Los Gatos/Saratoga Camera Club
www.losgatos-saratogacameraclub.org

Newsletter

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New in 2011

Dues are Due

If you haven't already paid our Treasurer DH Rasweiler, 2011 dues are $50 and must be paid by February 28th to remain an active member.

Entry Limits

Members may enter a total of **four images** into a monthly competition with a **maximum of three images in any one category** and a **maximum of three images in any one medium**.

Categories are defined as Pictorial/Color, Monochrome, Nature, Travel, Photojournalism, and Creative.

Media are defined as Digital/Projected and Print.

Pictorial Color A and B Groups

Only the Pictorial/Color category has A and B groups. See Determination of Member's Classification as Advanced (A) or Basic (B) on the Downloads page of the web site for details.

Coming Club Events

See the Event Calendar page on our web site for further details.

January 30- February 27, 2011
Exhibit of 30 prints by 22 photographers from the club

Wednesday, February 02, 2011
Deadline for entering digital images for February club competition

Monday, February 07, 2011
Competition
Digital - Creative, Monochrome, & Color
Prints - Creative, Monochrome , & Color
Judge: Alison Brooks
Refreshments: Gene Antisdel, Reanna Bakke, Jeffrey Balfus

Saturday, February 19, 2011
Field Trip
Chinatown Community Street Fair (San Francisco)

Monday, February 21, 2011
Program
Alternative Techniques for Creating Photographic Images presented by Peter Schenk
Refreshments: Ken Bloomfield, Sandra Breiten, Bo Brezoczky

Saturday, February 26, 2011
6C End-of-Year Dinner

Carolyn Ramsay Award Winner
2010 Photographer of the Year, JoAn Lambert

Presented by Betty Toepfer.

I am delighted to have the honor to present this year's Carolyn Ramsay award. Many of us "old-timers" had the good fortune to have been a member of our club during Carolyn's time and remember her as the go-to person for information, procedures, rules, regulations and protocol for our club, 6c's, PSA, FotoClave, etc. She held almost every office in this club at one time or another and was also the 6c's rep for many years.

Carolyn was a passionate award winning photographer, as well as a judge for camera clubs locally, nationally and internationally for the Photographic Society of America, or PSA. She loved field trips and I think she would have driven her SUV anywhere if she believed that she could find a great image there. She also had this wonderful ability to teach through judging, critiquing, demonstrating and sharing any new technique or photographic process that she may have just learned at a recent workshop or seminar or through personal experimentation.

Carolyn gave very generously of her time, talent and personal resources to anyone who had a need or interest in doing something at which she was already accomplished. I remember when I first joined this club, I wanted to mat my prints, so I went over to Carolyn's and she taught me how to double mat, then left her studio open so that I could come by any time and use her equipment. She also had a beautiful dark room that was available to anyone who needed a place to develop their film, print, mat or use any of her equipment. AND if you did not know how to use any of her equipment, she would take the time to teach you.

I believe that Carolyn set the standard for how to have a well functioning camera club and how to be a friendly, helpful and participating club member. When she passed away in May 2006, Carolyn left a monetary gift to the club. At the suggestion of Marty Weisberg, the board decided to create an annual award in her honor, the Carolyn Ramsay Photographer of the Year Award.

To be considered for this award, a club member must

- Demonstrate photographic skills by scoring amongst the 3 highest point levels of the year.
- Hold at least one officer position
- Help the club with extra effort as such occasions arise.
- Be friendly and congenial.
- Work to improve the club's operation

Previous winners of this award are, Airdrie Kincaid, Don Schremp, Peggy Patterson, and myself. This year's honoree joined our club in 1987, and has held an office every year since, including Secretary, President, VP Slides, Hospitality, Membership, Programs, Treasurer and VP Field Trips.

Please join me in honoring JoAn Lambert as the recipient of the Carolyn Ramsay 2010 Photographer of the Year.

Competition Winners Tell Us How They Did It

In the old days as the winners were shown at the competitions, the makers would say a little bit about their winning image and other members could ask questions about what it was, where it was taken, how, when, or why. As the club grew and the competition nights got too long, we had to drop this valuable learning experience.

This issue of the Newsletter will include comments from both the End of Year media winners and the first place winners of the for January 2011 competition.

2010 Digital Projected Image of the Year

Tendrils
Craig Colvin

This image was created by photographing incense smoke. I had seen several similar examples on Flickr and wanted to give it a try. The smoke from incense works well for photography because it is very dense and hot. As it cools it tends to create interesting curls and loops in the smoke trail. I ended up taking 135 photos during this session and ended up with roughly 15 interesting images. I chose this one because I liked the lower loops and the kind of sea horse shape.

