



Twin City Camera Club

ViewFinder

Member: Photographic Society of America
and The Southwestern Michigan Council of Camera Clubs

March 2006 Roll 70, Exposure 3 Editor: John Opie Associate Editor: Dennis Mally

Website: <http://www.twincitycameraclub.com> E-Mail: joscibbler@comcast.net

Want an e-mail version of this ViewFinder? Check with Tom McCall at: viewfinder@twincitycameraclub.com

Select Subjects for Competition Meetings (second Monday of each month):

April	Steeples
May	Fog or Mist (natural, not man-made)
June	Nature (our classic)

Wildflower shoot at Kevin Reed's on Saturday April 29 at 9 am with lunch about noon.

Digital Slide Reminder:

The e-mail address for digital slide submissions: digital@twincitycameraclub.com. Please remember that the image size should be 1024 pixels horizontal and 768 pixels vertical. Save in jpeg format, medium quality. Save the image with the maker's name and image title as its name (Maker's Name-Image Title.jpg), please remember to capitalize first letters and use a dash between name and title. In the body of the e-mail, be certain to include class and titles of all images. Deadline remains the first Monday of each month, one week before competition night.

Take Another Look! From Tom McCall: TCCC Website Gallery now ready.

The new 2005 - 2006 Honor Photograph gallery is up and linked from the club website. <http://www.twincitycameraclub.com/> This is a new main gallery with sub-galleries for each month. We still have a few minor adjustments to make in getting the photo's ready to post but take a look and let me (Tom) know what you think. We've increased the size of the photos and the new gallery has several features that make viewing the images easier including a slide show function that may involve downloading a small java applet if your computer needs it. If an error happens about the maker or titles of any photos, please email Tom the correct information and he will make the corrections asap: tmccall@parrett.net

SWMCCC Activities Reminder: From Dennis Mally, the very active president of SWMCCC: This brief update is to ask you to reserve three dates on your SWMCCC calendar for 2006: April 22, April 30 and July 27-30, 2006. Please pass this information on to your members; A posting in your Club's newsletter and/or website would be most appreciated.

Spring Conference – April 22 – Grand Rapids

A one-day competition and banquet will be hosted by the River City Camera Club. New competition procedures will be employed that should streamline and improve the process. The most important change to take note of for now is that **entries are to be submitted the morning of the event, between 9 and 10am**. All members are encouraged to attend. If you have not attended a competition before, I'm sure you'll find it interesting and enjoyable. It's a great opportunity to see a wide variety of photos from other member clubs. If you can't make it to the event be sure to pass your entries on to someone who will be attending so they can be included in the competition.

Board Meeting — April 30 — Kalamazoo

A meeting of the SWMCCC Board of Directors will be held at Western Michigan University beginning at 1:00 pm. Board meetings are open to all SWMCCC members and you are encouraged to attend to hear first-hand what is planned for the future and to express your opinions. Among other things, at this meeting we will debrief and discuss the Spring Conference held the previous week; especially the new competition procedures that will have been employed there on a trial basis. We will also be voting on a number of issues, so it is important that voting members attend to cast their votes.

Summer Weekend of Photography — July 27, 28, 29, 30 — Hope College, Holland, MI

Once again a great four days of "summer school" are being planned this year, with many popular carryover events as well as new venues and opportunities to learn, practice and improve your photography. The Weekend is organized with a great deal of flexibility to accommodate the needs of everyone. You can come for one day or stay for all four days in accommodations that are provided on campus. If you've not attended one of these weekends before I'm sure you'll be impressed with both the offerings and the setting.

Besides SWMCCC's *Counsellor* newsletter, check out <http://www.swmccc.org/> as this website has been recreated and contains up-to-date news on SWMCCC happenings including the spring competition and the Summer Weekend of Photography and Digital Imaging. The website is up and more information is being added weekly so check it often.

Program Night, March 27, 2006

John Dykstra's super slide show, "Creation's Harmony," was the centerpiece of the night: "how nature fits together." With superb images, great music, his own narrative, John Dykstra, a professional photographer, used slides and digital images to show America's landscape as "living poetry." The Grand Canyon became a "giant canvas," as well as the tufas of California's Mono Lake, Yosemite Valley, the Smoky Mountains, the Everglades, Pacific coastline, the trees of autumn, winter and ice, pine forests, even swampy bogs, and remarkable close-ups of insects, spiders, butterflies, and many, many flowers, including the carnivorous species.

John then described some of his digital insights, many of which were similar to Victor Coar's two nights earlier:

The key is the histogram. Get the histogram right and your image will be right!

Three keys to RAW:

- 1) Use Shadow/Highlights in a layer
- 2) Use Curves: drag left down, drag right up.
- 3) When you use the Unsharp Mask, start with Amount of 100%, Radius of 0.9-1.3, and Threshold of 3 or less. Then manage sharpness to your satisfaction, remembering that your print will be a little softer than what is on your screen (Your editor's experience, also).

Save as psd. Then crop. (Editor's note: some others disagree: crop first to avoid impact of pixels that won't be used anyhow.)

John Dykstra gave us a particularly good program night. Let's have him back. His website is: www.johndykstraphotography.com Also check the website for his photo trip in September to the Pacific Northwest.

