

2009

N4C INTERCLUB COMPETITION SCHEDULE

The following list indicates the slide and print competition topics for each month which will be in addition to the usual monthly pictorial print and projected images competitions

Month	Prints (Loc.)	PIs (Loc.)	Month	Prints (Loc.)	PIs (Loc.)
Feb	Trav/Creative (M)	Nat/Creative (NJ)	Aug	Trav/Creative (M)	Nat/Creative (NJ)
March*	Journalism (M)	Trav/Journ (NJ)	Sept*	Journalism (M)	Trav/Journ (NJ)
April	Nat/Seq (M)	Nat/Creative (NJ)	Oct	Nat/Seq (M))	Nat/Creative (NJ)
May*	Trav/Creative (M)	Trav/Journ (NJ)	Nov*	T/C/J (M)	N/C/T/J (R)
June	Journalism (M)	Nat/Creative (NJ)	Dec*	Annual (R)	Annual (R)
July*	Nat/Seq (M)	Trav/Journ (NJ)			

NJ = Nancy Johnston's (313 Berkeley Park Blvd, Kensington)
M= Eugene Morita's or to be determined • R = Rossmoor
All N4C competitions are open to camera club members.
*Print Return Months at Board Meetings

N4C OFFICERS & COMMITTEE CHAIRS 2009

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR, ARTICLES, OTHER NEWS

We are accepting anything of photographic value from individual members for publication in the **Foto Fanfare**. With the renewed interest in club placement of new members, we would happily reprint any thoughts you may have in this area. Otherwise, we would entertain any article of interest be it How-To or other. We rely heavily on your input to swell the information that we can give to the N4C membership.



"Downpour" by Claudia Bodmer, Peninsula Camera Club
Winner: Pictorial Projected Images Masters and Pictorial Print of the Month



FEBRUARY

No Board Meeting
Interclub Competitions
21 Projected (P/N/C)
10:00 am Nancy Johnston's
21 10:00 am Prints (P/T/C)
Call Gene Morita for information

MARCH

Board Meeting
9 8:00 pm First Methodist Church,
1600 Bancroft, San Leandro
Interclub Competitions
21 Projected (P/T/J)
10:00 am Nancy Johnston's
21 10:00 am Prints (P/J)
Call Gene Morita for information

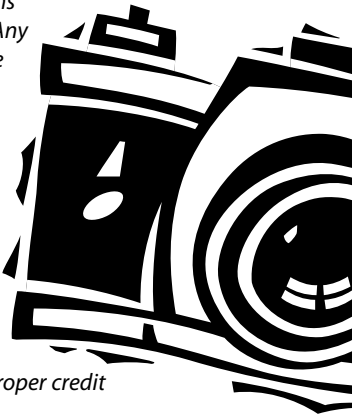
APRIL

No Board Meeting
Interclub Competitions
18 Projected (P/N/C)
10:00 am Nancy Johnston's
18 10:00 am Prints (P/T/C)
Call Gene Morita for information
19 Yerba Buena Chapter Meeting
Jeremy Sutton on "Painter"
Claudia Peterson - Nature
Larry Salvesson - CS4
San Mateo
9:00 am - 3:30 pm

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Foto Fanfare is the official publication of N4C, the Northern California Council of Camera Clubs, a federation of 12 Camera Clubs located in the greater Bay Area. Its goals are to hold monthly competitions among member clubs and present special informative programs whenever possible. Any articles, letters to the editor or editorial comments are the opinions of the authors, and not official N4C policy. Articles or other information published in Foto Fanfare may be copied for camera club use, provided proper credit is given.



PRINTS - MONTHLY COMPETITION

Chair: Gene Morita • Judge: Barbara Mallon • January 2009

Monochrome Print of the Month
"Bridge Abstractions" by Jane Postiglione of Contra Costa Camera Club

Monochrome Basic (MO/B) (4 prints)

1	Leaping Lemur	Pat Silveri	Marin
2	Pure Horsepower Total Control	Euclid Viegas	Diablo Valley

Monochrome Intermediate (MO/I) (8 prints)

1	Serene Setting, Siem Reap	Lee Daley	Marin
2	Steps and Arches, Angles and Curves	Roy Fidler	Marin
3	Young Boy Ready for Ceremonial Dance in New Guinea	Bilha Sperling	Contra Costa

Monochrome Advanced (MO/A) (11 prints)

1M	Bridge Abstractions	Jane Postiglione	Contra Costa
2	Self-Supportive	Barrie Bieler	Contra Costa
3	Waiting for Riders	Joe Hearst	Livermore
4	Direction	Sandra Ruhl	Millbrae

Monochrome Masters (MO/M) (14 prints)

