

Focal Points

The Official Newsletter of the Flagpole Photography Club

Volume 2

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**Next Meeting:
January 21, 2010**

**Location:
Cyrenius H. Booth Library
Newtown, CT**

**Program: Color Management
with Rick Tyrseck**

Assigned Topic: Self Portrait

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

The club has marked a 40% increase in members this year for a total of 41, including our newest members Erica Benoit, Mark Cassidy, Carol Froehlig and Bob Harris. As of our November meeting, we had \$1010 in the budget.

NECCC FALL INTER-CLUB COMPETITION REPORT

In the Class B Black & White Print Competition, Flagpole is in first place with 93 points! Bob Berthier scored a first place award for "Frozen Cottonwoods", Rick Tyrseck won second place for "Sailing Around MarshallPoint" and an honorable mention went to Sheila Silvernail for "Battle Tent".

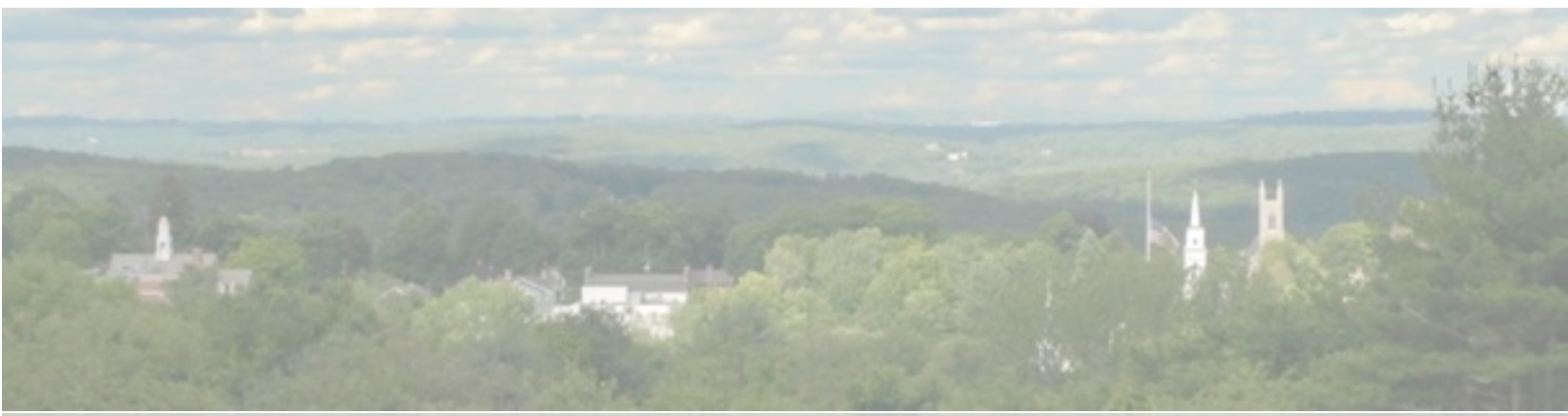
In the Color Print competition, which encompasses Classes A & B, out of 28 clubs, Flagpole is in 12th place with 86 points. Honorable mentions went to Bob Berthier for "Mountain Bluebird on Lupine" and Sheila Silvernail for "Blue Dome".

In the Electronic Pictorial Class B Competition, Flagpole ranks 3rd out of 25 clubs with 83 points. In the Class B Nature Competition we are 8th out of 22 clubs with 81 points. Anne Eigen won an honorable mention for "Grebe Skimming the Water".

Winning images can be viewed on the NECCC website at www.NECCC.org under the Interclub Competition link. Members were encouraged to submit more photos, particularly in the Nature category, and were reminded that this category restricts images which show the "hand of man". Members should also be aware that the PSA definition of what constitutes nature photography has been amended.

NEW PSA DEFINITION OF NATURE

A revision to the PSA Nature Division definition of what defines "Nature" was adopted at the 2009



PSA International Conference. Members can find the old definition on the Flagpole website. The new definition includes the following paragraph: "No techniques that add to, relocate, replace, or remove pictorial elements except by cropping are permitted. Techniques that enhance the presentation of the photograph without changing the nature story or the pictorial content are permitted. All adjustments must appear natural".

Dan Charbonnet, immediate former Chairman of the PSA Nature Division, has offered some clarifying comments on the change. "For most people, this means that the various HDR techniques are now allowed and it means blurring the background is now allowed, provided the results look natural. All images must be considered "Digital Realism", where a photographer may perform any enhancements and modifications that improve the presentation of the image to make it more closely represent the original scene photographed but that does not change the truth of the original nature story. Cropping and horizontal flipping (equivalent to reversing a slide) are acceptable modifications. Removing spots due to dust on your sensors is allowed. Adding elements to your images, removing pictorial elements from your image other than by cropping, combining separate images or rearranging and/or cloning and/or copying elements in your image are still not acceptable and can lead to disqualification of your image in the competition.

