



IN FOCUS



Member

A Publication of

THE SANDHILLS PHOTOGRAPHY CLUB P.O. Box 763, Southern Pines, NC 28388

Enriching the North Carolina Sandhills through Photography

VOL XXV, NUMBER 4

April 2009

NEXT MEETING:

Monday, April 13, 7:00 PM

Christ Fellowship Church

Midland Road at the corner of Pee Dee Road

Southern Pines, NC

Program: **Digital competition - Animals**

COMPETITIONS: Brady Smith

April's club meeting, held on the 13th, will be our next photo competition. It will be a **Digital** competition on the topic of **Animals**. Submitted images can include animals of all sorts: from the wild, in captivity, and family pets. Insects are not included (even if they are family pets). Regular quantity and time rules apply: up to **two (2) entries** per entrant, taken within the last **three (3) years**. As previously announced, Don McKenzie (www.mckenziephotography.com) will be our judge.

Once again, here are the rules for the competition:

1. Size your image so that the shortest dimension is a minimum of 768 pixels (1024 x 768 pixels is okay, but 768 x 576 is not. The smaller of the two numbers should be 768 or larger).
2. File type should be JPEG or TIFF and should not exceed 2MB in size, if you can help it.
3. You must include the following information in your email:
Image title
Your name
Which class you're in (A or B)
4. You may also include a brief description of the photo.
5. Please submit your photos to the competition chairman email address:
competitions@sandhillsphtoclub.org.
6. You must send them before midnight on **April 6** to be included in the competition. This deadline is firm. Late entries will not be accepted.
7. You may also give/send me a copy of your submissions on a disc or flash drive (but please don't wait until midnight on the 6th to give it to me!).

Our first **Online** photo competition is underway. This will be a completely **Open** competition with **no time limit** for how long ago photos were taken. You will be able to submit **two (2) images**, which will be judged during the month of September by

PRESIDENT'S RAMBLINGS: Don Hiscott

Some of you know that I was born and raised in Canada, the home of hockey. Hockey players are a tough, rugged bunch of guys. They play with teeth knocked out and with broken noses. Not much seems to stop them.

Photographers may not be quite as tough, but I know that 14 of our members braved the elements and went to the Zoo. I understand that conditions were far from ideal (a gross understatement), with the cold and the rain. Congratulations to all you brave souls!!!

It's unfortunate that the weather turned so bad after all the anticipation and the great planning on Len Barnard's part.

Brenda and I joined Jill Margeson, Chris Christiansen, Jim Smith and Gary Magee in Charlotte at the Carolinas Nature Photographers Annual meeting. We experienced rainy weather too, but we had the luxury of being indoors.

Frans Lanting was the "keynote" presenter. On Friday evening his title was "Every Picture Tells a Story." Saturday he presented "Life: A Journey Through Time." It was great to hear someone we all were familiar with through *Outdoor Photographer*.

The highlight of the meeting for me was the presentation by Bill Fornthey on "America From 500 Feet II." This was a follow-up of his previous book "America From 500 Feet." He showed us remarkable photographs and talked of his Christian experience after conquering cancer more than 30 years ago. It was a very appropriate presentation on Sunday morning.

For those of you who are not members of CNPA, I recommend it highly. Next year's annual meeting will be in Greensboro. George Lepp will be the featured speaker.

About Bob Biamonte

Bob Biamonte has had bypass surgery and is resting at home. His wife tells me that he is doing well and that he has lost 11 pounds. He has Physical Therapy three times a week. We wish him a speedy recovery and a quick return to our meetings.

all club members who wish to judge. Winners will be announced during the October club meeting. You may start sending me images now, although those images will not be shown until later.

To send images, just use the same procedure outlined above for competitions. Just be sure you put Online Competition in the subject or the email and don't send them with images for one of the other competitions. *Again, please note that images will not be viewable on the website until **September 1**.*

Looking ahead... June's competition topic is **Travel** and will be a **Print** competition held on **June 8**. Images should capture the feeling of a time and place and portray a land, a people or a culture in its natural state. Travel images have no geographical limitations: they are not limited to other lands, and may include those of domestic situations. Titles with the name of the place are encouraged. For this competition, we are still allowing only two (2) images per member, but they can be up to five (5) years old. **HAPPY SNAPPING!**

PROGRAMS: Len Barnard

May 11: Frank Pierce, owner of *A Southern Studio*, will present a program on preparing for and doing a magazine photo shoot with thoughts and ideas toward our upcoming magazine photo competition. Frank will be the featured artist at the Artist Alley on Friday, April 3. Frank has been involved in the art field since he was 16. He is proficient in oils, watercolors, and acrylic and currently has a photography and graphic design studio and custom frame shop at 275a NE Broad Street. As an extra benefit for our club members he will start giving a 10 percent discount to all Sandhills Photography Club Members. At this point just tell him you are member to receive the discount. In the future we hope to develop a way that will allow him to know our members.

