THE IMAGE

March 2019
Spring Issue

View From the Boardroom

By Susan Frechette

It's almost April, but spring has not quite yet sprung; although I do see some signs. Last week I noticed skunk cabbage poking up in the middle of a wet section in the woods along a hiking trail in Essex. I had my camera with me but I was all bundled up in multiple layers and just didn't think it was worth trying to get the camera out for skunk cabbage. I do pull it out for ice though. A week or so ago I was able to get a few shots of some unusual looking ice near a stream crossing.

Despite the persistent cold this winter, hiking has become an activity that I've looked forward to every week. It's been a way for me to get some much needed fresh air during a time of year when it's all too easy to just stay inside and sit around. Taking along my camera gave me an added incentive. This winter I've been able to get shots of frozen waterfalls and lots of ice and snow covered streams, ponds and lakes. Hikes along the winter shoreline offered beautiful landscapes of isolated beaches and marinas. Being a photographer has taught me to appreciate the beauty of so many things in nature. Colors, patterns, big things and small things; things I never would have noticed at all a few years ago.

A week ago I grumbled at the 20 degree temperature as I headed out to hike, but even though warmer days were just up ahead, I knew that this could be my last chance to see the patches of snow and ice along the stream beds and edges of ponds. And I was right because the ice and snow are just about gone. I doubt if I'll see anything frozen now until November.

This was taken at Chatfield Hollow a few weeks ago after that last snow storm that we had.

"Photography is a way of feeling, of touching, of loving. What you have caught on film is captured forever...it remembers little things long after you have forgotten everything."
.... Aaron Siskind

2019 SPRING MEETING SCHEDULE

April 3, 2019—CCC/SECC Joint Competition hosted by SECC

April 17, 2019—40 Slide Review

May 1, 2019—Gladeview Healthcare Show Opening

May 15, 2019—Review of Annual Club Project

June 5, 2019—Annual Business Meeting; Potluck Dinner

OFFICERS
President
Maryann Flick   860-304-5693

Vice President
Paula Chabot   860-399-5414

Secretary
Sue Frechette   860-663-1372

Treasurer
Mike Frechette   860-663-1372

Past President
Archie Stone   203-245-2381

COMMITTEES
Exhibits
Allison Maltese   203-458-7916

Hospitality
Paula Chabot &
Sue Frechette   860-663-1372

Membership
Dave Rathbun   203-484-2262

Newsletter
Sue Frechette   860-663-1372

Programs
Mark Janke   203-457-1890

Publicity
Colin Reeve &   203-241-7949
Anne Mele

Digital Image Technology
Louis Secki   203-804-7479

Webmaster
Rob Nardino   203-318-0831

Activities
Sue Frechette   860-663-1372

2019 SPRING EXHIBIT SCHEDULE

April 15, 2019—Senior Center Take Down 8:30 am-4pm

April 27, 2019—Gladeview Show Drop Off; 12:00-2:00pm

May 1, 2019—Gladeview Show Opening; 6:30-8:00 pm

June 22, 1019—Gladeview Take Down

MEETUPS

We have come up with a number of photo opportunities that we will be organizing this spring and summer. Here is a list of what we are planning to schedule but we have not solidified the dates yet. Some of the venues will be local and free; some will require participants to pay an admission fee. We are also considering holding some private shoots where we may have to charge a small fee to participants. We are considering an occasional out of town venue where we may have to drive longer to an event or destination. We are always looking for someplace new so if anyone has an idea for a photo shoot, please contact Sue Frechette at wfrprs@att.net. Here are some of the things that we're planning to schedule over the next few months.

Daryl Smith—Glass blower—late April or May

Weir Farm National Historic Site in Wilton

Ray of Light Animal Rescue in East Haddam

Hammonasset State Park Night Shoot

Mystic Seaport

Lavender Pond Farm in Killingworth—sometime in July

HELP WANTED

We could still use some volunteers to join the board. Many of our board members are currently filling more than one role.   If you are interested in helping to steer club activities and are willing to take on a few tasks throughout the year, we would welcome your help. Please contact Maryann or any board member if you have an interest.

