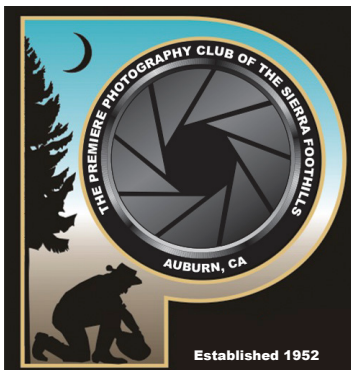




PLACER COUNTY PHOTOGRAPHY CLUB NEWSLETTER

Fall 2024, Vol. 72 No. 4

Union Pacific Big Boy

By Marion Pavan

Westward Bound Tour

Auburn, Roseville, and Yuba Gap

Sunday morning, July 14, 2024 — my alarm rings. It's 6:00 a.m. A quick shower, coffee, smear myself with SPF 100 sunscreen and I set out at 7:00 a.m. to capture Union Pacific's 4014 "Big Boy" locomotive on its return trip to Cheyenne, Wyoming, via Donner Pass.

When the Union Pacific Railroad announced its plans to restore 4014 to operational status, I thought how great it'd be to watch and photograph this locomotive climbing the 2.0% grade over Donner Summit during winter. And today I would be doing just that. Ok, it's summer, not winter - winter will have to wait another day, maybe after I buy that mirrorless camera... or two.

Union Pacific's 4014, a 4-8-8-4 "Big Boy" class freight steam locomotive, began operating in excursion service in 2019 after six years of a complete tear-down and frame-off restoration. The locomotive was taken down to parts with each part repaired/rebuilt or replaced. Ten people in Union Pacific's Heritage Steam Fleet, led by Senior Manager Ed Dickens, did the work.

The "Big Boy" is the largest operational steam locomotive in the world. Delivered to the Union Pacific in 1941, the locomotive operated in revenue service until its last run on July 21, 1959, and was placed in storage

until officially retired in 1961. Following retirement, it was donated in late 1961 to the RailGiants Museum in Pomona, California, where it became one of eight "Big Boys" preserved around the United States. On July 23, 2013, the Union Pacific announced it was acquiring the 4014 from The Southern California Chapter of The Railway and Locomotive Historical Society in Pomona, with the goal of restoring it to service. Restoration to full operating condition and conversion from coal to oil fuel was completed in May 2019 at the Union Pacific Steam Shop in Cheyenne, Wyoming.

Why the name Big Boy? Originally, this locomotive class - 25 locomotives built by the American Locomotive Company (Alco), Schenectady, New York - was to have been called Wasatch after the Wyoming mountain range it was designed to conquer with its 1.2% ruling grade. However, an unnamed worker at Alco scrawled "Big Boy" on the locomotive's smokebox door and the name stayed. (When steam locomotives prevailed on the nation's railroads, it was the custom to give a specific name to a given steam locomotive wheel arrangement. For



Engine #4014 crossing the Auburn Ravine Bridge

Union Pacific Big Boy (continued 2)

example, the 4-8-4 wheel arrangement was called Northern after the Northern Pacific Railroad where it first appeared.)

I loaded the Subaru the night before with everything I'd need for the day's trip - food, beverage, extra this and that - except for the photo equipment which would not do well in an over-heated garage. After two days visiting this locomotive in Roseville I was ready. Of the dozens of potential stops along the mainline, my plan would include Auburn, Applegate, Dutch Flat, Yuba Pass, and Soda Springs bypassing Colfax and Truckee given the expected crowds.

But first, the obligatory stop at Peet's Coffee for a dozen shots of high-strength espresso.

At Auburn, I chose the Auburn Ravine bridge over I-80 set up my tripod and captured the 4014 with its train approaching and on the bridge. The 4014 burns oil fuel - reclaimed engine crankcase oil with metals



Ed Dickens, Union Pacific's Heritage Steam Fleet Senior Manager who led the team that restored Big Boy, tips his hat to the engine's admirers along the route.



Keeping that engine shiny in Roseville

filtered out - creating a dark smoke cloud marking the locomotive's passing - this would come in handy later.