Since HDR techniques and Helicon Focus techniques are techniques that enhance the

presentation without changing the pictorial content, they are now considered allowable techniques. Please note that all adjustments must still look natural. Just because a technique is legitimate does not guarantee the image it was used on will get a good score."

NOVEMBER'S PROGRAM

Gary Spring, our November speaker, shared six of his strategies for making the most of a nature shoot, including doing advance research about the area you'll be shooting and working to get your shot right in camera to maximize your shooting time and minimize your time in post-production.

DECEMBER PARTY & COMPETITION

Members voted to combine the warmth and camaraderie of a party celebrating the holiday season and a more casual photo competition for our December gathering.

Informal voting on photos with the theme "Humor" led the festivities. Taking honors in the B & W Print category were Bob Berthier in 1st place and Micheline Williams in 2nd place. In the Color Print category, winners were Anne Eigen in 1st place, Win Brickmeier in 2nd place and Olympia Stoller in 3rd place.

Members provided a sumptuous array of tantalizing food and drink and after the feasting, a grab bag gift exchange ensued with much merriment and attempted concealment of hotly contested items. As an FYI for next year's exchange, utility tools and cute animated stuffed animals were popular items.

LINKS

http://www.outdoorphotographer.com/how-to/photoshop-and-other-software/high-dynamic-range-done-naturally.html?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=OPeNewsNov_121009

<http://www.stuckincustoms.com/hdr-tutorial/>

<http://www.luminous-landscape.com/tutorials/Helicon.shtml>

MEMBER MACRO

New to Flagpole this year, Sheila Silvernail has already distinguished herself in our club as well as NECCC competitions. Check out her website at www.silverduststudios.com.

1. What inspired you to get into photography?

Like many others, I had a Brownie camera as a child, then on to 126 instamatics. I did some cross-country traveling as a young adult and my brother let me use his 35mm camera. Then, when I returned to college in my late twenties to finish my degree, I chose fine arts as my major. The first time I saw a print develop in the darkroom I was hooked. It was such a great combination of art and technology.

2. What one piece of photographic equipment (besides your camera) can you not live without?

My computer! Since I no longer have the space for a darkroom, I'd be lost without my "virtual darkroom".

3. What is your biggest photographic achievement?

I've appreciated the opportunity to have a solo show and sell a few pieces, but I feel I've grown the most when competing. Receiving two Best-in-Show awards at Durham Fair 2008 and then again in 2009 with two more for Photography-Special was especially exciting because of the caliber of competition.

4. What is your biggest photographic challenge?

Getting the final image to portray the original scene is always a challenge. There are so many variables and what the human eye sees is not what the camera/film/digital media sees.

5. What is the most important photographic lesson you ever learned?

Think ahead and look at things constantly. Look around you and take notes, mentally or on paper. Envision the finished image before creating it.

Study the masters and the amateurs. See with your mind and imagination, then practice, practice, practice.

6. When you were just starting out, what was your biggest photographic a-ha moment--the thing that created a major change for the better in your photography?

There were two aspects. One was becoming comfortable with my camera as a tool, understanding how it worked, the effects of aperture and shutter speed, focal length, etc. The other was learning to see what I was looking at, how the light touched the subject, the balance of light and dark in the two-dimensional composition of the film plane, and how it all affected composition.

7. What is your favorite subject to shoot and why?

Close-ups are a favorite, with an emphasis on detail and the elements of design. I also like landscapes for the same reason.

8. Which photographer(s) inspire(s) you?

Obviously some of the historic masters, Ansel Adams, Edward Curtis, Dorothea Lange are inspiring. Some budding contemporary favorites are Judith Secco (judithsecco.com), Stephanie Laird (stephanielairdphotography.com), and Australian Nick Lagos (do an internet search of him and you'll be amazed). The sculpture of Anna Hyatt Huntington, painters Georgia O'Keefe and Mary Cassatt are among other types of artists that I've found worth studying.

9. Describe the dream photographic field trip you'd love to take.

Big skies, broad valleys, high mountains, fields of flower gardens, clouds, color and detail.

Competition Winners

November, 2009

Assigned Subject: Shadows



1st Place Assigned
Bob Fletcher



2nd Place Assigned
Anne Eigen



3rd Place Assigned
Olympia Stoller



1st Place Open
Fellowship
Anne Eigen



2nd Place Open
Spoonbill Reflection
Bob Berthier



3rd Place Open
A touch of Autumn
Bob Fletcher



1st Place B & W
Lady in Waiting
Bob Berthier



2nd Place B & W
Waiting for the Choo-Choo
Don Brooks



3rd Place B & W
Reclaimed
Benay Yaffe