For the setup I placed the incense in a pie tin on a table in front of a black background. I placed the camera on a tripod and used 2 Nikon SB-24 speedlights setup behind the smoke each at a 45 degree angle so they would light the smoke from behind. I placed a red gel on the right flash and pointed it slightly down and a blue gel on the left flash and pointed it slightly up. Where they intersected creates the purple color. The speedlights were set to manual and 1/8th power.

I manually focused the camera on the smoke when it was rising vertically. Because I was shooting at f/4.0 some of the photos ended up blurry as the smoke shifted.

Technical specs: 1/250 sec at f/4.0, ISO 200 Canon 50D with a Canon EF-S 17-55mm f/2.8 IS lens at 42mm

2010 Print of the Year

Run-A-Ground at Half Moon Bay
Bob Leipsic

Walking on the beach of Half Moon Bay, I came across a boat that ran a ground in the storm a week prior and started to look for a way to get an interesting composition.

I tried several angles but kept coming back to the same place and decided this was the right spot. I liked the lighting and the warm misty feeling it had.

2010 Slide of the Year

Dynamic Butts
Sherry Grivett

I was in Jasper Nat. Park, Alberta, Canada walking along a trail near a lumber yard and saw this stack of boards laying flat with the butts colored. I was attracted by the colors of the ends of the boards. I held my 400 lens on my EOS 3 film camera and looked at the colors and wondered why each had lettering on it like a brand. So then I titled my camera to give the image some energy and liked it and took the picture. I don't know anything about why there is writing on any of the boards. Didn't talk to anyone. It was such a long time ago that it is hard to remember much about it.

I enjoy taking grab shots of color, shape, design, lines, weirdness. Once in a blue moon these images actually do well at club. I was out looking for nature shots like birds and elk and instead I shot boards. That is why it is important to always carry your camera. I have taken images of firewood stacks over the years. I am attracted to design and shapes of the logs in a stack of wood. Seeing a stack of flat boards was different because of the colors on the ends.

It is one of my favorite slides because it is different. I was shocked to no end that it won Slide of the Year.

January 2011 First Place Journalism Projected Image

For shots at Steamer Lane it works best to be at or near high tide fairly late in the afternoon with a big winter swell running. You can position yourself out on the point to the south of the lighthouse.

I generally use my 200-400 VR lens on a tripod and my 70-200 VR handheld. If all goes well you will get some surfers fairly near to the cliff and some of them will actually ride the wave in your direction.

During the winter the sun is at your back and will light up the face of the surfer. In my opinion this is what makes a good surfing shot. You need the surfer coming toward you with a lot of light on his face.

You need a fairly fast shutter speed to make sure to eliminate motion blur. If I'm shooting at 400mm I like to have a shutter speed in excess of 1/600th with the VR operating.

Without VR I would recommend a shutter speed twice the focal length or 1/800th for 400mm, etc. Also you will want to have your camera body set to "dynamic tracking" mode.

Surfing At Steamer Lane
Bernard Weinzimmer

January 2011First Place Journalism Print

A Surfer Concentrates On A Tight Turn
O'Neill Cold Water Classic,
Steamer Lane, 10/21/10
John Perry

This surfer photo was taken at the O'Neill Coldwater Classic at Steamer Lane in Santa Cruz. The tide was in but the sun was high. Oh well, you can't have everything!

This was my first attempt at photographing surfers but it was made easier because in the O'Neill competition the surfers are very good and they compete in groups of four surfers making it much easier to isolate a surfer in the viewfinder.

The panning technique and camera settings used are similar to what would be used to photograph birds in flight. A good zoom lens is a necessity. I used a Nikkor 28-300mm f/3.5-5.6 lens set at f/8. All images were hand held and taken as strips of 8 frames/sec.

People often ask how many photos do you take to get a good one? Well on this particular day I took over 750 images.

January 2011 First Place Pictorial/Color Projected Image – Advanced

I signed up for the "Photographer's Day" at Bodie State Historical Park in October of last year. We arrived 1.5 hours before sunrise and waited about a half hour before they let us in. I had done some research and studied the maps of Bodie and felt that this house with the old windows would look really nice reflecting the first rays of sunrise as it broke over the eastern hills.

As I was walking towards the spot where I wanted to set up, I noticed that the park rangers had left the lights on in the rear room of the house. I was cursing under my breath (or possibly out loud...) when I saw this, thinking about how it ruined the whole concept of an abandoned mining house.

Anyway, I got set up and started taking shots before sunrise just to check my composition and make sure everything was set for the big moment. When I saw the picture that emerged on the LCD, I knew the rangers had done me a huge favor by leaving the lights on. The yellow light spilling onto the street was a perfect contrast to the blue pre-dawn sky and gave the picture its focal point.

I stayed there and got the shot that I came for. It was entered in the November 1st competition and can be seen in the Competition Results section of the website. I think I like this pre-dawn image better, though.

