



July 2020
Volume 18: Issue 7

IN FOCUS



“Airplane Hangers”
©Larry Hudspeth
Theme “Humor”



PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

June has been quite a month for me. I have been diligent in adhering to my wife’s challenge of taking my daily photo. Some of the assignments have been challenging but I have completed every assignment. Some of them I could not do on my daily walk so I had to improvise. Two of my assignments that I struggled with were “unusual” and “one word”. If you ever want to challenge yourself have someone give you a different photography assignment for 30 days in a row. I recommend it, but I doubt that I will ever do it again.

Have a great month of July.

Jack

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- Member Gallery:June.....Page 3-6
- Dan’s Aussie TravelsPage 7
- Another ViewPage 8-9
- Themes for 2020Page 10
- Fireworks Photography TipsPage 10

Welcome to **IN FOCUS**, newsletter of the Cascade Camera Club, located in Bend, Oregon.

Our meetings are usually held at the Bend Senior Center, 1600 SE Reed Market Rd, the First and Third Monday of each month (except September). Currently do to the Covid19 virus, the Senior Center is closed. Our monthly critiques are being held online. See website for instructions. We will resume our normal meeting routine when possible.

Website: cascadecameraclub.com
Email: cascadecameraclub.com/contact/

June Critiquer
John Williams

Theme Was "Black/White"

SUBMISSION DEADLINE
11:59 p.m. ON THE WEDNESDAY
PRIOR TO CRITIQUE NIGHT



JUNE SUBMISSIONS

Theme:

Robert Agli	Chinese Plague Party Wear
Gary Alvis	Tightrope
John Aylward	One of These is Not the Same
Ralph Delamarter	What DID I Step In
Blanche Feekes	Mist in the Morning-BBR
Jeannine Florance	Wise Guy
Joe Hudspeth	Reigning in the Raucous
Larry Hudspeth	Still Life Number Three
George Lepp	Its Got to be Down Here Somewhere
Rich Marrocco	Steroids
Bev Murphy	Staring Contest
Judy Neill	What Are You Looking A
Joyce Norman	A Penquin Walks Out Of A Bar
Steve Peters	Oh There It Is
Brian Russell	Birthday Surprise
Ken Sandine	Condega Kids
Jack Schade	Otter with tounge
Dan Schafer	Zen Master
John Stewart	Mischief
Jeff Tilley	Play Boy
Greg Waddell	Awareness

Critiquer for July
Bev Murphy



Thanks to Judy Neil for the banner image on 1st page. All images in this newsletter are copyright of the Maker and may not be reproduced without permission.



June Theme Images
"Humor"



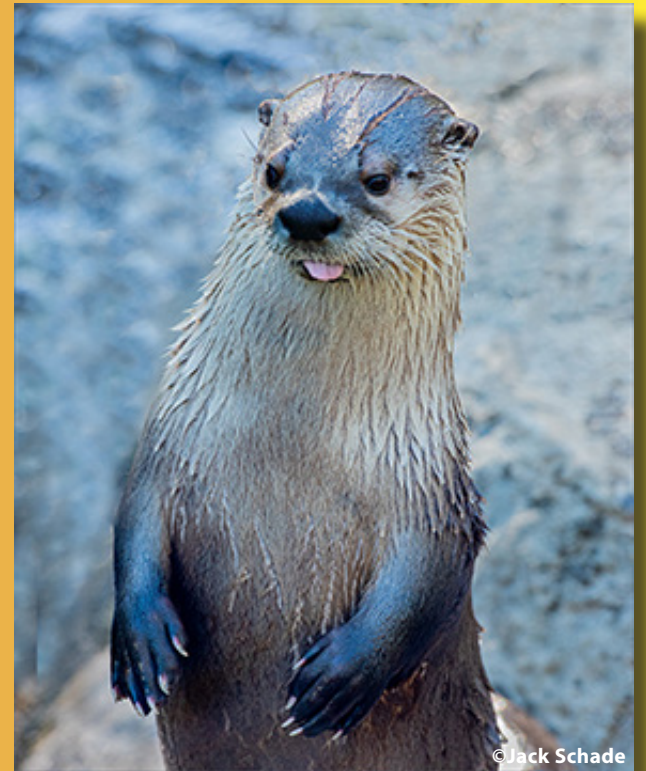


June Theme Images
"Humor"





June Theme Images
"Humor"





©John Stewart



©Ken Sandine

June Theme Images
"Humor"



©Greg Waddell



Bev Murphy



©Brian Russell

DAN AND JEANNIE'S AUSTRALIA JOURNEY

Exile in Australia Continues

Here I am, writing to you from my office/dinner table/seashell photography studio. Did you notice the ocean? This place is going to be hard to leave. Our little rental unit has been very comfortable



and our walks on the beach continue to be delightful. Nevertheless, Jeannie and I have decided to move on when our lease expires on July 18. This may be a mistake, but we're still hopeful that Queensland will open its borders soon and we can resume our camping trip in the tropical north. If not, we have been offered accommodations in the Central Coast area north of Sydney, which is also nice and a place that we wouldn't mind learning more about.

