



The CACCA NEWS

The Official Publication of the Chicago Area Camera Clubs Association

Volume 79 - Number 4

March 2011

I Forgot How Valuable Pictures Can Be

By: Sue Lindel

In the fall of 2009, on the way home from my favorite egret spot, I met up with some friends I hadn't seen in ages. I knew these women best when I was still a teenager and they were in their early thirties. We all had horses then and spent a lot of time together riding through the forest preserve and just hanging around the barn. Over time I had to leave that lifestyle, but never forgot them. My friends kept on with horses, although over the years their riding diminished a great deal. It was a wonderful stroke of luck to find them and be together - me on my bike and them on horseback there in the woods like old times. Even back in the day I always carried a small Kodak 110 point and shoot, so they were not surprised when I pulled out my Nikon and snapped off a couple shots.

When I got home, I was disappointed with those shots. Once again in my hurry to take pictures I forgot my camera was set for white egret feathers in sunlight, not dark horses in the woods. In disgust I nearly deleted them as they were grainy

from editing and just not what I, with my newly advancing ability, would deem good enough. Despite my poor opinion I sent a copy of the least crummy image off to the one friend with email.

As is typical, my friends and I again drifted apart. None of them are big email/computer people and phone tag is annoying. It was nearly a year later I found out one of those friends had been diagnosed as being terminally ill within a month of my seeing her that day. She was always stubbornly proud and wouldn't let anyone know.

The photo I thought was so inferior was extremely precious to Liz - especially as unbeknownst to any of us it marked the last time she was able to ride her beloved horse. Even then she was in some pain, but didn't know at the time how serious the trouble was.

I just recently learned how Liz had kept a copy of that same photo hung in her home as motivation to try and keep moving as her illness swiftly overtook her. She had kept it in another room, and it became a

sort of reward to walk to see it. That very image, that I casually dismissed with my over zealous criticism, had gone with her to hospice care and was near her when she passed away. I am told it brought great comfort to her. Liz didn't see poor composition or grainy texture. When she looked at that picture, she saw the priceless memories it represents and felt herself reliving what she loved most with friends she adored.

Please don't let advancing skills, knowledge and subjective quality issues rob you of what photography is really about. Don't forget that it's the emotions in a picture that mean the most and sometimes they are more important than the technical impression we want the image to make. I almost deprived dear friends some much needed solace because of my own worry of my image not being good enough to show them. My photographer's ego didn't appreciate that on a deeper level, it was a great shot.



Pictured above is the set-up crew for the CACCA Photo Exhibit "The World as Seen By Chicagoland Photographers" at the Chicago Cultural Center (L to R). Bob Brandes, Lyle Anderson, Alan Cox, Bill Brown, Mark Southard, John Hewitt and Pat O'Malley, Director of the Renaissance Gallery in the Chicago Cultural Center. The exhibit will be up through March 27, 2011. These outstanding photographs are all by CACCA Camera Club Photographers.

Visit Our Website — www.caccaweb.com



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CACCA Calendar Meetings

Saturday, March 12, 2011
Palos United Methodist Church
121st and Harlem Ave, Palos Heights

Board of Directors' Meeting - 10:30 a.m.
Delegates' Meeting - 12:30 p.m.

Contests

Saturday, March 12, 2011
Interclub Slides, Prints & DPI
Special Category - Slides:
"Arches and /or Angles"
Special Category - DPI: "Power"

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Buying an All-Around Digital Camera for Less Than \$500

By: Jerry Hug

In the last few weeks I had two photographers ask me for suggestions for a lightweight digital camera priced under \$500. One photographer is taking a hiking tour in the mountains in Spain. She has to carry everything on her back, including her photo equipment. The other photographer has a friend who is going on an African Safari and also wants a camera for under \$500.

This was an easy and fun task to help others spend their \$\$ and know that they will be truly happy with the results. I got help from a well known National Geographic Photographer and three of the Top CACCA photographers who win prints of the year and really can and do buy the best equipment made by Canon or Nikon. I also checked the On-Line reviews.

Now you may ask, why would anyone who can afford to buy the best cameras made and also at the same time be an expert photographer want an all around digital camera for under \$500? That is easy to answer. Many times we want an extra camera for in the car, sling bag or just to have with us where ever we go. How many times we have missed that great shot because we did not have a camera with us?

Yes, there are 4 or 5 cameras that fit this request. My combined research turned up what I think is the winner. Nikon and Canon both have similar models but the winner is the **Panasonic Lumix FZ 100**. This is a Super Zoom Digital Camera that is listed for \$375. This camera has a 24x zoom lens built in. That is equivalent to a 25 – 600mm lens on a 35 mm camera. The lens is made by Leica and is super sharp. No dust spots on the sensor to worry about because the lens is not interchangeable. It has a 14.1 CMOS sensor and a 460K dot 3.0 inch tiltable LCD. This lightweight camera has Auto Exposure Bracketing for HDR, Image Stabilization with Program-Aperature-Shutter and Manual modes with a burst rate of 11 fps. Along with still images, add HD video. Is the result as good as a \$4000 high end consumer camera? **No**. But we have software that takes care of noise resulting from shooting low light.

I suggest that this is a camera worth checking out for a lightweight extra inexpensive camera.

(Note: any mention of products or services in this article or anywhere else in the CACCA News does not constitute an endorsement or approval or those items by CACCA)

2010 - 2011 Competition Dates

	10/9	11/13	12/11	1/8	2/12	3/12	4/9	5/14
Interclub Slides, Prints & DPI	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Alteration of Reality DPI		X		X		X		
Photojournalism Slides & Prints	X		X		X			
Nature Slides & Prints	X		X		X			
Portrait Prints & Slides		X		X		X		
CACCA Spring Salon Material Due						X		
Special Category Slides	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

The deadline for entries in the Interclub DPI or CPI and DPI Special Category SCI are both one week before the monthly CACCA meeting.