GLADEVIEW SLIDE SHOWS

The slide shows at Gladeview continue to be a big hit.   These shows help the residents stay in touch with the outside world and often invoke memories and we've received very positive feedback from the facility. We will need volunteers to do slide shows through the upcoming months. Travel is always an enjoyable topic as well as local scenes and events, but other topics are also welcome. The presentation should take about thirty minutes or less. Our experience is that 50—60 images will usually fit into that timeframe.   You can use the club projector as well as the club laptop if you need it. The facility is flexible on scheduling a Tuesday that will work for you. Please consider volunteering.   It's fun, the audience is enthusiastic, and it's a nice way to show some of your great images. If you would like to do a slide show but need help with creating or presenting it, let Maryann know and one of us will be happy to give you a hand. We will also accompany you during your presentation, if you'd like a little extra support.

ANNUAL CCC PROJECT

The theme for our 2018-2019 Annual CCC Project will be "Work the Subject". Pick a place or subject and take pictures from different perspectives. For instance, if you've chosen an interesting or favorite spot that you like, frequent that spot throughout the year and take pictures in different lighting situations, or different seasons of the year. Make a study of it. If you choose a particular subject rather than a place, think about how you can photograph the subject in different ways. Different poses, angles and lighting techniques can present your subject from different perspectives. Here are some helpful websites that discuss the process of 'working the subject'.

https://creativepro.com/
photography-fundamentals
-work-scene/

https://digital-photography
-school.com/create-
stronger-photos-working-
subject/

FLICKR

We have noticed that the images loaded to our Flickr site has been diminishing. In order to make it easier for members to contribute, we've decided to no longer request images that fit a theme. Instead we'd like members to load their images to our Flickr site whenever they have an image they would like to share with the club. If you are not familiar with our Flickr site, here is the link. We look forward to seeing your images.

https://www.flickr.com/
groups/coastalcameraclub/

NEUTRAL DENSITY FILTERS   *By Mike Frechette*

The art of photography consists of two parts; artistic vision, and the technical aspects of light interacting with the camera, lens and film (or sensor).

When a photographer interacts with reality, he or she must chose the camera, lens, exposure time, aperture and the photo sensitivity of the sensor or negative. Depending upon the choices, the resulting image will be different. But there are limitations on what settings can handle.

If you want to capture the motion of waves at the beach on a sunny day, you would want to slow the shutter speed and narrow the aperture as much as you could. You'd also drop the ISO to a minimum. These actions would reduce the amount of light entering the camera, thus increasing the shutter time needed for the exposure. The longer the shutter speed, the more blur you should get with the wave. But, you still might not be able to get that blur because slowing the shutter may end up overexposing the image, even if you've pushed the aperture to F29 and lowered your ISO to 100. Here's where a neutral density filter can help.

A neutral density filter will reduce the amount of light coming into the camera without altering the hues of color hitting the lens. These filters can be sold as a set, where each filter covers a number of F stop reductions, or you can buy a graduated neutral density filter which covers a larger range of F stop reductions. A single filter can cost around $50; a set will run you around $250. A graduated ND filter can cost about $80 (and up).

These filters will allow you to get that nice silky look on a waterfall, but there are other reasons for adding ND filters to your photography toolkit. For example, on a very bright day you may have to make your F stop so small that you start to have problems with light diffraction. Light diffraction can occur when the light waves begin to bend noticeably, resulting in a reduction in the sharpness of the photograph. You may already have a low ISO set and increasing the shutter speed would mean that the F stop would have to be lowered, reducing your depth of field which might be undesirable. Using a 3 stop ND filter (meaning the light will be reduced by the equivalent of 3 F stops) will allow you to maintain the aperture setting but increase the exposure time.

This ability of a ND filter to enable longer exposures without "blowing out" the highlights can create some interesting effects that can be useful. Using a ND filter will remove any moving people or other objects in your photo. You will be able to shoot a building across a busy street with traffic flowing and if you're using a 10 stop ND Filter and a long exposure, no cars will be in the photo. This picture was taken during rush hour with vehicles constantly cutting across my view.