1	Foggy Golden Gate Bridge at Night	Mary Toolson	Millbrae
2	Misty Sea and Coastal Rocks	Allan Smith	Livermore
3	Rubber Tree Leaves	Mohamad Vajed	Livermore
4	Back Road To The High Country	Robert Fournier	Peninsula
5	A Dusting of Snow (POM)	Mary Toolson	Millbrae

Color Print of the Month
"The Rowboat" by Jane Postiglione of Contra Costa Camera Club

Color Basic (CO/B) (6 prints)

1	Aspens and Early Snow	Irene Jones	Livermore
2	Church of San Juan de Dios	John Sundsmo	Marin

Color Intermediate (CO/I) (12 prints)

1	Asian Straw Broom	Selden Parmelee	Contra Costa
2	Two Nuns in Bhutan	Bilha Sperling	Contra Costa
3	Embarcadero Holiday	Carol Zychowski	Marin
4	A Blown Glass Forest	Phil Harris	Millbrae

Color Advanced (CO/A) (8 prints)

1M	The Rowboat	Jane Postiglione	Contra Costa
2	Portrait - Panama Girl	Jane Postiglione	Contra Costa
3	Color Walkway	Janice Hughes	Marin

Color Masters (CO/M) (13 prints)

1	Mexican Rooftops-Cabo San Lucas Mexico	Bernie Mulaskey	Marin
2	Amargosa Range & Death Valley Dunes	Bob Cossins	Millbrae

3	Bandon Sunset #3	Joe Hearst	Livermore
4	White Dog & Blue Sky Reflected On Wet Sand	Robert Fournier	Peninsula

Nature Basic (N/B) (9 prints)

1	Native American Linden Tree Fall Colors	Lee Daley	Marin
2	Fallen Aspen Leaves on Frosty October Morning (populus tremaloides)	Irene Jones	Livermore
3	Ruffed Grouse (Bonasa unbellus) Grey Morph	Clarence Luckett	Livermore

Nature Advanced (N/A) (12 prints)

1	Tiger Swallowtail Alights on Pincushion Flower	Bill Stone	Contra Costa
2	Diving Brown Pelican (Pelicanus Occidentalis)	Claudia Bodmer	Peninsula
3	A Long-billed Curlew (numenius americanus) Glides in at Dusk to Seek Protection in a Salt Marsh	John Goyer	Livermore
4	Atlantic Puffin Breeding - Head and Chest Detail in Profile - Iceland (Fratercula Artica)	Robert Fournier	Peninsula

Sequence (S) (7 prints)

1	Mirror Symmetry --- with Twists	Barrie Bieler	Contra Costa
2	The Cover-up - Before and After Eviction in Belmont Neighborhood	Mary Toolson	Millbrae
3	Hover Fly Hunting (Syrphid Flies)	Carmen Cavalieri	Livermore



“Mexican Rooftops, Cabo San Lucas, Mexico” by Bernie Mulaskey of Marin ; Winner: Color Masters Prints

“Bridge Abstractions” by Jane Postiglione of Contra Costa Camera Club: Winner: Monochrome Advanced Prints & Monochrome Print of the Month

PICTORIAL IMAGES - MONTHLY COMPETITION

Chairs: Gene Albright, Nancy Johnston, Walt Braun • Judge: Stephen Weiss • January 2009

Pictorial Electronic Image of the Month

“Downpour” by Claudia Bodmer of Peninsula Camera Club

Pictorial Basic (20 entries)

1	Sweet Sounds	Euclides Viegas	Diablo Valley
2	Building Reflections	Diana Rebman	Berkeley
3	Waiting for the Bus	Stephen Busch	Contra Costa
4	Curious Cattle in a Normandy Pasture	Walter Krovoza	Rossmoor
5	PreDawn over Lake Michigan	Bob Woldt	Millbrae
H	Wading Avocet	Diana Rebman	Berkeley

Pictorial Intermediate (19 entries)

1	The Altamont	Candice Gondeck	Contra Costa
2	Can of Nails, Alcatraz	Merrill Mack	Marin
3	City at Midnight	Lynn Letteris	Rossmoor
4	Peace Be with You	Ojars Kratins	Rossmoor
5	Dreams of Freedom	Dorothy Weaver	Marin
H	Fire-eye Diucan, Wings Spread, Patagonia	Obie Gilkerson	Berkeley

Pictorial Advanced (21 entries)

1	Motor Bike	Linda Wang	Alameda
2	Docked	Bernie Mulaskey	Marin
3	Cerro Torre Dawn Panorama	Barbara Lee	Berkeley
4	Chance Meeting	Robert Wehrmeister	Contra Costa
5	Beauty on the Forest Floor	Robert Beall	Contra Costa
H	Poppies and Hills of Gold	Bob Cossins	Millbrae

Pictorial Masters (25 entries)