The Best of Year in the Individual Nature Slide and Print divisions and judging for the Grace DeWolf Award (for diversity in nature photography) in both slides and prints will be March 12. Up to six images that have been in competition during the three competitions may be submitted. Any point count can be entered for three of the six images. The other three must be awards or have earned at least 24 points.

The Len Gordon Creative Award will also be due on March 12.

Special Category Slide Subjects: January – Color White; February – Hanging - Out, Up, Down, On; March – Arches and/or Angles; April – Hand of Man in Nature.

Special Category DPI Subjects: January – Eyes; February – Infrared (In Camera or Simulated on Computer; March – Power; April – Night or Twilight; May – Quilt Like.

Make Your Best Shot: Preparing a Collection of Prints for Display

By: Marie Rakoczy

If you enjoy photography and are a member of a camera club, no doubt the quality of your work has increased over the years. Your friends, relatives, and colleagues at work know of your interest in photography and are entertained by your photos. Maybe it is time to put a collection of your work together for a display at a local library or art gallery – or on that blank wall at home!

I had never thought too much about a "collection" of my prints. The only collection that I have is in a series of print boxes gathering dust in the basement -- it consists of all of the prints that I have entered in competition at Green Briar Camera Club. (You probably have a similar collection). But I had to start thinking about a print collection when I volunteered to work on a Mardi Gras fund- raiser for my high school alma mater.

My husband Joe and I visited New Orleans in March of 2006, just six months after hurricane Katrina. We put a digital show together using Photodex ProShow Gold software, featuring the Big Easy's architecture and famous places, and ending with a segment on the damage that Katrina wrought on the neighborhoods of the Lake Ponchartrain area. I presented it to the Mardi Gras planning committee at the high school and they asked if they could show it -- minus the Katrina section -- on screens in the banquet hall during the dinner. They also asked if I could make some prints from the slide show for display and decoration during the fundraiser event. I was thrilled but a little intimidated by the task.

What images would best lend themselves to such a collection? I first selected strictly Mardi Gras-related images like beads, a jester, and a Bourbon Street lamppost. The planning committee really liked the photos and wanted more images and a wider variety, so I went back to our New Orleans slide show image pool. My theme had expanded to New Orleans in general and would include some architectural details, street scenes, and a couple of related collages. How would I bring all of these images more tightly together into a collection?

When putting together a collection, it is good to start with a unifying theme, but there are other ways to achieve unity in your collection as well. A friend of mine has a wonderful mini-collection of photography in his guest bathroom. The walls are painted a deep red, and all of the photographs

are black and white and are presented in simple frames. They are of different sizes and subjects, but the major "theme" (and the "style," too) is "black and white," and it works beautifully.

I had a good theme going for my collection, but I was concerned that the photos wouldn't harmonize visually with each other the way the black and white photos harmonized in my friend's bathroom. I had posterized some of the images to make them more striking and it occurred to me that posterizing all of the images was a good way to give the collection more unity through uniformity. Posterization reduces the number of colors used in an image and makes the transitions from one color to another more abrupt, creating more drama in the photograph. I learned a lot about the Adobe Photoshop "posterize" filter (a topic for another day!) as I worked on the images and was pleased at how forgiving posterizing is. When you are going to be making a jumbo print, the quality really has to be there, and posterizing frankly allowed me a little bit of a fudge factor. I was pleased with the way the images now looked much more like a "collection" that I could be proud to show.

Since the school planning committee had decided on poster-sized prints for the fund-raiser, I started pricing inexpensive but decent 20" x 30" frames. Ouch! There is no such thing as a decent, inexpensive frame, and when you need to buy ten of them it only gets worse! But then my

husband and George Lepp came to the rescue. Joe reminded me that there was an article that George Lepp had written for Outdoor Photographer magazine last fall on "Making a Faux Mat." Those of you who attended the PSA-sponsored Lepp lecture last November may remember that he referred to this technique near the end of his program. He developed the faux mat to solve the same problem I had – he didn't want to buy frames or mats for his collection, either.

The faux mat visually looks like a real mat. By using the fx icon options in Photoshop, you create an attractive drop shadow in the fillet that gives it depth and pleasantly fools the eye into perceiving the border as a real mat. It is relatively easy to do if you are familiar with Adobe Photoshop. I tried the technique in Elements and one of the steps involving the fx feature did not work, but I'm sure that if you are an experienced Elements user, you should be able to tweak Lepp's instructions and get a similar result. Rather than copy Lepp's article on the technique, here is the website where the article can be found:

<http://www.outdoorphotographer.com/columns/solutions/making-a-faux-mat>.

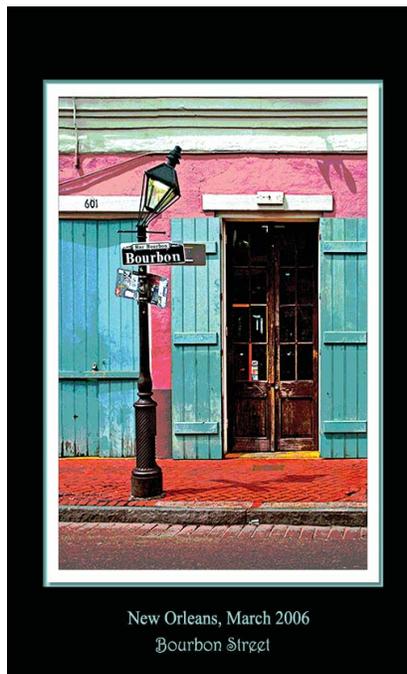
So now I had a "matted" photo, but now where would I print it and how would I mount it? Through the Des Plaines Camera Club, I found out that Costco does a good job on poster prints, so I looked at their website:

http://www.costcophotocenter.com/help/helpcontent/Creating_Poster_and_Collage_Prints.html

The website is a wealth of information, showing poster sizes, the minimum resolution required for each size (an important factor if you want a quality print) and instructions on how to order. A 20" x 30" poster print is \$8.99, but if I bought a print, I would still have to mount it. The answer was to buy a poster board. For \$24.99, Costco prints your photo on a sturdy, high-quality poster board.

