RC PHOTO CLUB
HOME OF THE RANCHO CUCAMONGA PHOTO CLUB ©

Welcome!

New Members: **Dana Osgood, Jim Osgood,** and **Alexander Ovando.**

Visitors: **Dana Osgood, Jason Anderson, Dennis Vaughan, Jonathen Davis, Emelie Cady,** and **Jenny Esser.**

Attendance: 53

Member Appreciation Night

Members were reminded to submit their photos for the year-end slide show by 6 p.m. on Nov. 20th. The potluck list was updated, and everyone was encouraged to attend and bring their donations for the **House of Ruth**.

We thank all who brought their donations of food and toys tonight.

Resizing Files

Some members were having trouble resizing their photo files to **1,000 x 800 pixels** so that they could be emailed and then used in the slide show. **Anthony Feliciano** discussed several different ways to do this easily.

You can choose from either of these websites -- **picresize.com** or **shrinkpictures.com** -- and you will be guided through the resizing process in a few simple steps.

In most photo editing software -- Photoshop CS, Photoshop Elements, and Picasa -- there are options that will help you resize your files.

Note that you will want to <u>rename your resized file</u> so that you can retain the original file.

Other Tips ...

RC Photo Club
Board of Directors

Anthony Feliciano
President

John Alexander
Vice President

Yvette Weilacker
Secretary

Beth LaRock
Treasurer

Frank Coffman
Member Services

Yvonne Hicks
Assistant Secretary

Brian Strader
Club Photographer

Lisa Royce
Member-at-Large

Annette Vela
Member-at-Large

RC Photo Club
Committees

Bill Wight
Chairperson
Education

Carole Ann Garland
Chairperson
Community Service

Quick Links

Contact Us

RC Photo Club
Website

SHUTTER COUNT

Do you know what the shutter count is on your camera?

One simple way to find out is to go to **myshuttercount.com**. Here you can upload a recent photo, and the website will tell you what number you're at.

The shutter click lifecycle depends on your particular camera. Most lower-end DSLR cameras will shoot somewhere between 50,000 to 100,000. High-end DSLR's will shoot into the range of 300,000 to 400,000. The more your camera costs, the higher the actuation (shutter click) count. Yes, the shutter mechanism will eventually wear out and can be replaced, but that is costly. That is why this is a very important number to ask about when you are considering the purchase of a used camera.

If you notice that the shutter button is getting harder to click or is feeling sluggish, then that is your first clue that the shutter mechanism is about to go out. **Paul Speaker** suggested that another sign might be where you find that part of your photo image is missing. He added that it is his understanding that most camera manufacturers will usually guarantee up to about 300,000 shutter clicks.

Here's a website to check the shutter life of most cameras ... **olegkikin.com/shutterlife**. Of course, your mileage may differ.

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FIRMWARE UPDATES

Is your camera firmware updated?

Go to your camera manufacturer's website and check for the latest firmware update, if there is any. <u>Very important</u>: When downloading and installing an update, be sure that your camera battery is fully charged and then follow the manufacturer's directions carefully. If you need help, ask a knowledgeable club member to help you.

When considering the purchase of a used camera, be sure to ask if the firmware has been updated.

Criteria for Year-end Awards

Awards for *Best Photo*, *Most Improved Photographer*, and *Best Photographer* of the year were voted on at the last Board Meeting. The criteria we use in our decisionmaking include the following:

1. Photos submitted for contests, exhibitions, displays, photo challenges, and photo sharing;

2. Attendance;

3. Volunteering;

**Dates to
Remember**

Next Meeting
Thurs., Jan. 5th

**Classes &
Workshops**

**Urban Exposure
Workshop**
Sat., Jan. 14

**Photoshop
Elements 9**
 # 181462
Mondays
Jan. 9 - Jan. 30

**Dig. Photography
Basics**
 # 181492
Tuesdays
Jan. 10 - Jan. 31

**Dig. Photography
Advanced**
 # 181494
Wednesdays
Jan. 11 - Feb. 1

**Photo Opps
& Exhibits**

Cable Air Show
Jan. 7 & 8

**Downtown
on Ice**
Los Angeles
Nov. 17 - Jan. 16

Festival of Lights

4. At least 6 months of paid active membership at the time of consideration.

Award winners will be announced at the Member Appreciation Night on December 1st.

