

Housatonic Camera Club

MARCH 2009



The Lifelong
Learning Center
(Wagner Building)
Noble Horizons
17 Cobble Road
Salisbury, CT 06068

NEXT MEETING - TUESDAY, MARCH 17TH

The President's Corner

Smelling the Roses and Other Clichés

First, thank you all who have sent me best wishes I am recovering well and hope to be up and about soon. For those who had not heard, I underwent by-pass surgery a few weeks ago. It was a shock, and surprise as I had not been, except for the occasional cold or flu, been seriously sick a day in my life. I blame it all on genetic predisposition.

Anyway, now that it is over and I am recovering, thoughts return to photography and the club. I have done a few outings to do doctors' appointments and more various lab tests and have to keep reminding myself to have my camera with me. I am not yet up to toting my bag with me with all my gear but now that I have fresh new batteries for my small, pocket digital I try and grab that whenever I leave the house. One thing I miss about "the good old days" is the non-reliance on batteries. A camera would work anytime, all the time. Even meters would work if they used self-powering selenium cells for readings. Now, it is total reliance on batteries and I had gotten into some bad battery habits. Despite purchasing additional batteries and even marking the good ones I always seemed to have the weakest battery in my camera and have missed some potentially good shots because as I was about to snap the shot my lens would retract and the camera shut down. I finally got some good batteries and threw all the marginal ones away. The other point with batteries is, dispose of them properly. Even the small lithium ion batteries can be potentially dangerous in a landfill or incinerator.

So I have been carrying around my eight year old pocket Canon with only 2 megapixels which has taken some excellent photographs for me. Don't discount a camera's ability based on its megapixel rating. There are several factors involved. Much is made of how many MP (megapixels) a camera has but it is a bit more involved than that. It is also a factor of the CCD, which is the actual image-sensing device. The larger the CCD the better the ability to capture light. Sort of like going from a 35 mm negative to a 120 or 4x5. So, it is a combination of MP's and CCD size that will determine the quality of an image and CCD size is something not generally advertised. The manufacturers have developed the ability to cram many MP's onto a CCD but it is much more expensive to produce fewer CCD's per wafer to increase their size. And it is CCD size which will ultimately affect the quality of an image. Image "noise" and the quality of an image in terms of tonality range also depend on size. With my 2 MP Canon, which has a decent size CCD, I have taken photos capable of 8x10 prints which you would be hard pressed to tell from a 6 or 10 MP image.

The seriousness of my surgery has been sinking in and with that fact in mind I have been looking at the world with fresh eyes. After leaving the hospital after seven days I felt as if I had been Tibet for seven years. I saw things from a slightly different viewpoint and have been trying to reflect that attitude in either photographs I have taken or will take. So keep those cameras handy and keep snapping.

At our March meeting, club member Rita Mathews will speak on "The Wild I Have Known". Looking at her bio you can see she has certainly known many. Rita is a wonderful photographer (and story teller) and will surely entertain and educate during her program.

Rita W. Mathews, Ph.D.

- Retired Research Professor NYU Medical Center
- National Science Foundation Fellowship
- Investigator, Marine Biological Laboratory, Woods Hole
- Author of 26 Scientific papers and United States Patent # 4,952,675
- Scientific Expeditions to:
 - San Blas Islands (So. Carib.)
 - Chiriquí Lagoon (North Panama)
 - Perlas Islands (Eastern Pacific)
 - Galapagos Islands aboard R/V Alpha Helix
 - McMurdo Station, Antarctica
 - South Pole Station
 - Fish Survey Ross Sea aboard USCG Glacier
- Expeditions to:

Iceland	Svalbard
Patagonia	Siberia

Baffin Island

North West Passage (1st West to East on private yacht)

- Lecturer aboard
 - Illyria (5years, 4 trips a year) to Antarctica
 - Kapitan Klebnikov to Greenland and points North & Ross Sea, Weddell Sea etc.
 - World Discoverer to Antarctic and Alaska
 - Clipper Adventurer to Svalbard
 - Norwegian Coastal Lines (Hurtigruten) 4 trips to Svalbard as a pilot project to open up tourism on one coastal steamer
 - Prof. Multanovsky to Antarctic

This year being the end of a 2 year cycle activates the nominating committee: Bill, Lazlo, Judy, Rita, and Brian. Club members can make suggestions for executive committee officers or express interest in other committees to any or all of these nominators.