Best laid plans of mice and men often go awry: east of Auburn, in a deep cut, 4014 struck a tree trunk on the roadbed delaying it for several hours as the railroad and the engine crew assessed damage and decided what to do. One discussed option was to back the train to Roseville for inspection and repair. I found this out at Applegate. Spent time after that trying to figure the locomotive's specific location to capture photos. There are two separated tracks between Roseville and Colfax going back to the 1920's when the Southern Pacific

Railroad double-tracked the line over "The Hill" as Southern Pacific called its line to Donner Summit. Track #2, the one used by 4014 has the easier grade thereby saving the locomotive's oil fuel and water. So, to the Dutch Flat grade crossing, waited again - no update. Then to Colfax, waited again, no update, got caught in traffic leaving the city. Colfax was to have been a half-hour "whistle stop" for public view and photos. Kept checking Union Pacific's locomotive tracking app but no updates. Rumors and counter rumors "flying" everywhere.

Best plan I could think of was on to Yuba Pass, one of my favorite places to capture train photos. There, I would plant myself and wait. When I arrived, people were yelling 4014 was on the move; had run-through Colfax without stopping to make up time; that it was stopping all traffic on I-80 in both directions; people everywhere; and was moving at the maximum permitted speed. At Yuba Pass, people staked their locations. I stood in front of the signal bridge with two camera/lens combinations: first, my D500 with the 24-70/2.8 medium zoom and, second, my D3X with the 14-24/2.8 wide-angle zoom. My plan was to aim the D500 at the apex of a curve going to my left that would show-off the principle behind an articulated steam locomotive, then swing around with the D3X as the locomotive passed under the signal bridge for a "dramatic" distorted wide-angle shot of the locomotive's front with its smoke covering the signal bridge. Both

Union Pacific Big Boy (continued 3)

cameras were set for continuous focus, continuous low thereby setting up both cameras' predictive focus, and manual exposure at 1/1000s., f8.0, and auto ISO.

Oil smoke in the distance behind trees and topography heralded 4014's appearance with the engineer laying on the steam whistle to warn everybody.



Chugging through Yuba gap

As the 4014 rounded the curve, I aimed the first camera, pressed back button focus, then pressed the shutter release as the locomotive came into view.

This is one beautiful locomotive, I thought, as the camera clicked-off rapid-fire captures.

Watched 4014's smokebox front grow ever larger in the viewfinder. Still pressing the shutter release. As 4014 passed to my left, I felt the heat given off by the boiler and the incredible heat of the oil fire in the boiler's firebox. A 600-ton steam locomotive at speed is as much felt as it is heard and watched: heat, vibration, hiss of escaping steam, staccato bark of the steam/smoke exhaust through the smokestack, the lingering smell of heated metal, heated lubricating oil, and oil smoke in the air. Swung around with the first camera to capture 4014 passing underneath the signal bridge but missed. Still, I captured photos of the passenger train beneath 4014's smoke cloud ending with the observation car disappearing into a tunnel. After that, I headed to Soda Springs, the sun already setting behind the mountains. At Soda Springs I decided to relax and simply enjoy the 4014 as it and its train passed by. After that, I called it a day.

Over three days, I captured 850 photos including those of the crowd, crew (some of the nicest, most gracious people I've ever met), crew working on the

locomotive, crew interacting with the crowd, people interacting with the locomotive, plenty of close-up detail captures of the 4014, and of the 4014 heading up "The Hill." They're on my computer now.

I had thought given my past experience capturing photos of trains on "The Hill" that I would do better on the action shots. That was hubris on my part. When it comes to photographs, steam locomotives and diesel locomotives are different "animals" and for that reason must be treated differently. With a diesel locomotive, the exhaust and sound of the diesel prime mover are the only external effects, everything else is internal. With a steam locomotive, however, every aspect of the locomotive's operation and movement is external. For an event as important as this, I should have practiced more beforehand: using two camera/lens combinations, perfecting the "decisive moment," researched locations better, pre-visualized the locomotive on the rail. When the 4014 came into view at speed there isn't time to think only to act.

