



Nature Photo Times

Founded 1956

Member: Photographic Society of America & Twin Cities Area Council of Camera Clubs

Vol. 53, No. 9 - May 2009

From the President

Wow! I find it hard to believe that this is going to be our last meeting until next September! But the good side is that spring is definitely here and we all should have enjoyed some great spring photography. I just spent this morning hiking around Wood Rill SNA and Wolsfield Woods SNA looking for spring ephemerals, I managed to find a few Blood root, rue Anemone and some buds for many others so I think most of the wildflowers in the Twin City area are about a week away.

These last two years have been a real pleasure serving as your President, but I also am looking forward to when I come to meetings next fall to have more time to socialize and not have to worry about conducting the evening's business. I also want to thank all of the current Board Members with all the work they did it makes the job of President much easier.

This month's program is about "The Minnesota Nature Conservancy" by Tom Landwehr who is the Supervisor of the Minnesota Chapter of Nature Conservancy. Much of my photography is done on one of two public lands, SNA's and Nature Conservancy, so I am looking forward to his program.

Have a great summer and if I don't see you in the field we will see you next September.

2009/2010 Nominations

President: Jean McDonough

Vice President: Lil Polley

Secretary: Linda Nygren

Treasurer: Don Nadreau

Newsletter Editor: Jay Olson-Goude

We will be voting on these candidates at our May meeting. We will also be taking nominations from the floor.

Good Shooting

John Pennoyer

Recorders or Artists?

Restricting the Digital Darkroom

By David Perez

Is photography being corrupted by the use of post-processing tools such as Photoshop? Or is the only thing that matters is whether or not you create the best possible image?

The belief that images captured by digital photography are "pure" (as defined by the image being "as it was captured") is a canard. Whether the image is altered by the in-camera processing or in the post-processing, the "purity" is destroyed the moment a single pixel is altered.

And while the term "artist" may conjure up images of someone with a prematurely gray pony tail and tiny glasses, driving around in an oversized roller-skate, photography is an art. And artists have always worked to make their output the very best it can be - which means using ALL the tools and techniques available. Without restriction.

In a recent seminar, well-known photographer and Canon Explorer of Light, Rick Sammon indicated that he creates the images he sees in his head, not just what's visible in his viewfinder. Current technology has given us the tools so we too can extend our vision beyond the viewfinder, creating better images. This has been the goal of photographers as long as there has been photography, and artists throughout history.

How many times has a judge downgraded a potential "9" or "10" image to a "7" or even a "6" because of an imperfection the photographer was aware of, but wasn't allowed to correct due to restrictions on editing? Whether it's an intruding branch, a missing catch light, an overly bright spot, or a "boring" background, the photographer should have the option of doing what's needed to optimize their image.



An original image (Top) and optimized version of the same image (Bottom).

The use of technology to alter images is nothing new. Since photography began, photographers have spent thousands of hours in the darkroom using the tools and techniques available to alter the purity of their images. Were there howls of protest from the “purists” decrying wet darkroom processes such as:

- “Shoot for the shadows, develop for the highlights” (push and/or pull processing)
- Dodging and burning
- Contrast or slide masking
- Slide sandwiching
- Internegatives
- Variable contrast papers
- Toning
- Dust spotting
- Airbrushing imperfections
- And any of the other techniques available to manipulate images of the time?

Using the tools available in today’s digital darkroom simply extends those wet darkroom tools and techniques - artistically, there is no difference. A good photographer will produce good work from the camera. Modern tools and techniques enable the photographer to optimize his or her work, making a good image better, possibly great. Digital imaging has created a new ball game, one in which it is not sufficient just to be good at recording what the camera sees. Today’s photographer must master a variety of equipment and tools, just as they did in the wet darkroom. Only the tools have changed.

I haven’t seen the MNPC charter or bylaws, but I suspect they contain a statement that supports making members better photographers. Salons are part of that improvement process and should encourage mastering the whole photographic process, including the tools of the digital darkroom. Without dwelling on the purported alignment with the Photographic Society of America as a reason for restricting editing, I suspect the PSA restrictions are based more on politics and protection than any desire to protect the “purity” of photography.

For photographers for whom any image alteration is anathema, there remains the option of continuing to shoot film. It was certainly simpler; especially slide film – no white balance, no ability to perform any but the most basic optimization, no need to learn new technology. Even a photographer who captures images digitally may choose not to use the available digital darkroom tools for a variety of reasons

- protecting the “purity” of an image,
- dislike of spending time at the computer
- discomfort with having to learn new technology

There is no requirement that any post-processing be performed, but these days, improving photographic skills involves more than learning equipment. It also requires mastering the tools and techniques available in the digital darkroom. Photographers should have the flexibility to perform as much or as little post-processing as they choose.



An original image (top) and an altered version of the same image (bottom).

Let's end the halfway measure of having a litany of post-processing specifics and replace it with a simple statement that "an image entered in a salon must be a reasonable representation of the subject being depicted". I propose that the board of directors for the Minnesota Nature Photography club enact this change for the 2009-2010 photographic year.

