

Focal Plane

A Publication of the Ridgewood Camera Club

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HAVE A NICE SUMMER



President's Farewell Message

Well it certainly has been another busy year for RCC members. We celebrated our 70th year and RCC continues to maintain its high membership of 100 plus members and a very strong and enthusiastic membership at that. And, our photography is still "glowing" at its best. This year we continue to hold the Tri-Club trophy since 2005 after winning this year's competition.

We have many things to be grateful for and that is our Executive Committee who upholds the club with dedication to maintaining a strong club. We also have other members who have come forward and added their support and help during events, such as the International Competition in January. Many thanks to all those who have given us their support. You remember last year, we didn't have many field trips, well this year we had one every month plus impromptu trips. We started with Bun Chan taking us on a great field trip to Coney Island to set the pace. Then on to Harriman. George Garbeck stepped in and took us everywhere from, Dumbo to the Bronx Zoo, to Fort Lee Revolutionary War Enactment, NYC at Christmas, and on to a 3 day trip to Washington, D.C., where he ordered the weather perfect! Thank you George and Bun!

This season's accomplishments have also included a wonderful redesigned website with the talents of George Garbeck and Vinnie Kempf. Our members are exhibiting everywhere; we have had an RCC exhibit at the Ridgewood Library in December; a wonderful Christmas party hosted by Bun Chan and his wife; we have been featured in the February and March issues of PSA Magazine and have had a successful International with the direction of Chick Chakarian and Marie Kane. We have had new members step up to the plate and hit home runs, like Bob Kane, who has introduced "Peer Review." And, he has recently added a "Before and After" image manipulation that many have participated in. Thank you Bob. We have had members helping chairpersons with their jobs making responsibilities run smoother. Thank you Gisela Schroeder and George Campbell. And Vinnie Kempf has updated the website at least 400 times, followed by Dieter's wonderful talent of putting together our Focal Plane each month. Thank you Vinnie and Dieter. We need to continue this spirit, which is what makes RCC stand above the rest.

With all this, who can stop us now? It has been my pleasure being your President for the 2007-2008 season and it has been an honor representing a club that gives so much to its members. I welcome Connie Fox as our next President.

Camille LaPlaca-Post

Focal Plane

Dieter Steinmeyer

Editor

201-652-3031

dsteinmeyer@verizon.net

Website - <http://www.ridgewoodcameraclub.org>

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Member PSA & NJFCC

Copy Editor

Vinnie Kempf

Techno Editor

MR. LENS FLARE

2007-2008

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Ridgewood Camera Club

The Camera Club and the Executive Committee

I know that there are a number of members who express the opinion that the Executive Committee and the RCC resist change. Let me present three instances to dispel that fiction.

First, a few years ago when digital manipulation of slides started to become a reality the issue was discussed at the Exec Committee and approved with lightning bolt speed. A little exaggeration but I have seen us take more time discussing the arrangements for the annual dinner. Not only was the issue swiftly approved but what really surprised me was that it was accepted for nature images provided that the original intent of the image was not modified. This was a major leap forward.

The second instance was the introduction of digital competitions. After a demonstration of a digital projector and laptop for holding such competitions a motion was put on the floor, the amount of discussion was minimal and the motion passed unanimously. Everyone saw it as the future for camera clubs.

The third was when we recently decided to fully convert to digital in our projected image competitions. A motion was made and approved with some minor discussions concerning the fairness of the issue for slide photographers.

To me these were major changes and show that RCC has been and will in the future continue to change. In fact as I go around judging in various camera clubs, RCC is known as the club that introduced digital competitions to New Jersey.

Vinnie Kempf

2007-08 Field Trips

I believe this season of field trips was a successful, enjoyable and a productive one. At various times, over 30 different club members, accompanied by friends and family attended our 10 excursions. This means over 30% of the club membership participated at one time or another. The largest group on a single trip, DUMBO and the bridges had 14 attendees. During this year we visited a variety of venues at different times of the day, and in all kinds of weather. We got some great shots and met some interesting people. Over 240 pictures from the thousands of images we shot can be seen on the club website. We shared our knowledge and, most importantly, our friendship and camaraderie. With warm congeniality we dined together in over a dozen memorable meals. In short we had fun.