I decided to see what one of the Costco posters would look like. I found that my photo file was way too big to email it in using the Costco Photo Center (www.costcophotocenter.com), so I took a flash drive to my local Costco and went to the easy-to-use kiosk. I then paid for the poster and was told it would be ready in about 20 minutes. I was very impressed by the quality of the final product. I have since shown it to a number of people at the Green

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New Orleans, March 2006
Bourbon Street

The Importance of a Model Release

By: Margie Hurwich

Recently I shot a male and a female model with three other photographers. The models were told that the shoot was to be TFCD (Trade for CD), in which the payment for their services would be the images being given to them on a CD for use in the portfolio or personal use. In the past, all of us had worked with the one of the models one of the photographers had worked with the other model.

Prior to shooting, we had the models sign our model releases. These releases ensure that the photographer retains the rights to the images, the images may be sold by the photographer and in some cases, the compensation for the model. In this case; TFCD.

We shot for four hours that day, having the models in many areas of the Illinois Beach Resort and in many different outfits. We all walked away with many photos and were very happy with the day.

Two of the photographers processed images and sent them to the models. The female model then sent a note to both photographers requesting a copy of all of the untouched images, even offering to come to their homes to have them put on her external hard drive. When the photographers stated that they only provide final images, the model stated that she felt used and that she took the day off of work and even had her hair and make up done for the shoot and thought the photographers should provide her with the untouched images.

Through some looking, we have found the female model's website and in fact, she is selling images taken from the first photo shoot in which the photographer

worked with her. In that instance, she had been given untouched images from that photographer, she retouched them herself and is now selling them on her website. Of course this is illegal and the photographer will be contacting the model informing her that it breaks the contract of the model release from the first shoot.

Moral of the story, we photographers need to ensure that when shooting people we obtain releases. In most cases, releases are only needed if the photographer sells the images. However, obtaining a release can ensure the photographer can use and/or publish the images; alter, modify or change the images in any manner the photographer desires; and, use the content for illustration, promotion, art, editorial, advertising, trade, publishing or any other purpose whatsoever. As well, if digital copies are provided to the model, the model agrees not to modify the images and will only use the images for their professional portfolio or personal use. The model also agrees that the images may not be sold or distributed by them unless permission is granted by the photographer by means of a separate release.

This was a definite learning experience for all of us photographers. We can't be too careful to know 1) who we work with by checking out their websites and portfolios; 2) how we distribute our images and 3) what our release states.

To see a copy of my release, go to the CACCA Website at: <http://caccaweb.com> and click on Download. For more information contact me at: margie@margiehurwichphotography.com

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Briar and Des Plaines camera clubs, and members all heartily agree that Costco did a fabulous job of creating my poster print. When you consider how much ink would be required to produce a print of that size, the \$8.99 for just the print is a really good price. Then if you consider that you don't have to mount the print if you get it printed on a board, the \$24.99 seems like a reasonable price, too.

While not archival, the poster print/board is an inexpensive way to present your work. You could decorate a room in your house with impressive reproductions of your favorite photos, and at that price, you could change your collection regularly. Reproducing your work on a poster outside

of a collection also has many uses. You could very easily make poster boards of family collages or individual family members for special occasions. Wouldn't someone just love a giant poster of their new baby or a favorite place they have been? The sturdiness of the board and the attractiveness of the faux mat (should you choose to use it) really enhance the photo and its presentation.

I now have a collection of color prints that are unified by theme (New Orleans), by style (posterization), and by presentation (faux mats on poster board). I have also discovered poster printing. Now get to work on your collection!

Len Gordon Creativity Award

Judging

The judging will occur at the April CACCA meeting. Each candidate must submit five images for consideration. Only images that have been submitted (print, slide, or digital image) in any CACCA sponsored competition are eligible for consideration. These must be in digital form, ready for digital projection, and comply with CACCA rules for DPI images. Three to five judges will be approved by the CACCA Board to view the images and determine the winner from the five images as a whole. If no candidates are available, or the judges do not consider the choices as meritorious, then the honorarium will not be given for that season. Previous winners will not be eligible. Bruce Van Pelt, last year's recipient, will coordinate the competition. Images must be emailed to him at least one week prior to the competition for consideration. His email is: bvp@indianvalley.com

Definition of the Creativity Award

While Len is best remembered for his Alteration of Reality images, this award is also about photographic images that show uniqueness and originality not normally seen in most images. An image can be modified to appear altered in an unusual way, such as seen in the category of Alteration, but an image that may appear realistic qualifies if a high level of imagination and originality are evident. Since these terms are not easily definable in a quantitative manner – just as is the case for any award-winning image – both candidates and judges will have to rely on experience and examples when determining proper choices

Web Picture Contest

By: Robert Brandes

CACCA is running a contest for images to represent CACCA Club members on the CACCA web site.

CACCA has allowed me to run a contest to collect images to be placed on the top of the CACCA Web site. With 2 pictures on every page and over 24 pages we need about 48 winning images. Every member of every club is eligible to enter 1 image into the contest.

Details will be on the website. Click on the "Picture Contest" tab, located on the first page of the website for the full story, rules and information.

The Best Camera is the One That's With You

By: Jerry Hug

Many years ago Joe Rakoczy of Green Briar and Des Plaines told me that he always has a camera with him. Many of his interesting and award winning images have come from having a camera with him. This was before the digital age. Including traveling to and from work.

Now almost all cell phones have cameras. We now have no excuse for not recording that special moment in time. Many great photographers such as Dewitt Jones, Tony Sweet and Dan Burkholder are writing articles, books, videos and giving workshops on iPhone Photography.

During my past three weeks of recovering from sick bay, I purchased my first iPhone and downloaded about 20 iPhone apps (applications). It is like have a camera and digital darkroom in your pocket. CACCA News in May 2011 will feature a special article on iPhoneography.

Our Apologies...

A correction to Joe Falout's January 2011 article, "Creative Thoughts".

The second to the last paragraph should have read "except layers #5 and #7" instead of "except layer #5".

Sorry for the confusion!

CACCA is a member of PSA.

