

THE CAMERA CLUB OF CENTRAL MINNESOTA



The Newsletter of the Camera Club of Central Minnesota

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November 2018

Club Meetings and Other Bits of Information

The Camera Club of Central Minnesota will be meeting on the first Monday of each month with the second Monday of the month as back up starting in January 2017. We will meet at the Public Library in St. Cloud from 6:45 to 8:45 pm.

The club has monthly photo topics, image sharing and critique, hands on demonstrations of photographic gear and software, member online gallery links, discussions about photography, and is open to all.

Remember, all your photo assignments and meeting dates are online at:

<http://cameraclubmn.com>

Assignments

Monday November With the library closed the first and second Mondays we will not have a meeting in November.

Monday December 3, 2018, Bremer Community Room 104, Holiday Gathering: Submit five photos of the year and we will put them together into a slide show. Send them to jbreagan063@gmail.com

Monday January 7, 2019, Bremer Community Room 104.



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Attending Photography Workshops

I often get the question, "Why should I attend a photography workshop?"

Usually, that question comes from beginner photographers that want to improve their skills, but are a little shy about joining up with a group of photographers that might have more experience and a better skill set than they do.

Sometimes, I even get that question from more experienced photographers that might think that they already know enough to get by.

I've attended numerous photo workshops over the years, and each time I've come away with a better understanding of why they're so valuable.

So, if you're on the fence about taking a photography tour or joining a photography workshop, here's a few reasons why I think there's no better way to learn photography.

Editor's Tip: *Improve your photography skills in one of the most breathtaking areas on earth.*

Learn why Iceland should be on your must-see list of places to visit.

The whole point of a photography workshop is to help you develop improved skills and deepen your knowledge of photography.

So it should be no surprise that one of the greatest benefits of a photography workshop is that you have the chance to learn a lot in a relatively short amount of time. Think of it like an immersion class, only instead of being in a classroom, you're out and about in some of the most spectacular locations in the world.

Photographers of all skill levels join photography workshops, so no matter if you're a beginner or an expert, you'll likely find other people in the group with a similar skill level.

That's advantageous from a learning perspective because you can work together and offer one another feedback that helps you both improve the quality of your photos.

What's more, some photography workshops limit the number of participants to just a hand-



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Attending Photography Workshops (continued)



ful of people. As you might imagine, the smaller the group, the more one-on-one time you'll get with the group leader for fine-tuning your approach to taking photos.

When looking for a photography workshop, definitely check on the size of the group, the number of leaders, as well as the experience level of the leaders.

After all, you want to maximize your opportunities to learn, and you want to learn from photographers that have experience not just taking great photos, but teaching others how to take great photos as well.

Another benefit of participating in a photography workshop is that you can actually focus all of your attention on photography because the travel arrangements are taken care of for you.

Apart from getting yourself to the destination, you really don't have to make any decisions about lodging, transportation, or the locations you visit.

Most photography workshops are guided by experts that have been to the location you visit over and over again.

So not only do you benefit from the fact that you can have a no-worry travel experience, but you'll also benefit from their knowledge of the area and their ability to get you to both popular and lesser-known sites at the right time of day at the right time of year to maximize your experience.

Photo Workshops Will Inspire You to Be Better

There's nothing quite like being outdoors with your camera, taking photos of beautiful scenery.

I find that my visits to places like Joshua Tree and Yosemite inspire me to work harder and be better as a photographer.

But when you visit iconic locations like Iceland or the Alps, doing so as part of a photography workshop only amplifies the inspiration you find.

That's because you feed off the energy of the other photographers and the group leaders. You find another degree of passion for photography and landscapes that you didn't know existed.

But actually getting out there with like-minded individuals and exploring your talents as a photographer in a jaw-dropping location is definitely worth the time, money and effort!

A problem in modern photography - as I see it, anyway - is that too many of us are wrapped up in trying to replicate what others do.

By that, I mean that instead of seeing gorgeous photos of this location or that location on Instagram and trying to redo what's already been done, we should focus more on developing our own voice and photographic style.

And a photography workshop is the ideal situation to do just that...

In the supportive environment of a photo workshop, you feel free to experiment with your approach and learn new ways of seeing the world through your camera.

What's more, you can find new ways to challenge yourself to learn technical or artistic skills that will improve the quality of your photos.