July 13: Tina Wrona of *Tina Wrona Photography* will present a program that will give parents and grandparents pointers on taking quality family photos—not just snap shots.

September 14: Scott Zielger, author, will discuss photography related to his published photography book.

November 9: "Take a Second Look with George." More info later but save any photos that you want help in improving.

WORKSHOPS: Bill Matthews

Tone Mapping, HDR and related digital darkroom techniques with Glenn Gilchrist will be presented at the Sandhills Community College Landscape Gardening Center on **Saturday, April 4 (please note change from original date)**. Glenn will give an overview of the latest shooting and digital darkroom techniques that allow you to capture a wider range of light values while providing greater control over local contrast, resulting in images that display a rich and greatly enhanced tonal range. Glenn provides more detail in his article attached to this newsletter. For more information contact Glenn at glenngilchrist@nc.rr.com or 910-725-0112.

Enhancing One's Photographic Creativity with Mike Stratil is scheduled for Saturday, **May 16**, at the Sandhills Community College Landscape Gardening Center, 9:30 – 11:30 am. This workshop will explore the dependence of the quality of photographic work on the imagination, symbolism and emotional message that the photographer brings to the task. You may find more details in Mike's announcement included with this newsletter, or call Mike at 949-6518 for more information. A sign-up sheet will be circulated at the April meetings.

Understanding the RAW Digital Camera Image Format and Getting Your Monitor Calibrated with the SPC Projector, a two-part workshop with Bill Matthews, is scheduled for Saturday, **June 27**, 9:30 – 11:30, at the Sandhills Community College Landscape Gardening Center. Details to follow.

A Photoshop Workshop at SCC with Bob Biamonte is being planned for September or October.

LIGHTROOM PROGRAM: Don Hiscott

Elsewhere in this newsletter you saw the information about Bob Biamonte's surgery.

Bob and Dave Nicoll had planned to teach Lightroom at Sandhills Community College this spring. Because of Bob's surgery this has changed. I talked with Dave Nicoll and he told me that he would be willing to run a Lightroom Class at his studio. He would charge \$50 an hour and could accommodate five people. He also told me that five sessions would be enough to get us well acquainted with Lightroom. If anyone is interested please let me know and I will see if we can make it work.

EXHIBITIONS: Betty Hendrix

Appalachian Physical Therapy at Olmstead Village in Pinehurst will be displaying the photographs of our club during May and June. Twenty-two of our members will be showing about 44 works in all. The list of photographers is set. All work *must* be properly framed and wired prior to delivery. Anything delivered improperly will be omitted from the show.

Please e-mail or call Betty Hendrix: bettyhendrix@charter.net or 949-4131 if you have any questions.

SPRING FIELD TRIP: Brenda Hiscott

Things are coming together for the Spring Trip. By the time you read this newsletter we will have passed the April 1 date for the Hilton (formerly the Sheraton). I'm sure they will still honor the discounted rate of \$115. It will be helpful in our planning if you will let me know that you have made your reservation. You can either call us at 295-9544 or send an email at hiscott@nc.rr.com.

We have talked with Ed Hall, the President of the Coastal Photo Club. Some of their members will meet with us at our hotel on Monday evening, the 27th, at 7:00pm. They will be able to give suggestions of places to see and photograph. He recommends a trip to Ft. Macon, about an hour from New Bern. Beaufort is another of his favorite places to photograph. He and his wife like the restaurants as well. Don and I have been to Beaufort and we would echo Ed's recommendation.

If you not already decided to join us in New Bern from **April 27 - 29**, I hope you'll come to enjoy the outing.

MEMBERSHIP: Alison Earl

As of March 16, we now have 81 paid members, along with our 2 honorary members. Our three newest members are **Jeffrey Gilbert, John Osmar and Barbara Milson:**

John Osmar (AKA John or OZ) describes himself as a beginner, with his Kodak Easy-Share camera. His favorite photographic subjects are his son and nature and he hopes to gain a higher skill level through his membership. He has been in the area for two years in May, coming from Akron, Ohio, about 30 minutes south of Cleveland.

