In Focus

The monthly Newsletter of the Focus Camera Club

July 2013

Photos in this issue are from last month's 'Happy/Sorrow is...' competition.

Ready to have a Blast?

Are you celebrating the Fourth with friends and family? We sure hope so. And to help, there will be no Focus club meeting the 4th.

So go ahead and "get your grill on" and enjoy the day.

And be SURE to review the meeting date changes on Page 5.

This Month's Featured Article

We live in an information rich society. But some of it is bad information. I'm here to dispel a few myths... Read more here

A Little bit of sorrow amid tremendous happiness by Marilyn Clark

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Programs: Guy Geoly
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Special Projects: Marv Mickelson
Education: Guy Geoly

The purpose of the Focus Camera Club is to further its members' enjoyment, knowledge and mastery of photographic skills through cooperative efforts and fellowship.

Focus Camera Club Monthly Meetings

Meetings are held the First Thursday and Third Tuesday of each month. Our **meeting place** is in The Community Room at the Greenwood Village City Hall, 6060 S. Quebec St. (That's on the east side of Quebec just south of Orchard Rd.) Get a Google Map by clicking here. Meetings start promptly at 7 PM and will end around 9:45 PM so we can be out by 10 PM.

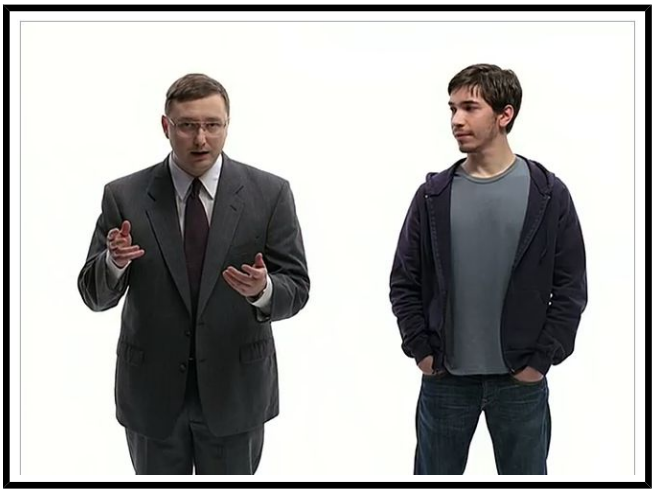
Photography Myths and Misconceptions

By Karl Peschel

Information abounds on the Interwebs, in books, and in courses taught by gurus. Sadly, not all of it is correct. Some things are simply repeated over and over because "so and so said it, so it must be true."

Here are a few myths and misconceptions I see frequently.

Mac is better than Windows; Canon better than Nikon



(Dang, it hurt to type that heading!)

The reality is each is a **TOOL** and any can be rendered useless depending on the skill of the craftsman. I'm a Nikon/Windows guy, and I can use a Mac or a Canon if need be. I won't be as proficient, and may not know all the features, but I can get by.

Photoshop on a Mac or PC is virtually the same once you're in the program. Dials and buttons on a Canon or Nikon to set exposure or focus are very similar. The menus are made to be easy to understand. Lenses and flashes attach in a similar fashion.

There are more similarities than differences, but everyone shouts from the rooftops about the differences and how one is "better" than the other. Generally, the differences are quite small.

Pick the one that works for you, feels good in your hand, and has the features you need. Simple as that.

And if your friends look down on you because you are a Nikon user (or Canon, or Pentax, or you don't use Photoshop, or whatever), don't run out and buy new equipment or software. Get new friends!

More Megapixels equals Better Images

More megapixels = bigger prints. Nothing more.

On a 4x6 print you'll never see the difference between 4 MP and 24 MP. And 6 or 8 MP makes beautiful 8x10's and 11x14's. If 90% of your work is printed at 16x20 or larger you can justify getting 24 MP or 36MP cameras. But don't get caught up in the marketing of Megapixels and think you "must" have them.

Entry level DSLRs and Micro Four Thirds cameras have enough MP to satisfy most any photographer. You may be tempted to buy the newest entry on the market, but don't get one just because it has more megapixels. Get it only if it has the features you NEED to get the photos you normally take.

