

Essex Photo News

May
2007



Our 57th
Season

DIRECTORY OF OFFICERS

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PHOTO LAB MAY 3RD at 7:30

SHARP:

“Red, White, and Blue” is the topic for the instructional lab. It deals with photographing fireworks and will be given by Joe Thomas subbing for Jill Booth. Joe will cover not only techniques, but will also provide information on sites for the more spectacular displays for this summer.

MAY 17TH ANNUAL COMPETITION

A panel of three judges using an electronic scoring system to select a picture of the year in all competition classes, will be held on May 17th. Our judges will be Chuck Moore of the Plainfield Camera Club, Vinnie Kempf of the Ridgewood Camera Club, and Heinz Otto, director of the photographic archives of PSA. All have judged and given programs at EPC before and have reputations for fairness and photographic knowledge. Members are permitted to enter three photographs in every category for which they are eligible. However - and it is a big however - the photographs must have been entered in one of the regular monthly competitions held since the start of the club year SEPT.2006. Thus, entries from the Assigned Subject contest held in December are not eligible unless they were subsequently entered in one of the monthly contests. Also, you must have entered a minimum of eight prints or slides in any given category in order to be eligible in that category.

PHOTOGRAPHING FLOWERS AND OTHER NATURAL THINGS

by Dennis P. Curtin

“The virtue of the camera is not the power it has to transform the photographer into an artist, but the impulse it gives him to keep on looking--and looking.” Brooks Atkinson

Basic techniques Manual focus is almost essential so you can position the plane of critical focus at just the right spot. In close-up photography about half of the available depth of field is in front of the place of critical focus and half behind it.

Exposure compensation with autoexposure bracketing (AEB). Not all cameras have this mode but it lets you capture a series of shots at slightly different exposures. You can often specify the difference in exposure (1/3, 1/2, 2/3 or 1 full stop) and the number of exposures in the series. Sequential burst mode runs off the series of exposures as I hold down the shutter button.

To make the best use of my available depth-of-field, I compose the shot so all of the important elements fall on, or close to, the same plane.

Wind & sun Without question, the two biggest problems you have when photographing flowers is the wind and the sun; with the wind being the worse of the two. I've seen photos of wind blown photos taken at a slow shutter speed and they looked great. You can almost feel the wind in them. For most purposes however, blur is your enemy. Luckily, on most days even when there is a breeze, there will be slight pauses when it's calm. You just have to be patient and wait until just the right moment



Close ups vs. context Playing the angles

Shooting down is the normal angle but getting down at eye level, or even shooting up is a unique view. If you want things sharp, try to have them all fall in the same plane and have the camera parallel to that plane.

Flash I use the Canon Twin Lites whenever it's dark or windy. The flash has a high speed sync mode that lets me shoot at 1/2000 to freeze plants in motion. Another advantage of flash is that you can use it in combination with exposure compensation to darken the background. The dimmer the light and the farther away the background is, the darker it will be in the shot. This

lets you get great depth of field without the background becoming a distraction. The flash also has a control so I can increase or decrease the power of the flash

Backgrounds Backgrounds make or break a photo. A flower photographed against a busy background gets lost. If the background is out of focus and soft, a sharp flower will stand out against it. Luckily, depth of field in close-ups can be quite shallow so it's usually not a problem making the background soft. You just open up to a wide aperture such as f/2 or f/3.5 and focus on the flower. Anything behind the flower will be soft and the farther away it is from the flower, the softer it will be.

One special technique is to use a light tent. I got an ezCube and cut the bottom out of it so I could position it over a flower. It not only softens and diffuses the light and cuts the wind, but also when positioned in the right way it gives you a uniform grey or white background.

For more information along with fantastic photos on photographing flowers and other natural things, go to this website:

<http://www.shortcourses.com/flowers/flowers.htm>



JUDGING THE 9 HAS IT! by Joe Thomas



SUPPORT EPC AND B&H

If you are ordering anything at B&H including cameras, electronic gear, or even TV's, it will benefit our club financially by ordering through our Essex Photo Club website at: <http://www.essexphotoclub.org/> Enter, scroll down, & click the B&H icon. You will go straight to their website & EPC will get 2-3% on the sale.