We thank **David and Mary Maynard** for their generosity in making the placques for these awards at no cost to our photo club!

Volunteering Events

The RC Photo Club has many volunteer events scheduled for December. Many thanks to those who have signed up to help us in our efforts to provide holiday portraits for our community's families, youth, and seniors:

Brian Strader ... John Alexander ... Annette Vela ...
Janis DeMaine ... Richard Arnold ... Ben Canales ...
David Maynard ... Mary Maynard ... Bob LaRock ...
Beth LaRock ... Scott Lowe ... Gary Dibble ...
Kristen Jauregui ... Dana Osgood ... Charma Hill ...
Yvette Weilacker ... Bill Wight ... Carole Ann Garland ...
Alice Way ... Frank Coffman ... Yvonne Hicks ...
Emily Nightingale ... Cyndy Largarticha

Special thanks to **Anthony Feliciano** for providing his portable studio equipment and his photographic talents.

Street Photography Workshop ... Sat., Jan. 14th

Anthony Feliciano is offering an *Urban Exposure Workshop* on **Saturday, January 14th**. This is open to beginning and advanced photographers. You'll meet at the Rancho Cucamonga Metro Station at 8:00 a.m. (or at Los Angeles Union Station at 10 a.m.) where you will grab your gear and head out with the group to learn how to photograph people, places, and things while walking the streets of Los Angeles. Workshops are limited to 12 participants, and the cost is $69.

Go to the **Urban Exposure Workshop Meetup** site for more information and to sign up, or contact Anthony at our next meeting or by email **here**.

Photo Sharing ...

At each meeting, everyone is invited to **bring in 2-3 photographs (8x10 or larger), and pick one of these to talk about.** (In the interest of time, please adhere to these guidelines.)

We are interested in hearing the story behind the shot, as well as how you captured, processed, and printed your image. Please write on the back of each photo your **EXIF** information (ISO, Shutter Speed, Aperture, and Focal Length settings.)

NEW ... If you would like a critique of one of your photographs, please bring it to our attention during the Photo Sharing, and be sure it is 8x10 or larger.

Bob Haine started us with a little quiz, asking, "Do you recognize this landmark in Yosemite?" Yes, it's El Capitan. This photo *(left)* was taken at one of the most popular spots where the tour busses stop, the western portal of Yosemite Valley known as Wawona Tunnel View or Inspiration Point. Bob took this photo about 6 weeks ago, before sunset. As he pointed at what he called a "brown stain" on El Capitan, he asked if we had any idea what caused that? After a few incorrect answers, Bob then showed us a second photograph he had taken from the opposite direction. He called this "Jet Trails and Smoke Rings," and he pointed out the smoke from a fire that was burning northwest of there, which he concluded had caused the shadow resembling a brown stain on El Capitan.

Bob's then showed us another image he took of El Capitan from down in the valley, along the river. He first held up his original print, and the second one had the color saturation increased a little in Photoshop. Bob said that he has been experimenting a bit with Photoshop editing, but he asked for opinions on which photograph we preferred. The general consensus was that the original unedited print looked better, because the shadows in El Capitan were not as dark as the edited version. ***Jonathen Davis*** suggested increasing the blacks just a little bit to bring out the shadows in El Capitan, and then leaving the blue sky as it is.

Gary Dibble explained that "there's a story and a lesson to be learned with this series of three photos," as he held up his first image. He described Mono Lake at sunset as "the hotspot for every photographer in the Owens Valley." As he was setting up his shot on the south shore, there were literally about 100 other photographers with tripods, waiting for the sunset. Gary pointed out that in this image, "the color of the sunset at this stage was not very promising, but there was some interesting detail in the clouds." As the sky got darker, about half of the photographers left.