A Better Camera will Make me a Better Photographer

The only definite change a high end DSLR will make for you is a reduction in your bank account. You don't "magically" get knowledge and experience, or absolutely stunning images, by simply holding and using a Canon 1Ds or Nikon D4.

Just because Joe McNally, Moose Peterson, Joe Farace, Jeff Johnson, Annie Leibovitz, Russ Burden, or anyone else uses *[insert camera/lens/tripod/flash/etc here]* doesn't mean you will achieve the same results when you buy that thing too. Knowledge and experience are what help you get great images.

Exposure, composition, and lighting are ALL elements of great images. Learn about and master those things. And none of them is affected by the camera in your hand. The Rule of Thirds, some north window light, ISO 400 at 1/125 and f8 is the same on your Sony point and shoot as it is on your Nikon D800.

You Only Use a Flash Indoors

Outdoor Fill Flash is an important tool in a photographer's arsenal. Many P&S and DSLR cameras have controls for fill flash. Read your manual and learn about them, paying particular attention to reducing the amount of fill. Many cameras allow you to dial in -1 or -2 fill so the photo doesn't look "flashed."

Fill Flash brightens shadow areas in outdoor images, whether you are shooting people or flowers or anything else. Just remember you are limited by your flash distance. It won't light up something 30 feet away, especially since you're using smaller apertures outdoors.

A Classic example – an outdoor photo of someone wearing a hat. Deep shadows under the brim mean you can't see the face. Use Fill Flash at -1.5 or -2 to throw some light on the face and viola! Know you can see it's Uncle John.

RAW is Better Than JPG

First, a quick definition. RAW files (.NEF, .CRW, .ORF, .PEF, or whatever your camera calls them) are pure image data captured by the camera. White balance, sharpening, contrast and many other settings are stored in the file, but can be changed in your photo editing software.

And there's the rub.

RAW files **must** be processed through software to obtain a final image to print or share. Each manufacturer has their own file format and structure, and it's slightly different from camera to camera. That's why you routinely have to update your Photoshop/PSE/Lightroom versions; to keep up with the new cameras and files.

Many people refer to RAW files as "uncooked," and it's not a universal format. JPG files are a finished product. All the settings and processing has been applied. You can still edit JPGs, but RAW is just a bit more flexible. JPG is a standard, universal image format and can be viewed on many devices and easily shared.

Should you shoot RAW or JPG?

Only you can decide which is better for how you work. RAW does offer some post processing benefits, but you'll be spending more time in front of the computer. Many pros shoot JPG, especially in studio shoots where they control the lighting and exposure.

Both RAW and JPG capture the same number of pixels, so it's not about resolution or image/print quality. Choose based on YOUR needs and workflow.

Everything Can be Fixed in Post Processing

Lazy photogs rely on Photoshop/Lightroom to fix photos. And let's be very clear: everything CAN'T be fixed in post. Although RAW files afford a bit more leeway than JPG, your best option is to shoot it correctly in the camera to begin with. Unless you'd rather spend hours or days fixing your images instead of shooting them.

• Overexposed is overexposed; You can't put color back in to something that's recorded as pure white.

• Bad white balance in a JPG file is hard to fix.

• Out of focus is...well just delete the image. Lytro technology hasn't made it to our cameras yet, so out of focus can't be rescued.

You've likely heard the term "Get it right in the camera" and it's so true. Know enough about your equipment to be able to set the correct focus, WB (white balance), and exposure and you're 95% there.

Photoshop/PSE/Lightroom Plugins Make Me More Creative

Angry liquid monsters?!?! (WTH!)

Sorry, but no. For some they are just a crutch. And I've known people who simply click through various effects until they get something "cool looking" and they stop. That's not creativity; it's laziness.

A lot of what plugins do can be replicated in Photoshop. The problem is you have to REALLY know PS and it may take 47 steps and 12 layers to accomplish the effect.

Plugins speed the process and allow for a faster workflow and better consistency from image to image for working pros.

When looking for plugins and addons for your image editing software, only consider those that help you produce quality images. Skip the gimmicky junk.

Creativity comes from your head.

It's the vision of that final image you see in your mind.

The camera, software and other tools at your disposal are only there to help you create that vision.

