

IN FOCUS

The Newsletter of the Rockford Photo Club

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June 2011



The objectives of the Rockford Photo Club shall be to improve our photography, and to appreciate photography as an art form.

Upcoming Events

Thursday, June 9 - 6 PM - Committee meeting at the Art Museum. All club members are welcome.

Thursday, June 9 - 7 PM - Program. 'Three-Ring Circus'. We'll break up into 3 smaller groups for mini-workshops on: (1) Getting Started in digital photography, Moderator to be announced, (2) Mounting and Matting, by Ron Bott, and (3) Macro Photography with.

Saturday, June 11 - Field Trip - Brookfield Zoo

Tuesday - June 21 - 7 PM - Pixel Meeting at Jerome Jones's, 798 Ivy Oaks Dr, Caledonia. From the IL 173 (West Bend Road)/I 90 interchange go east past the first stop light at Belvidere/Beloit Road. Go a little more than another mile and turn right on Ivy Oaks Drive. 798 is on the left side toward the bottom of the hill. Look for white van in driveway. A good thing to bring along is a jump drive.

Thursday - June 23 - 6 PM (note earlier time) - Outdoor Shoot - Horses, owned by Kim Smejias Horizon View Farm, 1974 North River Road, Oregon, IL. There are about 14 horses, some Arabians, and a trainer who will work with us to pose the horses. There will also be some (four-footed) babies and/or youngsters. And a wagon that we can photograph or ride in, or both.

And if that isn't enough, a shelter where we can rest, or eat, or whatever. We may want to bring some 'snacks' to share, or order some pizza, after the shoot, when the light starts to go.

For those who may not have received this notice, camera craft has moved its store from the Edgebrook Center to 3801 N. Perryville Rd.

Thursday, July 14 - 6 PM - Committee meeting at the Art Museum. All club members are welcome.

Thursday, July 14 - 7 PM - Program on Bird Photography by Steven Servantez, who is an excellent photographer and speaker.

Tuesday - July 19 - 7 PM - Pixel Meeting at Jerome Jones's, 798 Ivy Oaks Dr, Caledonia. From the IL 173 (West Bend Road)/I 90 interchange go east past the first stop light at Belvidere/Beloit Road. Go a little more than another mile and turn right on Ivy Oaks Drive. 798 is on the left side toward the bottom of the hill. Look for white van in driveway. A good thing to bring along is a jump drive.

Thursday, July 28 - 7 PM - Display. Subjects: Birds and Horses. To show the new things you have learned from the recent shoots and programs. You might even use an 'old' bird shot and a 'new' one.

Future Programs (will be updated as I know more)

- Aug 11 - Second Chance Contest - for anyone who did NOT win an award in a 2010 contest.
- Aug 24 - Field Trip - Tall Ships Chicago
- Aug 25 - Display
- Aug 27 - Field Trip - Bristol Renaissance Art Fair
- Sept 8 - Portrait Photography with Ron Hale
- Sept 22 - Brian Hampton new date
- Oct 13 - Program
- Oct 27 - Display
- Nov 10 - 4 Seasons (shoot the same place 4 times)
- Dec 8 - Party - Slide Show - "2011 Favorites"

The new 'webmasters' will soon be accepting images for posting in the new Gallery, so start gathering a few together. We don't yet know how many, but 5 or 6 should be safe to start. Email them to Rose, Connie, Jerome, or Kandie.



Here is the group that went on the Chicago Bus Trip, except for Kandie, who is taking the photo. If they will send me enough of their images, I will set them up a page on the website.

Jim Franklin has some **software for sale** that he bought, and then received better as Christmas gifts. He has Adobe Photoshop Elements 8, and Corel Paintshop Pro Ultimate Photo X2 both still in the original boxes, unopened. Call him at 815-623-2626 between 6 and 10 PM to discuss the price.

Janice Collins still has some **HP photo paper for sale**, in assorted sizes. To see what is left, call her at 815-979-0569.