When it's all said and done, these were a fantastic three days!



*Above: Heading into the tunnel at Yuba Gap
Below: Driver detail*



Announcing the first annual *PCPC Members Showcase* 2024

It's time to get ready to show off! The first annual PCPC Members Showcase will be the featured presentation of the last PCPC meeting of the year on December 17, 2024! Our end of year program will celebrate all of our members!

The Members Showcase is a place for you to shine! Everyone who wants to participate will be featured in the showcase. It replaces the end of year competition. The Showcase is a place for you to show off your best work. What images have you taken that represent you as a photographer? Please share those with the rest of the club. It's going to be exciting to see what you come up with.

The showcase will be a video consisting of all of the images submitted. They will be compiled and set to music into one grand presentation. There will certainly be oohs and aahs from the audience as each image gets its moment in the spotlight.

Now is the time to start thinking about the photographs you will want to include in YOUR showcase. Please don't leave it to the last minute. We want you to shine so start now identifying the photographs you think best represent you as a photographer.

Every member will be allowed to submit up to 12 (yes 12!) images that they want to share with the rest of the club. There are no limits on what types of images you submit. They can be from any of our existing categories like Landscape, Wild Nature, Domestic Nature, Travel, People, Photojournalism, Altered Reality, or Open. But, they don't have to fit a category. They can be images you have submitted to the PCPC in the past or new images you've never shown before. They can be photographs of anything. Maybe you want to share images from a fabulous vacation spot, or photos of your pet dog or cat or kid, or a type of photography you're experimenting

with, like macro photography. There are no limits.

A connecting theme makes a group of images more cohesive like a dozen sunrises or sunsets, or beach shots from a trip to Bali, or flowers from your garden, or waterfalls you've given a silky look to, but it's not necessary. Afterall, they do have at least one connection and that's that YOU took the images.

There are no restrictions on what you can do to an image. While our traditional categories have different restrictions, you can consider everything you submit, regardless of subject, as being in the Open category where there are no restrictions.

The deadline for entering images in the PCPC Members Showcase is November 25, 2024. Images submitted after that date cannot and will not be included in the Showcase. Please don't submit anything yet. More details will be available soon that will provide specific information about image size, image resolution, naming, etc. and how and where to submit images for the showcase.

Have fun! Start reviewing those images now. We can't wait to see what you're going to share with us.



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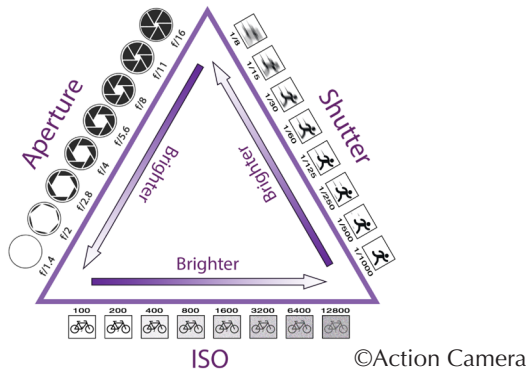
Auntie's Tips Back to Basics

Have questions about photography?
Auntie will answer them here. Send
your questions to:

pcphotoclubnewsletter@gmail.com



Let's get back to basics. There are three essential elements of photography. And they are NOT the camera, the lens, and the tripod. They are all about light. The word photograph means writing or drawing with light. In 1839, in the early days of using a camera to create an image, British scientist Sir John Herschel coined the word "photograph" from Greek words, phos meaning "light", and graphê meaning "drawing or writing." So, what are those three essential elements? They are Aperture, Shutter Speed, and ISO.



The above illustration, courtesy of **Action Camera**, of what is known as the Exposure Triangle shows how much light each of the elements contributes to the image.