Remember....
Our club thrives on an **ACTIVE** membership.

ALL CLUB PHOTO CHALLENGE
ENTRIES MUST BE SUBMITTED TO

Gisele Doyle – Alwaysdrawing@yahoo.com

no later than Monday March 16th.

They will then be transferred onto one disc to show at the meeting. Please size them the same as you would for other competitions so they will be projected correctly onto the screen.

Challenge themes are –
Emotions/Expressions
Winter Trees
Color White

The Executive Committee will be meeting soon to plan future programs, workshops, and possible trips. Suggestions and ideas are always welcome from all club members.

Photography records the gamut of feelings written on the human face, the beauty of the earth and skies that man has inherited, and the wealth and confusion man has created. It is a major force in explaining man to man.

- Edward Steichen

TIPS & TRICKS by Rita Mathews

I just got back from a photo session with Arthur Morris the famous bird man. He calls his outfit "Birds as Art". I must say that his photos are some of the best that I have ever seen. Each one is a work of art. He is completely generous as to telling you how to get the best photos, with all his tricks and machinations. The first thing he did to me was to look at my histogram. According to Art one must see that the histogram is moved to the right hand side but not touching the right hand side and of course not towering up against the top of the histogram. He divides his histogram into 4 parts. The left for dark stuff, the next for something lighter, the third for darker shade of whites and the far right for all the very light stuff.



Photo by Rita Mathews

Dark stuff also should not touch the left hand side either. It takes some getting used to but I must say you will get no blinkies and your light subjects will have full colors and texture and appear in almost 3D. Blinkies in reality mean there is nothing there but white or a total absence of anything, no color and no texture etc. I did not get to work with him for very long as I caught a bad cold and had to take it easy. I am going to go with him again next winter to Florida.

One other thing I learned was what to do when lacking light. I knew you could change the ISO but I did not realize many things about it. To shoot for the best quality always shoot Raw format, use the sensors native ISO (it will be either 200 or 100 in most of the modern digital cameras), if you have to use a higher ISO use the lowest you can get away with. Get the exposure right, for over exposure blows out bright areas and under exposure increases noise tremendously. When shooting at higher ISO's, use noise reduction soft ware. Photoshop Raw is such and can alleviate some noise by adjusting the Luminance and Chrominance. Remember over-sharpening will not help. The newer cameras have Normal ISO ranges from 100 to 3200 and 6400. It is far better to get a good in focus print (tack sharp) rather than have a noiseless image that is blurry. Good shooting!

The Member Profile this month is about
Naomi Feldman

I am grateful to the HCC for providing a home for me and my photos. Taking photographs is a joy: each photographic experience being unique and memorable perhaps more so than the photos themselves. Photography at all levels is magical, mystical and even spiritual. The camera has been my partner, we take each other, we lead each other on, an extension of each other, one not functioning without the other. The camera is my excuse to explore.

Born and raised in Manhattan where I have lived all my life, one of my earliest memories is of my mother clicking away with her Rollei. Vassar College was followed by medical school, and eventually I became a psychiatrist (using my maiden name) with a psychotherapy practice and a subspecialty in forensic psychiatry. As such I worked on the psychiatric prison service at Bellevue Hospital, worked full time for the Federal Bureau of Prisons, and evaluated thousands of criminal defendants for state and federal courts. When it was time to retire I looked forward to more time for our three kids and the five grandkids, as well as more time for photography, quilting, needlework and paper craft, hoping to evolve a way to combine them all. We have traveled some, but my territory of choice has been the Northwest corner and its neighbors.