The Australian daily new coronavirus cases were in the single digits

for several weeks, but there's been a spike in Melbourne in the last ten days or so. Yesterday's number—30—was the largest in quite a while, and most of these were from community transmissions. The state just initiated a door-to-door test blitz, with 100,000 tests to be administered in affected neighborhoods. It's not at all clear what will happen there. We'll see.

I thought I'd mention an interesting feature of the southern hemisphere that you may not be aware of. As in the north, the best months for viewing the Milky Way are May through October. The earth is tilted during those months so that there's a view of the galactic center to everyone's south. Here, those are the winter months, when days are short. That means that one can photograph the Milky Way in June starting at about 6pm in the evening. That's quite a pleasant shock for someone who's used to waiting until almost midnight to get Milky Way shots in Oregon! Here's an image from last week taken at 7:30:

Did I just create a faux pas by including two selfies in one article? Oh my.

We're off to Canberra tomorrow to visit the kids and hopefully snag a "garden" theme photo at the National Botanical Gardens. Surely there's a good image in there somewhere. I'm also working on a final multi-media tribute to our Denhams Beach home and will post that on our blog—biglapjournal.com—before we leave here in three weeks. Cheers!



MOVEMENT-IN PURSUIT OF SHARP FOCUS

ANOTHER VIEW by ROBERT AGLI

It's story time boys and girls and perhaps a brag or two. During my college days I was on a pistol team and also very involved in competitive archery. I was the number 2 archer in the state of Michigan for a brief period of time and a reasonably good hand gunner. One of the things you quickly learn is that a smooth release of an arrow or trigger pull separates the winners from the losers. Interestingly, some of the most successful photographers I know had or still have an interest in target shooting or have had in depth military and/or law enforcement training. These folks seem to have a much higher success rate of handheld sharp images in their photographic pursuits. In this politically charged environment of gun rights versus gun control I'm not advocating that you run out and start shooting. I'm simply pointing out there may be a correlation in these skill sets.

Most photographers blame their autofocus systems for soft images. Autofocus may indeed be a factor with DSLRS, as mirror misalignment, mirror slap and a host of other issues can cause problems. The new mirrorless cameras focus directly from the sensor plane almost eliminating autofocus as the problem. I suspect camera/lens movement is a far bigger factor for soft images. At the very top of the list of poor camera technique is jerking the shutter release. This has to be a smooth motion and it rarely is. Many of the self-proclaimed experts talk about rolling your finger over the shutter to obtain a release. In my opinion that's a real load of horse manure and ergonomically next to impossible. Ideally what we really need is a voice activated shutter. Short of that unlikely breakthrough in technology you should really be thinking about breath control and smooth shutter depression. Take a breath, exhale your breath and slowly depress the shutter release at the bottom of the exhale. It should come as a surprise when the shutter fires. If it doesn't, you jerked the release. This is exactly how you practice target shooting.

It's fascinating to me how skills from various aspects of our life crossover and prove useful in other activities. During these self-same college years I paid my college expenses working as a layout engineer in construction. I'm the guy who made sure everything was level, the building was square and followed the dimensions and plans of the architect. I was constantly setting up wooden legged tripods for my level and transit all day long, hundreds of times a week. To this day I can set up and level my camera tripod in seconds while all those folks with fancy leveling plates are still fumbling around. Another crossover skill – "who would'a thunk!" Those leveling plates are actually a good idea particularly for video and panorama photographers.

By far, the greatest tool to improving the quality of your images is a quality tripod system and remote shutter release whenever you can use one. However, here is an interesting phenomenon. When you are 15 stories up trying to level a surveyor's transit you learn the building moves! The bubbles on the transit are literally moving side to side. You level by finding the midpoint of the movement. Furthermore, the telescope on both the transit and the level are

bouncing around due to wind and building vibrations. It's lots of fun. Photographers suffer the same problems. A tripod is certainly more stable than handholding but there is still movement. The greater the magnification of your lens, the greater the problem. Anyone who has used a 600mm lens while someone is walking by knows what I am talking about. Next time you have your tripod set up on carpet wiggle the camera. That should convince you of the value of a remote shutter release. When you push the shutter release you are compressing the tripod legs into the carpet. Even with a 14mm lens you are introducing some degree of camera movement if you are not using a remote release. Everything moves including concrete. Tripods can indeed transmit vibration under some conditions. Under most circumstances it's still the way to go.

With the introduction of electronic stabilization in both the camera and lenses the impact of camera movement on image quality has been greatly reduced but it's not perfect. It's worth noting that on many of these lenses (and cameras) you may need to shut off the image stabilization when using a tripod. It's critical to check your owner's manual and find out if your lens and/or camera should have the stabilization off when on a tripod. Your frustration of getting soft images might be resolved with the flick of a switch.