PHOTO FARE MAY 9TH:

The final Photo Fare for the year will be given on Wednesday, May 9th at 7:45 at the home of Joe Thomas. The topic is "Seeing Things" a six-segment program dealing with shadows, reflections, contrasting elements, abstractions, the picturing of scenes including artificial light and, most importantly, the depiction of motion. **Motion is the Assigned Subject** for the year (the competition will be held in December) so this might help you define the subject in your own mind. A sign-up sheet will be available on May 3rd, but attendance is limited to nine members..

A NOTE FROM LESLIE HILL

I would like to invite everyone to the reception for a gallery showing I am having in the city. See link below: <http://homepage.mac.com/paulabarr144/PhotoAlbum7.html>

FULL MOONS

May 2nd May 31st and June 30th

IMPORTANT WEBSITES:

Email: Info@essexphotoclub.org
www.essexphotoclub.org
www.essexphotoclub.blogspot.com
<http://nbkaplan.com/digital>

EPC FIELD TRIP

MAY 5TH AND 6TH.

LONGWOOD GARDENS, ETC.

We hope to see wonderful photos from those making this club field trip.



To conclude our series on judging we will discuss the scoring system in use at Essex Photo and how it evolved, keeping in mind that almost every club in this country uses some variation of the 1-to-9 or 1-to-5 standards used by PSA and New Jersey Federation competitions.

Some clubs permit judges to preview a certain number of photos so the judge can get a feel for the competitive level. Some permit first-place ties. Some do not choose a picture-of-the-month in any category. Some limit commentary to only beginning and intermediate groups. We do none of those things. Our members ask for a commentary on every entry and want a "win" in every class even if there are no nines or there are two or more nines.

The old Montclair club permitted previews and had a 4-to-9 system. The West Essex Club started with a 6-to-27 system (as if there were three judges instead of one), switched to a 3-to-9 standard in the 1970s and adopted the two-tier system (first round 3-to-7, second round rescoreing the 7s as 7, 8 or 9) which Essex, the successor club after the merger, now uses.

We do not permit previews for two reasons: one is time (our club has more entries than most other clubs so there is a need to speed things up), the other is that by having the judge identify all honors entries (seven is an honors score) in the first round and then having him review all those entries a second time we avoid the possibility that an early entry will be given a low score in the absence of a preview. Judges tell us they like the system (also used in Ridgewood) because it is less likely to result in judging errors. Interestingly, the system results in higher average scores overall.

In our annual competition we use three judges (as do all other clubs). Voting takes place without commentary unless there is a need for judges to discuss the merits of a couple of photos in choosing one as best of the year.

3 4 5 6'S

BUT, YOU CAN SUBMIT YOUR PHOTO AGAIN!



WEB SITES OF THE MONTH by Nath Kaplan

How would you like to take a free online photography class that you work on at your own pace? A photographer by the name of Jodies Coston offers a **Free Online Photography Course** sponsored by morguefile.com. Right now there are a total of twelve lessons. The program is a little old, but the basic information is still appropriate. The web site covers topics such as Composition, Aperture and Shutter Speed, ISO, and Grain. It also covers Camera Filters, Soft Focus, Zooming, and Panning. There are additional lessons on Landscape, Nature, Travel Photography, Portraits, and Studio Lighting. If you are looking for ideas for "MOTION", there is a lesson on photographing moving vehicles.

Check out <http://www.morguefile.com/archive/classroom.php>

FINAL PROGRAM OF THE YEAR

AT 8PM on May 3rd, Howard Knauer's program on "Macro Work" will follow the Photo Lab. It will includes some hands on opportunities so bring along your camera if you plan to participate.



Michael Pagliuca is looking to purchase a used individual slide viewer so that he can share slides with other family members. Please call him at 973-748-8232 if you have such an item for him.