Again, the immersive nature of a photography workshop makes all this possible in a very short period of time. If you want to quickly improve your skill set and produce images with more visual appeal, a photography workshop is the way to do it!



Reveling in the success of your peers as you share images and offer feedback to one another further inspires you to be better, too.

Learning about photography by reading a tutorial online while you sit on your couch is certainly one way to improve your photography.

YOU CAN FIND NEW WAYS TO CHALLENGE YOURSELF TO LEARN TECHNICAL OR ARTISTIC SKILLS THAT WILL IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF YOUR PHOTOS.



Photographing the Northern Light

To photograph the Northern Lights (Aurora Borealis), follow these instructions and tips to get the best photos. Try different settings shown here and learn what's best for taking pictures of the Northern Lights in all their nightly beauty.

How to Take Better Pictures of the Northern Lights

Basic equipment: A tripod first of all, preferably used with a remote trigger so you don't have to touch the camera. The camera should be a 35mm SLR camera with manual focus (set to "infinity"), which works well for Northern Lights photography. Digital cameras will need to have manually adjustable ISO and zoom settings.

Additional photo gear: Beyond the basic photography equipment, you should bring the following gear for great results: A wide-angle zoom lens, f2.8 (or lower numbers), will give great results photographing the Northern Lights. A wireless trigger is also very nice, so you don't nudge the camera at all. If you have a prime lens (with fixed focal length) for your camera, bring it.

Taking a picture: You will not be able to take good pictures of the Northern Lights with short exposure times. Good exposure times for this are 20-40 seconds per picture (the tripod will help you eliminate shaking of the camera - you can't hold the camera by hand.) A sample exposure time for ISO 800 film with f/2.8 would be 30 seconds.

Location and times: It can be hard to predict the Northern Lights so you may be in for a few hours of waiting during a cold night. Take a look at the profile of the Northern Lights (Aurora Borealis) to learn more about the best locations and times to find and photograph the Northern Lights! Also, learn more about what kind of weather in Scandinavia photographers can expect.

Batteries don't last as long in cold nights. Bring spare batteries.

Try lots of different exposure settings; night photography is challenging. Test your setup first.

Include a part of the landscape to make the photos more attractive and as a visual reference for size.

Do not use any filters, as they tend to distort the beauty of the Northern Lights and degrade the image.

Turn on "noise reduction" and the white balance to "AUTO" on digital cameras.

What You Need

- Digital camera with interchangeable lenses
- Wide angle zoom lens (f/2.8 max)
- Sturdy tripod, preferably with remote trigger
- ISO 400 or ISO 800 setting
- Spare batteries and warm, comfortable clothing

But before you book your flight and pack your bags, keep this in mind: There can be no guarantee that you will actually see Northern Lights if you only try to go out to catch them one night. Be flexible, since this is Mother Nature, and keep an eye on solar activity (available online) while planning 3-5 days of staying at your destination. If you don't stay that long, it will be hit or miss with the Northern Lights. Have fun, stay warm, and good luck.



**BATTERIES DON'T
LAST LONG IN COLD
NIGHTS. BRING
SPARE BATTERIES.**

Breaking the Rule of Thirds

One of the first things photographers and photography enthusiasts learn is composition, in particular, the rule of thirds. Out of the many composition techniques out there, the Rule of Thirds is arguably the most popular. We're advised to stick to the rule of

thirds by default because it makes our photos a lot more pleasing to look at. However, we are free to break the rule if, and only IF, the situation calls for it. And only if you understand this rule by heart, of course.

What are these exceptions,

you ask?

Well, one is seascape photography. We stumbled upon a video by filmmaker and landscape photographer Adam Karnacz where he demonstrated how he broke this rule when he photographed a seascape im-



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Breaking the Rule of Thirds ... (continued)



age at sunrise.

The final image has mossy rocks in the foreground with the sunrise reflected on the sea in the back. Adam had decided to forego the rule of thirds in this instance, explaining:

“I’m actually breaking the rule of thirds and putting the horizon right up at the top of the frame because we’ve just got that little slit of light... that’s right up at the top of

the frame. Anything above that really isn’t that interesting. It’s kind of that gray-blue tinge of the sky. So I’ve broken the rule of thirds for that reason — because all the interest is down at the bottom of the frame.”

Additionally, Adam made use of long exposure to “give it an ethereal feel” and cropped it into a square image “because all of the interest is in the cen-

ter of the frame.”

