

The

# CACCA News

Chicago Area Camera Clubs Association

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## “Nature”: Traditional and Current Definition in the Nature Community

by Pat Wadecki

The rules for Nature competitions have traditionally been designed to keep nature images as true to the reality of the nature story as possible. Rules were simple and fairly easily understood: no “hand of man” and no techniques that are typically considered “alterations of reality”.

Nature images were captured on transparency film and standard field techniques included the use of filters such as polarizers, warming, and graduated neutral density filters. Film offered options which included color and temperature bias, more or less saturation and contrast. Entries in the nature slide category were judged not only for the content but for their use of good field techniques.

Nature print makers who used the wet darkroom used simple darkroom techniques that allowed a print to be made which showed the scene in its best “light”. Dodging and burning were typically used, as were filters that removed unnatural color casts. Minor blemishes, such as annoying highlights were often deemphasized by using Marshall dyes. These transparent dyes were sometimes used to enhance pale colors, as for example to increase the yellow of a pale beak on a bird. Thus prints were expected to be judged not only for their content and good field techniques but also for good printing techniques and presentation.

When digital capture and printing entered the scene, nature photographers were most concerned that digital techniques not be allowed which would change nature entries from their emphasis on good field techniques and simple darkroom techniques. It is certainly the desire of serious nature photographers that nature competitions reward nature photography and not complex Photoshop techniques. If one were to look at prestigious international nature contests it is clear that they reflect this philosophy also. The following are examples:

Shell Wildlife Photographer of the year (formally BBC): Digital adjustments are only acceptable if limited to minor cleaning work, levels, curves, color, saturation and contrast work. The faithful representation of a natural form, behavior or phenomenon must be maintained. Compositing and multiple exposures are not allowed. Sharpening is allowed. Cropping is allowed... ensure your images are not oversaturated and faithfully represent the subject matter.

Nature Conservancy and National Wildlife Federation: All photographs should accurately reflect the subject matter and the scene as it appeared. Photos that have been digitally altered beyond standard optimization (removal of dust, cropping, adjustments to color and

*(continued on page 2)*

## Reframing the Individual Nature Competition

by Rich Fisher

During my involvement in CACCA there have been repeated discussions regarding “nature photography” and how CACCA should run its nature photography competition. There have been references to PSA’s rules as well as Nature’s Best competition. In this editorial I want to step back and provide my observations of nature photography at CACCA and suggest a new framework to create a more dynamic competition aligned with current CACCA capabilities.

Hand of Man. I have seen very inconsistent treatment of images with the hand of man. Images with only the faintest hint of a road or structure have been challenged and occasionally disqualified while in other cases the hand of man has been fairly obvious and yet the image was not challenged and was allowed to compete. In still other cases judges did not disqualify an image but rather penalized it by giving it a low score. The part of the rule requiring that a man-made element be unobtrusive is inconsistently enforced and at times flagrantly ignored. A common egregious example is an osprey on a pier and pole. The man-made element is not unobtrusive; rather, it is prominent in the image.

Honest Presentation and Altered and Manufactured Images... manipulation that creates a false or misleading impression. In every competition there are images reflecting extensive “gardening” on the part of the photographer. Pollen has been removed from petals, imperfect leaves have been pruned or twisted out of the way, leaves and pine cones have been collected and arranged on the forest ground in an interesting pattern, spiders have been moved from one plant to another, etc.

However, sometimes gardening is not possible – particularly with wildlife. You cannot remove a blade of grass that is in front of the eye of a lion and it is unethical to disturb foliage around a bird’s nest (the scent you leave behind could attract a predator resulting in destruction of the nest). Which type of image, the meticulously gardened one or the one without changes, is the “honest presentation”, one that does not give a misleading impression?

The rule that the photographer must “create a false or misleading impression” imposes a requirement that the image is true. While the rule prohibits manipulations which lead to untrue images, this obligation still allows the photographer to freely choose lens, camera, filter, etc to achieve the image desired. However, once an image is captured, the digital equivalent of the many film techniques are prohibited.

- If you want to create a panoramic image, you need a specialized film camera because manufactured images are not allowed. You cannot combine images after the fact to create a panoramic.

