

SVNP NEWSLETTER, JULY, 2020

INCLUDING MINUTES OF THE JULY 9, MEETING

The meeting started with discussion of the pandemic, especially in relation to the resumption of in-person meetings. There seemed to be a consensus of caution on this matter.

There are currently opportunities to give presentations starting as soon as September, 2020. How the schedule may need to be further rearranged continues to be anybody's guess. Any suggestions you may have for programs - especially of a how-to nature - would be appreciated. Please email (wah@waynehallphotography.com) or call (978-443-9226) Wayne if you are willing to give a presentation yourself or if you know someone to recommend.

Please remember, 2020 marks the 25th anniversary of SVNP. There is an open invitation to any and all to suggest activities that might appropriately help celebrate the occasion, especially now that the annual exhibit at the Wayland Library has been canceled. Wayne floated the idea of devoting the November online meeting to a retrospective image-sharing evening with a focus on the participation of former members. Any further ideas would, of course, be welcome.

The Evening's Presentation

Hendrik Broekman presented a program the gist of which might be gleaned from the essay, starting on the next page.

Member Images

Ed McGuirk showed a fine set of landscapes taken close to home during the pandemic lockdown.

Terri Ackerman presented a collection of mammal and bird babies, from a fawn to robins.

Essay: Travel? Who Needs It: Photography Close to Home

Hendrik Broekman

One of the joys of photography is traveling. Or is it the other way around? Traveling, there are so many new things to see (and photograph) and do (and photograph). As long as the sense of novelty is maintained, travel can be an addictive experience, more as a stimulant than a narcotic.

Being someplace new puts each of us on our photographic mettle to see, understand and quickly distill a view we have never seen before (and won't see for very long) into an effective image. Every shot is a new puzzle. The image should convey a sense of the scene in a way that is immediately engaging, which, failing being self-explanatory, can be easily described later in as few words as possible -- and all this without frustrating our traveling companions. The danger lies in succumbing to the temptation to speed up, think less, shoot indiscriminately and choose later. In other words, to take snapshots.

When that *later* finally does arrive, the assembly of the slide show is catnip to many of us. It allows us to retell the tale, revel in our new knowledge and set our experience in a kind of photographic cement. After all, the slide show is essentially a photo album, just more dynamic if less physically accessible. That's what my 40-year old slide carousels tell me, anyway. I was looking forward to preparing and presenting just such a program for the group describing our trip to the Gulf of California in late March of 2020. But, no...

A recent comment by a club member to the effect that I seemed to get substantial bang for the buck from the couple of miles around my house suggested the subject for this essay. At the time the comment seemed odd to me. As I have said, probably too many times, most of my discretionary photography is accomplished not on travel vacations, but on two daily walks with my dog, Willow, usually on conservation land in my area. Our destinations are, if not an easy walk, then seldom further than five minutes' drive from

home. For some, it may be difficult not to regard this as a photographically constrained existence. After all, at first glance it would seem to violate the old photographic aphorism--“If you want to take more interesting photos, then stand in front of more interesting stuff.”

Constrained it may be, but it has its rewards. First, I get to touch a camera (which I find calming) at least once daily. Walks certainly do go by without any images being captured but it's rare that I don't lift a camera to my eye at least once, whether or not I ultimately decide to press the shutter button. There's something to be said for carrying a camera or two for nearly two hours each day. As a musician, I have learned the value of daily practice. The resulting fluency stands me in good stead when I am confronted with a momentary chance for an image no matter how far from home I may find myself.

Walking with Willow off lead as I do, I always have to keep a weather eye for developing situations that may require my attention, possibly my proximity and sometimes my immediate presence. If I dawdle too long over some photographic opportunity, he has been known to follow his own bliss and disappear for a little while, engrossed in *his* doggy chores. So, not only must I split my attention, I also need to up my seeing game in order to identify and evaluate scenes quickly. Come to think of it, this resembles travel photography far more than the classical set-up-a-tripod-and-wait sort. Still, one must find some compensation for the loss of novelty that results from walking the same familiar fields week after week.

But are they the same fields? Can one step into the same river twice? The progress of time, often slower than most tour busses, is inexorable and it should render moot any concern about lack of novelty. From the traveler's perspective, with a schedule to meet, there is seldom sufficient time. From the stay-at-home's point of view, there is often too much. For a well-lived life, there is never enough.

Time can count sunlight, moonlight, clouds, weather and the seasons among its bag of tricks. If one opens one's mind to the possibilities of change at this elemental level, suddenly subjects open up. You may find you are not looking at just a leaf but, perhaps, a leaf

that is backlit, or a leaf heavy with droplets (in the sun after a quick shower or on a grey, overcast day?), a leaf turning color or a desiccated leaf – the list can be extended much further.

