



Friday 1 April Birds and free software to focus April meeting

Spring is almost here and that means that the birds will soon be arriving back. It is thus appropriate that our next meeting features birds. Club member Barrie Thomas will show us his collection of bird photographs and outline some of his techniques and hints. He will also give some advice on where in the local area it is best to find some of the rarer species.

There will also be a presentation for those looking for a free alternative to PhotoShop Elements. Peter van Boeschoten will demonstrate the features and advantages of paint.net. This is a no cost downloadable program which might suit many camera club users for a wide range of photo editing requirements.

John Williamson will again show another video highlighting a feature of photo Shop elements.

As usual we will also show the results of our current assignment "Still Life".

Friday 1 April PROGRAM

0915 – Slide show "Still Life"

0930 – Bird photography with Barrie Thomas brought in by members

1000 – Marg's hints

1015 – Coffee

1025 – Paint.net

presentation

1045 – PhotoShop Elements video

1100 – View, review and comment on the "Still Life" photos



"Hanging around" by Louise Robert

Members to help take photos at seniors "Far West Fun Fest"

The Camera Club members have an opportunity to participate in the upcoming Far West Fun Fest. This seniors' activity will run for two weeks starting on 5 May.

This is the first year for this program which takes on a seniors games flavour, but for fun. While centred at the Kanata Seniors Centre many activities will also take place in local retirement residences and other venues from Carleton Place, Stittsville, Kanata and Bells Corners.

Events will kick off with a continental breakfast. Other activities include the Wii, board games, darts, mini golf, bingo, swimming, casino, carpet bowling, bridge and many more.

Camera Club members are asked to participate by taking photographs at the different activities. This is a great

opportunity to take "people photos" as well as candid and action shots.

If you wish to volunteer to participate there will be a sign up sheet at the April meeting.

Send in your "Still Life" photos

The theme for March is "Still Life". This is a broad open-ended topic which allows you to interpret it any way you wish. Use your imagination and go beyond the traditional "plants in a vase".

Submissions are due by Tuesday 29 March so we can show them at the next meeting.

Submission requirements and information can be found on page 4.

Month	Assignment	Deadline	To be shown
March	Still Life	29 March	1 April
April	Spring Forward	3 May	6 May
May	Sunrise/ Sunset	31 May	3 June



“Looking in – looking out” by Sue Carey

3 quick tips to improve your pics

Focus difficulties

Compact digital cameras may have difficulty focusing when there is low contrast in a scene. If you fail to achieve focus taking photos in low-light or low-contrast situations, lock focus and exposure on something of equal distance which has contrast. Depress the shutter-release button half-way, recompose your shot and then fully depress the button.

Prefocus

Anticipate the moment by prefocusing before photographing a fast moving subject. Prefocus on an object of equal distance as the subject will be when it moves in front of you. Keep the shutter button pressed halfway as you track the subject, then press it down fully when ready to take the shot.

In low light, shoot at the widest angle

When taking photos in low light, shoot at the widest angle. In other words, don't use the zoom in difficult lighting. The aperture is largest at the wide end of a zoom, and let's in more light to the camera. If you need to get close to a subject, either “zoom with your feet” or crop the image when editing.

Why is there a DCIM folder on the memory card?

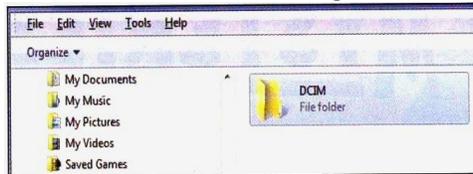
Q. Why does every digital camera – even the one on my smart phone – insist on storing photographs in a folder called DCIM?

A. What's with the alphabet soup? Why not just call the folder 'Photos', or skip it altogether and save photos directly to the root directory? Believe it or not, there is method in the DCIM madness, and it's all about standards.

Eons ago, DCIM (for Digital Camera Images) became the default directory structure for digital cameras. Mostly it exists to keep everything organized. When you put a memory card into a camera, the camera immediately looks for a 'DCIM' folder. If it doesn't find such a folder, it creates one.