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**Editor** ..... **William Moskoff**

**What's Clickin'** ..... **Janet Schleeter**  
25912 W. Timber Ridge Drive  
Channahon, IL 60410 • Janet49@juno.com

For additional information on Camera Clubs please contact

**President** ..... **Jerry Hug**  
957 S. 6th Avenue  
Des Plaines, IL 60016  
Ph. 847-299-9099  
Email: jerryhug@comcast.net

#### **CACCA Calendar Meetings**

Saturday, October 11, 2008  
Saturday, November 8, 2008  
Saturday, December 13, 2008

Palos United Methodist Church  
121<sup>st</sup> and Harlem Ave, Palos Heights

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

#### **Contests**

#### **October, November, December 2008**

Interclub Competitions

Individual Competition dates to be determined

Special Category -

"Places of Worship and parts thereof"

**Send competition results and other articles to:**

William Moskoff, Editor

148 Washington Circle • Lake Forest, IL 60045

Ph: 847-234-8243

Email: moskoff148@comcast.net

**Website:** [www.chicameraclubs.org](http://www.chicameraclubs.org)

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## **"Nature": Traditional and...**

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contrast, etc.) will be disqualified.

Nature's Best International Awards: All photographs must accurately reflect the subject matter as it appeared in the viewfinder. Nothing should be added to an image and, aside from dust spots, nothing should be taken away. Normal processing of RAW image files and minor adjustments to color and contrast are acceptable, as is minimal cropping.

Beyond these contests, it appears that the nature photographer is sometimes slightly more liberal. CACCA nature enthusiasts have tried to preserve the essence of the pre-digital rules, feeling that it is appropriate to use simple digital techniques that "enhanced the image" but did not "manipulate" or "manufacture" an image. The rule of thumb for most became that Photoshop techniques used could be such as those which handle exposure (brightness, levels, curves, etc.), saturation, removal of color casts, warming, removal of minor blemishes (spots, scratches, artifacts of sharpening) but not of elements in the subject matter. Lightening of areas through dodging techniques, and de-emphasis of certain areas of the image through the darkening of burning techniques are commonly used since these were standard techniques in the wet darkroom. CACCA rules currently clearly state that elements should not be removed or added.

For decades the wording of CACCA nature rules were simply taken from the PSA nature rules with a few modifications. PSA did not allow captive animals such as zoo and game farms, considering these NOT to be wildlife. PSA says, "Authentic Wildlife is defined as one or more organisms living free and unrestrained in a natural or adopted habitat." CACCA removed that restriction. Further PSA states that, "The story telling value of a photograph must be weighed

MORE THAN the pictorial quality". CACCA asks that the story telling value of a photograph must be weighed ALONG WITH the pictorial quality.

Once again it might be wise for CACCA to turn to PSA for guidance. The PSA rules are simple and strive for what is called "digital realism". They state: "Makers may perform any enhancements and modifications that improve the presentation of the image that could have been done at the time the image was taken but that does not change the truth of the original nature story. Cropping and horizontal flipping (equivalent to reversing a slide) are acceptable modifications. Addition of elements, removal of elements (other than by cropping), combining elements from separate images, rearranging elements or cloning elements are not acceptable."

It is important to note that in the nature competition arena both in PSA and in international contests it is clear that it is not allowed that separate images be combined.

Some may want the rules to be more specific wanting to know exactly which Photoshop techniques are "legal". Trying to add to the CACCA rules a list of specific techniques that can or cannot be used will only end in frustration since new digital techniques are constantly being introduced. For example, the use of RAW capture has now necessitated a whole new post capture processing that was not required previously. CACCA rules should, as do the PSA rules, espouse a simple statement rather than a list of techniques.

It is currently a challenge given to CACCA to assess its nature rules and find a way to simply state what is deemed acceptable. It would be hoped that in doing so that CACCA would keep in mind the commonly held perspectives of the nature community at large and preserve what has been and still is the essence of that special type of photography called "nature photography".

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## Reframing the Individual..

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- If there is a wide range in brightness (e.g., darker foreground and bright sky) you need to use your split neutral density filter. An “exposure comp”, when the same image is captured twice with different exposures and then merged is not allowed. Same effect, different technique – just not allowed.

The specification of the methods not to be used is very narrowly defined and is contrary to standard photographic practices.

The story-telling value of the photograph should be considered along with its pictorial quality. Since PSA is often cited as the basis for CACCA rules, I will reference them. PSA rules state the storytelling value of a photograph MUST be weighed more than the pictorial quality. My observation is that the story telling value of an image has little to no importance at CACCA – often pictorial quality is the sole criterion used to evaluate an image. I have never heard a comment from a judge about the story telling quality of an image (or asking about animal behavior) though comments are often made about the image quality. This is to be expected since we are photographers, not biologists.

What does this mean for nature photography at CACCA? While the rules are well intended, their application is inconsistent. The rules have been amended without consideration of generally accepted digital techniques and do not represent how judges look at nature images. Rather than attempting to create the ideal nature competitions, it is in CACCA's best interest to create a set of rules that supports CACCA's stated mission as outlined in its constitution - “Development of fellowship among member clubs and promotion of photographic interests and accomplishments in the Chicago area”. The rules should allow people to explore photography and new techniques (i.e., photographic interests), not stifle growth.