Some years ago I had a conversation with George Lepp about image sharpness. A number of my colleagues wanted to know what sharpening program he used. He chuckled and said start with good shooting technique. The sharpening programs can only do so much but all digital images, particularly RAW, require some sharpening and you are handicapping yourself if you don't start with excellent camera technique and high quality optics.

One useful tip used by seasoned photographers is that when handholding your camera use at least the reciprocal of the focal length of the lens for your shutter speed. That means that for a 600mm lens use a minimum shutter of 1/600th and for a 50mm lens use 1/50th of a second. Of course seasoned photographers compelled to handhold would be using a higher shutter speed along with breath control, smooth shutter actuation and image stabilization. You try to do anything to increase your success rate.

For all those naysayers who think they are rock steady here is a little experiment. In a semi-dark room tape a pen size flashlight or other small light source (laser pens are ideal) to the bottom of your camera or better yet to a telephoto lens. Turn off your image stabilization in both the lens and camera and see if you can hold the bouncing light steady. Now depress the shutter. Mount the camera on a tripod and walk behind the tripod. Depress the shutter with and without a remote shutter release. I recently performed this experiment with and without image stabilization in both the camera and lens. I'm stunned how good image stabilization has become. Do not let it become a crutch. It should be used to compliment your good shooting technique.

Continued on following page

One of the natural laws of the universe is that the only people that can hold an object perfectly still are dead. The systolic and diastolic pressure of blood pumping through your veins causes movement. Your objective is to minimize the impact of this movement by any means at your disposal. I don't recommend death, it affects your shutter release.

For non-believers here are a series of shots taken with a Nikon Z7, using a Nikon 200-500 @ 500mm and my favorite model. It doesn't move! Also, no editing was done to these images other than cropping.

Shot #1 is handheld with the VR (vibration reduction) turned off and 1/500th shutter speed

Shot #2 is handheld with the VR turned off but 1/3000th shutter speed

Shot #3 is handheld but VR is on, 1/500th shutter speed

Shot #4 is tripod mounted, VR on, 1/500th

Shot #5 is tripod mounted, VR off (per Nikon's recommendation) 1/500th using the camera shutter release

Shot #6 is tripod mounted, no VR and using a remote cable release. This looks the same until you see a strand of a spider web across the eye and also from the bill to the breast. This is not visible in any other image. Compare the eye and the stitching in front of the eye to the other images.



TIPS FOR PHOTOGRAPHING FIREWORKS

BY MICHAEL FREEMAN



Are you planning to photograph this year's July 4th fireworks displays?? Take some advice from International photographer, Smithsonian magazine lead photographer, and Focal Press photography book author Michael Freeman.

1. **Anticipate the action:** Research when the show begins, ends, and how high the fireworks will be. Secure an unobstructed view by arriving early and then consider the background and foreground of your shot. Try different zooms or interchangeable lenses, and experiment with buildings to give scale and anchor to your shots. Use the first few bursts to finalize your lens focal length and framing.

2. **Let the fireworks do the moving:** You'll need a long shutter speed and a perfectly steady camera. Use a tripod!

3. **No tripod?** Find a solid surface at head or waist height with an unobstructed view. Use something soft to balance your camera. A ziploc bag filled with beans or rice will hold your camera steady once you've pressed it down firmly.

4. **Shoot for a long exposure:** Fireworks take a second or two to burst, so leave your camera's shutter open for that long. Alternatively choose B mode (bulb-shutter stays open for as long as you hold the release). Avoid camera shake by pressing gently and holding your finger steady, or use a cable release. If all else fails, try your self-timer.

5. **Control the exposure:** Control the brightness of the fireworks by setting your aperture. If it's too wide (f2.8) you'll lose the rich color, so start with a setting like f8. Use the very beginning of the show to review your results. Focus? Use Infinity.

6. **Avoid flashes:** Not only will a flash not reach that far, but the fireworks are the lighting! Turn off your flash.

7. **Keep your ISO low:** There will be plenty of light from the fireworks, so keep the ISO low, (such as ISO 100) and you'll avoid the noisy image that may spoil the fireworks; brilliant effect.

8. **Think about focal length:** If you want the fireworks to fill the frame, consider how close you are. You already made a guess on framing, but be prepared to re-adjust your zoom or fit a different lens. Try a wide-angle if you're close.

9. **Pay attention to firework frequency and variety:** Leave your shutter open from just before the burst until just after. Once you know the burst height, watch the ascending trail to know when to press the shutter release.

10. **Get ready for the finale:** You'll need to widen your lens focal length and point the camera higher to get several bursts into one shot!

Michael Freeman

MONTHLY THEMES

Jul	Gardens
Aug	Harsh
Sep	Under
Oct	Odd Couple
Nov	This Changing Planet
Dec	Joy

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