1M	Downpour	Claudia Bodmer	Peninsula
2	Yellow Grate	Joe Hearst	Livermore
3	Bodie Sunset	Jerome Larson	Diablo Valley
4	Bristlecone Pines	Steve Stuckey	Alameda
5	Red Sunflower	Randy Hake	Rossmoor
H	Uglich, Russia	Jerome Larson	Diablo Valley



“Shuttle Endeavor Launches from Kennedy Space Center on November 14, 2008” by John Goyer of Livermore Valley Camera Club
Winner: Journalism Masters Projected Images

TRAVEL ELECTRONIC IMAGES - BI-MONTHLY COMPETITION

Chairs: Gene Albright, Nancy Johnston, Walt Braun • Judge: Stephen Weiss • January 2009

Travel Electronic Image of the Month
“Evening Descends upon a Nile Village” by Ed Mestre of Alameda Camera Club

Travel Basic (23 entries)

1	Buddhist Temple, China – Recording a Donation	Roy Fidler	Marin
2	Changing of the Guard at Ataturk’s Tomb, Ankara, Turkey	Morris Johnson	Contra Costa
3	Annapurna Base Camp, Nepal	Karen Najarian	Diablo Valley
4	Nepali Trail Traffic	Karen Najarian	Diablo Valley
5	Leaving Budapest	Terri Delillo	Livermore
H	The Bean, Chicago	Bob Woldt	Millbrae

Travel Intermediate (18 entries)

1M	Evening Descends upon a Nile Village	Ed Mestre	Alameda
2	Paying Homage to the Lucky Buddha, Bangkok, Thailand	Dorothy Weaver	Marin
3	Sunset during Rain Storm in Bergen, Norway	Ivanka Shakiba	Berkeley
4	The Great Wall at Jinshanling, China	Jason Young	Contra Costa
5	View of One of the Granada Hills through a Window of the Alhambra, Granada Spain	Carmen Cavalieri	Livermore
H	Morning Fog over Positano, Italy	Ivanka Shakiba	Berkeley

Travel Advanced (17 entries)

1	Fisherman Setting Chinese Fishing Net, Kerala, India	Dan Lent	Berkeley
2	Elderly Pilgrims Resting. Lhasa. Tibet	Joe Chan	Berkeley
3	Huayna Picchu Sentry Station View of Machu Picchu, Peru	Bob Cossins	Millbrae
4	Central Square of Ghent, Belgium	Bob Sturm	Peninsula
5	Above San Pedro Island, Belize	Sherry Grivett	Contra Costa
H	Nubian Symbolic Wall on Elephantine Island, Egypt	Christine Hansen	Marin

Travel Masters (13 entries)

1	Ladies Washing Their Clothes in the River, Fung Huang Village, China	Ben Kong	Millbrae
2	Starting to Prepare Chicken Sate for Clan Feast, Bali	Bob Fournier	Peninsula
3	On the Steps of the Ganges	Ann Rivo	Marin
4	Le Louvre	John Goyer	Livermore
5	San Francisco Ferry Building - Entry to the City	John Goyer	Livermore



“The Altamont” by Candice Gondek of Contra Costa Camera Club
Winner: Pictorial Intermediate Projected Images

JOURNALISM EIs - BI-MONTHLY COMPETITION

Chairs: Gene Albright, Nancy Johnston, Walt Braun • Judge: Stephen Weiss • January 2009

Journalism Electronic Image of the Month
“Shuttle Endeavour Launches from Kennedy Space Center on November 14th, 2008”
by John Goyer of Livermore Valley Camera Club

Journalism Basic (19 entries)

1	Children Watching under Water Window Washer at SF Academy of Science	Lynn Letteris	Rossmoor
2	Italian Street Festival, June 2008, San Rafael, CA	Carol Santos	Marin
3-Seq	Red Panda Chinese Acrobats Fitting through the Ring at San Francisco Zoo	Sue Zhou	Berkeley
4	Sending Her Home	Joan Cusick	Diablo Valley
5	High Concentration Is Needed to Get a High Score	Bill Chambard	Contra Costa
H	So, This Is the House Fire	Mary Lou Froese	Millbrae

Journalism Intermediate (22 entries)

1	Lovers with Lollipop	Joe Hearst	Livermore
2	OK, Fix It. But How	Bilha Sperling	Contra Costa
3	Chinese Dancer Sweeps across Stage, Xi’an, China	Roy Fidler	Marin
4	Freedom of Expression Intrudes on Others	Mary Toalson	Millbrae
5	Royally Focused	Ed Mestre	Alameda
H	Expose Yourself to Nature	Vicki Rupp	Marin

Journalism Advanced (12 entries)