A neutral density filter can eliminate even slow moving objects, like people walking. Here are two photographs of the beach. One has a person walking and the second has no people. I could have used Photoshop to remove the person but I also wanted the water to look very smooth. This is where the artistic element comes in.

The next photo illustrates the 'zoom' effect in which the photographer takes a picture while simultaneously turning the zoom on the lens. I achieved this by using my ND filter and setting my shutter speed to 30 seconds, and then I slowly turned the zoom ring. This effect would be very hard to achieve without the ND filter because the photo would be too blown out using a slow shutter speed. It's important to know that no ND filter is perfect. You *can* get some color distortion. You may also get some vignetting, as you can see in my photo. So be aware that you may have to crop the picture to reduce the effect. If you use *Lightroom*, you can use lens profile corrections to remove the vignetting (Lens Corrections>Enable Profile Corrections).

This last photo below is an example of a technique called 'motion blur' photography or 'smearing'. I achieved this by setting the shutter speed to 30 seconds and then I slowly moved the camera with a downward motion. You may not see a point to making an image like this, but the technique can be used very effectively when creating artistic and abstract images.

If you are looking for something new to learn, pick up a ND filter and try some of these techniques. It's fun and it will expand your knowledge and understanding of how your camera settings work together. It may also spark a new interest in creative photography.

AN INTERVIEW WITH DAVE RATHBUN

By Susan Frechette

My curiosity to know more about our club members prompted me to interview Dave Rathbun this winter. Dave is our membership chairman and coordinates judges for all of our shows and as well as scheduling our own members to judge shows for neighboring clubs. As membership chairman, he provides the board with statistics on participation at our meetings which helps us to understand what our members are interested in and allows us to provide better programing. Dave joined our club in September 2013. He consistently wins ribbons and awards at our shows and he and prior member Barbara Hanson held a show last year at the Madison Senior Center where his work was very well received. Like all of our members, Dave has led and continues to lead an interesting life. I hope you enjoy reading about him as much as I enjoyed the interview.

Could you tell us something about yourself?

I was born and raised in Windsor, CT and I've been a lifelong resident of the state. I graduated from high school in 1965 and got a job right away at the phone company as a telephone installer repairman in Manchester. I got trained and worked for a year. Then I got drafted. I knew that if I didn't enlist, I'd likely be looking at a tour in Vietnam so I enlisted with the Air Force. This meant I'd be in the service for four years instead of two, but the phone company was very supportive and

Force Base in New Jersey. I got trained as an aircraft maintenance technician so that meant that I flew with the aircraft to various places and did repairs and maintenance at the air force bases. I spent some time in Vietnam and also in Okinawa.

After my four years were up, I came home and picked up my old job at the phone company. I continued doing installations and repair, and then moved into management and worked out of the Long Wharf facility in New Haven. I spent thirty six years working for the phone company until my retirement in 2001. Because I had started working right out of high school, I was only 53 when I retired

How did you get started with photography and how did you develop your skills?

As a teenager, I enjoyed 'playing' with photography. I wasn't serious but had fun taking snapshots. When I was in the service I got myself a good camera. One of the bases that I was stationed at had a darkroom and that's where I learned to develop my own photos. But I had no formal training and I basically just continued to take a lot of snapshots. It wasn't until I retired that I really got into photography. I was looking for a hobby and decided to pick photography again. I got myself some basic gear, did a lot of reading, and started going out on shoots. After a while I decided to join a camera club. I belonged to the North Haven Camera Club for a while, then I joined the Coastal Camera Club. Being in the Coastal Camera Club has been very instructive for me. I like the programs, the speakers and field trips. And the competitions and shows have helped me to hone my skills. Shortly after I joined the club, Paula Chabot, who had been coordinating membership, asked for someone to take it over. I decided to jump right in and volunteer. I enjoy tracking and managing our membership. It's fun and gives me some perspective on what people are interested in doing.

What camera equipment do you use?