Gary's second image was taken about 15 minutes later, "as the sunset started to pick up some pink," and then even more spectacular in color even later, as seen in his third image *(upper right).* "It was the most astounding sunset I have ever seen. Everything was exploding with crimson. The lesson to be learned here is that you do not give up on the sunset until it is so dark that you need to get out a flashlight to get back to the parking lot." Gary shot these at f11, ISO 160. The shutter speeds were slow and varied, as these were taken on a tripod and edited into HDR images.

Paul Speaker and **Nancy Speaker** recently attended a conference of the **International Association of Panoramic Photographers**, where Paul's panorama placed in the Cityscape category. *Congratulations, Paul!* He did not bring this particular print with him tonight; however, he did show us his other two panorama entries -- a sunset beach scene *(left)* and a valley view of El Capitan from along the Merced River *(below).* At this point, Paul asked, "Please give credit in our newsletter to our two lovely assistants," (Yvette & Beth) as the panorama of El Capitan was held up before the members.

Then Paul shared with us panoramic print of the first place entry in the Landscape category, an image of the Guadalupe Mountains in Texas, which was photographed by Bryan Snow. **Click here to view**.

Paul shot his panoramas with a Canon 5D Mark II, and specifically the El Capitan image was a stitched panorama assembled in Photoshop.

Paul was asked by *Les Kagawa* regarding what tripod head he used for the panoramic shots. Paul responded, "It's a nodal. What I use is a **Really Right Stuff** head. And then I have a

FAS that fits on top of that, which sets the body back a little bit so that I'm rotating on the no point of the lens, or approximately there, which makes it a whole lot easier to stitch. When you get everything level and you've got your lens rotating on the no point, and then when the software goes to put it all together, even the objects that are four or five feet in front of you will line up, and everything will be very smooth, and you won't have to go in and do a whole lot of editing afterwards to get things to match."

Bill Wight asked Paul if he could tell us what the "no point" is. Paul explained, saying, "There is a point in the lens (if you are familiar with the diagrams) within the area where all of the light rays come together and at some point will cross. And the point where that cross takes place to provide an upside-down image on your sensor plane -- the point where it crosses is called the no point. So what you're trying to do is, when you rotate your lens, you're trying to get it so that you have two objects lined up on the left side. And when you move your lens to the right side, they're still aligned. That's when you know you're in good shape." Paul added that it's somewhat complicated in a technical sense, so here's a website on **panoramic photography and the "no point"** that we found to help explain it in further detail.

Al Lipsey was in the Bishop area recently, photographing what he tells us are his favorite subjects -- rocks and water. His first photo is entitled, "Backlit Buttermilk," which Al says is "the hardest picture I've ever taken." This area, called the Buttermilks, is among a network of dirt roads, southwest of Bishop. Al sought out this shot, but was challenged by the light of the late afternoon sun which was coming over the mountaintop and directly hitting his lens. So he set up his tripod near

a 50-foot dropoff which overlooked a creek. Al recounts, "I asked myself, how am I going to do this? Everything was backlit, so I decided to filter the heck out of it and give it a shot." He captured this image with his Canon 5D Mark II, fitted with a 24-70mm lens, at f16, 1/25 sec., ISO 100, with a focal length of 38mm.

Al displayed his second photograph, which he calls, "Four Pines and a Pond." He says that he was coming down from Lake Sabrina early in the morning and saw this little pond with a pier. So he set up his shot on the pier, waited until the background was how he wanted it, and captured the image.

And then Al dedicated this last image to Bill, "because this is his favorite place to go in the whole world." Al calls this photograph, "Wake Up Call" *(above)*. He captured this image at 6:48 a.m., before the 7:07 sunrise, "so that's alpenglow actually on the mountainback there." Al noted that when he first looked at this image, he thought that there were flaws because of white dots in the sky. But upon further examination, he realized that these were stars. Al shot this at f6.3, 30 sec. handheld, 14mm, with a CPO and color enhancer. **Costco** produced these prints.

