Placer Color

Volume 46 Number 2 **Newsletter of the Placer Camera Club** Feb 2008 **est. 1952**

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Placer Camera Club meets the third Tuesday of each month, except July and August, at 7:00PM in the Beecher Room of the Auburn Placer County Library, 350 Nevada Street, Auburn, Ca. **Visitors Welcome!**

This months meeting will be Tuesday **Feb 19, 2008**. Informal gathering at **6:30** with the meeting starting **promptly** at **7 PM.**

This month This month Sue Barthelow will show us a photoshop technique, Barry Walton will tell us about Adobe Lightroom and Pekka Liemola tell us about proper printing.

Camera club member **Jerry Berry** will start a show at Sutter Auburn Faith Hospital on January 11th. He will have about 20 images hanging in the main hall at the hospital. Several will be of Mono Lake sunrises and sunsets.
The **reception** for his show is at the hospital on Feb 21 from 4:30-6:30 PM.

A mural in San Francisco -->

New Camera Shopping Web Site

Club member Sue Barthelow has recently developed a web site to make on-line shopping for photography-related items a little easier. You can find camera equipment, books, photo shoot gear, art supplies, travel reservations, book reviews, articles and more.

Her site lets you check out what's being offered on eBay and gives you links to other sites like Adorama, Ritz Camera, HP, Adobe, Office Depot, Shutterfly, Amazon, Powell's Books, REI, Expedia, Travelocity, Priceline, and more. Sue earns a small commission when someone buys something after surfing to a store from her web site. It doesn't add to your cost when you to use her links, so why not try it out next time you buy on the Internet. Check it out at www.morethancameras.com.

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WHAT DO YOU WANT TO LEARN?

The Education Committee is developing a list of topics to be presented at future meetings. So that we may address needs, we are requesting your input on topics and potential presenters. Here's some ideas currently under discussion and implementation:

Topics aligned with the upcoming season - snow scenes, spring and summer flowers, migrating birds, your suggestions?

Software techniques of PhotoShop (what aspect would you like?), LightRoom, ?

How to get your best prints.

Photo Journalism - what do newspapers look for?

City-scape shooting.

Landscape shooting.

Sharing experiences with printers - what printer to buy?

Panoramic pics.

Place-based presentations: The where, how and when of shooting in special places.

Shooting with 4x5 film cameras.

Offerings and experiences with learning centers.

Please be prepared to give your input at our February meeting.

“Through the Viewfinder”

By Tony Middleton

This month I want to talk a little about spontaneous photography.

During a recent outing to San Francisco with fellow club members Mike S. and my wife Kristi, we decided to take a stroll through China Town. As we walked from the parking area up into a local park a switch between cultures I had not expected struck me. The first thing I noticed was the friendliness and genuine smiles I saw on the faces around me. Now remember, here are 3 camera toting tourists walking through the Sunday gatherings of friends and family of another culture. Even so, everyone we came across welcomed us.

For me it was difficult to get my creative flow moving in the beginning. Being focused on nature and landscapes it took a while to adjust my ‘eye’ to my surroundings. Before long I just started shooting at things that to me were unique or out of the ordinary. These images were not in short supply once I started burning pixels.

This photograph turned out to be one of my favorites:

Taken through the steel security bars and a window, these various toys and figurines are a great representation of the color and happiness that I experienced **during this excursion.** The photo itself could have been better if I had used a polarizing filter to reduce the glare

(back in the parking area in my big bag) or had searched for a different angle and focal length to capture more of the characters in the frame.

I think the most important thing I took away from this time in what to me was like another world, is that sometimes it is good to get out of your comfort zone. This was way out of mine in the beginning, now I can't wait to go again.

Things I learned on this trip:

1 - When in a new situation it may be better to carry more gear than less. I sure could have used my polarizing filter that was left in the car.

2 - Be patient and open to new visual surroundings, soon enough something will catch your eye.

3 - Like the 'China Dolls' in my photo, there are secrets that can make you smile long after you have captured them "through the viewfinder".