Has your club joined the Photographic Society of America??



www.psa-photo.org

Safe Image Storage Part 1 — In the Field

By: Rich Fisher

Both the newest photography and the most seasoned professional photographer share the same challenge to keep their images safe until they are no longer needed. If a professional loses some critical images, (s)he could lose a client. If a casual photographer loses images, memories from important family events or a trip of a lifetime could be gone. Both are catastrophic, whether personal or professional.

In this series of articles I will outline my strategy to protect my image both in the field and at home. I will start with protecting images in the field and provide a follow-up article which outlines my strategy to protect my images at home and how I "permanently" store them. I will provide my rationale for my choices. Some are based upon personal experience, some are based upon observation, and others are based upon what I believe to be logical thought. However I should point out that none are based upon rigorous test. I do not suggest you follow my system – however I hope that you will understand the basis by which I build a system and the description will provide direction for you to build a system by which you can safely store your images. By the way, please do not panic when I say "build a system" – your system can be as simple as creating a backup copy of your images on a second hard drive or DVD.

There are two conflicting requirements when developing a backup strategy – (1) have I done enough (the risk that I will lose an image is too high) and (2) have I done too much (I am wasting my time). What is the happy medium? There is no best answer, at first you try something and decide if it works well for you. Then you learn more and new options present themselves and you revise your system. Success for me is never losing another image (yes I have lost a few). Being highly successful means never losing another image and not spending any more time or money is necessary backing up my images. Because personally losing image is the worse of the two sins, I tend to include an extra layer of protection in my backup strategy.

Just a word of reality. Eventually you will lose a copy of your images. It is only a question of when, not if. A good backup system will increase your chances to recover the lost images. The best way to assure that your images are safe is to have a backup system that guards against multiple risks – failure of an electronic device(s), theft, fire, lightning strike/power

surge, ...

Okay, enough theory – onto storing images in the field.

The first time I need to address the challenge of keeping my images safe is immediately after I click the shutter. On a day trip, this means some simple things – keeping the camera and cards from walking away with a stranger, not leaving the camera or cards resting on a park bench as I walk off, not letting the camera go for a swim, and not removing the card when the camera is writing data. Also I need to remember not to accidentally reformat the card or erase images that I want. Unless I shoot a lot of images on a day trip, I do not need to back up in the field. I can carry sufficient cards to last for a day.

However on a multi-day trip things change. A few cards often will not have sufficient space to last when I travel. Then I will need to copy the images off my cards onto a backup device(s). Let's look at this challenge – what are the options and the requirements.

1. The system should be simple enough that it does not impact my shooting style.
2. I want a system that is robust and fault tolerant.
3. And most of all, I want my images home safely.

What does this mean? I want my backup system to fit into the way I photograph. I don't want to spend inordinate amounts of time backing up my images. I want to be out photographing, not backing up my images. One is fun, the other is a chore. Ten hours of backup for every hour of photography is onerous (unacceptable and frankly in my opinion, stupid); an hour of backup for a day of photography is not so bad, though I wish it was shorter. By fault tolerant, I mean if a single piece of equipment fails I can continue to photograph with little to no impact on my style.

The first question I ask "is there some way to avoid the necessity of backup". The simplest way to avoid the necessity of backup is to have sufficient cards to last the entire trip. Years ago this may not have been a viable option. However today for a short to medium trip, this is definitely possible. Prices on good, but not top of the lines, are quite reasonable. A 16GB SanDisk Extreme compact flash cards cost \$85 after rebate¹. That is enough space to store 500-600 raw images for a 16-18 megapixel camera or for

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those of us dinosaurs who still remember film that is equivalent to around 15 rolls of film. Larger size cards are even more economical: a 32GB Sandisk Extreme CF card costs \$150 after rebate. If you decide to use cards without an alternative backup method, remember to bring a few extra. The shooting may be better than you had planned, or a card might fail. Enough cards to hold 2,000 images may cost \$300. This compares favorably to the price of a digital wallet or laptop.

If you decide that you need to reuse your cards in the field then you will need to have a method to copy the images on the card to a storage device. When I backup a card I make at least 2, preferable 3, copies of my images. I use multiple copies to protect against the failure of a single unit (or its theft, ...).

While there are numerous storage devices on the market, I will discuss only a few types: digital wallets, laptop computers, and external disk drives. I do not include CDs and DVDs because they are too small. A CD holds only 600 MB (0.6 GB) while a DVD will hold 4.5 GB. You will need over 4 DVDs to hold the equivalent of a single 16B flash card.

A digital wallet is a small device, typically the size of a large point and shoot camera. Commonly a digital wallet will have several slots (or slot with adapter) to read various types of memory cards and houses an internal hard drive. There may or may not be a small LCD screen which allows you to view your images. If you shoot raw make sure that the digital wallet you are considering can read and display the raw files from your camera. In some cases you may be able to update the firmware (software that runs the digital wallet) to support new cameras. Most digital wallets are powered by internal batteries so you can backup in the field, far from an electrical outlet. However frequently the batteries in digital wallet only last for 1-2 downloads before they need to be recharged.

There are several reasons that I do not use digital wallets.

1. I have observed more frequent failures than laptop computers.
2. They are often expensive for what you get. A 160GB Epson P7000 cost \$650. Other manufacturers offer less expensive models.
3. Backup is slow on many models
4. Unless a unit has a port to copy to an external hard drive, each digital wallet provides a single backup copy. In the event of a failure, you may lose your images on the wallet plus your method to backup

images.

In defense of digital wallets, I know a professional photographer whose primary storage mechanism is 2 digital wallets. He has never had a problem with his digital wallets, and wonders why I lug my laptop with me.

The alternative to a digital wallet is a laptop computer (or netbook computer or tablet computer). Generally on these computers you can (1) load software to let you view and sort your images, (2) communicate with the world via internet, email, and social networks, and (3) copy your images to an additional backup device. A laptop, or even a netbook computer, tends to be heavier and larger than a digital wallet – however in my opinion its versatility outweighs the size/weight penalty.