Thus I propose that Nature become a “Pictorial Nature” competition.

Hand of Man. This topic is a red-herring. The competition is Nature, not the absence of the hand of man. The natural world impinges on areas where mankind has had an impact. There are few, if any places in the world that have not been impacted by man. Excluding overt signs of the hand of man hides the truth – humanity's presence is ubiquitous on the planet. Nature is adaptive, life evolves. The question should be “is this an image of the natural world”, not “is the hand of man absent”? Do the elements of the image help tell the story? A coyote in downtown Chicago or the cougar on the north side are interesting nature stories.

Honest Presentation. Image quality has become very important in all competitions at CACCA. Photographers should be allowed an artistic license to create an idealized

representation either in the field or after the images is created. Similar techniques should be allowed in the field or after the image is captured. That includes removing grass or branches that obscure an image, merging two or more images to create an exposure composition, stitching images to create a panoramic, etc.

Manipulation that creates a false or misleading impression. A manipulation that creates a false or misleading impression, either in the field or after the image is captured, are not allowed. Period.

The story-telling value of the photograph is a plus that judges may consider. There should be no requirement that an image convey a story. It is not reasonable to ask our judges and photographers to have sufficient knowledge of biology to judge the scientific significance of an image. Nor is there the opportunity to convey this information to judges so they can weigh it when evaluating an image. However, if an image does convey a story, that is a plus.

In the end, the photographer has a responsibility to CACCA and nature clubs to provide an honest, though perhaps artistically rendered, interpretation of a natural event. Simply stated, a person standing next to the photographer should be able to attest that the image truly represents what the photographer captured.

On the other hand, CACCA has an obligation to the photographer. Images that have been accepted in one nature competition should be accepted into all nature competitions. And judges must not give an image a low score because they think an image is close to being disqualified. Either an image is in or it is out.

In summary, it is time to reframe the nature photography competition from one where rules are arbitrarily enforced, techniques are selectively allowed, and the story telling value of a photograph has little value, to pictorial nature competition where the photographer is required to present an honest image.

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## Make Your Best Shot

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by Marie Rakoczy

Everyone has seen a slide show at some point. And everyone has been *subjected to* a slide show or two. Whether you are showing good old 35mm slides in your show or using a program such as **ProShow Gold** to create a digital show, you need to make your best shot at putting together a show that your audience will enjoy.

**Your slide show preparation starts even before your trip.** Once the destination has been determined, go on the Internet and identify the “must-sees” and “must-dos” of your chosen locale. Go to your local library and look at travel books in order to plan your trip and feel the excitement of anticipation. Look in the glossy photo books, too, not just the travel guides. It's not that you want to reproduce the exact images in the book – you just need to get an idea of what is worth seeing and shooting.

**On your trip, take a lot of pictures** -- *really* a lot of pictures. Get out of the old film mindset that says every shot costs you **X** cents. Buy a few good-sized cards so that you can shoot a lot of high-quality images. I have a Nikon D70S and my 4G card allows me to shoot over 1,000 photos (.jpg). On a good day, I *will* shoot that many. Take photos of whatever strikes you: funny signs, people, interesting details, etc. Photograph things that are characteristic about the place you are visiting. If your dinner plate appeals to you visually in its variety or strangeness, by all means take a picture of that, too. Chances are your audience will enjoy it vicariously!

**Talk to people.** It's amazing what access you can get to a subject if you are friendly and show an interest. On a trip to hurricane-ravaged New Orleans, we saw a man painting a huge American flag on the roof of a damaged building. We spoke with him and took some photos of him in his paint-stained clothing, then stood back and took more pictures as he sat on the roof hard at work. My husband, Joe, was soon on the roof with him, holding a conversation and getting the best shots. We had a similar experience in Algoma, Wisconsin, while shooting pictures of a fisherman hanging his nets on a rack to dry. In no time, the man invited us into his fishing boat and gave us a guided tour! On yet another occasion, we saw a brightly colored train engine with coal cars fading into the distance waiting near a grain elevator in Montana. We went to take photos of the scene and started talking to the engineer. Soon we were in the engine room and he was showing us how he operates the train. In each case, had we been too shy to speak up and be friendly, we would have missed out on a great photo experience!

**Take a variety of shots.** If you include both horizontal and vertical photos in your show, it will add more interest. Bracket your shots so you are sure to get a good exposure, and use a tripod wherever possible to guarantee sharpness.

**Don't put your camera away if the weather gets bad** - sometimes bad weather adds to the mood of a place. During our trip to Alaska, I was disappointed that the weather was foggy and wet as we cruised the Inside Passage. As it turned out, many of the photos that

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## Make Your Best Shot...