Brian Strader shared with us a couple of photographs from his recent fall trip to the New England states. The first *(right)* was taken at an historic cemetery in Boston, the resting place Samuel Adams and many Revolutionary War heroes, such as Paul Revere. This is an HDR image which he processed using **Photomatix** software.

Brian's second photo showed the Portland Head Light, an historic lighthouse in Maine. It was raining, so he found himself taking a few pictures, then wiping the lens, and repeating this process over and over. Considering the challenges of the weather, he said that he was surprised with some successful captures of this scene. Brian made his prints at **Sir Speedy**.

Gary Mumaw made a calendar using **MyPublisher**, and he soon discovered that landscape-oriented photos worked best for calendars. As a workaround, he cleverly put two of his portrait photos together on a single page to meet the necessary dimensions.

These photos *(left)* were taken during a recent trip to Sedona, specifically the west fork of Oak Creek Canyon, during the peak of the fall color season. Gary got to this area early in the morning so that he could secure a space at a parking lot that fills up quickly. While there, he noticed that an Arizona Highways Photo Workshop was going on, so he hiked four or five miles up the canyon to get away from the crowd of photographers and tripods. Gary noted that these particular five-day workshops can cost as much as $2,000, which is much more expensive than *Bill Wight*'s Mountain High Workshops. Gary's photo on the left showed a beautiful fall-colored mountain scene, and on the right is a closeup of the autumn leaves.
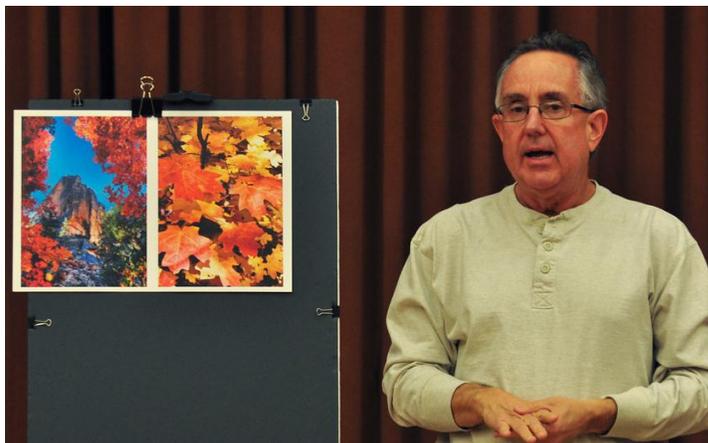
Emanuel Stewart introduced his photos *(right),* saying, "Well, we do shoot people here. That's my passion." He held up a closeup of a woman's face. "I think she has incredible eyes, which I try to focus on."

Emanuel then thanked Anthony for suggesting **FXhome PhotoKey 4 Pro** software, which he employed in this next image of the same subject. He used a green screen behind his subject, and then dropped in the dramatic emerald green background during the editing process. Emanuel said that when cropping, he would have preferred to have moved the eyes of the subject a little higher.

Anthony took this opportunity to explain that because we are using digital images, we can manipulate images and drop in different backgrounds using a green screen or even a blue screen with different software applications. Because of this, the possibilities are endless. You'll see that what you pick for the background affects the subject.

Dale Namminga was recently at the **SEMA Show** in Las Vegas. He explained that "SEMA" stands for Speed Equipment Manufacturers Association, and that "it's a wonderful place to shoot."

Dale captured this image of the inside of a Pantera *(left).* He said that the lid was open, and there were shiny bits and mirrors. And at the top, it's all one view, which allowed Dale to shoot this from a rather unique and interesting perspective.

Dale recommended that this is a fine show to go to if you want to shoot pictures.