Program and Competition Schedules

Program Schedule		Competition Schedule	
7/4/13	**No meeting due to the holiday**	7/16/13	**Subject** – Selective Focus
8/1/13	**Presentation –** Creative Lighting by Cliff Lawson & Paul DiSalvo	8/15/13	**Subject** – Open
8/29/13	**Fifth Thursday** - TBA		
9/3/13	**Presentation** - TBA	9/17/13	**Subject** – Altered Reality
10/1/13	**Presentation** - TBA	10/15/13	**Subject** – Looking Up/Looking Down
11/5/13	**Presentation** - TBA	11/19/13	**Subject** – Open
12/5/13	**Presentation –** Best of YOUR Best	Late Dec	No Meeting

** **NOTE** ** – A few meeting dates had to be shifted for the GVPD in the coming months. The rest of the 2013 schedule is included here so you can make note of the changes on your calendar. The highlighted dates are different from what was previously published.

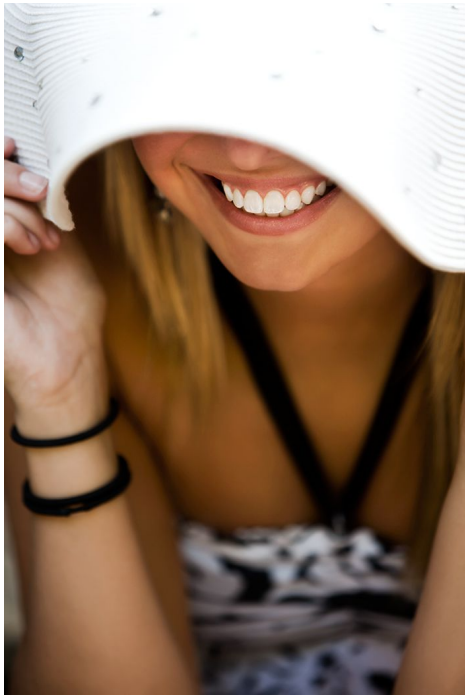
GVCH is a free meeting location for the club, and we therefore need to be flexible at times. Hopefully, the Thursday to Tuesday moves won't conflict with your schedule.

No Program Meeting July Fourth

Enjoy the holiday. Have a cookout with friends and family. Go take photos of the fireworks.

This Month's Competition is Selective Focus

Our official definition: *An image meets the requirements of this topic if one or more of its elements are in focus and the remainder of the photo is not. Examples are sharp foreground subjects and soft or blurred backgrounds; and sharp background elements and out of focus elements in the foreground. This list is not exhaustive. The unsharp elements of the image may be the result of narrow depth of field or may be created or enhanced by Photoshop or another image editor.*



Can't See Me by Ken Farman

Using selective focus is an age old method of drawing the viewer's eye to a particular part of the image. Done properly, it creates an impactful image.

If you need the Competition Entry forms or the template for the stick-on labels, you can get both from the Focus website on the Competition Rules page.

Happy/Sorrow is... Competition Results

	Media	Artist	Image Title	Score	Award
f5.6	Color	Mitzi Pearlman	Happiness is "Painting on a Street in France	8	1st
		Linda Slavec	First Communion	8	2nd
	Digital	Jennifer Nelson	Loves to Laugh	9	1st
		Judy Kahn	A War Remembered	8	2nd
		Gwen Pina	Happiness is... A Sisters Hug	8	3rd
	Monochrome	Jennifer Nelson	Death of a Dahlia	8	1st
f8	Color	Rick Matson	Serenity is Happiness	8	1st
		Rich Hayes	Thinking of You	10	1st
		Dustin McIntyre	Mother loses daughter to drunk driver	10	2nd
		Butch Mazzuca	Our Fallen Heros	10	3rd
		Gigi Embrechts	Ready for this World	9	HM
f11	Digital	Marilyn Clark	A Little bit of sorrow amid tremendous happiness	10	1st
		Nancy Myer	Hanging On	9	2nd
		Leander Urmy	Three Chalk Artists	9	3rd
		Bob Bartlett	I AM SMILING	9	HM
	Monochrome	Frank Gibbs	Begging to Survive	9	1st
f16	Color	Paul DiSalvo	State Champs	10	1st
		Ken Farman	Can't See Me	9	1st

Remember to send your winning Print images to Webmaster@FocusColorado.com for the online galleries.