I'm happy to report that, to my knowledge, no field trip attendee got lost, injured, thrown out of a restaurant, arrested, or became pregnant as a result of any of our adventures. I can't say for certain if the same applies to the many people we met.

It was a pleasure leading these outings and I would like to thank all those who attended and made my job such a pleasurable experience. I look forward to assisting next year's field trip chairman in helping to make the upcoming season as much fun as was this year.

-- George Garbeck



Photographing Water in Landscapes

Tibor Vari

Ramsey, NJ

Photographing water in the form of a river, stream or waterfall within a landscape image has a number of challenges. Probably the biggest obstacle is achieving the right exposure since white bubbling water can fool a meter into underexposing the image. Fortunately, the digital cameras of today give the photographer tools to get great water exposures.

The best time to shoot moving water is on overcast days during the spring snow melt or during the peak fall foliage in autumn. Other times are fine, but can be challenging especially during a bright sunny day when the direct rays of the sun can make exposure a real challenge. Where to go is simply an exercise in doing some research on the Internet about the location you have chosen. There are even websites dedicated to waterfalls (with pictures), covering specific regions in the US. Other sources are books and topographic maps, which show you the waterfall locations as well as rivers and streams to explore.



First some basics on equipment, the use of a solid tripod is critical to getting the silky look in the water since exposures generally range from a $\frac{1}{4}$ second on up to 2 seconds (or even more). The tripod provides the stability required during the exposure that simply cannot be obtained hand held. Select a composition that has impact: generally follow the rule of thirds, and include interesting leading lines, diagonals or curves within the image. Fortunately, most water scenes provide one or more of these compositional points. A good rule to follow is start wide encompassing the entire scene and then work it by getting in tighter and tighter. Also, don't let the tripod become an anchor, move around and try different angles and compositions. One last compositional consideration is before the image is shot, run your eyes along all four sides and corners to make sure no distracting elements are intruding on the image.

The most important filter to use is a circular polarizer, which reduces reflections and glare found in abundance when shooting water. On an overcast day, the polarizer comes into its own by reducing reflections, while helping to pop the colors of leaves or the moss or rocks. A warming filter (81P), can be useful when shooting in shade or to add some warmth to the image. A neutral density filter can keep the exposure within the 5 stop tonal range of digital sensors while also allowing for longer exposures.

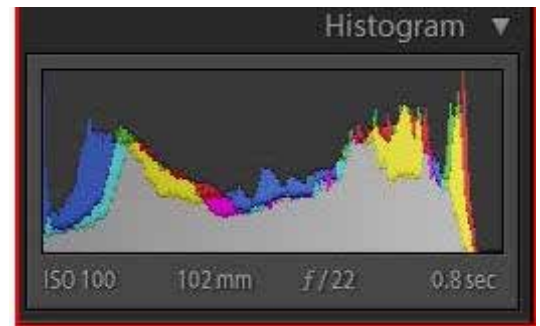
The next decision is to shoot in either RAW or JPEG (some cameras can shoot in TIFF). Most photographers who want maximum flexibility with as much information in the digital file will opt to shoot in RAW.



In either case, the next step is to select which White Balance setting to use. For RAW, simply set it to Auto since the Kelvin temperature that WP represents is easy to adjust in software such as Lightroom. For JPEG, it's not as simple since a mistake here will take some work to fix (shooting all day and not realizing the camera is set to Tungsten). So pick the WP that best represents the weather (Cloudy, Sunny, Shade etc.), or simply leave it on Auto and let the camera decide. Of course, another choice is to use a gray card and create a custom WP setting for your shoot.

To achieve the silky look in the water, a tug of war occurs when the photographer needs to select the shutter speed, ISO, and aperture. Changing these 3 settings creates pros and cons which need to be balanced by the photographer.