Jeff Gilbert considers himself a beginner and has a Nikon D-50. His favorite subjects are children and any outdoors. He hopes to gain some better technique and technical know how from our club. He has been in the area for four years, moving from the Pittsburgh area.

We just received **Barbara Milson's** information in the mail. She has several years of photo experience but is definitely still learning. She is interested in all types of photography and would like to learn more about how to use her camera.

Welcome Jeffrey, John and Barbara!

As mentioned in last month's article, attached to your notice that this newsletter was ready online is the PDF with all members' names, addresses, phone numbers, and email addresses. Please let me know if there are any corrections at theearls@nc.rr.com.

LIBRARY: Gisela Danielson

Our library is growing and easy to use. You may borrow books and/or DVD/CDs. There is a link to the Library Index on our Website: <http://www.sandhillsphtoclub.org/>

Place your order via email, gdanielson@nc.rr.com or call me, 673-0521. Your order will be ready for pick-up at the next SPC meeting.

Donations of gently used and fairly recent photography related books are always appreciated. Activity for March was dismal. Please take advantage of a great resource by checking out the index under the library link.

PHOTO EQUIPMENT CLASSIFIED

FOR SALE: Ballhead, Bogen/Manfrotto Model 3262QR ballhead with integrated quick-release platform, and a mating camera mount platform. Condition is excellent. Asking \$60.00. Contact Jim Smith at smithjf@aol.com.

If you wish to buy or sell photo equipment, send your ad to **Ann Stephens** at astephens95@nc.rr.com. Ads run for two issues unless you request otherwise.

REFRESHMENT ASSIGNMENTS: Bill Sheppard

The following are refreshment providers for the next three months:

April **June White & Donna Ford**
May **Lori Fischler**
June **Alison Earl & Kathy Green**

MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORT: Denis Smetana**Monthly Financial Report Regular Account**

February 1, 2009	Starting balance	\$5,514.44
	Expenses	-\$200.00
	Income	\$80.19
February 27, 2009	Final balance	\$5,394.63

Expense was for our annual gift to the SCC Foundation for a one-year scholarship.

Income was from '09 dues from two members and interest on our checking account.

Monthly Financial Report Projects Account

The Projects Account was folded into the Regular Account but a separate accounting will be kept. Thus the actual balance of the Regular Account (including the Projects Account) is \$5,557.28.

There was no other activity in our projects account so the beginning and end balance was the same at \$162.65.

2009 SPC Board Members

President	Don Hiscott	295-9544
Vice President	Len Barnard	673-2135
Secretary	Donna Ford	295-5301
Treasurer	Denis Smetana	944-8124
Past President	Bill Matthews	692-8254
Programs	Len Barnard	673-2135
Competition	Brady Smith	947-3946
Exhibitions	Betty Hendrix	949-4131
Field Trips	Brenda Hiscott (Spring)	295-9544
	Kathy Green (Fall)	585-0190
Day Trips	Jill Margeson	673-1497
Hospitality	Bill Sheppard	944-1219
Publicity	Ann Stokes	235-0950
Workshops	Bill Matthews	692-8254
Newsletter	Ann Stephens	673-2091
Library	Gisela Danielson	673-0521
PSA Rep	Jim Smith	673-4744
Membership	Allison Earl	215-0316
Website	John Wynton	673-1084

Photo Tip of the Month: Glenn Gilchrist

Glenn Gilchrist has created a site on Flickr as a prototype for use of the Sandhills Photography Club Members. To see some club photos that have already been uploaded go to:

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/sandhillsphotoclub/>

When this site opens, you will see whatever pictures that have been uploaded and available for viewing. You can click on any picture to see a larger version of it, or click the Slideshow icon on the upper right of the screen. If you would like to display your photos here, follow the instructions below:

At top right, click on sign in. In the next screen you can sign in as: Yahoo User ID: sandhillsphotoclub
 Password: spc28387 (lower case letters)

Caution: If you already have a Yahoo address, you must click on the tab that allows you to sign as shown above. From here it is basically follow their instructions to upload pictures. **Use JPG format, and size them just like you do the photos you submit for club contests.** When the picture is displayed, you will see an option to delete it if you have made a mistake. When you are done, click Sign Out on the upper right of the screen so that you go back to the view only mode.

One word of caution, be sure to put a copyright on your photos, keeping in mind that unscrupulous people can always make a copy if they so desire. There are tens of millions of photos on Flickr, so the chance of yours being used illegally is probably pretty small, but keep it in mind. You might want to keep your big money shot off the Internet.