Field Notes "It's been a good Ride"

By John Pennoyer

Some of you old timers of the club will remember our last Field Notes author, Francis Breyette, he wrote the article for many years and finally he thought that it was time to let someone else take charge. That was somewhere around 12-15 years ago and of course I volunteered only because no one else volunteered. I am not a good writer, but I thought that I would open my horizons a little and see how I would do. My writings may have improved from the early years, but I will always struggle putting my thoughts into words that everyone can make sense of. Not sure if I achieved that or not, but writing all of those articles did make me a better photographer, because I would research and try to apply that information in the field before I attempted to put it in writing. Also all of those "Field Notes" gave me more confidence in writing, and because of that confidence I have had many articles published in magazines that actually paid me money for my article and images. One thing I am very proud of is that after all of those years, not once did I miss a deadline (usually by the first of the month) or miss a month of writing a Field Notes article. But like Francis of several years ago, I think that it is now time for someone else to take up the torch and continue on with contributing monthly articles to our club newsletter.

I have called my articles "Field Notes" only because my writings were intended to be educational and informative from my visual perspective and technique which may or may not agree with your visual perspective and technique. But that's OK it's what makes nature photography so great, all of us have different visions and try to capture our personal vision by looking through the view-finder of our camera. So this will be my last official "Field Notes" but I will still contribute 2-3 articles a year, to try and keep my creating juices flowing. If you would be interested in being a monthly contributor just let our newsletter editor know. Also remember everyone is encouraged to submit articles at any time it is not necessary to be a regular contributor, our club newsletter is for all members.

Dynamic AF vs Single Point AF

It is always interesting when putting on programs how questions develop from statements that you made during the program. My program for spring break was on "North American Wildlife Photography". One of

the statements that I made was in most cases my camera is always set-up for Continuous High Speed shutter, continuous-servo AF, and dynamic AF area. Someone asked me a question do I ever use "Single Point" AF and the answer is yes! So let's look at the difference (these terms are Nikon, but all camera manufacturers do the same thing but use different terminology).

My general use for wildlife is Dynamic Area, only because as I focus on a bird/animal my focus point will automatically try and track with the subject as it fly's or runs away, this allows me to only concentrate on composition. There are times that this can be frustrating especially if the subject is behind foliage, trees etc. Using Dynamic, the focus point may keep switching because it cannot distinguish a tree from a Whitetail Buck. So in certain situations I will change to Single Point and put the focus area right on the buck when it is stationary. Of course if the buck takes off I will be out of luck because there is no way you can switch back to dynamic fast enough to capture a fleeting moment. So if at all possible I prefer to leave it on dynamic when shooting wildlife.

In April some of us traveled to NW Minnesota to photograph Greater Prairie Chickens, I occasionally switched to single point but in most cases I had it set to dynamic. On the second morning in the blind, a coyote came out from the tall grass on the far end of the Lek; all of us focused our cameras on this beautiful coyote. Immediately he started moving rapidly in our direction, the old motor drives were really heating up. I must have fired off 30 images of this coyote, luckily for me my camera was ready, and every image was hair sharp. The Dynamic AF tracked the coyote beautifully and all I worried about was panning with the coyote to maintain composition. If I had been on one of the other focus areas, I would have probably been lucky to capture one or two sharp images. One final thought I also use MF override in many situations.

Have a great summer and see you next September.



"Coyote at the Lek"

By John Pennoyer

Good Shooting

**Minnesota Nature
Photography Club
April 2009 Salon
Scores**

Judges: Alan Schulz

Photographer	Title	Score
Baker, Eric	Wolves (W)	8
Cleveland, Ron	13-line Ground Squirrel	8
Dykstra, John	Wood Duck A	8
Gladitsch, Marilyn	Wild Geranium #12	8
Hogeboom, Jerry	Chickadee (W)	8
Hogeboom, Jerry	Hoverfly (W)	8
Holtz, Mike	Kinkajou (W)	8
Hoppe, Paul	Warmfuzzy	8
Hoppe, Paul	Naptime	8
Hoyt, Kristin	Pasque Solo	8
McDonough, Jean	Foggy Sierra Snow Scene	8
Olson-Goude, Jay	Creek Sunrise	8
Perez, David	North Shore Ice	8
Perez, David	Hawk Takeoff	8
Polley, Lil	Palouse Falls	8
Rehpohl, Dean	Swan Duo (W)	8
Scholljegerdes, Florence	Clouds at Sunset	8
Vichich, Dave	Badlands	8
Weinman, Larry	Going Up (W)	8
Zosel, David	Barred Owl (W)	8
Zosel, David	Chickadee (W)	8
Cleveland, Ron	Ontario Color	9
Cyr, Mariann	Pasque Flowers	9
Fiegenschuh, Karl	Hummingbird (W)	9
Fiegenschuh, Karl	Moose Encounter (W)	9
Galambos, Ted	Tree Clouds	9
Gladitsch, Marilyn	Marsh Marigold Duo	9
Graves, Rick	Prairie Smoke 2	9
Graves, Rick	Spiderwort	9
Hoyt, David	Bay-headed Warbler Feathers (W)	9
Pennoyer, John	Show Off (W)	9
Pennoyer, John	Female Goldeneye (W)	9
Specht, Don	Turkey-trot (W)	9
Vichich, Dave	In Flight Meal (W)	9
Williams, Roger	Takeoff (W)	9
Cyr, Mariann	Sandstone Impression	10
Dykstra, John	Wood Duck B (W)	10
McDonough, Jean	Prairie Smoke No. 3	10
Williams, Roger	Gotcha (W)	10