For example, increasing the aperture from say F11 to F16 causes the shutter speed to decrease by a stop as well. This can be countered by increasing the ISO, but runs the risk of introducing digital noise into the image. A good starting point would be to set the shutter around 1 second, aperture at F16, and ISO at the lowest setting for the camera (generally ISO 100 on most cameras). Part of the challenge in selecting a shutter speed is a function of the speed of the water. If the water is fast moving, then the shutter speed can be fast, slow moving water the shutter speed will be longer. Take an exposure and view the resulting histogram on the camera's LCD. The goal is to have the bubbling water in the high light portion of the histogram graph while not hitting the right side of the chart. If the graph hits the right side with a large number of pixels, this means that the pixels representing the water (or sky), in the image has been overexposed and the result is white with no details. To compensate, adjust the shutter to a faster speed (less light hitting the digital sensor), and try again. By properly using and reading the resultant histogram, the photographer can insure that the image is properly exposed with no clipping.



Another option to using the histogram is to turn on the camera's "blinkies", which will flash those portions of an image that have been clipped (hitting the right side of the histogram). The trick is finding the right shutter speed that is slow enough to make the water look silky while not overexposing the image and still keep the image sharp from foreground to background with a narrow aperture.

To summarize, keep ISO low, shutter speed between ¼ to two seconds, aperture as narrow as possible, use a tripod, a polarizer, and know how to read your camera's histogram. The great thing about digital cameras is just go out, shoot, experiment, and have some fun.

Photographing Water in Landscapes

Tibor Vari

Ramsey, NJ

**Double Winner at the Annual Competition
Projected Images
Marie Kane**



Yellow Day Lily



Male Painted Bunting



Color Print Winner
Columbine Close-up
By
Della O'Malley



Black & White Print Winner
Columbine in B & W
By
Rich Gheno

Top Scorers in the Annual Competition

Annual Pictorial Competition

5/14/2008

Photographer	Title	Score	Award
Kane Marie	Yellow Day Lily	15	Top Award
Forrest Marjorie	Golden Lily	13	Honorable Mention
Forrest Marjorie	Lavender Columbine	14	Honorable Mention
Fox Connie	Venice Canal	12	Honorable Mention
Garbeck George	Reflected Pears	12	Honorable Mention
Hall George	Rose Center with Fly	13	Honorable Mention
O'Malley Della	Striking Purple Iris	12	Honorable Mention
O'Malley Peter	Colorful Macaw	12	Honorable Mention
Placer Joe	Sunrise At Mesa Arch	12	Honorable Mention

Annual Nature Competition

5/14/2008

Photographer	Title	Score	Award
Kane Marie	Male Painted Bunting	14	Top Award
Fox Connie	My Hero	12	Honorable Mention
Gunther Alice	Weeping Geranium 2	12	Honorable Mention
Hall George	Wolf Monkey with Baby	12	Honorable Mention
Joffe Martin	Painted Bunting No 1	13	Honorable Mention
Kempf Vinnie	Cougar	13	Honorable Mention
Kempf Vinnie	Tiger	13	Honorable Mention
O'Malley Della	Julia Butterfly	12	Honorable Mention
O'Malley Della	Monarch Landing on Black-eyed Susan	12	Honorable Mention
O'Malley Della	Tricolored Heron - Catching a Fish	12	Honorable Mention
O'Malley Peter	Columbine and Bud	12	Honorable Mention
O'Malley Peter	Pelican in Flight	13	Honorable Mention

We meet on the 2nd, 3rd & 4th Wednesday of the month at 8:00 pm
The Woman's Club of Wyckoff, 176 Wyckoff Ave. Wyckoff. NJ
Guests are always welcome at regular meetings

Assigned Subjects for the 2008/2009 Season

Architecture

Waterfalls



Ridgewood Camera Club

**19 Smithfield Rd
Waldwick NJ. 07463**