1	Calvin Keys Helps Set the Mood at the Oakland Art and Soul Festival 2008.	John Goyer	Alameda
2	Staff Member from the Crucible Demonstrates Fire-eating Technique at the Oakland Art and Soul Festival	John Goyer	Alameda
3	Barrel Racer and Appreciative Audience	Bob Fournier	Peninsula
4	Heave-Ho Johnnie, You Can Do It	Maureen McGettigan	Marin

Journalism Masters (6 entries)

1M	Shuttle Endeavour Launches from Kennedy Space Center on November 14th 2008.	John Goyer	Livermore
2	Once upon a Time!	Jerome Larson	Diablo Valley

Denny Weigand and Wayne Miller of Contra Costa to Run Seminar on Lightroom Workflow and Photoshop Enhancements February 21, 9 am to 4 pm, 2336 Buena Vista Ave., Walnut Creek • \$99

The Seminar is for Photographers by Photographers and is geared for Beginner to Intermediate users. If you use or want to use Lightroom and Photoshop to process your images this is the seminar for you. Learn the correct settings and workflow in these applications to cut down on your time on the computer so you can spend more time capturing images behind your camera. Veteran LR or PS users will find that this seminar will open new horizons.

Denny will show a complete A-Z workflow with Lightroom. Wayne will show you how to take those images into Photoshop and make them a Wow factor including High Dynamic Range.
For a registration form contact Wayne Miller at fineart@wmphotos.com.

BOARD NOTES

We welcomed many new board members including **Tom Debley, Vice President.** The new list of delegates for 2009 is:

Alameda: Ed Mestre
edme2@sonic.net
Berkeley: Marvin Martin
marvin325@sbcglobal.net
Contra Costa: Polly Boissevain
p.boissevain@sbcglobal.net
Diablo Valley: Amory Donaldson
senilbat@hotmail.com
Livermore Valley: John Goyer
johngoyer@sbcglobal.net
Marin: Mike Miller
mdm@lvha.net
Marin Digital: Dan Van Winkle
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Millbrae: Jim Cutler
photogolfer@yahoo.com
Peninsula: Jose Rodriguez
joser33usa@gmail.com
Photochrome: Mary Asturias
mary_asturias@pacbell.net
Rossmoor: Tim Christoffersen
tim.christoffersen@gmail.com

Special thanks to Bob Rogers, outgoing president for running the Annual Luncheon and assuming the responsibilities of our non-existent VP during 2008.

Treasurer's Report: N4C Balance as of December 31: \$9742.20. The 2009 Budget was presented with some changes to be made. To include \$750 to purchase a large monitor to be used at the El monthly competitions instead of the projector. We will discuss whether to raise club dues from \$40 base plus \$20 for each competition section to \$50 base and \$25 for each type of competition as of 2010.

Annual Awards Luncheon: 78 attended. A discussion on how to shorten the time of the luncheon ensued. Some suggestions included projecting only the HMs in prints since the winners were on display, short-

ening the social hour, have first place winners stand to acknowledge win and pick up medals afterwards.

Competition Committees

Prints: Gene Morita, the new print chair is concerned with the problem of collecting prints for two months at a time. He suggested possibly mailing them with no mats. The problem was resolved when two board members offered to get the prints to Gene in the off-months. Polly Boissevain would take the East Bay Prints to Gene's house and Bob Cossins would assume responsibility to get the South Bay prints to him.

A Social (Informal) Meeting to discuss club problems and/or suggestions for improvements to N4C was approved. The date has yet to be set.

PSA: Spring Chapter Day is April 19. Jeremy Sutton is the primary speaker on how to use Corel Painter®. A flyer is included with the registration form in this issue of the Foto Fanfare.

FotoClave will be held the weekend of October 30 - Nov 1 at the DoubleTree Inn in Modesto. George Lepp will be the keynote speaker.

New Business: Annual Luncheon again. Whether we should change venue. Tom Debley will look into this. Amory Donaldson suggested that a binder be prepared with the list of all the information about how to run the Annual for use of the Vice Presidents. Bob Rogers and Tom Debley will work on that.

Level of competition of club members submitting entries for monthly competitions was brought up in a message from Barbara Mallon, former co-print chair. She feels that many are placed in lower levels than where they belong, causing truly basic workers to lose heart. A resolution was passed:

Resolution encourages Clubs to place new members in proper placement at Club level. To have a critique of a new members' images to determine at which level they should belong. N4C cannot force the clubs to do this according to our bylaws; we can only urge them to do so.