Policy on Meeting Cancellation due to inclement weather. If the Museum is open, the meeting goes on, but please be very careful driving

For all club-meeting displays, prints, slides, and digital images are allowed, usually 4 or 6. Prints must be mounted on something stiff, and must be at least 5x7" (or 35 square inches). **Prints for contests** (maximum of 4) must have a border or mat. Images that have won previously in a club contest are not eligible for another club contest. Contest entries are limited to club members, but anyone may participate in displays.

In the May Newsletter, Jerome asked "Why do you take photographs." That's a thought provoking question that I suspect has many answers.

I take photographs because I enjoy the process. I've been an outdoors person all my life and therefore landscape and nature photography are my primary interests. Being in the right place, at the right time, with the right light is an enjoyable challenge for me. I often come away without an acceptable image because conditions just didn't jell, but the time and effort spent preparing for the capture of a good image are satisfying and provide lasting memories.

Dave Donahue

(Let's have responses to Jerome's question from more of you!)

Rose is working on the new website, and several of the rest of us are struggling to learn how to add material to it. Temporarily, you can access it at rockfordphotoclub.typepad.com Watch us as we struggle with Pages, Postings and Photo Albums. Today, I learned to Edit a Post!



Meet

Dan McConoughey

- 1- **How long have you belonged to this camera club and do you belong to another one as well?** About three months and I don't belong to another club.
- 2- **Was there a particular event or moment that got you interested in photography?** I've always been fascinated with photography. I like the fact that you can bring home a little bit of what you saw.
- 3- **What was your first camera?** I think it was a box camera that my Mother gave me.
What do you shoot now? Pentax K5 and a Nikon P7000 Point & Shoot.
Future? I'm good for now and don't intend to buy more cameras for quite some time.
- 4- **What club events would you like to see happen more?** I'd like to see a two or three Photographer Feature Night where each one has the opportunity to show 25-30 of their best or favorite photos.
- 5- **What has been your personal "best moment" at camera club - and why?** I enjoy the field trips.
- 6- **Are you shooting digital and do you also belong to Pixel People?** Yes and Yes.
- 7- **What photography magazines do you subscribe to - and which are your favorite(s)?** Pop Photo.
- 8- **Is there a photo book (digital photography, Photoshop or other) that you would recommend and why?** No, I just study on line.
- 9- **What Display or Contest did you most enjoy? And do you have any suggestion for a topic for a future one? (Don't be afraid to think "outside of the box" here.)** All, and I suggest motion, birds, flowers, people.
- 10) **If you could make one suggestion to the new members of our club, what would it be?** Shoot, shoot, shoot!



Pixel People

SHARING INFORMATION
ABOUT
DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY

NEXT PIXEL PEOPLE MEETING

All those interested in digital photography are welcome! The next meeting will be held at 7:00 pm on Tues., June 21, at the home of Jerome Jones, 798 Ivy Oaks Drive, Caledonia, IL. More detailed instructions can be found on Page 1 of this newsletter. **Bring digital problems, prints, digims (digital images) to project, equipment problems or new equipment you want to show.**

Thinking Smart ... by Kandie Bott

It's another way of saying "be organized", which is another way of saying "plan ahead".

Make sure your camera bag is organized efficiently - not just the convenience of your camera and lens placement but your camera cards, extra batteries and any filters you like to use.

Before you go on a shoot, check your cards - half full? Full? Download any pictures and have clean cards when you go out and then you need a plan for where to store full cards vs. available ones.

If you have a full card and need to change it "on site", then I cannot express enough to Think Smart! Look for a safe place to change cards. Take the advice from someone who didn't quite put enough thought into it and wound up losing a full 1 Gb card through a small bridge slot over the swamp in a zoo! The bridge slots were very narrow - who would have thought that it could slide sideways down, but it could and it did!

Charge your batteries ahead of time and store the fresh ones for easy access, but also change to a fresh battery before it's completely empty ahead of time, especially if it's getting low and you will be busy shooting.

Think about your clothing; check the weather via the internet ahead of time - especially when inclement weather may be occurring and don't forget plastic bags for your camera if the weather is iffy!

Plan, if at all possible, to go with a friend or two - for your safety. No matter how big you are or what your age or gender, think smart - be safe! Watch out for you first.

Shoot a lot of photos and enjoy your day!