One downside to either a digital wallet or laptop is that internal hard drive in the unit is nearly impossible for the non-computer geek to update. Thus the amount of storage offered by your laptop or digital wallet is determined at the time of purchase and may be insufficient in a few years as cameras megapixels expand. You can augment the storage in a laptop computer (or some digital wallets) by connecting an external hard drive to the unit. External hard drives are fairly small, typically only slightly larger than a smart phone, external hard drives can hold upwards of 1 TB (1,000 GB) data. Because external hard drives are small, lightweight, and relatively inexpensive (1TB costs between \$100 and \$150), it is possible to bring several of them on a trip.

I have a 1+ year old Dell PC with a 500GB internal hard drives. When I travel I bring 3 external Western Digital Passport drives. My work flow is as follows:

1. I copy my compact flash cards to my internal hard drive using a Lexar Express Card 34 reader. An express card read fits into the slot in the side of the laptop. I recommend the Lexar model over other competitive models since the Lexar has longer guide to correctly position the card and avoid bending pins. This card reader is significantly faster than my previous card readers.
2. I copy the downloaded images which are my internal hard drive to each of my external drives.
 - a. Two of the drives remain as archives until I get home
 - b. On one drive I load the images into lightroom and if I have time I edit them.
3. Once I have verified that I have copied my images to the external drives, I use a program

BreezeBrowser to extract the embedded JPG from the raw files on my internal hard drive. There is an embedded JPG (at least for Canon system, and I think for Nikon) which is stored as part of the raw file. I use the JPGs to create a slide show while on the road. If there are no embedded raw files, you can always quickly convert the raw files to JPG.

Because I want to minimize the time I spend backing up images, I plan to upgrade my system (new laptop, new external hard drives) to take advantage of the faster USB 3.0 standard. USB 3.0 appears to be 5 to 10 times faster than the older USB 2.0 standard.

I previously wrote that I want my system to be "fault tolerant". To me this means if any component fails, I can continue to photograph without significantly impacting my style. How do I do this?

1. Redundancy in equipment.
2. Rely upon those I am traveling with.

Where possible I carry duplicate items that can serve the same purpose. I carry 2 (or more) card readers, often with different interface types. I carry 2 or 3 external hard drives and if I were to use a digital wallet I would carry multiple of them. Carrying two computers is often not feasible (plus I often don't have two laptops, and there are weight and size restrictions when flying). If I know the group that I am traveling with, I will check to see if someone else has a laptop that I could use to copy my cards to my external hard drives in case my laptop fails. Though inconvenient this type of equipment sharing could really save your trip (or your friend's trip). If I am traveling alone or cannot rely on someone in the group, I would consider bringing a digital wallet as a backup to my laptop. I also bring extra cards in case I need to finish my trip without a backup device.

There are several other things I do to reduce risks.

1. Before I leave I verify everything works together. Chargers may look similar but may not work with your particular device or battery.
2. I fully test my new hard drives. I fill them to capacity long before I leave. I have heard that if electronics will fail, it will do so very quickly. I have traveled with photographers who brought a new digital wallet and did not fully test it before leaving home. It failed the first few days in Africa. B&H does not deliver to Africa. Test your

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equipment before you go so that you can get it repaired or replaced in time for your trip.

3. When traveling home, put your hard drives (or digital wallet) in different carry-on bags or perhaps one in a carry-on bag and another in your pocket. It would be unfortunate to have your equipment stolen; it would be a tragedy to lose your images too. Michael Reichmann, author of the website Luminous Landscape, reports that when returning from a major trip he puts his very best images on a flash card which he carries in his fanny pack.
4. I verify that my software is up-to-date and synched with the software on my main computer at home. On my laptop I have
 - a. Photoshop and Lightroom. I occasionally load images into Lightroom in the field, thereby saving me time when I return home.
 - b. BreezeBrowser is an excellent program to quickly view images, either raw or JPG, as well as extract the embedded JPG images that are part of raw files.

c. Rescue Pro from DataRescue.com. This is the best software I have found to recover lost images. I have tested the software by formatting a card and recovering all the images on it. I also have found it indispensable when helping friends recovering images. Read the details about the software carefully.

5. I make sure that I have a few extra cards. Cards may fail in the field and become unusable or fail and need to be brought back home to be recovered.

To summarize I provide (1) multiple layers of backup to protect myself against equipment failure, (2) protect against different risks such as electronic failure, theft, fire, ... and (3) identify solution in advance before the trips begins.

There is no one best system. Different backup strategies are required for different trips. The length of the trip, weight restrictions (are you driving, flying, or trekking), and expected frequency of photography, all help guide the choices for the backup strategy in the field.

¹ Note: costs reflect B&H prices after rebate. Rebate is calculated with 2 items being purchased. Prices do not include shipping or sales tax.

Post Card Competition

April 9, 2011

(2)-4X6 prints (Postcards) can be submitted per individual CACCA club member. No fee. Must be turned in on the competition date, Saturday, April 9, 2011.

On the Back of each card should be the Maker's name, Club Name and Title of the Image.

Anything goes, be creative. Last year many of the Post Cards had the usual type set Headline on the Photograph just like real postcards.

Club Representatives: Remind your members of this wonderful opportunity for creative expression. Last year we had over 300 4X6 entries. This is a fun way to get new club members involved in a competition with little cost. Anyone can get a 4X6 photo made with or without a printer.

Suggest you have your own club contest prior so you can see what looks good to your own members.

This has turned out to be the biggest individual CACCA event of the year. For more information contact Mark Southard at: photo.mark@prodigy.net

Comparison of Different Methods to Store Images in the Field		
Laptop	Digital Wallet	Extra Cards
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to the web and email 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small and lightweight 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only review in the camera
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can edit images and enter into LR 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small screen, hard to view details 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easily expandable (buy more)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easily expandable (external hard drives) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possible expandable (external hard drives) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No time required
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moderately fast 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can use in the field 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Great for short trips
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Costly if only for photography 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slow, some are pricey 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easy to view images at 100% to check for dust 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mixed experience on stability 	
Choice for extended trips	Choice if weight is major issue	Choice for short trips

Special Category Digital

I hope everyone is having fun with Photography. A few folks asked about the upcoming Special Categories.