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we took captured the feeling of the area very well, since it rains there just about every day. Mist-enshrouded cliff sides add an air of mystery. Rain makes fall colors more vibrant. Even lighting on waterfalls and in canyons can be much better than bright sun, which often causes harsh shadows and unforgiving, washed out brightness.

**Cull your photos.** A device called a **Hoodman** helps cull in the field, especially on a bright day. The Hoodman is a loupe that you wear on a string around your neck. You place it right up against the viewing screen of your digital camera, and it blocks the light so that you can view your photos. If you take a lot of photos, you should be deleting a lot of them, too. I cull my photos at every opportunity – in the car, in restaurants, on park benches. That makes it less time-consuming to review the images later when they are uploaded. But I never delete anything directly from the camera if I am not sure – when in doubt, don't throw it out!

**Have appropriate backup of your work.** It is not safe to just collect your images on cards and wait until you get home to upload them. You need backup of some kind – and the more, the better. We use a media storage device made by Epson, the P4000. It is basically a portable 80G hard drive, 6" wide, 3-1/4" high and 1-1/4" deep, and it has a 2-1/4" x 3" high-quality viewing screen. You insert your card directly into the device and can review and upload your card data. When you are finished, you can format your card in your camera for the next day's use, since your data is safely stored on the P-4000. In addition to this backup, we carry a laptop PC and upload our cards to that device as well. On a longer trip, we bring along blank DVDs and self-addressed mailers. Every couple of days we burn a DVD of our most recent photos and mail it home. This may sound like overkill, but if you don't protect your photo data, you may not have any material for a slide show!

Once you get home and the trip is no more than a memory and a credit card statement, it is time to review those precious images of your journey and begin to work on your show. Spend a good amount of time reviewing your images to **identify themes and a structure for your show**. The first structure most people think to use is chronological. This is often a very effective structure, since you can enhance your show with photos of maps that illustrate your route. It is a very straightforward method.

There are times, though, when a chronological structure is not as suitable. We took a trip to New Orleans and walked some of the same streets for five days, taking photos the whole time. Rather than chronological, the show was planned thematically in five parts: general images, Bourbon Street, Mardi Gras, architectural details, and the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. Each theme was pre-

sented with a different musical selection.

**Choose appropriate music for your show.** If you really want to do a special show, don't be satisfied with the canned music provided by your program, or the samples of music that came with your computer. Sometimes, as with our New Orleans show, the music is easy to choose: New Orleans is a town famous for its wide variety of musical styles, from jazz to Cajun/zydeco to blues. When you are on your trip, look for CDs of local music, and pay attention to the songs that appear to be characteristic of the place – this is especially helpful in a foreign locale. The Internet is, of course, also a great source, and National Geographic has an entire series of CDs with the music of various cities and countries. Music can greatly enhance the viewer's experience.

The music does not have to "go with" the movement of the slides on the screen, but if it does your show will be better. Syncing your slides to the music will involve time-consuming, meticulous adjustments to the duration of your images (which can be done with most good photo-editing software), but it will be worth it.

**When selecting photos for your show, cull well.** Cull mercilessly. Earlier I mentioned that I can take 1,000 photos on a good day. Only about a quarter of those photos actually get uploaded from my card, though, since I am constantly culling out the bad exposures, the experimental shots that don't work out, and the shots ruined because someone stepped in front of the camera or the camera moved. I often end up culling out a lot of the first photos that I take of a subject, because sometimes the more you look, the more – and the **better** – you see. After our three-week trip to Alaska, between Joe and me, we had kept 8,700 images, roughly 180 images per day for each of us. Of these, 820 were selected to be edited for the slide show. Of the 820 edited, only 528 actually made it

to the 30-minute show.

**Edit your images well.** No one wants to look at blurry, dull, or overexposed photos. A couple of years ago, I volunteered to prepare a digital slide show for my high school reunion. Back in the 70's, one of our teachers worked with her communications students to document our senior year. I had remembered it as a great show, but reality set in after the first five slides. These pictures had been taken by teenagers without much, if any, training in photography, and without much knowledge of what makes a good photo. I suddenly could see that there was going to be more to this than just scanning in the slides. Using **Photoshop Elements**, I edited every photo and ultimately found that very few of them were unsalvageable. The tools available in my photo editing program allowed me to bring even marginal photos back to life, and once I began editing, I fell into a routine (workflow) that allowed me to progress faster and faster. There is nothing like editing a few hundred photos for a slide show to get you to feel really comfortable with your editing program! The newly-renovated slide show was an enjoyable documentary of what it was like to experience Resurrection High School in the 70's. You owe it to your audience to make the photos in your show the best they can be.