Robert Lopez offered, "We also like to shoot cars." He was recently at a classic car show, "and all I had was a three-year-old point-and-shoot camera." Bob said that he didn't like the way the photo came out, as it was dull and lacked color and saturation. So he ran it through **Topaz Adjust** (the software demonstrated later tonight). Bob came up with this final image *(right)* which he says was pleasing to him and to the owner of the

car. He says that he does not have the camera anymore, because it did not pass the drop test.

Yvette Weilacker proclaimed that "after two years of membership in this photo club, things are finally sinking in to where I think I'm getting better at this." She held up a 8x10 of some early fall-colored grape leaves *(left),* a photograph which she shot at our Huntington Gardens outing last September. Yvette noted the transition of color from green to a vivid red. This image was captured in three bracketed exposures, then combined into a single HDR image using Photomatix Pro. Image editing was performed using Topaz Adjust, then some further editing in Photoshop Elements, and the final touch of a vignette added with Topaz Lens

Effects. Her camera settings were f5.6, ISO 100, with three bracketed shutter speeds of 1/25, 1/250, and 1/500 sec.

Richard Lee expressed his opinion, saying that "it's very expensive to go into the photography business, but it's even more expensive with photography as a hobby. I'm not rich, and I'm living under my wife's budget, so how can I get money for all this? I occasionally do some reviews for headphones." Richard got noticed by various companies with his online reviews, where now he receives headphones for free just to review them. He got wise and eventually started selling these headphones, using the money to purchase camera equipment. Sometimes he reviews camera lenses.

For these reviews, Richard likes to shoot photos of the products on a black background instead of white *(upper right).* He explains that "it doesn't show the product very clearly, but it makes it look more expensive."

Richard occasionally gets asked to bring in more food pictures. On the menu tonight were images of king crab, salmon eggs and liver (though he wasn't sure that's what it was), and Taiwan meatballs. *Anthony* noted that the king crab photo had a narrow depth of field, with the main subject in full focus, and then the focus trailed off and became slightly blurred all the way back. He then asked Richard why he chose to photograph it that way. Richard replied that he was focussed on the shell of the king crab, because that was the main subject. And then he chose to blur out the meat, "because the meat doesn't look very great. It tastes great, but doesn't look great." Richard took this photo with a 24mm prime lens, with his aperture set at either f1.4 or f1.8.

Scott Lowe created an image using what he called "manipulation with an Exacto knife" on multiple prints of his hummingbird photograph *(left).* The bottom layer is the entire photograph which serves as the background. For the next layer, Scott cut out the hummingbird's body and wings. And for the top layer he cut out the wings of the hummingbird. He then placed scrapbooking spacers between the layers to create some depth of field. For framing, he uses a shadow box which gave it a pronounced 3D effect. Scott then showed us the single photograph beside the shadow box image. This particular photograph was shot at 1/500 sec., f2.3, ISO 1600, 1/3 step exposure compensation, with a focal length of 200mm.

Photographs courtesy of Brian Strader, RC Photo Club Photographer

Topaz Software -- by Greg Rostami

Tonight we welcomed **Topaz Labs** representative, Greg Rostami, who demonstrated each of Topaz's image editing and enhancing software. He began by giving us a little background on the company. Topaz Labs was started in 2005 by Dr. Albert Yang. Much of the technology involved in developing their software comes from his past work for intelligence agencies and from his scientific and visualization work for NASA. After being in the scientific community for decades and being an avid photographer, he started Topaz Labs to apply his expertise toward artistic purposes in the field of photography.

Greg first showed us how to take a completely underexposed, indistinguishable photo into *Adjust* and *DeNoise* to reveal the hidden image. Then he took a photo with an overcast sky and a silhouette of the Eiffel Tower and quickly edited it in *Adjust* to create a significantly-improved image. Greg also took a single image into *Adjust*, and created an HDR image.

With *InFocus*, he showed us a totally blurred, illegible digital image of a vehicle, and with a few adjustments he revealed lots of detail, even to where you could read the license plate. In *Remask*, he took a photo of a bride and quickly changed the background ... even through the veil. Greg also quickly turned a photo into graphic art using *Simplify*. We got a sampling of all Topaz programs, including their newest addition, *B&W Effects*.