It is a place where members can upload photos for display. Later, if there is sufficient interest, the photos can be organized into sets. For example, there could be a set of photos from a recent field trip, or a photo of the month section. There are many possibilities.

If you have a photo tip to share with SPC members in the newsletter, please e-mail to Ann Stephens at Astephens95@nc.rr.com

FALL FIELD TRIP: Kathy Green (klg1309@aol.com 910-585-0190)

Below are three locations for a possible Fall Field Trip. Please review them and decide where you would most like to go. I need to make reservations soon since fall is a popular time. We will take a vote at the next meeting in April.

Choice #1 Gatlinburg, Tennessee

Photo ops and attractions;

- Great Smokey Mountains National Park.
- Gatlinburg Craftsmen's Fair - Arts and entertainment. Over 200 booths with Artisans on hand demonstrating their skills. Live music and food.
- Harvest Festival - Arts, entertainment and history. Food and music.
- The Great Smokey Mountain Arts and Crafts Community. The largest group of independent artisans in North America. Located on an 8-mile loop in Gatlinburg.
- Accessible by Trolley for \$1.00 a day.
- Ripley's Aquarium
- Arrowmont school of Arts and Crafts gallery exhibit Oct 8-25
- Ober Gatlinburg - Ski Resort and Amusement Park. Indoor ice-skating, restaurant and shops. Accessible by the newest and largest tramway. They also have a Skylift with great photo opportunities.
- Trolleys are available to go to Dollywood and other locations in the area and around town.
- Will try to arrange meeting with local photo club.

Where to stay: Quality Inn Creekside Resort. Located beside Le Conte Creek. Rooms with private balconies just 10 feet from the creek. Gas fireplaces. Deluxe Continental breakfast and complimentary garage parking. Trolley service at the driveway. Five premier restaurants around the corner from the hotel. Special pre-arranged group rate of \$86.66 per night for a room with 2 queen beds.

Distance: 296 miles, 5 hrs and 33min.

Choice #2 Cherokee, NC

Photo ops and attractions:

- Blue Ridge Parkway
- Great Smokey Mountains National Park
- Mingo Falls - 120 ft tall. 0.4 mile hike
- Great Smokey Mountain Railroad. Depots in Dillsboro and Bryson City. Great way to see the fall colors. Open and closed cars with lunches available.
- Museum of the Cherokee Indian
- Oconaluftee Indian Village
- Qualla Arts and Crafts Mutual
- Smokey Mountain Gold and Ruby Mine
- Mountain Farm Museum and Grist Mill
- Nantahala River

Hotel to be determined. Will try to arrange meeting with local photo club.

Distance: 257 miles, 4 hrs 46 min.

Choice #3 Litchfield / Myrtle Beach / Pawley's Island

Photo ops and attractions

- Brookgreen Gardens is large and beautiful for photographing, 20 minutes away.
- Local beaches
- Bike rental and bike trails
- 8 minutes from Myrtle Beach
- Minutes to a variety of restaurants and shopping
- Miniature golf
- Aquarium
- Active CNPA photo group in Myrtle Beach for a possible meeting to get suggestions for good places to visit.

Where to stay: Litchfield Beach and Golf Resort

- 2-4 bedroom condos \$129.00 with a full kitchen
- Seaside 1 bedroom suite \$74.00
- Villa with 4 bedrooms on the golf course \$119.00
- Breakfast \$9.00 at the resort

Distance 3 hrs 30 min.

NEXT BOARD MEETING:
Thursday, April 16, 3:00,
Sandhills Community
College Horticultural
Gardens Visitor's Center.

SPC WEBSITE:

www.sandhillsphtoclub.org

SPC JUDGE & SPEAKER WINS BIG: Jim Smith

Scott Hotaling, who was our speaker in September and Judge in October recently won several prizes for his photography. The January 2009 issue of “Wildlife in North Carolina” published the stunning results of their 2008 Photo Competition. In the category of *PEAKS, VALLEYS & MOUNTAINS*, Scott took the **FIRST PLACE** and an **HONORABLE MENTION**. In the category of *REPTILES & AMPHIBIANS*, he took **SECOND PLACE**, and in the category of *WILD PLANTS* he won an **HONORABLE MENTION**. Scott’s home is in Cullowhee, NC, and he is currently a student at NC State University in Raleigh. Congratulations to Scott from SPC!