Aperture also called **f-stop**, tells the camera how much light will come in to expose the image. The lens opens and closes to modify the amount of light entering the camera, similar to how the iris of your eye adjusts the size of the pupil to change how much light enters the eye based on the ambient light. A larger f-stop is indicated by a smaller number, e.g. f/1.4 or f/2.8 or f/4 and lets in more light. A smaller f-stop lets in less light and is identified by a larger number, e.g., f/11 or f/16

Shutter speed tells the camera how long to leave the shutter open to record the image. The longer the shutter is open, the more light will come in. The lens stays open for the duration of the designated shutter speed. A fast shutter speed freezes motion. A slow shutter speed blurs motion.

The **ISO** affects the camera's sensitivity to light. When there is less light available, a higher **ISO** boosts the camera's sensitivity so that it can more effectively read what light is let into the camera. The higher the **ISO** the more noise can be introduced

The three essential elements work together to create the photograph and the story you want to tell with your photograph. The f-stop you choose can change the depth of field also known as the depth of focus. Choosing a wide aperture narrows the depth of focus so that a smaller area in front of and behind the subject you focus on, is in focus. The smaller the f-stop, the greater the depth of focus and more of the image will be in focus.

Determining whether you need a fast or slow shutter speed, depends on whether you want to freeze or blur the image. The longer the shutter speed, the less likely you'll be able to hand hold the camera and keep the image sharp so you might need a tripod or another means to keep the camera still.

Increasing the ISO will make your camera more sensitive to light and that is useful in low light conditions although higher ISOs tend to introduce noise into the image.

Today's cameras are sophisticated computers and they eliminate lots of guess work and the need for external meters. You can take advantage of your camera's powerful processor and choose whether aperture or shutter speed should dictate the other settings. If you choose an aperture priority setting because you want to control the depth of focus for example, the camera sets the shutter speed based on given light conditions. If you want a faster shutter speed, you can adjust the ISO until you get a shutter speed that works for you. The aperture stays the same regardless of the shutter speed or ISO. Likewise, with Shutter Priority, you choose how long you want the shutter to stay open and the camera sets the aperture. In this mode, changing the ISO will affect the aperture but the shutter speed will stay the same.

Get to know the Exposure Triangle and how the three elements affect your photographs. That will help you become a better photographer.



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An Appreciation

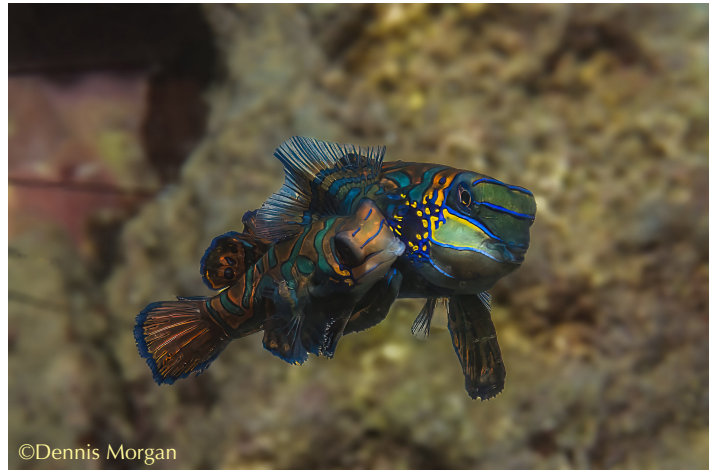
By Carol Smith

I have known Dennis Morgan, the PCPC Vice President and Web Master, for many years and I have always admired his work. Dennis is our very own Jacques Cousteau — an adventurous Scuba-diving underwater photographer. I am in awe of his photography. He does what most of us have never done or will ever do—descending into the depths of the sea to photograph its wonders. He consistently offers us a view of the world most members will never see and shares with us the daily lives of colorful deep sea creatures through his remarkable images.

Members new to the PCPC have mistakenly assumed he took these incredible images at an aquarium, not deep in oceans around the world. He does this while wearing an oxygen tank, a wetsuit, mask, and flippers. He carries with him special strobes and flash as well as a camera and lens all encased in sealed underwater housings as he descends into the dark depths. While under water, he has to keep an eye not only on his subject while juggling camera gear and adjusting camera settings, but he must also watch the clock to make sure he doesn't stay under too long at certain depths.