Some ideas proposed were:

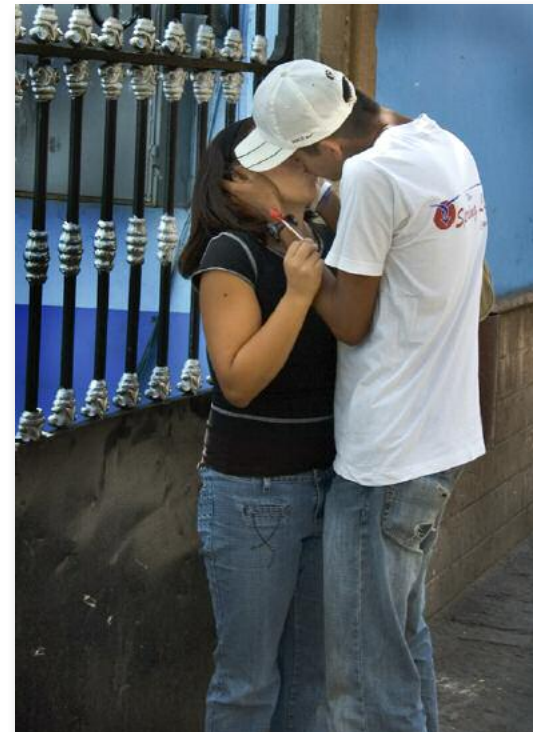
- A member should be in the same level in all categories
- Clubs should be encouraged to use the entire B, I, A, M levels
- A member of more than one club should not be allowed to put entries in two different levels in the same competition.



Far left: "The Rowboat" by Jane Postiglione of Contra Costa Camera Club; Winner: Color Advanced Prints and Color Print of the Month



Left: "Asian Straw Broom" by Selden Parmelee of Contra Costa Camera Club Winner: Color Intermediate Prints



Above: "Leaping Lemur" by Pat Silveri of Marin Photography Club; Winner: Monochrome Basic Prints

Left: "Lovers with Lollipop" by Joe Hearst of Livermore Valley Camera Club; Winner: Journalism Intermediate Pls

Harbor Details are Fun

By Joseph Hearst, APSA

Previously I wrote about techniques for photographing details of rusty cars, found objects, and decaying buildings in the PSA Journal. Photographers who have learned to enjoy making this kind of image will discover that harbors provide good sources of similar compositions. Those who have not will find that a harbor is a good place to begin.

It's important to choose your harbors carefully. Pleasure boats are usually fiberglass, with white and uninteresting hulls. Many commercial fishing boats are steel, sometimes colorful, and often rusty. They are also much more likely to have interesting ropes, nets, buoys, bumpers and chains. Therefore it makes sense to do one's best to visit fishing-boat harbors. High overcast provides the best light for photographing our subjects, because this kind of light is usually more effective to show more or less abstract patterns and colors rather than to model detailed objects. On the other hand, if one must deal with contrasty light one can often include the shadows in compositions to create new patterns. The shadows are especially effective when they are cast on colorful textured surfaces. We found excellent harbors and perfect overcast conditions on the Oregon Coast enroute to the 2008 PSA Conference in Portland.

When you get to a harbor, do your best to walk all of the docks, slowly, and chat with the people you meet. If you tell them what you want you may get suggestions. Often the docks are gated, but the gates are frequently open and if you look respectable there is rarely a problem getting on. Sometimes you may have to look for a harbor office and get permission, or even the loan of a key. Many interesting, colorful boats can be spotted from a distance, but if possible cover every dock, because small items are not easy to see from far away.

Ropes and nets

Among the first things one notices when entering a fishing harbor is a profusion of ropes and nets. They are often very colorful. They are found on the main quays, the docks, and the boats themselves, often on the after parts. Sometimes the nets are wound on large reels. Although they are very tempting, it can be quite difficult to separate them from the background and isolate parts of them to make coherent compositions. This is a situation for the use of one of the photographer's rubrics: "less is more". It is worthwhile to look at the nets or ropes from

many angles and use many focal lengths to help decide the proper areas of concentration. The various ropes and chains that tether boats to the docks can also provide counterpoint to the shapes of the boats and gear.

Buoys and bumpers

Perhaps even more striking than the ropes and nets are the buoys and bumpers attached to them, hanging from the ships, or simply floating in the water. Many of them are designed to attract attention, and so are made in bright colors, which contrast effectively with the often dull paint of the unrudded parts of the hulls and the different colors of the ropes. In the case of bumpers it is often easy to make simple compositions using their reflections in the water. The buoys, however, like the nets, tempt the photographer to include too much. It might be a worthwhile exercise to make images including only parts of one or more buoys.

Rusted steel



When salt water interacts with steel boats, a lot of rust is produced. The rusty places can be more or less categorized into three classes for the purpose of composition: hulls, spots, and objects. If a large portion of a hull is covered with colorful rust, the photographer must show some restraint so as

not to include too much of it in one image. Of course it is perfectly feasible to record the entire rusty areas and do the cropping later, but one can obtain better resolution by making more exposures of smaller areas – and they can still be cropped. It is not necessary for the final image to have the same aspect ratio as the sensor. If one is lucky, some of the rusty hull will be reflected in the water, making the image even more interesting.