Topaz Labs offers 10 different software programs which can be purchased individually or in a bundle for Windows or Mac. These are plug-ins for Photoshop and many other image editing software products. However, if you use Aperture, Lightroom, or iPhoto, you can download for free their **Fusion Express** software, which allows you to easily access most Topaz programs without Photoshop.

Each of these programs can be downloaded for a free 30-day trial. Once you purchase, software updates are currently free. Also, Topaz Labs offers many **online tutorials** on their website, and more tutorials can be accessed from their **YouTube channel**. Occasionally, they offer online and interactive **webinars**.

Each software program varies in cost, from $30 to $80. Purchased individually, all 10 will cost about $550. The entire bundle sells for $299.99. Tonight, Greg Rostami gave us a great price of $199 for the entire bundle (no tax). However, if you are interested in purchasing it soon, they currently have a promotional offer of **15% off the bundle price of $299** when you use the coupon code "**topazuser**".

Here is a quick synopsis of what each software program Topaz has to offer:

Adjust 5 ... enhance your photo by giving it a simple pop; create a single-image HDR look or apply a stylized look.

DeNoise ... remove general noise as well as horizontal and vertical banding noise; recover image detail; smooth color unevenness.

Simplify ... create high-impact, artistic photography; reduce detail to create a painted or sketched look.

Detail ... selectively adjust small, medium, and large image detail; increase the appearance of image depth; sharpen without creating edge artifacts or halos.

ReMask ... easily extract intricate image details; replace backgrounds or isolate areas for selective adjustments; maintain transparency in hard-to-mask objects like veils or hair.

InFocus ... sharpen for image clarity; rescue blurred images; refine image detail.

Clean ... cleans portraits and skin without losing structural detail; selectively remove undesired details or defects; enhance well-defined edges and lines; create over-sharpened and stylized effects.

DeJpeg ... substantially increase JPEG image quality; eliminate JPEG compression artifacts; recover image information from damaged JPEGs; improve the quality of images taken with mobile devices.

Lens Effects ... create a realistic depth of field simulation; simulate traditional and creative camera lens filters; apply specialty camera effects.

B&W Effects ... convert color images to black and white; simulate traditional and alternative B&W processes; add grain simulating popular film types; control contrast and tonal balance; create stylized effects.

In each Topaz software program, you can choose from a number of preset effects on the left of your screen, and then make further adjustments with a variety of controls and sliders on the right side of your screen. The creative possibilities are endless. Then take your enhanced image back into Photoshop to edit some more, if you wish.

Many of our members already have Topaz software or they purchased it tonight. Ask them for some feedback when you come to our meetings. For the best test, download the free trials and see what you can do with Topaz software to enhance your images.

Member Photo Web Links

Many RC Photo Club members are sharing their **FLICKR sites, websites,** and **photo blog links**. This list has been compiled from what we've received so far. Please contact us to keep us informed of any corrections. Are we missing any member's site? Send us a link to post in future meeting minutes. Don't have a site yet? **FLICKR** is free. Or try **Smugmug** for $40/year.

Enjoy these member links!

Denise Kochis, Carolyn Sherwood, Forest Shipps, Cyndy Largarticha, Richard Arnold, Bill Wight, Michael Lee, Gary Mumaw, John Alexander, Brian Strader, Kathryn Wilkens, Julie Navarro, Gus Ocon, Yvette Weilacker, Jeffery Saddoris, Gary Dibble, Anthony Feliciano, Robert LaRock, Jeff Mittman, Dale Namminga, Kenny James, Emanuel Stewart, and **Robert Walters**.

NEXT MEETING -- THURSDAY, JANUARY 5th -- 6 P.M.
"Happy New Year!"

Central Park -- James L Brulte Senior Center -- David Dreier Room -- Rancho Cucamonga
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Capture the moment!

Yvette Weilacker, RC Photo Club Secretary ... **rcphotoclub@charter.net**
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