Dennis' skill as an underwater photographer is admirable. We are privileged that he shares his images with us. Dennis' most recent adventure was just a couple of weeks ago in Indonesia where he photographed the tiny, at slightly more than 2 inches, colorful Mandarinfish in its mating ritual. Looking at these images is like looking at real-life Dr. Seuss characters. What wonders he captures! Who wouldn't admire the beauty of the subject and the skill it took to create the images?

Thank you Dennis, for introducing us to the oceans of the world and the creatures within them. We are exploring their depths vicariously through you.



The Importance of Backgrounds

At our July meeting, Carol Smith, gave a presentation about the importance of backgrounds in photographs and the impact a background can have on how a photograph is perceived.

Basically, the background supports the subject. Carol pointed out that while the subject is the star of the photograph, the background is the stage. You want your stage to show off your star to its best advantage. The background supports the subject, defines the subject, doesn't compete with the subject, and helps to tell the story.

She pointed out that the background can make or break a photograph. She provided lots of examples of photographs with good backgrounds and bad backgrounds and why certain backgrounds were good and why certain backgrounds had a negative effect on a photograph.

She talked about how to find a good background and made suggestions that provided simple solutions for finding better backgrounds. Three main things come into play when considering your background: the lens; the distance from the subject to the background and the camera to the subject; and the need to pay attention to the background when you're looking through the viewfinder.

Paying attention to what you see in the viewfinder before you press the shutter release can make a huge difference. You can often eliminate distracting backgrounds by moving a few inches or feet one way or the other. You can move up or down. Depending on your subject, you can walk around your subject to find a less distracting, more complementary background. She pointed out that

focal length and aperture also have an impact on backgrounds, by blurring them to eliminate many distractions or filling the frame with the subject. Sometimes you just have to wait until the subject moves. Patience is your friend.

From the examples she provided, the images



with good backgrounds had one thing in common. The backgrounds were simple.

Getting it right in camera is always the goal but that isn't always possible. There are ways you can improve the background in post processing. Easy fixes include cropping to eliminate distractions or darkening the background to make the subject stand out. And, in this day of AI, it's easy to use that to correct errors.

The entire recorded presentation and a PDF of it are available at our website. To view the video, recorded via Zoom, log into the club's website at <https://placerphotoclub.org> then, go to Galleries, select Slideshows, and scroll to the presentation.



Monochrome—July 2024

These are just a few of the images presented by our members at the July meeting. The assigned subject was monochrome and that was the only category presented. Monochrome can be very dramatic as these images show.



What's in a Name?

If you missed our September meeting on the 17th, then you didn't get a chance to enjoy Pam Kappelhof's entry in the People category which offered the best laugh of the evening. Pam's image is striking in its balanced composition. The lighting is perfect. All the elements in the image contribute to the story which smacks you between the eyes.

"Beauty and the Clueless" is a perfect title for this image. Sadly, the scene depicted is very commonplace these days. The image started a lively conversation at the meeting and Pam mentioned that she took the photograph after observing the couple in this situation for over half an hour. The beautiful woman's efforts to distract her clueless boyfriend went unnoticed by him



Beauty and the Clueless

but not by Pam. Pam thought that it might be fun to have a caption contest for the image but I don't think you can beat "Beauty and the Clueless." This image tells a complex story that could be open to all kinds of interpretation but the title says it all.

Have Camera Gear to Sell?

Swap Meet

ACTION CAMERA

October 6th
8am-12pm
4415 Granite Dr. Rocklin

Whether you have some camera gear to sell or are looking for something to fill out your kit, **Action Camera** is once again hosting its annual Swap Meet on Sunday, October 6, 2024, at its new location in Rocklin, at 4415 Granite Drive.

And, **Cash4Cameras** will be on site on October 5, 6, and 7 to buy your unneeded camera gear. It's a win-win event. It's time to turn your unused camera gear into cash so you can buy the latest.

USED PHOTO

SAVE THE DATE

CASH4CAMERAS

WILL BE ON-SITE TO TURN YOUR USED CAMERA GEAR INTO CASH!