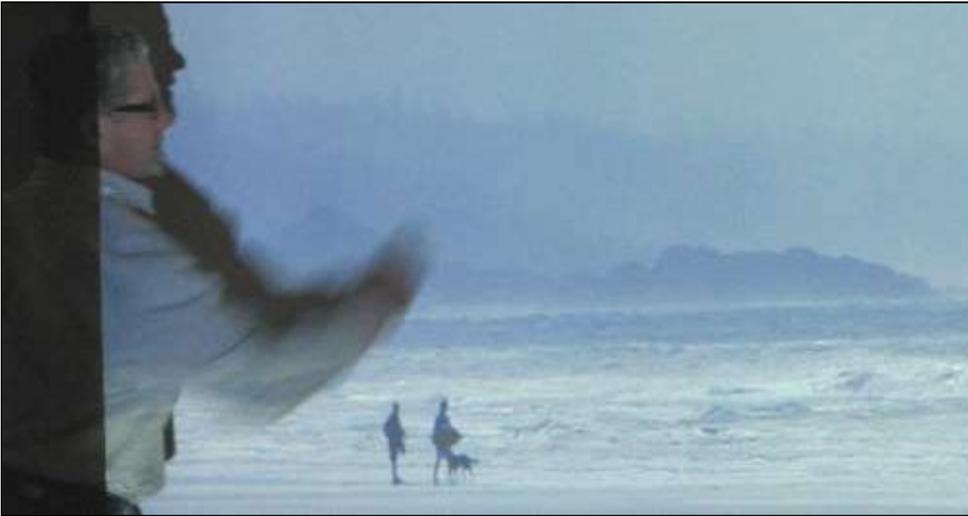
Likewise, some desktop image-editing programs are designed to look specifically for 'DCIM' folders on any media inserted into the PC. That saves time in scanning said media for images-and it prevents the software from importing images that your camera didn't capture.

From PC World March 201



“Ballerinas in Training” by James Wiper

Mentors are available to help before the meetings and at breaks



Doug Brittain makes a comment on one of his photographs. The presentation at the March meeting was informative and very well received. Doug's presentation and a link to his other photos can be found on the Camera Club web page under "Meeting Resources".



"Passing by" by Marg Jackman

Marg's Hints and Tips

THE RIGHT BACKGROUND OUTDOORS

When shooting portraits outdoors you have to think about your background. The background rule for shooting portraits outdoors is to keep the background as simple as possible. The simpler the background, the stronger your portrait will be, so position your subject where the least amount of activity is going on behind them. Here is where you might want to break the F11 rule, so you can throw the background out of focus by using an aperture like F2.8 or F4 with the portrait focal length you like the best. People with point and shoot cameras can get very good portraits by using the portrait mode on their cameras. Remember, when it comes to portrait backgrounds, less is more.

The Background Lighting Rule:

When it comes to backgrounds, there is another simple rule that you can follow that will keep you out of trouble. When you are choosing a simple background to shoot on, make sure your background is no brighter than your subject – in fact, darker is better, because a dark subject on a bright background rarely works.

Where to Focus:

Over the years, there has been conflicting thoughts as to where the optimal place is to focus your camera when shooting portraits (the cheek, the tip of the nose, the hairline etc). Luckily, today the consensus is fairly clear (you will still find some cheek holdouts here and there, but don't let that throw you): focus directly on the subject's eyes. By shooting at f11 and focusing on the eyes, this will give you a nice level of sharpness throughout the face (and most importantly, the eyes will be tack sharp, and in portraits that is absolutely critical).

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Camera Club

How to keep your entire photo in focus

By [Dave Johnson](#), [PCWorld](#)

An important part of taking a great photo is deciding what you want to appear in (and out of) focus. Often, you'll want to emphasize your subject by keeping the rest of the scene out of focus, so I've explained how to be selective about focus [using your camera's aperture setting](#).