**Avoid duplication in your photos.** You can repeat the same subject, but repeat it from a different angle, with a different foreground, or in different light. Mix up horizontal and vertical photos, but don't just show the same photo twice, once horizontally and the next vertically. Avoid photos that don't tell a good story or leave a question in the viewer's mind. Signs can help narrate your story for you, but never include a sign that cannot be easily read in a few seconds.

**Use transitions and effects wisely.**  
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## Make Your Best Shot...

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Transitions are modes of moving from one image to the next such as fading, dissolving, closing the image from right to left, left to right, up, down, etc. **ProShow Gold** has over 200 transitions. This does not mean that you need to use them all, or even more than a few, as they can become little more than distractions when used to excess. I like to choose a single transition for a

## Share Your Passion for Photography in a CACCA Club

by Jerry Hug, CACCA President

"We have new tools and ways to communicate, but the fundamentals of photography have not changed." (quote from an unknown source)

On Saturday, April 12, we introduced seven of the 50 year Club/CACCA participants. What a wonderful history of their leadership in the Chicago Area Camera Clubs Association. What impressed me the most was their joy and passion for photography. What also impresses me is the desire of our CACCA Board to lead our Association into the next 50 years. It is truly a thrill to be a part of our changing and growing Chicago area photo community. Exciting things are happening.

Camera Clubs and Photography are not about us, but about sharing our passion and images with others. None of us make photographs to store in a box or on a hard drive, but we all need friends and family to show and share our art form called Photography. The more we learn how to hone our photographic skills, the better we are able to share that passion with others. How does and can CACCA help you?

The CACCA Board is just members of area camera clubs who come together to plan the monthly meetings, share new and exciting photographic happenings in clubs and most important, the board organizes lists of club speakers, competition judges, workshops, and continues to develop means of better communications to and for our clubs.

What's in the hopper? We have a new newsletter that is slowly evolving into truly a newsletter vs. a monthly scorecard. The CACCA News started out this year as a bi-monthly, four-page publication. Articles are coming in and the publication is growing to meet the needs of our broad range of new and old club members. Bill Moskoff, our editor, is lending his skills and passion for good communications to our printed handout publication. But CACCA News is not enough and that is where our website is filling many needs.

Our CACCA website will be making a much needed upgrade this summer. We have a good site but it is time to again up-scale our website communication. Our computer guru, Bob Brandes, will be joining the

whole "chapter" (theme) or section (group of related images) of the show, and use a more elaborate transition when the subject of the images changes between sections or chapters.

Zooming in and out can be very effective when emphasizing an element in the image, viewing a sign (so that the viewer can read it, then see the larger picture), or adding humor. Zooming too much becomes annoying to the viewer. Fading too much slows down your show and wastes time when you can

be showing an image instead of all or part of a blank screen.

**Vary the duration of time that the photos remain on the screen** to avoid monotony. Don't leave the images up too long and don't take them away too soon. I have found that erring on the side of shorter durations makes for a peppier show and leaves the audience wanting more.

**When you are all done with your show, wait a couple of days and view it again.**

With new eyes, you will certainly see some things that need to be changed. Next, I like to view the show with Joe, then with my sister, Sue. Joe has a knowledgeable eye and a familiarity with the pictures (since he takes at least half of them in every show). The point of view of his critique is similar to my own, but from his own creative standpoint. Sue's critique is that of the ultimate audience member. She tells me what she doesn't understand or like from a more objective perspective, which is also very helpful. You need both a "Joe" and a "Sue" to help you with the final editing. Be prepared to accept, process, and act on their criticism -- and don't take it personally.

**Once the show is done, think about how you are going to present it.** Since a digital show moves along at the pace of the music, you may not want to do a "voice over" narration while it is in progress, as this will be difficult for you and disruptive to the audience. Prepare your viewers before the show by letting them know what they are going to be seeing, and then let them sit back and enjoy it.

Your final product, whether to be shown to hundreds of people or to a small group of friends, will be something that you can be proud of. If you have never put a slide show together, practice with a small group of related slides and some snappy music, then when you start planning that next trip or outing, think "slide show".



**At its April meeting, CACCA recognized eight long-time photographers for 50 years or more of service to Chicago area camera clubs. From left to right, they are: Russel Kriete Hon. FPSA, EPSA; Jane Kriete FPSA; Kenneth Rapalee APSA; Mary Root APSA; Helen Lynch; Sherrill E. Lynch APSA, EPSA; Jane Jacobsen; and Earl L. Kubis. Photo by Bill Brown.**

# Let It Snow! (Or If It Won't, Make Your Own) by Bob Benson

For those that have seen my demo, you know that I like attempting to create realistic weather effects (okay, sometimes). The features that I enjoy- and continually try to learn- in Photoshop allow us to do the same thing in many different ways, and I am going to show you what works for me. You may know other ways of doing the same thing, and there in lies the strength, and huge learning curve of Photoshop. I hope my approach allows you to discover some additional features or approaches to your favorite image editing software.