Saturday | October 5th | 10am-5pm
Sunday | October 6th | 8am-12pm
Monday | October 7th | 10am-4pm

ACTION CAMERA

4415 Granite Dr.
Rocklin, CA 95677

Where Can I Learn More About Photography?

There are lots of ways to learn more about photography. Here are a few options, both on-line and in person, that can help you.

- **KelbyOne** was reviewed in the Fall 2023 newsletter. Their free version can help you get started. <https://kelbyone.com/free/>
You will have access to 20+ of their favorite full-length courses, access to the current Issue of Photoshop User Magazine; access to their live weekly webcast—The Grid and their blog, the Insider. No credit card required to sign up.
- **Julianne Kost's Blog** Julianne Kost is a Digital Imaging Evangelist, Director at Adobe. She offers insights and training through her blog on Photoshop and Lightroom. As an Adobe insider, she offers comprehensive, easy to understand instruction on both programs. Here are direct links to Photoshop how-tos: <https://jkost.com/blog/photoshop-training-videos> and Lightroom how-tos: <https://jkost.com/blog/page/>
- **Sierra College Community Education** Sierra College offers both on-line and in person instruction in photography and Photoshop and Lightroom. <https://www.sierracollege.edu/>

[academics/community-learning/](#) Jeff Burkholder, a local photographer who has judged at the PCPC in the past, is the instructor in the fall photography and Photoshop and Lightroom classes held in downtown Roseville.

- **Action Camera** 4415 Granite Dr. Rocklin. <https://www.actioncamera.com/classes> Action Camera offers in person and on-line classes, including personalized one-on-one instruction.

Click on the links and check these options out for yourself. Photography is a life-long learning experience. The more you expose yourself to new ideas, the better photographer you'll become.



©Carol Smith

PCPC Picnic Is Coming Up in October

Mark your calendars!
PCPC Annual Picnic

Wednesday
October 23, 2024
11:00 AM to 2:00 PM

Auburn Recreation Park
123 Recreation Dr
Auburn, CA 95603
Covered Picnic Area



©Truman Holtzclaw

The PCPC will provide Hot Dogs and Buns, Condiments, Paper Plates, Paper Cups, Utensils, and Water.

Please bring a salad or other side dish to share, and your own beverage to consume (adult or otherwise).

Please note, the park does not allow glass containers in the park. Alcohol is allowed but it must be in or transferred to a metal or plastic container.

Our grill master Dennis Morgan is anxious to get cooking again!
More details coming soon.

Club Details

How to Contact Us:

Upcomings meetings: **October 15, 2024**
November 19, 2024
December 17, 2024

Website:

<https://placerphotoclub.org>

Email:

placercameraclub@gmail.com

Newsletter:

PCPhotoClubNewsletter@gmail.com

Meetings:

Date: 3rd Tuesday of Month

Time: 6:30 PM

Place: Beecher Room,
Placer County Library
350 Nevada St, Auburn

Zoom: Details in meeting reminder email

PCPC Board Members (2024 through 2025):

President ----- Dick Bosworth
Veep & WebMaster----Dennis Morgan
Secretary-----Liz Staats
Treasurer-----Mary Nunes
Member at Large-----Mike Schumacher

Non-voting Board Members:

Activities Coordinator--Pam Kappelhof
Newsletter Editor-----Carol Smith

Dues

Single: \$24/year

Couple: \$36/year

Dues are payable in January and are delinquent as of March 1. Delinquent members cannot participate in club activities or image reviews and your images will disappear from the website. Pay at meeting or mail a check payable to Placer County Photography Club. See Membership Application and Renewal form below.

Placer County Photography Club Membership Application & Renewal

☐ Single membership (\$24/year)

Please make checks payable to "Placer County Photography Club."
Present in person at a meeting (see above) or by mail to:

☐ Couple membership (\$36/year)

Placer County Photography Club
c/o Mary Nunes
13040 Windsong Ct.
Auburn, Ca 95602

Name or names: _____

Street address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Mailing address: _____
(if different from above)

City, State, Zip: _____

Email address: _____

Telephone: _____