Night or Twilight for April. Twilight is the time of the evening or morning that you can get blue skies. When is that? Go to: <http://www.bluehoursite.com/> and learn all you need to know about when you can find twilight for your location and for any day.

Quilt like is the Special Category for May. A number years ago David Crawforth of Bosie, ID wrote an article on "How To" for PSA's 2003 Convention in Houston, TX. He teaches you how to take an image and make quilt like patterns with Elements or PS. Dave's article on making quilt like photos is just one of many ways to alter an image and produce a collage or montage of patterns. See his file called: "Whack N Stack" on the Download section of the CACCA Website. <http://caccaweb.com/index.php>

Evaluation of HDR (High Dynamic Range) Software

By: Bob Benson

There has been a lot of articles and instruction on HDR photography lately, so I am not going to dwell on the possibilities and drawbacks, except to remind any novice to the technique that starting with three exposures that cover the over and under spectrum, one can compress the combined image's gamut by tone mapping. This allows images that are way beyond the ability of the monitor and printer to display properly to become more of what the eye perceives.

Up until recently, Photomatix software has been the king in this ability. Now that there are many choices, it has become more difficult for one to decide what product is best for them. Just Google HDR Software, and it becomes quite apparent that there are many choices, including free versions. Most of the products even have a full time-limited demo version to evaluate what works for you. Even the new Photoshop Elements 9 has it. Within Elements, select your bracketed images in the project bin and choose File > New > Photomerge Exposure. Obviously it doesn't have all the elaborate features of dedicated tools, but it does the basic job. One new program getting a lot of press these days is HDR Effex Pro by NIK Software. So let us compare that to the standard, Photomatix, and the new version within Photoshop CS5.

Photoshop CS5

Before this version, Photoshop's attempt at tone mapping HDR images was, well, uselessly, and that is putting it nicely. No one used it because it was such a convoluted mess. But now it does a good job, and it added a feature that was not well implemented previously in Photomatix, which was how to handle moving objects in the final image. Competition is a good thing, because this forced the developers of Photomatix to improve some of the feature set. In PS, choose FILE>Automate>Merge to HDR Pro. The windowpane that opens for tone mapping offers you various sliders for control, but the Radius and Strength amount versus the Detail ultimately determines the look of the final image. The Detail slider can determine if you will end up with the grunge effect or a more normal appearance. I found that the PS version took a little more learning curve to understand the controls, where Photomatix was easier to grasp. However, both programs take some effort before you will get a realistic image with detail, rather than the pseudo HDR look that has become so popular. PS has a great feature for control of Ghosts- the resulting effect you get when something is moving in

the multiple exposures taken; just pick the exposure that has the position you desire in the final tonemapped image.

Photomatix, v4

I use the Pro version, which also has a Lightroom plugin. The pro version Plus costs another \$20 so you can get PS and Aperture plugins, but frankly, it is just as easy to run the conversions directly. The plugin version only is \$20 less, but does not allow batch processing, which is a very handy feature when you shoot a lot of HDR. When you first bring the images up, a pre-process pane opens to give choices such as what method to use for alignment (all HDR images need to have this done, even when exposed on a tripod), application of noise reduction or not, remove Ghosting if applicable (automatic or semi-manual, which is new), and chromatic aberration. There are a lot of sliders to use in the tonemapping windowpane, and as I mentioned before, figuring out the best positions will take a little learning. However, once you get something that works, you can save the settings in a preset as a new starting point. (This is a feature in all three programs.)

HDR Effex Pro

What opens up here when you are ready to tonemap looks like a full program with a Lightroom type of appearance. The controls look very sophisticated, but they are easy to learn. One feature not seen in other HDR programs is the ability to apply local controls to specific areas, and to preview the area affected. There are other controls for getting

the image you desire. On the left side are visual presets to choose. (Photomatix 4 has the same preset feature.)

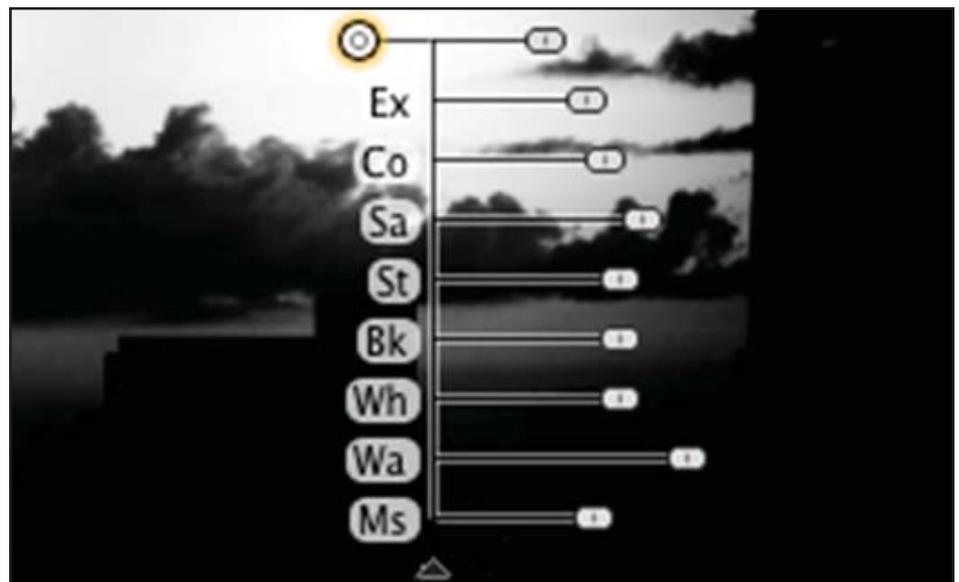
The area you see below, ready for local adjustments, cannot be more finely controlled, other than how large the area that is covered, and using more circles to control other parts of circles. On the surface, this "U Point Technology" seems pretty slick. But I found I could take the resulting tonemapped image into Photoshop (or Elements), and apply the local area adjustments with more precise control. Others may like the ability to get more of what you want within one application.