Note from your Editor

Dave Perez submitted an interesting article this month. I hope you read it and respond with some of your thoughts on this topic. His comments and suggestions get at the heart of what are club is all about. Responses will be published in the September newsletter.

This is my last newsletter. I will be turning the reins over to Jay Olson-Goude.. Jay brings with him prior experience as a newsletter editor and I think he will do a bang-up job. Please give him your support and consider doing an article on a topic you are familiar with. Hope you have a great summer and I will see you in the fall.

Don Nadreau

TCACCC and surrounding areas Logo Contest (TCACCC stands for Twin Cities Area Council of Camera Clubs)

The TCACCC Council is looking for a new logo, one suited for the 21st century and beyond
One winner gets free admission to 2010 Spring Break/
Inter Club (dinner included)
Deadline is July 15th, 2009
Enter as many designs as you wish
Logo becomes the sole property of TCACCC
TCACCC board will determine winner at the 9/10/09
council meeting

You can email entries to:

www.cameracouncil.org

U.S. Postal Mail entries to:

Mariann Cyr
3955 Glenview Ave.,
Arden Hills,
MN 55112

Or have your delegate bring to the monthly council
meeting

Questions: Please contact: cameracouncil.org

Please supply:

Your logo entry (digital preferred, but not necessary)

Your name

Club affiliate

Contact information (phone, mail, email)

Yahoo Group “MNNature”

With summer coming, this is a perfect time to make sure you are signed up with the MNNature group on Yahoo Groups. The group was established to help our club members stay in touch between meetings. There are 109 group members currently. Group memberships must be approved by a moderator (me), and are open to club members and also other interested persons including prospective club members. Potential topics of discussion include local photo ops and outings, questions about techniques or equipment, etc. Message attachments via the group are not allowed (for the benefit of those with slower internet connections), but sharing of images and information via links or uploads to the group site are encouraged.

Each group member can adjust their own mail delivery settings to receive “individual messages”, or messages can be bunched into approximately daily “digests”. One can also set delivery option to “no email, web only” and access discussions only via the web if preferred. This is also a good option if you wish to turnoff message delivery temporarily, e.g. during vacations. [It is important NOT to send “out of office replies” to the list.] One can also change delivery to a different email account if desired without getting a whole new membership.

If you go to the link for the mnnature homepage, you will be prompted to “join” if you have not yet done so: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/mnnature> . If you are already a group member, you may be prompted to sign into Yahoo (with the appropriate Yahoo ID and password that you used when you set up your “mnnature” group membership.)

Linking with a Yahoo account (which requires setting up an ID and password with Yahoo) will allow you full access to the group, including message archives and files/photos/links that are posted by members, as well as enabling current email messages from other group members. After you set up a Yahoo account, it is wise to set your “marketing preferences” with Yahoo: <http://subscribe.yahoo.com/showaccount> The Yahoo “mygroups” page can be very helpful for managing group settings: <http://groups.yahoo.com/mygroups> , especially if you belong to more than one group.

Alternatively, one could set up a mnnature email subscription without a Yahoo membership, but then you would not have the ability to access the mnnature Yahoo group homepage. Let me know if you prefer this option.

Once you are a mnnature group member, you can simply send an email message to mnnature@yahogroups.com and a copy of the message will go to each group member who is signed up for email delivery. [Note that you can send email messages to the group only from the particular email address is signed up with the group, or you may post directly via the group website.] Also please remember that when you hit “reply to” one of these messages, the reply goes to the entire group, by design. This is a discussion group, after all. If

you wish to send a private reply to an individual, make sure to adjust the “To:” field in your outgoing message accordingly (or prepare to be embarrassed).

Please contact me directly if you have questions about the Yahoo group. See you in September, but let’s keep in touch this summer!

–Linda Nygren, MNPC secretary and “mnnature” Yahoo group moderator

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Nature Photo Times

Published Sept.-May by the
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www.minnesotanature.org

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Meetings are held on the third Wednesday of
the month, September through May

6:00 PM - Set-up and Social Time
6:30 PM - Announcements and Business
6:45 PM - Program
7:45 PM - Nature Salon (Competition and
Judge's Comments).

Meetings are held at:

REI
750 West American Blvd
Bloomington, MN 55420

May Meeting Wednesday May 20, 2009

Our May presentation will be "The
Minnesota Nature Conservancy" by Tom Landwehr.

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