I have several cameras that I use. I have two Nikon cameras; the D750 which is a full frame and a D500 which is a crop frame. I also use a 4/3 Leica mirrorless camera. The Leica is lightweight and has a fixed 24-75 mm lens. It's good for when I'm going somewhere and don't want to lug around one of the heavier cameras. It has manual settings and shoots RAW. I use a variety of lenses on the Nikons. I have a fixed 300mm F4 prime lens, two zooms (a 200-500mm F5.6 and an F4.5-5.6 80-400mm), and two macros (a 105mm and a 60mm). I also have a 35mm lens, a 50mm lens, a 16-35mm F4 as well as a 70-200mm F2.8 and a 24-70 F2.8. All my lenses are Nikon. When I decided to get back into photography, I went all out.

What are your favorite subjects to photograph?

I like to photograph lots of things but now I especially like to shoot wildlife and nature. I'll try anything but the one thing I'm uncomfortable with is street photography. I stay away from that.

What else do you like to do outside of photography?

I like to be outside and I like physical activity. I'm an avid hiker. I've been hiking with a group of people for the past twenty-five years. The group has shrunk a bit, but we still get together once a month and hike and go to lunch afterwards. We've been doing all the blue trails in Connecticut. I also do yoga and I like to kayak too. I continue to be a runner, although at a much slower pace now.   I've run over a hundred road races from 10 km to marathons (3). I've also competed in two Mt. Washington road races.

How do you approach a shoot?

I don't necessarily plan my shoots. I don't usually scout an area first. When I have a block of time I just go out to place and find things to photograph. I like to look at my surroundings; I seem to always find something interesting. I try to work the subject and shoot it in different ways if possible.

What software do you use and what is your process for developing?

I use *Lightroom Classic CC*. It is a subscription for $10 per month but it's a bargain because it also comes with *Photoshop* and *Adobe Bridge*. I use *Lightroom* for most of my processing but I also have some *Nik* plugins that I use sometimes and I also use *Topaz*. I have a number of steps that I follow when I develop. First, after loading my photos I flag the ones that I think have potential. After selecting an image to work with, I first set a profile for it. I've been following Matt Kloskowski, a professional photographer who used to be part of the *Lightroom* development team, and I've purchased some profiles off his site. I then set the white balance and after that I go to the basic panel and make adjustments under the 'tone' section; I make adjustments to the black and white settings, exposure, I look at the sharpening settings and I try to eliminate any noise. I may go into *Topaz* to fix noise issues. I may also play with color under the HSL panel. I use tone curve a lot. I never change the contrast in the basic panel but instead do that under the tone curve panel. I may make adjustments under the effects panel depending on the photo. I often use *Nik* for my black and white photos. When I'm done, I label the picture 'red' if I think nothing more is needed, or 'yellow' if I think it's pretty good but may need more work. I also set a star rating; five would be an excellent rating and four would be a pretty good rating. This rating really helps when I'm selecting for images for a show or competition.

Do you have a tip to share with our members?

I have two main tips that I would offer to our members. First, go out and shoot a lot. The more you practice, the better you'll become. When I look back at photos from when I first started, and even just from a few years ago, I can see how much my photography has improved. The second tip is to know your camera; know what it's capable of and know how to use those capabilities. This will come naturally if you follow my first tip; getting out and shooting a lot. The more shooting that you do, the more familiar you'll be with your camera.

PROCESSING AND EDITING: OPTIONS OTHER THAN ADOBE LIGHTROOM AND PHOTOSHOP

By Maryann Flick

I was surprised to learn that *Photoshop* was created as long ago as 1987 by brothers Thomas and John Knoll, who sold it to Adobe in 1988. It was officially released in 1990. I did not come to use it until around 1995, long before I bought my first digital camera in 2007. It has become the de facto industry standard in raster graphics editing and digital art as a whole. Such is its widespread use that "photoshop" has become a verb. Since its inception, numerous versions have been released. In 2013, Adobe changed the licensing format and began "renting" it as a software service (*Creative Cloud*; CC). By this time photographers were hooked on the powerful software and both professionals and amateurs used it extensively enough to warrant the yearly subscription. Others said 'No thanks Adobe'. By this time Adobe had been selling *Adobe Lightroom* and *Photoshop* "light", which we know as *Photoshop Elements*, for quite a few years. Elements is easier to use than the full function *Photoshop* version and provides nearly everything you need for editing images and more. It's also considerably less expensive and is not a subscription service. I went through several versions until I switched to *Adobe Lightroom,* though *Elements* was my go-to for compositing, text and a few things that are not provided for in *Lightroom* like creative filters. I have since opted for the *CC* subscription and use *Lightroom* for most of my editing.