The approach to making snow is to add visible noise to our image, something that is normally an anathema to photographers. But before you start, for any effect to be convincing, you have to start with the right image. You probably will not convince anyone that snow was falling on a bright sunny image. Take a cue from reality, and find an image that conveys snow.

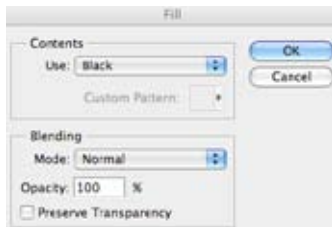
Here are the images that I selected for modification. Before you start, do all your normal imaging editing. Elements users can do the same things; the steps may just be located in different menu areas.

So here is the process. You can choose not to understand why this works, and just follow along as if this were a recipe, or you can examine each step to get a sense of understanding; the choice is yours. Many of us are only interested in getting there; the map is just a tool.



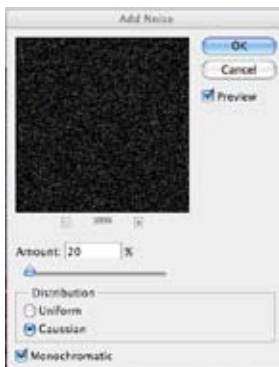
1. To use all of the filters necessary, your image must be converted to 8 bit, if you are using 16 bit currently. (If you are using RAW currently, hopefully your images are set to 16 bit for maximum information.)

2. Add a new layer, and fill it with black (EDIT>Fill)



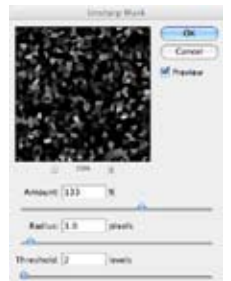
3. Change the layer's blending mode to SCREEN (LAYER>layer style>blending options), or just access from the layers window. If you want to more easily see the snow, leave the layer mode as normal until the end. (Screen mode works by telling all the layers below to show anything lighter than the current layer (black) to show through.)

4. From the FILTER menu, choose Noise. The amount you use depends on how much snow you want – 10 to 20% works for most average file sizes. Click the Gaussian and Monochromatic check boxes. (FILTER>Noise> 20%)



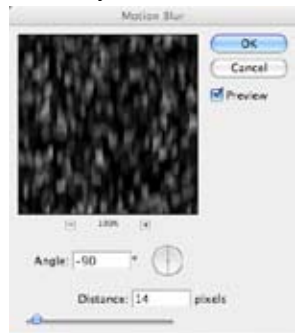
5. From the FILTER menu, choose Pixelate, then Crystallize. The cell size you select will ultimately determine your snowflake size. (The more pixels you have in your image, the larger number necessary to make the flakes bigger.) Start with about 5, and use around 20 for big flakes. (FILTER>Pixelate>5)

6. Choose FILTER, then Sharpen, then Unsharp Mask. Increase the sharpen slider until the crystals you created in the previous step have distinct edges. (FILTER, Sharpen, Unsharp Mask) Elements users will find the sharpen tools in a different place.



7. From the IMAGE menu, pick Adjustments, then Levels (IMAGE>Adjustments>Levels). The contrast or middle slider will determine how much snow, and the highlights or right slider will determine how much your snow will show up (brightness). Drag both sliders to the left to increase the level and intensity of the snow.

8. In the Filters menu again, choose BLUR, then Motion Blur. This is an optional choice, depending if you want your snow to look like it is falling, or you caught it in stop motion. Choose the direction. (-90 is straight down.)



At this point, you may decide you are finished, but for added realism, I usually repeat the above process on new layers, with some variations in the steps. These are usually variations in the intensity and size of the snow. (Unless your image does not have much depth, snow will appear to vary in size from front to back. Also, more distant objects may be more obscured by snow.) I will usually add a layer mask to these extra snow layers, and paint out some of the snow covering closer objects. (Elements users can erase some of the snow by varying the opacity of the eraser brush.)

At right are my final images, using the above steps. Your results will vary depending on your image size and individual settings. Years ago, you may have wished that you could have added a snow filter to your lens, and now you can!



# The Grace DeWolf Memorial Award

## Sponsored by Riverwoods Nature Photographic Society

by Sheri Sparks

Grace DeWolf, one of the founders of Riverwoods Nature Photographic Society, was a photographer who exhibited a passion for nature and nature photography. She served as mentor and inspiration for many a young nature photographer and often encouraged them not only to be aware of the importance of light but to explore and master photographing all subjects in the realm of nature photography: wildlife, botany /macro, and landscapes. In her honor a special award shall be given at the end of the Individual Nature competition series to a participant in Individual Nature Prints and/or Individual Nature Slides who has exhibited not only excellence in nature photography but has shown that excellence in photographing diverse nature subjects. This award is modeled after the Kohout diversity award which was formerly given when CACCA held a PSA sanctioned International Salon.