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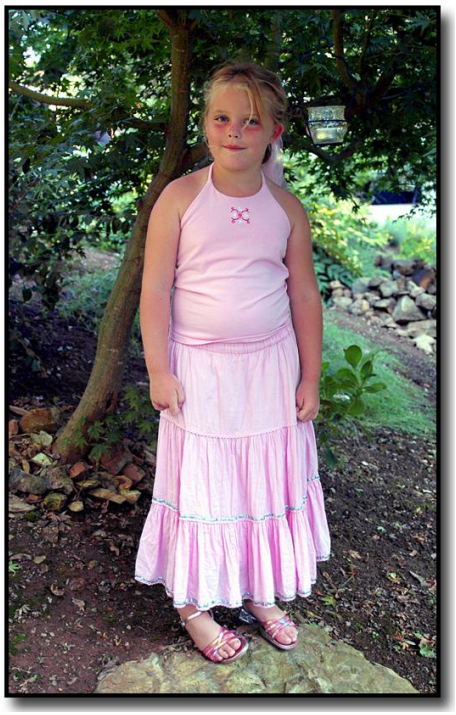
My favorite subjects to shoot are children, because they're so pure and unaffected even when posed. "Pretty In Pink" was shot in my neighbor's back garden as part of a photo shoot I did of their son's wedding reception.

Ardath Winterowd



Landscapes - Managing Depth of Focus

Text by Sue Barthelow

Have you been unsuccessful when you included a foreground object in a landscape photo? You expected everything from your close object to the background to be in focus? You discovered that either your object or your background didn't come out as you wanted. Then this article is for you.

This article won't help you understand everything about landscapes. However, it will help you to be more successful with those landscape images that need a deep focus region.

F-Stop Setting

You probably already know that your f-stop setting relates to the depth of focus you get in your image. Set the f-stop to a small value (wide lens diameter) and you get a shallow depth of focus. The spot you focus on is sharp while objects in front of and behind that spot are out of focus. Set the f-stop to a large value (small lens diameter) and most if not everything in your image is in focus.

In other words, when you focus on a point, your image has sharp regions both in front of and behind your focus point. The depth of your sharp focus region depends on your lens' aperture and thus on your f-stop.

How It Works

Depth of focus, f-stop and your lens' focal length are all mathematically related. If you know your lens' focal length and the f-stop you want to use, you can calculate a value called *hyperfocal distance*. Something located at the hyperfocal distance is sitting at your *hyperfocal point*. That something is between your foreground (a nearby object you want to be sharp) and your background (the distant scene). The hyperfocal distance is the distance to something you need to focus on in order to end up with both a nearby object and a distant scene in focus.

An important thing to pay attention to concerning the hyperfocal distance is that the nearby object you want to be in focus needs to be within ½ the hyperfocal distance from the hyperfocal point. If your object is closer to you than it is from the point you focus on, it will not be sharp.

Another thing you need to know is that there's actually more than depth of focus, f-stop and lens focal length involved in the mathematical equation used to calculate hyperfocal distances. The equation includes a constant referred to as the circle of confusion. Now

that's an appropriate name isn't it. Anyway, the constant is based on how your camera is made. So, your camera make and model go into the equation too.

What It All Means

Here's an example that works for many Nikon cameras. Let's imagine that you're using a Nikon camera to take a landscape photo and are using a 24mm focal length lens (either a fixed lens or set to 24mm on a zoom lens). The table shown below has been specially prepared for the example. This table is specific to many Nikon cameras and to a 24mm focal length lens. It doesn't work for all cameras and it only works for the 24mm lens.

F-stop	f/8	f/9	f/10	f/11	f/13	f/14	f/16	f/18	f/20	f/22
Focus at (ft.)	11.9	10.6	9.53	8.67	7.35	6.83	5.98	5.33	4.8	4.37
Sharp at (ft.)	5.94	5.29	4.76	4.33	3.67	3.41	2.99	2.66	2.4	2.19

In this example, if you want your image to include a sharply focused object that is located about 3 feet in front of the camera along with the background landscape, you can set your f-stop to f/16 and then focus on something about 6 feet away.