Conclusion

So the program that is best is the one that personally works for you. If you already own Photoshop that is the obvious starting point. While I think the version within Elements 9 is weak, it is already free, and waiting for your evaluation. I made the images below using the three software programs discussed here for comparison:

It will be very difficult for you to see what I saw when looking at the large versions. All three do a good job, and probably I could have gotten them closer to each other with more time. However, I felt Photoshop lacked the details in the highlights (clouds), and tended to produce more contrasty results, and it was easier to get more of the "grunge" effect, whether desired or not. Photomatix gave me better highlight and shadow details. HDR Effex also gave results better than Photoshop. I did notice

... Continued on Page 9



"U Point Technology"- ability to use localized control circles in many areas.

Continued from Page 8 . . .

a slight sky halo effect in Effex that I might have worked out with more time and practice. In the end, I still preferred the look I get with Photomatix. This ultimately comes down to what works best for you, but price difference may help in the decision.

The upgrade to Photoshop CS5 is \$199. HDR Effex Pro can be discounted to about \$130 to \$140, and Photomatix is usually available with a 15% discount (\$85), and through NAPP, the price is \$75. There is also a light version available for Photomatix at \$39, which lacks some of the controls.



Photoshop



Photomatix



HDR Effex

Slot Canyon Photographer

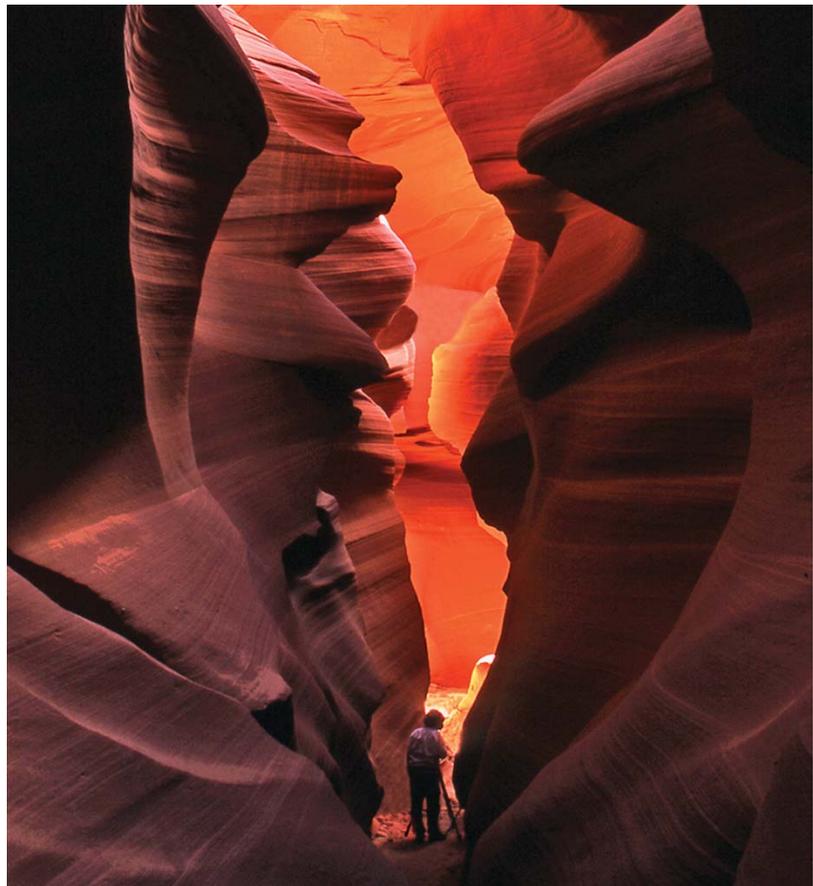
By: Susan Maxwell

Since the slot canyon has a depth of 40 feet below the earth's surface, it was necessary to use a carrying strap on the heavy Bogen tripod to go up and down the ladders. A quick release on the tripod was chosen to move the camera in and out of the carrying case many times while moving forward on the narrow river bed. The canyon floor has a fine powder sand with uneven ground, therefore a small level was used on top of the camera to ensure the correct alignment. The best lens choice for this space was my wide angle Canon zoom that works with my Canon camera. Much of the canyon is dark and the only available light was from the sun peeking through the crack in the earth above, so it was essential to take several long exposures to get the best one with detail in the highlights and the shadows. I began with 8 seconds and increased by one second a few times. Using Photoshop to tweak the colors for impact, the shadows and highlights tool brought up more details in the foreground. The saturation tool was increased by 11, then the levels tool was used only in the mid-range to help bring up some detail surrounding the photographer to create more separation between the man and the background. The finished color image is as close to what the environment

looked like when I was on the river bed called a slot canyon in the Southwest region of the United States.

The southeast corner of Utah and the northeast corner of Arizona has many slot canyons to explore with a group of people. The 2010 movie called 127 hours is about an experienced mountaineer who felt comfortable exploring the slot canyons alone, with an uncomfortable experience for five days. His emergency reminded me that the wilderness must be carefully planned for emergencies, since I drove alone into the Southwest with my camera and had a great time with plenty of water, dehydrated foods, and film in the cooler. Most cell phones do not work underground or in the wilderness either, therefore it is necessary to only go into a slot canyon with experienced guides with advanced reservation for safety and help if needed. The black and white version has been created using Photoshop CS3's Image button > Adjustments button > Black & White filter which made an automatic change, taking out the colors, leaving only the grey panel from black to white.