**SELECTION PROCESS:** The chair of each Individual Nature Division shall chair the selections committee for that division. The committee will consist of the 3 judges who just judged the third individual competition along with the 3 judges who judged the Best of the Year. After BOY has been selected, these 7 shall review the images (portfolio) which have been submitted by participants from that season. The portfolio for consideration for the award will consist of those submitted to be considered for BOY (awards or scores of at least 24) along with any additional HMs and/or up to 3 additional images which did not get honors (from the season's competitions) that any of the participants would like to have considered as part of their portfolio to demonstrate the diversity of their work...landscape, wildlife, botany. The chair may pre screen these images and withdraw for consideration any participant who clearly does not show diversity...i.e. shoots primarily wildlife or landscapes

After looking at the work of participants who do show significant diversity of subject matter the committee will decide if there is a participant worthy of the award...one who

has demonstrated not only photographic excellence but significant diversity. The committee may decide NOT to give this award for any given year if they feel that not enough variety has been shown in any one photographer's body of work or that the quality is not sufficient. Having received the award in one year/division does not eliminate a participant from receiving it in another year/division.

In this initial year for this award, we are proud to present this year's winners:

**Prints:  
Pat  
Wadecki**

Pat is a retired New Trier High School math teacher who for 20 years has been an active member of two camera clubs, Riverwoods Nature Photographic Society and Arlington Camera Club, holding many offices in each. Pat has not only received numerous awards from these two clubs for her fine quality slides and prints but also has been awarded major achievement awards by CACCA including the rank of Masters given for the number of her color prints which have received Best of the Month at monthly competitions.

Pat serves many of the CACCA clubs through her teaching programs as well as a competition judge. She has served as an instructor at CACCA's Chicago Area Photographic School (CAPS) and for many years taught a course in nature photography at a local high school's adult education evening school.

Among the honors of which Pat is particularly proud is the 2000 CACCA Photographer's Award for artistic achievement



and photographic excellence and the 2002 CACCA Kohout Nature Photography Award given not only for the quality of her nature images but also for promoting preservation and respect for nature along with teaching those skills and values to others. In 2003 she received the Stinson Award for her many years of service to CACCA having served on several Board positions including that of president. She has been one of the organizers of two highly successful CAPS and a George Lepp seminar.

Pat's work appears in "Chicago WILDERNESS" magazine as well as in a variety of books and magazines. She is most thrilled to have her work included in a Sierra Club book called *MOTHER EARTH, Through the Eyes of Women Writers and Nature Photographers* with one of the images chosen for a poster that promotes the book.

For the past seven years Pat has worked with the North American Nature Photography Association serving on the planning committee and as an instructor/chaperone for its High School Student Scholarship Program. In 2008, she was honored with the Russ Kinne Grant for her work with the NANPA student program.

**Slides:  
Don  
Bolak**

Don is a true nature lover. He not only is an active member of two clubs, Garden Photographic Society and Riverwoods Nature Photographic Society, but his profession is that of landscape architect/garden designer.

Don says he is drawn to the vivid colors, shapes and details in plants and their inhabitants. He has won numerous awards through both clubs and at CACCA. He placed first in Nature Slides two years in a row and this year won Nature Slide of the Year. He has won many slides of the month and has now earned TOPS at CACCA.

Don has had images published in the Chicago Tribune, Chicago Wilderness Magazine, Garden Design Magazine and Nature's Best Magazine where he was honored in its Backyard Photography Contest.



### Special Competition Categories – 2008-2009

The subjects for the 2008-2009 Special Category slide competition will be as follows:

- Oct. .... Places of worship or a part thereof
- Nov. .... Old Weathered Things
- Dec. .... People, two or more
- Jan. .... Wild Animals
- Feb. .... The Letter "P" must appear in the title
- Mar. .... Geology, e.g., mountains, rocks, rock formations
- Apr. .... Two Colors

# WHAT'S CLICKIN'

## BY JANET SCHLEETER

Well, spring did finally make it to Illinois. Hopefully, many of you have been stalking wildflowers and getting your personal bird/butterfly gardens into shape. The winter was a long, snowy one, but full of opportunities for snow shots. Nonetheless, I'm certainly ready for a little more color in the landscape.