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PHOTOGRAPHY BY

*Dan
McConoughey*



Paul, Kandie and Connie created our own Field Trip, to shoot soap bubbles. We brought along Kandie's good friend Sue to create the bubbles for us.

Our invaluable assistant:



Paul shooting bubbles against the sky.



Paul Attacked by giant bubble.



Attack Bubble Explodes!



From The Chairman

HOW TO IMPROVE YOUR PHOTOGRAPHY

There are two main ways to improve your photographic skills, and if you are serious about photography, you must do both.

First, you need to take more photographs. Henri Cartier Bresson said "Your first 10,000 photographs are the worst". To improve you must continuously photograph, develop prints, compare your work to others, and try to honestly criticize your own work. Unfortunately, while criticizing your own work is very helpful, it is ultimately limited in how far it can take your photographic growth.

You must also seek input from others, preferably those of not the same mind, whom you trust and respect. Only by doing this can your talent and imagination leap-frog to greater heights.

This is one of the reasons that we have a photography club, and it is our greatest failing. There are many reasons why. Many of us do not like criticism, so we do not ask for it, and many of us are afraid that giving our opinions may cause offense. We are friends in this club and do not want to do that. Here are some ideas that may help.

Learn to ask for and accept criticism. When you have a chance to show a photograph to anyone don't just present it and wait for a courteous and somewhat useless compliment. That is all you will get.

Instead, have a discussion. Explain what you are trying to do with the photograph, perhaps something about the circumstances under which you took it, and then utter the magic phrase, "what do you think?". At first, most people will not believe that you really do want to know what they think, but if you show that you are willing to accept criticism, they will be more honest. Remember that accepting criticism does not mean you have to agree with it.

Learn to give criticism. If someone asked you what you think about their photograph without explaining their intention or the circumstance of making it, you should ask them before giving your opinion. When you do give your opinion, phrases like "I like it", "That's pretty good" and God forbid, "That sucks", are not very helpful. "I like the way you...", "Did you think about...", "What if you...", "Why did you...", or even "I would be concerned about...", would be much more helpful, not to mention palatable to the person you are trying to help. Giving, as well as asking for and receiving criticism is an imperfect art that requires practice and tolerance by both parties. Mastering these skills is difficult but the rewards are great.

Jerome Jones

Rockford Photo Club
Connie Youngs, Newsletter Editor
6121 Canyon Woods Drive
Rockford IL 61109
connie6121@juno.com
connielouise@att.net

FIRST CLASS MAIL

Rockford Photo Club Operating Committee:

Chairman: Jerome Jones - 312-593-4925 (jerome@youngbloodjones.com)

Vice Chairman: Julie Thompson - 815-742-0315 (julienona21@yahoo.com)

Secretary: Jennifer Mahan - 815-608-9165 (gottaluvme127@yahoo.com)

Treasurer: Kathleen Ryan - 815-394-4818 (k_ryan@att.net)

Kandie Bott - 815-623-9656 (1rkbott@charter.net)

Jeff Carpenter - 815-623-6918 (JCLCJCBC@charter.net)

Connie Youngs - 815-395-1436 (connie6121@juno.com)

Webmaster: Jason Rotello - 815-621-5860 (jason@jrotello.com)

2nd Webmaster: Rose Hoffa - 815-815/531-1816 (rshoffa@gmail.com)

Newsletter Editor: Connie Youngs - 815-395-1436 (connie6121@juno.com)

For a current member list, send me an email (connie6121@juno.com) and I will send it to you. I can send an RTF (generic document file) or PDF (Adobe Acrobat file).

The following club members have volunteered to provide free one-on-one training for people interested in basic digital photography and/or computer image processing: Paul Crittenden (964-8252), Paul Mueller (874-6790), Dave Sbragia (234-2514), Al Westman (399-2584), and Connie Youngs (395-1436).

The Rockford Photo Club generally holds its meetings on the 2nd and 4th Thursdays of each month starting at 7 PM. We are currently (since the big remodeling project) meeting in a basement room of the Riverfront Museum Park Building (the former Sears Building), 711 North Main St. in Rockford. During the summer months, the time and place may change. Contact a committee member for more information.