



In Focus

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September 2009

President's Message

by Terry Babij

Welcome to a new year of the Niagara Falls Camera Club. This is my first term as president of our club and I would like to give you a little of my photographic background. I was born and raised in Toronto, and I've been taking pictures since my single digits. While in high school I was in the camera club where we used chemicals from the chemistry department to make our own developers and fixers from scratch. At the same time I started a camera club at the local YMCA complete with a functional darkroom. I have played with various 35mm Rangefinder, SLRs and TLRs for many years and then let them sit for several years until I was drawn into the world of digital, over 10 years ago. Until 6 years ago, all I captured was record shots and an occasional lucky shot.

I've always been impressed with images that have the WOW factor. I have a large collection of photography books and magazines, and a growing assortment of recorded programming that I've archived on DVD. As soon as I get around to cataloging them, I would be happy to share them with the membership. I'll be doing a presentation in November on Creativity Using Photography as the Medium. My hope is that this will inspire new ways of looking at subjects.



A few years ago I joined in a small camera club looking for mentors to help develop my skills. The absence of competitions and a belief that digital was black magic and not really photography, made it difficult for me to fit in. When I joined NFCC three years ago, I found the critical mass I was looking for, with very open thinking to the art of photography. Since then, I've worked my way up to Diamond status in Monochrome.

We have a fabulous resource in the NFRCC. The annual convention brings together great presenters and hundreds of people with like interests. What a terrific way to learn from others!

Earlier this year our executive team surveyed our members, and we are using your comments to create a better club. If you have ideas or would like to help with any aspect of our club, feel free to talk to me, or anyone on our executive team.

I would also like to point all members to our UPDATED WEB SITE! Chris Empey has done a great job putting together a place with rich content for us all to go to and use.

Take plenty of Neurochromes; they are free and don't require a computer, processing or printing!

Remember to stay In Focus, or break the rules!

- Terry

Why join a Camera Club?

By Karen Fulham

Camera clubs can be an invaluable resource for the amateur photographer. Many professional photographers have started out in camera clubs. A beginning photographer shouldn't feel intimidated by the level of skill achieved by some of the club's members; indeed, many of those same members started out as novices, with the same concerns and questions. A great many of them have learned all they know in the club. There are always members who specialize in many areas of photography, such as nature, portraiture, or any number of areas. They are most often willing to share their expertise with a newcomer.

Camera Clubs offer workshops, slide shows that are entertaining and informative, and presentations by skilled professionals and semi-professionals. Photo Competitions can be exciting and can finely hone your photographic skills. Most importantly, they offer a connection to others who share your interest in photography. The clubs can and do appeal to all ages; the generation gap disappears as members get together to share their photographic experiences.

Do Camera Club Competitions stifle creativity? They need not, if a healthy perspective is maintained. It must be kept in mind that judging is very subjective. What appeals to one judge will often leave another cold. Judges have been known to give the same image in different competitions differing scores. Could this mean that a score is to some extent dependent on the judge's mood on a particular evening? The fact is, after participating in competitions for a while, you become aware of your strengths and weaknesses as a photographer, or ideally you should. At that point you don't need high scores all the time to validate your skill. One shouldn't shoot to please the judges. Shoot what pleases you. Compete not with others, but with yourself. Compete for the knowledge you can gain by looking at your images through someone else's eyes, and compete just for the sheer joy of showing your stuff to others!

Find a camera club in your area and join up!

Niagara Falls Wins the Rainbow!



Chris Empey is presented the Rainbow Trophy from Anne McCooley, President of Twin Cities Camera Club. This is the first win for Niagara Falls in the 20 years our two clubs have been enjoying this friendly competition. (Presentation at the banquet.)

Opposite: Top Left - Scott Simons receives the award for Best in Show - Slides from Karen Fulham on behalf of Steven Simons. Top Right - Karen Fulham presents the award for Best In Show - Prints to Ron Snyder of TCCC.

Bottom - Karen Fulham and Anne McCooley present George Beehler with a plaque celebrating George as the oldest member of the Twin Cities Camera Club



Niagara Falls Camera Club Banquet 2009



NFCC Executive 2009-2010

(From L-R) Chris Empey, Lynn Audette, Terry Babij, Karen Fulham, Paul Patterson, Jacqueline Dingman, Leslie Khan, Sharon Murray, Stan Grant, David Andrews, Jennie Grant, Denis Audette, Gerrit Schenk. Missing from photo: Miriam Gersho and Scott Simons



From My Perspective

By Jacqueline Dingman

I love digital SLR cameras! Knowing you've captured the shot can be a 'life-saver'. You'll feel freer to experiment. But know you're going to have to make peace with your computer. The best image quality requires editing your images.

Like other art forms, you can't create images unless you understand the technical aspects, the why and the how. Don't be conned by your auto settings. You'll go farther with manual and a firm grounding in photographic principles. So you will need a camera that allows you to switch lenses. Your camera needs to allow you to set the shutter speed and the aperture size on your own; in other words, you have to have the option to set your camera to MANUAL.

To shoot effectively, you'll need to learn a few basic concepts and techniques. For now, let's keep things simple.

Before you shoot in manual mode, you have to tell your camera how sensitive it has to be to light. You can do this from shot to shot if you wish, unlike the days of film where you had to finish each roll before switching film types, which made it difficult to go from a bright to a dark situation.

The ISO rating tells you how sensitive to light your camera's imaging sensor will be. Most cameras allow you to select the ISO setting manually to suit your needs from shot to shot. The ISO setting is described as a number (between 50 and 25,600). The higher the number, the more sensitive it is. However, the higher the number, the lower the quality of the image. It can end up looking almost grainy. We call this 'Digital Noise'. Lower numbers should produce an image with less noise than higher ISO numbers. Sometimes we want a crisp, clean image. Sometimes we want a 'grainy' look. Remember, photography is subjective.

Here is a selection of ISO settings: 50, 100, 200, 400, 800, 1600, 6400, 12800, 25600. Each time you double the ISO#, you double its light sensitivity.

Niagara Falls Camera Club

2009 - 2010 Schedule

September 2009

- 14. Program: "Wildlife Locations of Photographic Significance Around the Niagara Area" by Ken Newcombe, Burlington
- 21. Monthly Projected Images and Print Competition # 1
- 30. WEDNESDAY - Introductory Photo Course

October 2009

- 5. Workshop: "Model Portrait Workshop" presented by Kirk Stokes, NFCC
- 14. Executive Meeting
- 19. Monthly Projected Images and Print Competition #2

November 2009

- 2. Program: Video "Creativity from the eye of the photographer" Presented by Terry Babij, NFCC
- 16. Monthly Projected Images and Print Competition #3

December 2009

- 5. Program: "An evening with Mike DiBattista" by Mike DiBattista, Photographer, Niagara Falls Review
- 19. Monthly Projected Images and Competition #4

January 2010

- 4. Workshop: "Critiquing Images" by NFCC Members
- 11. Executive Meeting
- 18. Monthly Projected Images and Print Competition #5

February 2010

- 4. Workshop: "Photography Workshops" by NFCC Members
- 18. Monthly Projected Images and Print Competition #6

March 2010

- 1. Members Night
- 8. Executive Meeting
- 22. Projected Image and Print of the Year Competition
- 29. 21st Rainbow Competition With Club & Twin Cities Camera Club

April 2010

- 23-25. 49th Annual NFRCC Convention Holiday Inn, Grand Island, NY

May 2010

- 1. Annual Awards Banquet

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