In the case of rust spots, it is particularly useful to pay attention to the angle of the camera while making the exposure – it is not necessary to confine oneself to vertical

or horizontal. The angle should suit the composition potential of the spot. Remember that extra spots may improve the composition if they are in the right place in the frame.

Individual objects, like winches, anchors, chains, blocks, cleats, padeyes, and bitts (the last four are things that ropes are tied to or go through) are easy to isolate. Also, they seem to get rustier than the main parts of the hull, perhaps because they expose a larger fraction of their surfaces to the elements. Again, however, one should consider the composition. Sometimes the object lends itself to a vertical or horizontal position and perhaps even centering, but often it is more useful to place it at an angle in the frame.



Pilings are the posts that hold up the docks. They are usually made of wood, which can accumulate spectacular growths of algae and sometimes marine animals, and steel, which often rusts in interesting patterns. It is important when photographing either kind to isolate interesting patterns. Since pilings are tall and thin, it is often unavoidable to include some of the background in the frame, and then one should be careful to prevent the often bright background from influencing the exposure. Positive compensation helps, and it can be useful to have the display in highlight mode so you can see what parts are overexposed – they can be cropped or modified in Photoshop later.

Detritus in water

Don't forget to look down. There usually many things floating in a harbor, and some may be worth photographing. Seaweed, leaves, pieces of wood, and scraps of



rope can swirl and combine with reflections to provide fascinating compositions. Films of oil can add to the mix. And sometimes fish or even marine mammals can contribute to the interest. Of course, harbors are full of fascinating reflections too, so many that they really need a separate article to discuss them.

Finishing the image

In many of these cases the rust appears at first to be pale and uninteresting, but the image can often be made spectacular by increasing contrast and saturation in Photoshop. Sometimes compositions can be improved by rotating the image. The background can be made less intrusive either by blurring contrasty elements, replacing them with bland ones, or by changing the color or brightness of the sky. It is often useful to remove or darken distracting objects, and sometimes it makes sense to change the position of some of the minor constituents of the scene. Since in most cases no one knows what the subject actually looks like or what the true colors are, the maker has almost complete freedom, and should make use of it.

With all of these opportunities, it should be no surprise that one can often find more potential images in a fishing-boat harbor than at any other site in the same amount of time.

Marin Member Publishes Book on Paris

Lila Sparks-Daniels of Marin Photography Club is holding a reception in honor of her first solo photo show on Thursday, March 5, 5:30 - 7:00 pm at the Chez Pierre Restaurant, 7330 Redwood Blvd, Novato, CA. She has recently published a book, "Being in Paris" which can be ordered from the photographer or through blurb.com.

415-819-0845 or lilasd@aol.com.

Editor's note: For a very reasonable price you can produce a beautiful many-page book using the facilities of blurb.com. Their facilities make it possible to have copies printed on demand.

THE INCONSISTENCY OF
CAMERA CLUB PLACEMENT
OF NEW MEMBERS

The question has been raised as what, if anything N4C can do to help camera clubs decide where to place new members. The answer is simply that we have no authority to do this, but the imbalance still remains. Barbara Mallon of Livermore Valley and former Co-chair of N4C Print Competitions posed these problems:

To be relevant, a competition should be meaningful. If there are rules, they should be followed. If the individual clubs have different rules for their own competition, that is their prerogative. But when images come to N4C, they should be disqualified if they do not fit the rules of the category, i.e. if a nature or journalism print has been obviously manipulated beyond the rules. Nature, journalism and travel should be true to the scene in which they were taken.

Competition levels is another concern. If someone is entering basic, he should be someone in need of improvement not just a new member. Maybe if we made this category mini-print, it would help (print 8X10 max). We need to come up with some criteria to separate the categories. Some subjective line that includes learning composition, lighting, depth of field, sharpness color balance, saturation and Photoshop usage among others. We had a big upset in the LVCC club about moving some people to higher levels. Beginners were quitting because they could not compete with master level people in basic. I see the same problem in the print submission to N4C. If the club wants to let this person compete in basic, fine. But their skill level may a different assignment at N4C. Even if I have no experience in journalism, I know enough about producing a good photo that I should not be in basic! If all skill levels are the same, why have skill levels. Maybe one level and more prizes would function better.

I think the N4C print chair or the N4C judge should have the authority to enforce these rules. It is too bad that more people do not come to the judgments.

Thank you,
Barbara Mallon

A response was received from Beth Schriock of Marin Photography Club:

N4C Controversy: Appropriate Member
Placement in Competition Levels

A flurry of recent N4C emails has raised issues about the levels at which members compete. The concern has been expressed that some photographers are competing at levels below their actual abilities with the consequence that they win frequently, shutting out and discouraging the other people appropriately competing at that level. The suggestions that have been made include:

1. Placement of new members at level appropriate to their skill rather than just starting at Basic.
2. A member cannot enter images in a category at two different levels.
3. Members should compete at the same level across all categories (pictorial, nature, etc).
4. Members should compete at the same level across all divisions (prints, digital).
5. People who belong to multiple clubs should compete at the same level in all clubs.