Begging to Survive by Frank Gibbs

A War Remembered by Judy Kahn

Calls For Entries & Photo Contests

Three Chalk Artists by Leander Urmy

C4FAP – Center Forward

Entry Deadline EXTENDED: July 10

In the 2013 Center Forward exhibit we are interested in exploring the unique quality of photography, therefore the theme is open and all subject matter is welcome.

Visit the C4FAP website for complete details.

Multiple Photo Contests

Here's an article at MakeUseOf.com detailing a number of ongoing, weekly, and annual photo contests. There's also links to a few photo contest directories online you may want to explore.

Local Photo Opps and Events

Russ Burden Photo Tours

www.russburdenphotography.com 303.791.9997

2013 Photo Trips

Jul 13 - 19, Colorado Wildflowers & Alpine Scenery

Jul 27 - Aug 2, Glacier National Park

Aug 24 - 30, Goats and Gods: Mt Evans and Garden of the Gods

Sep 24 - Oct 3, Tetons and Yellowstone NP in Fall

Oct 15 - 20, Hunts Mesa - Aerial perspective of Monument Valley and Capital Reef National Park

Nov 2 - 8, Bryce Canyon and Zion National Parks

Dec 7 - 13, Bosque Del Apache / White Sands Natl. Mon.

Colorado Renaissance Festival continues

Where: Larkspur, CO

Dates: July 6-7, 13-14, 20-21, 27-28 / Aug 3-4 Saturday & Sunday Only, 10:00 am - 6:30 pm / Rain or Shine / No Pets FREE PARKING

Visit the RenFest website for details, tickets, Themes for each weekend, and info on the Photo Contest.

Scott Kelby's Shoot Like a Pro

Monday, July 29 in Colorado Springs.

Scott will cover camera operation, shooting landscapes / travel / sports / portraits, photo "recipes" for successful images, and how to make better photos. A day filled with great information from a personable and excellent teacher.

Details and sign up are at the KelbyTraining website. Cost is < $100 (discount for NAPP members too).

Mount Goliath Wildflower Walks

2013 Tour Dates: Tues., Thur. and select Sat., June 11 - August 3

Volunteer guides lead interpretive tours that follow the Mount Goliath M. Walter Pesman Trail – a moderately difficult, 1.5 mile downhill trek from 12,153 ft. to 11,540 ft.

Wildflower hikes begin promptly at 9 a.m. and are open to adults and children 10 years-old and older. Reservations are required. See the Denver Botanic Gardens site for info and registration.

Loves to Laugh by Jennifer Nelson

Colorado Photography Festival

The 3rd Annual Colorado Photography Festival will be held from August 10-15, 2013. Ten of the nation's premier photographers will give instruction in the classroom and in the field on numerous aspects of professional photography, from capturing your images to optimizing them in Photoshop. This year's instructors are Dan Ballard, Grant Collier, Glenn Randall, **Russ Burden**, Mark S Johnson, Stephen G Weaver, Andy Cook, David Kingham, Mary Lynne Ashley, and Rob Palmer.

Details on the classes and workshops are on the CPF website. Some workshops are already full, so if you're even remotely interested go to the website and sign up now.

Crested Butte Wildflower Festival

When: July 8-14, 2013 in Crested Butte, Colorado

Join us for a week of wildflower splendor in the charming, historic town of Crested Butte, the official Wildflower Capital of Colorado! Visit the festival website for complete info and make plans to attend.

Frame #37

A collection of extra tidbits I've discovered during the past few weeks.

— Did you get the Lightroom 5 upgrade? Watch this Youtube video where Julieanne Kost show you a few hidden gems in the new version. Or read this PPMag article for a complete list of the changes.

— TopazLabs makes some of the best image processing addons for PS/LR and you can save $100 (coupon code **july4)** on their bundle through July 7th. See the details and all you get at their website.

— Muslin backgrounds are inexpensive, lightweight, and travel well. But Ohhhh the wrinkles! Learn a few methods for getting rid of or reducing wrinkles in Muslin from Backdrop Express.

> “Deciding on a composition when framing a scene is an exercise in subtraction. Unlike the painter who starts with a blank canvas and builds up his image by the addition of paint, as photographers we work in the other direction.”
>
> *- Pete Bridgwood*