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What's Clickin'

By: Janet Schleeter

Len Rodeghiero. When I first came to CACCA some 25 years ago, he was there. If you needed a last minute program or judge, he was there. Whatever you needed, Len would always do his best to help. Len ran the Oak Lawn Invitational Salon for years and supported all the numerous camera clubs he belonged to over the years. He was a frequent attendee at CACCA and always pitched in to help. He served as business manager and PJ chairman at various times. Most recently, he was a big part of Blue Island and Oak Lawn. Len didn't have much of a family---we were his family. Photography and friends were very important to him. Oak Lawn Camera Club has planned a tribute to Len on Friday April 8, 7:30 p.m. at their regular meeting place: Oak View Center, 4625 West 110th St., Oak Lawn. One of Len's programs will be shown, then everyone is invited to go out for pizza and beer.

I want to thank Bob Benson for collecting over 200 images to use for the judging program he is putting together. Thanks, too, to all the members who sent him images to use, especially those who were brave enough to send bad images! Kankakee asked me to do a program on judging so I used some of Bob's collection of images. It was a big help. Bob hopes to get all of the sample judging results collected soon and will work on getting a program completed. I see that Sharon Peterson of Green Briar is also touring the circuit with a program on judging. We really need some new judges!

Speaking of judging, Marti Buckley wrote a nice article in their February newsletter on judging. Kudos to Marti for encouraging more members to judge. Garden Camera Club had a very successful show last year at the Chicago Botanic Garden. It was a short-term display of members' images. Well, this year the CBG wants them to display for over a month. The members are already getting their images ready. The show will be up from June 13-July 24. There are sure to be some stunning images! There are plenty of things to photograph at the Chicago Botanic Garden, so get there, see the show, and take some photos.

A number of folks within CACCA have taken photo workshops with Mark Rasmussen, a former member of several of the area clubs. Check out Mark's website lightchasephotography.com for his tour schedule. Mark is a great photographer, and I hear good things about his trips. I've certainly seen some great shots coming from them. Another former member (and former CACCA president) who is worth checking on is John Mariana. John now lives in Georgia. His current workshop schedule is limited, but check out his website for some great books he has published. I'm seriously eyeballing

his "Fine Art Techniques" volumes 1 and 2. John's website is marianaphotography.com.

Beverly Rodgers is doing a great job with the newsletter for Chicago Nature. There is now a beautiful full page of theme photos by members. January's theme was "Chicago on Ice". February's was "Winter in Door County". March's theme will be "Starved Rock Outing". These are photos that are not necessarily competition pictures. It is a nice way to feature member photographs. A couple of other clubs do this, too, that is, feature non-competition images in their newsletters. Also, many have member galleries available for viewing. Being in the newsletter is special, though. You can print it out and give copies to friends and family members.

Jerry Hug, Des Plaines, has been under the weather, but he is on the mend and getting back into the swing of things. He got a Verizon iPhone and has been having fun playing with that. Look for him to soon come out with information on photo apps and maybe even a program. Jerry and his toys!!!!

Don't forget to make a visit to the Chicago Cultural Center to see the fine exhibit coordinated by Mark Southard. It is called "The World as Seen by Chicagoland Photographers". The exhibit showcases the work of 45 photographers representing 20 of our 37 CACCA clubs. The building is located at 78 E. Washington Street, but it is suggested you enter on the Randolph Street side. The show will be in the Renaissance Gallery of the Cultural Center February 18 to March 27, so there is plenty of time for you to get yourself down there. If it's a nice day, take your camera along and enjoy the scenery and skyscrapers of downtown Chicago. There are some great interiors in the Cultural Center worth shooting, too.

The March issue of Lake County's newsletter has a great beginner level article about white balance. There is also a more advanced article that goes beyond the composition "rule of thirds". Ron Meyers discusses the "Golden Ratio" which is something I've never heard about. It "specifically deals with aesthetically pleasing proportions and ratios between two elements." Very interesting, definitely worth going to their website and downloading their March newsletter.

Riverwoods is having an interesting theme competition: camouflage. Mother Nature is good at that, so this should be challenging. It would be a good theme, too, for Jane Kriete's special category slides for next season.

I don't always receive news on who is ill or who has passed away, so please let me know if someone who has been a longtime member of your club or who has been active in CACCA should be mentioned. I did hear

that Art Langner, one-time member of Salt Creek passed away. Green Briar lost a longtime member, Lois Krantz. Lois was a dedicated traveler and gave many programs to area clubs.

Thanks to Rich Fisher, Garden & Riverwoods for emailing a form from Red River Paper to get camera clubs to sign up. Red River will give each club 2 \$35 gift certificates each month. Rich sent this out to the CACCA clubs email list. If it didn't get passed along to the right person, contact me and I will get you the information: Janet Schleeter, email jsphoto222@sbcglobal.net, phone 815-467-5022.

I didn't get a lot of newsletters for some reason, but I did go through the club websites and came up with this calendar of programs.

March:

- 14 – Lombard - Sheri Sparks "Landscape Photography"
- 14 – Des Plaines - Sharon Peterson "Guide to Competition Judging"
- 15 – Foresters - Michael Kobe "Woodland Flowers: My Favorite Locations, Photos, & Techniques"
- 15 – Downers Grove - Barbara Kudrnovsky "Digital Techniques for Nature" and Ruth Smith "Quick Fixes for Nature Images"
- 16 – Wright - Bill Brown on HDR
- 16 – Arlington - Brian Matsumoto from Canon will discuss Canon products
- 21 – Riverwoods - Sharon Peterson "Judging Photo Competitions"
- 22 – Downers Grove - Bruce Van Pelt "Editing Your Images in Camera Raw"

April:

- 4 -- Wright - Joe & Marie Rakoczy program on Colorado Rockies
- 8 -- Oak Lawn - Tribute to Len Rodeghiero
- 11 – Lombard - "How to Improve Photographs After the Shutter Clicks"
- 12 – Elgin Area - Jim Slager "Geo-Tagging"
- 14 – Sandwich - Hank Erdman "Photo Impressionism & Abstracts"
- 14 – Riverwoods - Lou Nettlehorst "Close Up and Personal: The Joy of Macro Photography"
- 19 – Downers Grove - Len Quartetti "Canvas Printing and Stretcher Framing Canvas Prints"

If you don't want to be surprised by a change in schedule, you should check with each club before showing up at any program. Times and places are available at caccaweb.com.