Just as some subjects seem always to be photogenic and some continually resist looking interesting, many more, perhaps most, must wait for the right conditions to look fantastic. If clothes make the man then, with equal certainty, conditions (and that very much includes the background) make the subject. Indeed, at times the conditions will be so extraordinary that they become the subject, much as, in a print clothing ad, the model (subject) is only there to allow the clothing (conditions, but actually the meta-subject) to shine. The moment becomes the subject.

In other words, if you wait long enough and return to the same spot enough times, then you might, once in a while, find yourself standing in front of something a lot more interesting than usual - at least for a (decisive) moment or two. You might witness something you've never seen before and won't see for very long, either. Sound familiar?

Aside from the promise of finding interesting conditions anywhere at least once, another perk of familiarity is the freedom to pass up shot opportunities. It's a bit like shopping. Some days the tomatoes are great, on others they're not even worth the calories. Familiarity with the surroundings can not only offer the chance to work a single idea over many visits but also to engage simultaneously in many discrete, long-running mini-projects. It's as much about amassing a comprehensive collection of interesting moments as getting it right.

So, in summary, I have developed two firm, but simple, principles concerning photography close to home:

1. Your camera is a precious resource--don't leave home without it.
2. *f*/8 and be there.

But, above all, BE there. With a camera. Beyond that, it's all jazz.

August Preview:HDR Photography–Blending Brackets

Ed McGuirk writes: “By bracketing multiple exposures of the same scene, and blending them together in software, it is possible to achieve exposure results that are impossible with a single image. The program will discuss how and what you need to do in the field to come away with the proper exposure brackets necessary to produce good results with HDR software. The discussion of HDR software will first include Lightroom ‘Merge to HDR’, and second using Photoshop masks and TK Luminosity Masks to achieve exposure blends. A few examples will be shown of how to use each of these software techniques.”

UPCOMING SVNP PROGRAMS

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| Aug. 13 | Ed McGuirk <i>HDR Photography–Blending Exposure Brackets For High Dynamic Range</i> |
| Sept. or Oct. 2020 | Special Guest, George Woodland <i>Mongolia: Eagle Hunters and the Gobi Desert</i> |
| Nov. 12 | An Online Celebration of SVNP's 25th Anniversary <i>Details to follow as planning proceeds</i> |

Please Note – We expect meetings to be held electronically, via the web, until such time as the membership feels safe in engaging in face-to-face gatherings.

SVNP EXHIBIT CALENDAR

Group Exhibits

Ongoing/ On Hiatus	Newbury Court - Community Room, 80 Deaconess Road, Concord, MA rotating exhibit
Postponed	Wayland Public Library - Raytheon Room, 5 Concord Road, Wayland, MA
May-June 2021	Trinity Episcopal Church, 81 Elm St, Concord, MA; <i>25th Anniversary Exhibition</i>

Individual Member Exhibits

SVNP members - please notify Wayne Hall (wah@waynehallphotography.com) of your upcoming individual exhibits for posting on the SVNP website.

Date	Member	Exhibit Location
Ongoing	Marijke Holtrop	Online Exhibit on the website of the Friends of the Assabet River National Wildlife Refuge (http://farnwr.org/gallery.html)
Ongoing	Betsy Moyer	Newbury Court Senior Living, Concord MA <i>Neighborhood Flowers</i> , 5th floor, south bldg
Ongoing	David Emerson	The Gallery at 51 Walden, Concord, MA, <i>Canals of Venice</i>
Aug.5-Sept.24	Terri Ackerman	Emerson Hospital, 133 ORNAC, Concord, MA, Main Entrance Hallway

Nov-Dec

Terri Ackerman

Nashoba Brook Bakery, 152
Commonwealth, W. Concord,
MA



An Invitation from your Editor

If having a meatier monthly read is of interest to you then, please, I invite you to send anything you may wish to contribute to future newsletters (a précis of an upcoming presentation, photos, personal news, reviews, neat tricks you find worth sharing, etc.) to me at henkbroekman@gmail.com. Please include SVNP in the subject line.

I especially invite presenters and members sharing images to select and submit files for illustrative purposes. I expect it would be possible to accommodate two images or so for main presenters and one each for after-presentation sharing. Generally, expect to see half-column layout along the lines of this example. If you have photos you may wish to share, please submit jpg files sized no smaller than 1200 px on the long side. Submission deadline will be 11:59 pm on the Monday following the meeting. Inclusion in any particular newsletter will be at my discretion based on newsletter length, distribution file weight, current workload, etc.

Hendrik Broekman



*Helicopter Parenting;
photo, Hendrik Broekman*