In dealing with this issue N4C must proceed with caution and Article XI.C of their bylaws uppermost in their minds:

In adopting these competition rules, the Council officers and delegates are cognizant of the right of each member club to determine the requirements for participation in the club competitions; and to regulate the manner in which photographs made by different classes of members shall be selected for entry in Interclub Competition under the rules prescribed herein.

Comments regarding each point:

General: Perspective is needed in approaching this issue. The photography clubs are recreational not professional organizations. That said, consider the purpose of these levels and how they are determined. As suggested above a major purpose is to facilitate the competition of members of equivalent skill. This provides reasonable opportunity for all members to experience some success and encourage continued participation. On the other hand if people are competing against a member of greater skill it can challenge them to improve their own skills. Even if the more skillful member repeatedly wins, the others are not completely shut out from honors as other places

are awarded. Advancement in competition level can be viewed as an honor that must be earned, so the levels are also a means of encouraging participation and providing honor. Placing members in levels by some subjective assessment of skill negates this. The system of awarding points for participation and achievement (aka winning or placing) supports this last purpose. If N4C honors its bylaw of not interfering with club competitions, they may want to change competition levels when the club submits their entries. If that is the case, then the number of entries per category per level per club will be altered. Bookkeeping would also be a nightmare.

Placement of New Members: Ideally each club could have a committee of Masters level photographers that meets periodically to set the competition level for new members. Then there are the practical considerations of finding volunteers willing and available to comprise the committee and meet in a timely fashion. New members do not all join at the same time; some wish to compete the night they join. Our club had over 20 new members join throughout the year. A new member may not have a portfolio but be an excellent photographer. Currently MPC meets once a year in December to review and adjust the levels of all members. Nothing dire is going to happen if a new member competes below their skill level for less than a year.

Different levels in the same category: Most likely occurs at the Annual Competition as Joan said, because of different calendars for advancement amongst the clubs. The easy solution is that the Print Chair place all of that person's entries for that category at the higher level.

Compete at same level for all categories: Disagree. As others have indicated factors other than skill can determine how well one does and that should be considered. Some can afford bigger lenses for nature or better afford to travel to exotic places than others. Those that can't should be able to compete where they have a better chance even though they're really good at Pictorial. It does take some extra skill to get a good Nature shot - much harder than landscape (Pictorial) where everything sits still.

Compete at same level for all divisions: Disagree. A member shooting film and competing at an advanced level in prints may not know Photoshop or

be a beginner and consequently not compete well in digital. The reverse may be true as well; a person may be great at digital but not be able to technically produce a good print.

Compete at the same level in all clubs: Disagree. How well one performs in a category is relative to whom s/he is competing against. Club A may have a really hot group of Nature photographers and consequently "Joe" has trouble placing - he's still Intermediate. However Club B's members aren't interested in Nature so "Joe" does really well in those competitions so he's Advanced. If N4C required him to be Advanced in Club A he would never have any chance of placing. You could say he could compete at the club A level as Intermediate but then at N4C compete at Advanced. Since each club is limited on the number of entries per level, that would mean that one of the Advanced group's entries would not be allowed.

In conclusion in order not to violate its own rule of not interfering with club competitions, the only issue that N4C can deal with is adjusting the level within a category of a member with entries to the Annual Competition in more than one level. It is up to the clubs to set levels in the context of their own membership and practical considerations.

-Beth Schriock
These are my own opinions and do not necessarily reflect the position of the Marin Photography Club.

EDITORIAL ON PLACEMENT

*First of all, it is true that N4C cannot require clubs to follow rules as to how to place new members. But we have, at the last Board meeting, passed a resolution **urging** member clubs to review the work of their new members before assigning them automatically to a B classification. There is no question that many new members of camera clubs are highly proficient workers. To find the proper placement of any new member, it is not necessary to have a formal setup of Masters photographers. In our club, Contra Costa, when the new member wants to compete we ask him to bring in a portfolio or email it to a number of our better photographers. If he brings it to the club, we will review it on the spot and make assignments immediately.*

The reason behind this practical approach is that a number of new members enter a club with high credentials and really should not be competing with less experi-

enced workers. Even with these options in effect, some new members slip between the cracks and we end up with e.g. a highly experienced travel photographer still competing in Basic or Intermediate.

Another problem is that not every club uses all four levels, B, I, A, and M, for their competitions. Thus Contra Costa, e.g., uses only B, I, and A for special divisions such as Nature and Travel. Other clubs may use all four categories or may use the higher three. Thus workers in A in Contra Costa will not go up against workers in M in Marin, although they probably should..