As *Photoshop* and *Lightroom* were evolving over the years, other companies were creeping into the lucrative market of photo editing. Brands like *Nik* and *Topaz* were clever enough to create "plug-ins" which are programs with editing features that are slightly different and sometimes easier or more powerful that you can access from within *Photoshop* or *Lightroom*. One of the newest is *Luminar*, developed by *Skylum* (formerly *MacPhun*). It has gotten excellent reviews. I have it but have not had a chance to learn it yet. There are other programs available, but *Topaz* and *Luminar* are the standouts currently. Both have stand alone versions (not just plug-ins) that are not subscription based so you don't need to have a subscription for *Lightroom* and *Photoshop* in order to use them. Both are highly recommended by the pros. *Luminar* is also reasonably priced. Another excellent program is *ON*1; it works as a plug-in or a stand alone editing program. My husband loves it.

I wrote this article because of a message that I got from our NECCC commentator, Rick Cloran. I happened to email him an explanation as to why we no longer ask for more than commentary with our 40 slide review. We used to ask for both comments and suggested edits of our images. Basically, the commentators often suggested *Photoshop* edits that were too technically advanced for most of our members. Furthermore, not that many of our member use *Photoshop*. So as we listened to these lessons, I could see the frustration in a lot of the members' faces. It was not helpful so we now ask for commentary only. I thought I would share with you Rick's reply.

"Your members are far from unique in not being comfortable with many of the typical *Photoshop* instructions. I swear that at times I can actually see folks cringe if I mention layers or masking. If they aren't comfortable with programs like *Photoshop* and *Elements,* it may be worthwhile for them to look at ones like *Luminar* or *Topaz Studio*.

Interestingly, *Topaz Studio* is free in its basic form and comes with several fundamental adjustments. As you want more functionality, you buy additional adjustment packages to unlock the full scope of a particular type of treatment or effect. That lets you keep the program very simple or make it grow with you as your skills with it increase. The nice part is that they provide "preset" looks on the left side of the workspace, that allow a beginner to scroll through and find a look that seems promising or interesting and click on that. The preset isn't just a one click adjustment. It actually applies all of the individual adjustments that go into creating that look. All of those adjustments are stacked over on the right side of the workspace. The maker can go through them, turn them on and off individually to see what they do to the image, open them and adjust the adjustment controls to tweak what that adjustment does, and also add other adjustments from the main menu. For something that is a freebee to start with, it is a pretty nice way for someone to ease into processing without spending a lot of money. The final extra plus is that, while it will install as a filter under *Lightroom*, *Photoshop* or *Elements*, it also installs as a stand alone program, so you don't have to have or use any of those other programs to use it or make it work. It will even open Raw files."

I've given you some of the available options other than *Adobe* for professional level photo processing. The downside is that you have to learn how to use them effectively and be comfortable handling your files. There are numerous resources on the internet and free tutorials for everything. Talk to fellow club members. They may not be able to give you extensive lessons, but they can offer tips and steer you to helpful resources. Digital has made some aspects of photography easier, but it has also introduced some new challenges. Just remember, learning new things keeps our brains from drying up.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Members,

I hope you are all happy with our 2018-2019 meetings so far, especially our newest members. I appreciate your feedback too, both the pluses and minuses. It helps us plan for future programs so please let me know what you liked and what you think missed the mark. And we love suggestions! What would make the club more enjoyable or worthwhile for you?

If you are enjoying the club and know of someone who is also interested in photography, ask them to join you at a meeting. We are always looking to add new members but everyone is welcome to visit our meetings.

Maryann

Submitted by Paula Chabot