Ghosts Get Up Early in Bodie
Rick Whitacre

Canon 50D, Canon 17-40mm f/4.0L, 17mm, 30 seconds @ f/8.

January 2011 First Place Pictorial/Color Projected Image – Basic

Ginkgo Leaves
Bob Downs

I took a few pictures of a ginko tree in downtown Los Gatos around Christmas time. This one was backlit. It was taken looking up through the leaves toward a bright but hazy sky. I tried to get a nice balance of bright leaves and dark branches.

In Lightroom I adjusted colors until the sky warmed up to where I liked it.

January 2011First Place Pictorial/Color Print- - Advanced

Mornings' Red Glow is a photo taken at sunrise (7:04 am) of Mesa Arch which is located in Canyonlands NP. September is a very busy time for photographers at Mesa Arch so you have to get there early in order to get good position in front of this arch.

It doesn't look it in the photo but the arch opening is only about 10 yards across and 2 yards high. So position is everything. I arrived at 5:30 am after a 40 min car ride and a 20 min hike in the dark. There was one person there when I arrived and by 6 am there we 20 people parked in front of the arch waiting for sunrise.

This photo requires a very wide angle lens and because of the tonal range a bracketed HDR is a must. I used a bracket of 7 images 1ev apart and a Nikkor 14-24mm f/2.8 lens set at f/18 and a focal length of 14mm.

Mornings' Red Glow
John Perry

January 2011 First Place Pictorial/Color Print – Basic

Stamp Mill Bodie
Sandra Leipsic

While shooting in Bodie looking for a different image, I noticed the Stamp Mill (which I had never shot before).

I wanted to shoot the Mill from below but knew I needed something in the foreground when I saw the remains of a brick fireplace and rusty barrels and decided that completed my composition.

Meet Our New President, Rick Whitacre

Rick is fairly new to photography, getting his first "real" camera before once-in-a-lifetime trip to New Zealand in February of 2009.

After growing up in Decatur Illinois, Rick came out to Santa Clara right after college in 1977 to work for National Semiconductor. He is now retired from a 31-year career in semiconductors, working at several companies including NVIDIA Corporation. He is married and has two college-age daughters.

Although Rick has had some point and shoot cameras, his wife complained that she was never in any of the vacation photos because she was taking all of the pictures.

Her passion is space, stars, aurora borealis, meteors, and other sky stuff. She always tried to drag him to see shooting stars and meteors but he never wanted to go. He just liked to sleep. She also wanted to go to Iceland and Antarctica but Rick wasn't interested because it was too cold. Now, every time he goes to a photo show and sees those images, he says "Why don't we go there"?

Before the 2009 trip, Rick asked a photographer friend of his what kind of camera to get. He was encouraged to get a Canon G10 so that it could take point-and-shoot pictures as well as go into full manual, aperture priority, or shutter priority modes. Rick got some quick pointers and started reading everything he could get his hands on. Here are some photography books he recommends.

The Photographer's Eye by Michael Freeman
Digital Landscape Photography, In the Footsteps of Ansel Adams and the Great Masters by Michael Frye
Night Photography, Finding Your Way in the Dark by Lance Keimig
Photography and the Art of Seeing by Freeman Patterson
Mastering Photographic Composition, Creativity, and Personal Style by Alain Briot
Mountain Light by Galen Rowell

By the summer of 2009, he thought he had progressed far enough to get a DSLR and bought a used Canon 50D. The camera he really wants (and WILL have some day) is the 5D Mark II for its full frame sensor and high ISO performance.

Rick has only taken one workshop from Robb Hirsch in Groveland CA which taught him "how to see a little bit better". He has also taken several photography classes at West Valley College and attended a few of their field trips. He recommends Brian Tramontana as instructor. He says "He is very good. He gets you out of your comfort zone and it is good to push yourself'.

Rick loves landscape photography. Capturing an incredible vista in just the right light is what really inspires him. Lately, he has been adding night and star photography to the mix and loves it. Yosemite is a favorite haunt, but he also took a driving trip through southern and north-eastern Utah last spring and was in heaven. Next stop is Yellowstone the first week of February 2011. The next workshop he will take will be from Michael Frye.

Rick was referred to the club by Julie Kitzenberger, became a member in November 2009, agreed to be the president a year later, and gave a program on the New Web Site and Photographing Star Trails and the Milky Way in January 2011. Now that's taking volunteering seriously!

Print Exhibit at Coffee Society

The 30 prints by 22 photographers from the club covered a variety of subjects, techniques, and presentations. One of the customers drinking coffee said I should write that the patrons really enjoyed them.

Right wall in the front room

Martin and Betty

Wall facing the entrance in the front room

Mel studying the metal prints

Left wall of the inside room

The Rossiers with Gail

Back wall of inside room

Key Contacts

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