Anything lower than f/16 (f/8 to f/14) won't work for you unless you can move farther away from the nearby object. Want to use f/11? That works as long as you move back so your object is 4 ⅓ feet away and then focus on something about 8 ⅔ feet away. If you want to use f/22, you can get almost as close as about 2 feet away from your object and focus on something about 4 ⅓ feet away.

How do you know? The chart tells you. You can do one of two things. You can look at your desired f-stop and then look down the column at the distances. Or, you can look at the row labeled "Sharp at" and find the closest fit to the object's distance and then read up the column for the focus distance and f-stop.

Take some landscape pictures using your camera and lens along with a set of tables that are made for your camera. Find a nearby object that sits in front of a long distance scene. Use your camera's tables to set your shots up. After a while, you'll get the hang of it and start remembering how to set the shot up without referring to the tables.

Want to get a copy of a set of hyperfocal distance tables that work with your camera? I calculated several using available web tools and put them on our web site. Check the article out by surfing to http://www.placercamerclub.org/tutorials/landscapes-managing-depth-of-focus. You'll find the links you need to get the set of tables that fits your camera.

Camera Metering

By Mike Schumacher

Previously we've discussed exposure compensation and stops of light. Your cameras metering mode will also affect how the camera interprets the light levels in a scene. There are 4 basic types of metering.

Multi zone metering- takes in the whole scene. Depending on the camera it might be called matrix, evaluative or multi zone, but it basically involves sampling multiple areas in a scene and using that to determine an f-stop and shutter speed.

Center Weighted- averages the whole scene with emphasis on the center of the scene.

Partial- meters only the center of a scene, usually about 9% of center.

Spot- meters only the center usually about 1 -> 3%.

Which of these metering systems you have will depend on the camera. Most will have multi zone, center weighted and partial or spot.

When your camera meters a scene it is calibrated to expose for middle gray or about 18% gray. The problem with this can be over or under exposure at extreme light levels. A dark scene will be brightened to 18% or over exposed and likewise a bright scene will be darkened to 18% or underexposed.

Modern cameras do a fairly good job on most scenes in the multi zone mode. It's extremes of light where we have problems. If you have a scene where a certain portion is brighter of darker than the rest and that's what you want to expose for you can use center weighted, take a reading and re-compose. If you are shooting flowers you might want to use partial or spot.

Bracketing exposures comes in handy for tricky lighting. The camera will automatically bracket + 1/3 or ½ and – 1/3 or ½ depending on your settings. A bracketed set is usually 3 exposures. One at the recommended setting and one above and one below.

You can also use exposure compensation and do it manually. If you have a very bright scene with some deep shadows you will have to decide what you are exposing for. Take a spot or partial reading on the bright or dark areas and use exposure compensation accordingly.

For a dark area you would use minus exposure compensation and for bright areas you would use plus exposure compensation. Start with 1/3 or ½ stop and expose multiple frames. This sounds backwards but remember that 18% middle gray?

The whole point of this is your cameras meter can be fooled. It can and will expose a scene with difficult lighting wrong. This is why a scene with a lot of white like a snow scene with very little else will turn gray unless you use plus exposure compensation.

8 Tips for Indoor Still Life Photography

by Sue Barthelow

Here's some tips for setting up and shooting still life subjects indoors.

1. Use Indirect Natural Light

Position your subject so it's lit using the natural light from a nearby window. Indirect and soft light is best. If there's too much direct sunlight coming through the window, cover the window with a white sheet to diffuse the light.

2. Illuminate from the Side

Give your subject extra dimension by using side lighting.

3. Brighten Your Subject

Use a reflector or white paper to lighten your subject's shadowy back or side.