* * * * *

Great images about Space! Different every day. Go to <http://antwrp.gsfc.nasa.gov/apod/astropix.html>



Barred Spiral Milky Way

Illustration Credit: R. Hurt ([SSC](#)), [JPL-Caltech](#), [NASA](#)
Survey Credit: [GLIMPSE Team](#)

Explanation: [A recent survey of stars](#) conducted with the Spitzer Space Telescope is convincing astronomers that our Milky Way Galaxy is not just your ordinary [spiral galaxy](#) anymore. Looking out [from within](#) the Galaxy's disk, the true structure of [the Milky Way](#) is difficult to discern. However, the penetrating infrared census of about 30 million stars indicates that the Galaxy is distinguished by a very large central bar some 27,000 light-years long. In fact, from a vantage point that viewed our galaxy face-on, astronomers in distant galaxies would likely see a [striking barred](#) spiral galaxy suggested in [this artist's illustration](#). While previous investigations have [identified](#) a small central barred structure, the new results indicate that the Milky Way's large bar would make about a 45 degree angle with a line joining the Sun and the Galaxy's center. [DON'T PANIC](#) ... astronomers still [place the Sun](#) beyond the central bar region, about a third of the way in from [the Milky Way's](#) outer edge.

From Opie: OK, that one above is an artist's conception, but most images are either true-color or false-color telescope images, including a large number from the Hubble Space Telescope that are truly remarkable. I chose this one because it reproduces in mono better than many of the color images on the website. Happy viewing. If you receive this via e-mail, you may be able to click on the blue items above to go directly to the appropriate website. Typical for each different day on this NASA site.

Victor Coar Demonstrates Features of Photoshop Elements in TCCC Workshop on March 25

About twenty people, both TCCC members and non-members, became well informed about the basic steps about how to proceed (workflow) in Photoshop Elements 2. Victor Coar, TCCC member and a professional photographer at Johnson-Rauhoff, did a detailed presentation on our big screen. Victor asked the question, "What did you originally see when you snapped your image?" The fundamental question, whether film or digital, was how to recapture that original picture in your mind, by way of a digital file, in a print, a website image, a slide, or presentation.

Victor emphasized that your original image should be kept original by creating a Layer for each of your activities. This will create big files, but they are worth saving since layers allow you to keep the original image and make different changes later. The following is a summary of my notes, which I hope are close to what Victor actually said. The below reads more complicated than it actually is, once you've tried it out a couple of times:

With an image brought up in Photoshop:

1) First go to Layers, then New Adjustment Layer, then to Levels and its Channels, that is, the Histogram. This is the primary. Match the Sliders (little triangles) with the left and right ends of your image, then use the center slider to bring the image closest to your original idea. If your image tends to be light, the histogram will be larger at the left; if your image tends toward dark, the histogram will be larger at the right.

2) Go to Hue and Saturation in a New Adjustment Layer. Go all the way to the right on the Saturation slider, which will show you an extreme that is unacceptable, then slide slowly left for a rich image that is closest to what you remember.

One important key when you have several layers is to go to the Opacity box and slider, on your Layers box on the right side, and find the best percentage, which could be 20% or 100% or most anything in between.

3) Go to Curves in a New Adjustment Layer, where you will see a straight line at 45 degrees. Drag up the lower half for a lighter image; drag down the upper half for a darker image. Only a slight drag makes a big difference.

Save a copy of all your work on another hard drive or a CD or DVD. Victor stressed the importance of saving both your original image from the camera or scanner, then the Photoshop adjustments you have made in another image. It is also important to have a copy of your work in another location in case of damage from fire, water, etc.

At this point you can resize your image for the print size you want. Victor recommends resizing no more than 200%.

4) Sharpening: wait until you are ready to print and have resized your image. Create a copy of the Background Level so as not to affect your original image, which is on Background. Go to Filters, then Sharpen, then Unsharp Mask, where you can experiment with the sliders. Be certain to check Preview. Some folks suggest starting with an Amount slider of 100%, the Radius at 1.0 pixels or less, and Threshold at 3 or less.

Now you can print. Victor emphasized how subjective and personal the results will be. The above items are tools to meet your personal goals.

He reminded everyone to make certain they have calibrated their monitor to their printer, using the calibration program supplied with the computer, as well as third-party calibration programs. Also be careful to match your paper selection.

Other hints from Victor Coar:

- Clean up details early in your procedure, like removing specks or blemishes, telephone poles, etc, with the Clone tool.
- Best bit depth (under Image drop down to Mode) is 16 bit, but this may not work with many programs and procedures. 8 bit works just fine and most of the time looks no different in a print.
- When you use Brushes or other tools, remember that black reveals, white conceals.
- If you need to print multiple images on the same blank sheet, create a file for the size you want, pick up the images you want, resize and put each image on a layer and drag it from the layer to the sheet.
- Remember, remember, remember to use Layers for all experimentation and changes in order to preserve your original image for future use. Otherwise the original image will be gone under the changes, and cannot be recovered. Make copies!

Victor Coar gave out a CD of many of these hints, and other items, to the attendees of the workshop. Items on the CD included: Custom Vignette, Expanding Dynamic Range, Hand Coloring, Improving Tone and Contrast, Loading (new) Brushes, Using Borders, and best of all (for your editor) Toned Black and White.

Confused? It's probably your editor's fault, and I wrote something wrong. Correct me, or add stuff, at my e-mail.