As a first step toward competing oranges against oranges, I would suggest that a club does indeed install a review system for all new members. It does not have to be formal, but should be utilized every time a new member enters the club, and at that time. There do not have to be specific goals of photography achieved in order to be placed in a specific level; it needs only a surveyal of the person's photographs as a judge would do. The good club photographers know if someone has extra capabilities without those capabilities being specifically delineated..

Secondly, perhaps a member who was missed in the initial review, and who shows extraordinary talent, should be immediately moved up to the next level. Granted, this may complicate the scoring process, but some accommodation could be made, such as giving the person 1/2 to all the points accumulated in the lower level to take up to the higher level.

As a third point, the clubs should review their B, I, A and M levels and perhaps move to use all four of them, instead of only three. This may be difficult for a small club or one that has decided to try a different approach such as Peninsula, however, it makes a lot of sense. The disparity between clubs in the choice of the levels it uses was an anticipated problem with the onset of the B, I, A and M designations. If a club still wants to use only three levels, I would urge them to take the three higher levels.

Lastly, I do believe that N4C has the right to require that anyone submitting in the same division through two different clubs, should submit at the same level, preferably the higher of the two. In regards to that, if a member has changed levels during the course of N4C's calendar year, the two levels would be allowed.

We hope to take up the submission question at the next Board meeting.

The purpose of all this discourse is to have competitions that are meaningful for all participants.



Top: "Tiger Swallowtail Alights on Pincushin Flower" by Bill Stone of Contra Costa; Winner: Nature Prints A
Middle: "Motor Bike" by Linda Wang of Alameda CC Winner: Pictorial Advanced Projected Images
Bottom: "Sweet Sounds" by Euclides Viegas of Diablo Valley CC; Winner: Pictorial Basic Projected Images

**JEREMY SUTTON "PAINTER" EXPERT
AT YERBA BUENA SPRING CHAPTER DAY**
CLAUDIA PETERSON, Nature Photography
LARRY SALVESON, CS4 and Camera Raw 5
Sunday, April 19, 9:00 am - 3:30 pm, 2009
Central Park Recreation Building, 50 5th Avenue, San Mateo
Registration Fee: Member: \$15 • Non-member: \$25



Jeremy Sutton is one of the world-renowned Corel Painter® artists, who has taken photographs of average interest and converted them into works of art. His talents far exceed most of ours, but he will show us how to work with Painter to change a so-so photo image into something unusual and spectacular. His presentation abilities are outstanding. He will demonstrate how to use Painter for enhancing your photos from 9:00 am- noon. His website is jeremy-sutton.com.

The afternoon also promises to be a great learning experience.

Claudia Peterson of Santa Clara Camera Club will demonstrate how to take the wonderful nature and bird photos for which she is so well known. Claudia works at local sites, so we can easily attempt to emulate her methodology. She will discuss her techniques from 1:30 to 2:30 pm.

Larry Salvesson of Peninsula Camera Club: And for those of you who are still deciding whether to upgrade to Photoshop CS4, or would like to know more about it, Larry will show us differences between CS3 and CS4 and go into some of the details of using the new CS4 features and Camera Raw 5. He will present from 2:30 - 3:30 pm.

Jeremy was first introduced to using the computer as a fine art tool in 1991, and has been exploring the digital medium ever since, currently combining multiple media, such as photography, digital paint, oils, crayon and acrylics. His principal digital painting tools are the Macintosh computer, Wacom tablet and Corel Painter software. Within Painter he can flow seamlessly and effortlessly from painting with broad washes of watercolor one moment to applying thick viscous impasto oil paint the next.

Jeremy is also an author and educator on the subject of creativity and digital fine art, a Corel Painter Master and speaker at numerous conferences such as SIGGRAPH, Macworld, ImagingUSA and Wedding and Portrait Photographers International. His publications include five books, two video training series, and four DVD tutorials. Jeremy has taught workshops, seminars and given presentations throughout the world, including in the U.S., Brazil, Israel, Italy, U.K. and Japan. You can learn more about the teaching side of his life by visiting his educational web site, PainterCreativity.com.

REGISTRATION FORM

Spring Chapter Day
Sunday, April 19, 2009
Central Park Rec Center

Name _____
Name _____
Address _____
City, State, Zip _____
Phone () _____ E-mail _____
Camera Club or Other Affiliation _____
How did you learn about this Seminar? _____
Tickets (Member) @ \$15 _____ Non-Yerba Buena Member @ \$25 _____
(There will be coffee and breakfast buns. Lunch is not included)
Total Enclosed _____

Please send registration form and check made out to
Yerba Buena Chapter
to Joan Field, 142 St. Patricks Drive, Danville, CA 94526