If memory is correct I always had an old camera, acquired an Argus C4, and probably started with some very elementary Nikons in the seventies with an equally elementary knowledge of what taking photos was all about. I gradually acquired more sophisticated Nikons and lenses as they came along. I learned some basic black and white printing as well as color printing along the way, taking an occasional workshop. I am deeply grateful to such teachers as Joel Meyerowitz, Allen Rokach (nature, flowers etc) and Tony O'Brien (a master of black and white and light). Their photographic vision and technical skills have been inspiring. And thanks also to the staff of the Photo Studio at the American Museum of Natural History, where I have been a volunteer black and white printer and the beneficiary of their vast experience and great support. While I clung desperately to my F100 film camera my husband snuck in a digital point and shoot several years ago, and reluctantly, but with amazement, got my feet wet in the digital world. Last

summer I capitulated and bought a Nikon D300, a digital camera which allows me to use my very good old lenses as well as a new one. After graduating from I-Photo on the Mac, I am very clumsily essaying Adobe Photoshop Elements, but I'm no technical wiz. This is tough. Would that the photographer grow to match the equipment.

Of course photography is about light, but I think that it is the harnessing of light to control it, to make it work actively that is the challenge; by selecting the time of day, perhaps, the amount, the shadows or reflections in creating the actual image. Besides people and my beloved "nature," my subjects might be a bit of almost anything, particularly if it is colorful. Sports and photojournalism are in another world but good composition remains critical. Given the right light (and technique) I think one can make almost anything interesting. I like to walk around the possible subject, look very close or far, sit down, look up and down, keep looking and waiting patiently. Having amassed a mess of not so good images, I find the winnowing down process to be difficult; but I seem to lean toward the more revealing, or abstract (such as a close-up of rust or a piece of a car) or the more painterly or atmospheric (and feelingful?) landscapes, whether close-up or distant. I would not make a good postcard photographer.

My husband Frank and I, Married for fifty-two years, came to Lakeville around 1966 and built our house. Frank is a retired lawyer, but has been making art since childhood, principally print making. I am proud that he has incorporated a number of my images into his prints. I sell an occasional photo, have won a few prizes, have several book jackets to my credit, and have imposed my prints on unsuspecting relatives and friends. I am pleased that one of our grandkids has developed an interest in photography. Mostly I want to share my vision, what I have enjoyed taking and making, with others. If I could by osmosis perhaps transfer my emotional as well as visual experience to the viewer to interpret for him or herself that would be my ultimate gratification.



Photo by LAZLO GYORSOK



Photo by GISELE DOYLE

REMINDER

We will be judging entries for the last PSA competition at the April 21st meeting. Start looking through your photos, or go out and take some new ones. Just remember to send them to Rita Mathews – explomat44@yahoo.com & don't forget to size them properly!

AND THE WINNER IS.....

Lazlo Gyorsok received “Best in Show” in the January 2009 PSA Competition! His winning photo “Baby, its cold outside” is shown on the left.

We also have 2 other members who did well in the same competition. **Gisele Doyle** won an Award with her photo “Into the Light” shown below left, and **Jane Rossman** with an Honorable Mention for “Trees in the Mist” seen below right.



Photo by JANE ROSSMAN

Eye-socket camera films from inside the head

By Dong Ngo

There's a blurred line between challenge and opportunity.

Having lost his eye in a childhood accident and suffered a lot of pain, Rob Spense, a 36-year-old filmmaker, has decided to do something that'll put filming and seeing into just one eye, quite literally.

His work is called the Eyeborg project, and involves his friend Kosta Grammatis, a photographer/engineer, and a team of ocularists, inventors, and engineering specialists. The team is building a prosthetic eye that can capture and transmit video.

While the idea is simple, it's a great engineering challenge. For the project to be successful, the smallest, lightest, most power-efficient technologies have to be found and implemented.

The team is using the world's smallest CMOS camera for the project. This device is about 1.5 millimeters squared. It's so small that if you sneeze while it's resting on your open palm, you might never find it again.

The eye camera captures and sends video signal wirelessly using an RF transmitter as

small as the tip of a pencil. According to Kosta, the data will be sent to a recorder placed in a backpack. The eye-socket camera is powered by a lithium polymer battery that fits inside the prosthesis.



The prosthesis & the tiny camera it contains.
(Credit: Eyeborgblog.com)

Rob and the team are currently working on a documentary about the Eyeborg Project and the experience of living with a bionic eye.

Their work could ultimately help San Francisco artist Tanya Vlach who is looking for technology to use for her own bionic eye-cam.



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For more information on this conference go to their
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