There are also times when you want everything in a photo to be in sharp focus, however, from the very front of the foreground to the most distant part of the background. There's a way to do this, and it's called *hyperfocal photography*--or, more to the point, shooting at your lens's hyperfocal distance.

The Problem With Focusing Normally

The term *hyperfocal* might sound a bit intimidating, but don't worry: There's no calculus or physics involved. The easiest way to understand hyperfocal distance is to imagine that it's the distance at which you need to focus your lens in order to get the deepest possible depth of field. Photographers often rely on the hyperfocal distance to ensure everything is in focus from the very foreground to the "infinite" background, as in the photograph linked here.

Consider this: Suppose you are taking a landscape photograph and want to include both a log lying on the ground in the foreground and some distant mountains. The log is only a few feet away, but the mountains are miles away--as far as the lens is concerned, they're at "infinity." Is it possible to get both extremes in sharp focus? Maybe. But how?

You already know that you should



Getting maximum depth of field

switch your camera to Aperture Priority and dial in the biggest f-number you can, like f/22. That setting gives you the best depth of field.

Suppose you focus on the log. Your depth of field extends in front and behind the log. The depth of field in front of the log is wasted, because you don't care about capturing anything in front of the log. Behind the log, you'll have some sharpness, but it probably won't go all the way to infinity.

Photography trivia: The closer your focusing distance, the more narrow your depth of field will be. This is why macro (very close-up) photos have such a miniscule depth of field.

Okay, focusing close didn't work. What if we focus more distant -- on the mountains -- by setting the focus at infinity? We automatically get deeper depth of field (because depth of field gets proportionally bigger as you focus on more distant objects), which is a good start. But again, we are wasting perfectly good depth of field. All the depth of field beyond the focusing distance is useless, since it's already at infinity. If you are lucky, the depth of field in front of infinity will reach all the way back to the log, but it's unlikely, especially if the log is quite close to you.

The Solution: Use the Hyperfocal Distance

You can probably guess where this is going. Instead of focusing on either the closest or most distant part of your scene, you should focus on something in between. If you pick the right place in the middle to set the focus, the depth of field will extend forward to the log and back to the mountains, rendering your scene perfectly sharp. In another photo, rather than focusing on the grass at my feet or the mountains in the background, I chose an intermediate spot, which allowed the entire scene to be sharply focused.

So what's the right middle point to focus on? This is where the hyperfocal distance comes in. Specifically, the hyperfocal distance will give you a depth of field that extends from approximately half the focus distance all the way to infinity. Since the hyperfocal distance gives you the deepest possible depth of field, it's a photographer's go-to setting for getting a photo with seemingly infinite depth of field.

Here's a practical example:

Suppose you know that the hyperfocal distance for your lens (at a particular f-stop) is 20 feet. If you focus on something 20 feet in front of you, everything from 10 feet away to infinity will be sharp. So to capture the log in our original example, you'd need to set your camera lens to its hyperfocal distance and then make sure the log was halfway between you and the point you're focusing on.

As an aside, here's a detail you might not care about, but I'll throw it in for thoroughness: Photographers have traditionally used a rule of thumb that says the depth of field at the hyperfocal distance goes from half the focus distance to infinity. In reality, that's not quite true. The near limit of the depth of field is not exactly half the focus distance, but it's generally fairly close

How to submit photos for the gallery and assignments

We want you to send in your pictures for the monthly assignments and also for inclusion in our gallery on the Club website. So how to do that and what are the "rules"

1. Shoot your pictures at the largest resolution possible.
2. Use an email program and "Attach" your image directly. Do not use your web based image sharing mechanism.
3. Send your images to cameraclub@kanataseniors.ca
4. If you want your pictures included on our Photo Gallery, you must include your name as part of the image name

Shot as: **IMG0912.jpg** (straight out of the camera)

Renamed as: **Snowdrifts by John Williamson.jpg**

Only photos identified with a title and the name of the photographer will be forwarded to the webmaster for inclusion in the Gallery.

5. Processing of your image in Photoshop is allowed and encouraged.