First order of business is mention of the CACCA banquet to be held Sunday, June 8<sup>th</sup> at Oak Meadows Golf Course, 900 North Wood Dale Road in Addison. This is south of Irving Park Road (Rt. 19) and north of I-290. A buffet lunch will be served at 11:45 a.m. Plan to arrive around 11:00 for some socializing. Every club should be represented, as this is when the plaques and special awards are passed out. Clubs with a healthy treasury should consider paying for their president and delegate. It would be a nice reward for all they do during the year.

Second order of business—Delegates, please be extra careful at the May CACCA meeting and be sure all of the prints and slides you are picking up actually belong to your club. Occasionally, entries can be incorrectly sorted. As this is the last time we will meet until October, if the wrong club takes an image home, it might have a hard time making it back to the right maker.

Downers Grove had a fun night in April with members bringing in short digital slide programs for sharing. (Most were done with Pro Show Gold.) Topics ranged from hot rods at cruise night to autumn in Vermont to spring in the Smokies. A couple of members just put a bunch of images from multiple vacations together, set it to music, and took us on a tour of the world. Other clubs have done the same including Nature CC and Mayslake. My first introduction to these "cameos" was at Morton Arboretum (now Mayslake). It serves multiple purposes including encouraging people to utilize their images by sharing them with others. It also provides for a good time for all. There was mention at Downers of needing to provide popcorn. Some of the best programs at club are those done by the club members.

Bill Kruser and Cindy Kuffel, co-presidents of Arlington, came down to CACCA in March and passed on some ideas on how to keep a club thriving. Every person who joins Arlington has to sign up for a committee. Their participation may end up being small or large, but regardless, they feel as though they are making a contribution to the club, and they have a vested interest in making the club successful. Photo displays have been successful in attracting attention and new members to the club.

It occurs to me that members are missing out on a networking possibility. The CACCA Yahoo list for clubs is a great place to go if you have questions about photography. Last month a question popped up about retrieving lost images from a memory card. There were a few respondents with suggestions on image retrieval software that can be used. The Mayslake reprinted the exchange in their newsletter. I know we all get more emails than we care to, but this seems to me a valuable source of information. We have some smart

people in our organization!

Marie Rakoczy, the editor of Green Briar's *Honorable Mention* newsletter, is doing a nice job. There is a long list of parades in Chicago from the April 26 Dia de los Ninos parade to December 7th, the Chicagoland Toys for Tots motorcycle parade. If you want to check up on what's happening, go to the website: [www.cityofchicago.org/special-events](http://www.cityofchicago.org/special-events). Lillian Gordon sent a nice thank you to the club on behalf of Len. Green Briar members donated to the Midwest Hospice Care Center in Len's memory. Lillian said "All of you who truly knew him know how much Green Briar was a major part of his life. He looked forward to each monthly competition not only to compete, but to the bond of common interests that you all shared." Green Briar is working with Lillian to honor Len by sponsoring an award at CACCA in his name. Marie also included in the newsletter a column recognizing club members who have won special honors/awards within PSA and CACCA. A nice idea!

Jerry Hug wants everyone to know about the free summer workshops being held throughout the summer at the Prairie Lakes Community Center in Des Plaines. If you're on the CACCA Yahoo list, you probably received this already. The schedule is:

- June 9—Dennis Arendt will show prints and share his techniques with landscapes, IR and antique auto images
- June 23—Fred Drury will show how to calibrate and profile your monitor and projectors.
- July 14—Bailey Donnally will demonstrate his award winning techniques for combining images.
- July 28—Mark Southard will demonstrate techniques for getting better white balance and introduce new techniques for Elements/Photoshop.
- August 11—Bill Brown will show his methods for making better selections in Photoshop.

Wow! There is a bunch of clubs represented, and all this is free! For further information, please contact the Prairie Lakes Community Center, 515 East Thacker Street in Des Plaines, phone 847-391-5711. It doesn't say, but you should probably call ahead to reserve a space. These programs could prove to be very popular.

Des Plaines Camera Club is hosting a photographic garage sale May 17 & 18. If you have anything you want to donate or sell, contact Norb Wrobel (847-699-2837) or Bruce Malmin (847-870-1616). If you're buying, the sale will be from 9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. at 664 Polynesian Drive, Des Plaines.

Saturday, October 25, 2008—3H Camera Club will host a full day seminar and workshop on photography sponsored by Shore Color Lab. Bring your camera and tripod. It will be 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at The Conference Center, Purdue University Calumet, 2300 173<sup>rd</sup> Street, Hammond. Contact Ruby Riota, [sohophoto@sbcglobal.net](mailto:sohophoto@sbcglobal.net) (ph. 708-209-0582) or Rudy Navarro, [rudyn40@sbcglobal.net](mailto:rudyn40@sbcglobal.net) (ph. 708-476-8502).

Happy summer everyone.

Janet Schleeter