MARGESON PLACES FIRST: Ann Stokes

SPC Member **Jill Margeson** of Seven Lakes took First Place in the Macro/Close-up Category of the Members’ Competition held during the annual conference of the Carolinas Nature Photography Association (CNPA) in Charlotte, NC, in March. Margeson’s image of a butterfly (see below) entitled “Black Swallowtail” was her second CNPA win. In the Triangle Region’s monthly digital competition in September 2008, she took Second Place with “Galapagos Sea Lion at Rest.”

Margeson, inspired by her dad Chris Christiansen, has been a photographer all her life. During her childhood she was her dad’s assistant, carrying cameras, lenses, and tripods and helping develop film in his darkroom. As an adult, motherhood interrupted her focus on photography, and after a move during which the box that contained all her photographs was lost, she decided to stop taking pictures. She explains, “I felt it was important to enjoy the moment rather than depend on memories based on my photographs.” Read more about Jill in *The Pilot*.

Fearless leader at work



Photo by Glenn Gilchrist

Neither rain nor 40-degree temperatures deterred Program Chairman **Len Barnard** from leading a group of 14 SPC members during the N.C. Zoological Park Workshop on March 14 with Vinny Colucci and Melissa Southern in Asheboro.



Tone Mapping, HDR & Related Digital Darkroom Techniques by Glenn Gilchrist

Have you ever photographed a beautiful landscape, only to find that the picture you took has blown out highlights, white skies, flat tones and none of the drama of the original scene? Have you ever photographed a scene with both indoor and outdoor components, where you had to compromise your exposure and choose to lose detail in one of the other? Have you ever been at the right place but the wrong time – a beautiful scene at high noon with harsh, high contrast light?

All of these are examples of photography's greatest limitation, dynamic range. Dynamic range is the range of light intensity over which small increments can be discerned by the human eye, film, a digital sensor, and displayed on a monitor or printed. In every case, the human eye wins. The eye can see a far wider range of light than any device, often resulting in images that disappoint.

While camera, monitor and printer manufacturers race to expand the range of their equipment, software developers bring us two alternatives – exposure blending and High Dynamic Range (HDR) photography with Tone Mapping. Exposure blending, which has been around the longest, allows you to stack bracketed exposures as layers, and then use simple Photoshop masking to construct an image using the best from each. It is interesting to note that this procedure has been used successfully in the darkroom as well. HDR, on the other hand, creates a computerized “image” that includes all of the tones from the bracketed images – an image with such a wide dynamic range that it cannot even be displayed on the screen. You then use tone mapping sliders and settings provided in the software to map the image back to something you can work with. This all sounds very complicated, but is actually quite simple.

HDR photography has generated almost as much controversy among some photographers as did the onslaught of digital technology. HDR photography can produce very natural looking images, and can also be used to create unnatural looking images and a number of special effects. Like anything else, it can be used and it can be misused. But one thing it cannot do is make a poorly composed photograph into something other than a poorly composed photograph.

If you would like to see some examples of HDR photography, check out the galleries at <http://www.tonysweet.com>, <http://www.hdrsoft.com/examples.html> and a few at my site at <http://glenn.zenfolio.com>. If you Google “HDR Galleries” you will find many more – but beware, they will cover the entire gamut of the “overdone” controversy. Remember though, they are only pixels!

Join us at our workshop on **April 4** where we will take several images through the entire process. We will use Photomatrix, which is available in a free trial version at <http://www.hdrsoft.com>.

For more information contact Glenn at glenngilchrist@nc.rr.com or 910-725-0112.



Enhancing One's Photographic Creativity with Mike Stratil Saturday, May 16, 9:30-11:30 am

This workshop will focus on techniques for enhancing the creative aspects of one's photography. It will be guided by the following principles:

- (a) As an art form, the quality of photographic work depends partly on the imagination, symbolism, and emotional message that the photographer brings to the task;
- (b) These capacities are often suppressed by deeply ingrained habits and social pressures;
- (c) The individual photographer can learn to release these suppressed capacities by participating in activities that promote self-awareness and artistic spontaneity.

After an opening discussion of these ideas, the workshop will move to active participation. Attendees will use finger painting to express their deeper thoughts and feelings about selected photographs. Attendees are asked to bring the following materials:

- (1) One of the favorite photographs they have taken (at least 8.5" x 11" in size)
- (2) Two magazine photographs that they find particularly interesting, stimulating, educationally informing, or emotionally arousing
- (3) A set of finger paints
See: <http://www.michaels.com/art/online/displayProductPage?productNum=kd0288>
- (4) At least 6 sheets of paper suitable for finger painting (e.g., copier/coated inkjet paper at least 8.5" x 11" in size). They should wear informal clothing, and they should arrive in a spirit of childlike openness and enthusiasm.