4. Create a Backdrop

Use a backdrop to remove the clutter from your image and to let your subject stand out. Choose black, white or a color that complements your subject. A swath of velvet or velour creates a nice soft background. You can use mounting or mat board, un-creased butcher paper, a table cloth and even a shower curtain as your backdrop. If you're shooting something small, a jacket or shirt may be large enough to do the trick.

5. Position Your Backdrop

Keep the backdrop two to three feet away from your subject. This minimizes shadows your subject casts onto a light colored backdrop and keeps a dark backdrop dark. It also lets you set your depth of field so the backdrop's texture doesn't show on the image unless you want it to. If your backdrop is white, you can use a reflector or white paper to reflect light onto your backdrop to keep it nicely lit. Beware of light reflections from your backdrop since they'll compete with your subject.

6. Dull Your Table Surface

Make sure the surface your subject sits on does not reflect light at the camera when the surface will be included in the image. You may want to cover the surface with something that is non-reflective.

7. Use a Tripod

Use a tripod to record a sharper image. If you don't have a tripod, see if you can create a substitute by setting the camera on something. Use a bag of dry beans or rice from your pantry to support the camera at an angle of your choice.

8. Use Your Camera's Self-Timer or Remote Control

Reduce camera shake by using the self-timer or a remote control to trigger the shutter. Every little thing helps when you're trying to capture a sharp image. The simple action of pressing the shutter button can make your camera move as you take the shot.

Swap Shop

FOR SALE

Nikon Nikkor 200mm f/4 Micro IF AIS lens. This is the manual focus model which focuses down to a reproduction ratio of 1:2 (half life size) without any attachments. Even at 1:2 magnification, the free-working distance is approximately 19.5 inches between the front of the lens and the subject. This is one of the big advantages of a long focal length macro lens over shorter ones. This lens is among the few top rated close-up/macro lenses in the world. It is tack sharp and easy to use. It will work on both manual and auto focus Nikon camera bodies, (in manual focus mode of course which is likely all you'd use in macro photography), both film and digital. Many people forget that it is also an excellent telephoto lens.

The glass is flawless. The diaphragm is crisp and smooth with the blades being perfectly dry. It has both the built-in tripod collar and sliding hood shade, each of which operates as new. Both original front & rear caps are included. I'm also providing a 52mm UV-Haze filter if you want to be extra careful with that front element.

As a bonus, also included is the **Nikon 4T Close-up Attachment Lens**. This is a high quality, multi-element diopter which increases the magnification ratio of the base lens without losing any light. It simply screws onto the front of the lens just like a filter. It is a great accessory for this lens. It is in mint condition and comes with its original box and paperwork.

For those that were subjected to my club presentation on Close-up/Macro Photography a few months ago, the majority of the images I shared during that time were captured using this very lens.

I'm looking to get $310, (which incidentally is less than what comparable lenses are selling for on eBay, *without* the 4T, which is $30-50 itself). I'd love to see someone in the club continue to enjoy this lens as much as I have.

I'll be bringing the lens to the next few club meetings if you want to attach it to your Nikon (or Fuji) 35mm or digital camera body and see what it can do. I can also be reached at 530-268-3475 or 530-320-8961 or rgjk@suddenlink.net.
Thanks, Richard Myren.

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If you want to sell or are looking for photography related items members can list them in the newsletter or on the club website. Email or call me. Listings are free for members. Mike 530-367-4505 radioman@ftcnet.net

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Huey Monitor Calibration

The club has a Huey monitor calibration system for use by club members. Contact Judy Hooper to 'check out' Huey. 530-888-8308.

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Calendar of Events

February

19th – Camera Club Meeting –

Placer Camera Club Webpage

Check out the Placer Camera Club webpage. Webmaster Sue barthelow has been doing a fantastic job! Thanks Sue!

http://www.placercameraclub.org

→ ***Please feel free to contact me with items for the newsletter!***

Mike Schumacher (Newsletter) 530-367-4505 radioman@ftcnet.net

See you at the meeting Feb 19th at 7 PM!!