There’s no hard and fast rule when it comes to composition but it pays to know the rules by heart. So you might want to check the basics of composition and the rule of thirds (and breaking it). Meanwhile, we think street photographers would be interested in this piece titled, Screw the Rule of Thirds: “Composition” for Street Photographers.

Fixing WiFi Dead Zones

FOR THE STRONGEST WIFI SIGNAL, PLACE YOUR ROUTER IN THE CENTER OF YOUR HOUSE —OR AS CLOSE AS POSSIBLE.

WiFi is the lifeblood of the digital home. When it works, it’s glorious, but when WiFi ‘ghosts’ your home, the consequences can be ghoulish. There’s no better time than Halloween to address dead spots so here are a few tips to exorcise those connectivity demons and put your home on a path towards, fast, reliable, whole-home WiFi.

Replace cobweb-covered, outdated equipment

Let’s start with your WiFi router — it’s the engine of your connected home and it’s also called a gateway when it combines a router and modem. If it’s more than three-years-old, it’s probably time to replace it. With Xfinity, you can lease our powerful wireless gateways that we update, for no additional cost, when you’re ready to send your old router to the grave. Just use the xFi app to ensure your wireless gateway is the latest. If it’s upgrade time, we’ll ship you a new router.

Is your router buried alive? Unearth it for better WiFi

If you’re getting a ghostly WiFi signal, the router placement is likely the culprit. Basements and attics might be good for keeping equipment out of sight, but they’re terrible locations to ensure wall-to-wall WiFi coverage in the home. These router locations also will kill your signal:

Under blankets or inside a media cabinet

- On the floor
- Next to other electronics, like TV sets, cordless phones, baby monitors and microwaves
- Near glass doors, windows or even a fish tank

For the strongest WiFi signal, place your router in the center of your house -- or as close as possible.

Cast a spell for super speed with a simple test

What internet speed do you get in your home? Can it support additional devices powering simultaneous gaming, 4K movie streaming, video calling, and more? If not, you might need a speed increase. At Comcast, we’ve increased speeds for our customers 17 times in 17 years, often times at no additional charge. You can check your internet speed with Xfinity Speed Test available here.

Send the right signal to the WiFi spirits

Most modern routers and gateways broadcast more than one WiFi signal. If your device is “dual-band”, it’s broadcasting two signals or bands in your home — 2.4 GHz and 5 GHz. Typically, the 5 GHz band is faster and less congested than the 2.4 GHz band, but because the 5 GHz band uses shorter radio waves, the signal doesn’t travel as far. Check your router’s current band and



experiment with different devices to see what works best. If you have an xFi Gateway, our advanced software makes sure your devices connect best when you have a combined network name for both 2.4 and 5 GHz. You can learn how to combine the different WiFi network names and passwords here.

Don't get spooked by dead zones, just add mesh

Once you make sure you have the right router, position it centrally in your home and set devices to the proper frequency, you should see a dramatic difference in your home connectivity. But all homes are

not created equal and sometimes architectural design and building materials can impact your connection. If dead-zones still exist, consider adding our xFi Pods. xFi Pods are mesh wireless extenders that plug into an electrical outlet and boost WiFi coverage.

And in the lead up to Halloween, we're installing a one-of-a-kind mesh network in America's largest purportedly haunted house for a live event, streamed exclusively on Twitter.

Eliminate Zombies in Your Personal Internet of Things

Consider the WiFi devices

powered by your network. The average home will have more than 50 WiFi connected devices by 2020 – laptops, tablets, smartphones, game consoles, TVs, voice assistants, thermostats, door locks, toys, appliances and more. Yet, one malfunctioning WiFi connected gizmo can become the zombie eating up all your internet speed. Every month spend a few minutes reviewing the devices on your WiFi network. Disconnect unrecognized signal hogs (with just a tap using our xFi platform) and ensure all devices have updated software.



What Separates Good Photography From Bad?

Alongside the improvements to Photoshop CC announced at the Adobe Max 2018 conference, both versions of Adobe Lightroom get important feature updates, with improved artificial intelligence Sensei searches and sharing options in Lightroom CC and combined HDR and panorama merging in Lightroom Classic CC and Adobe Camera Raw.

The two versions of Lightroom seem destined to continue somewhat separate development paths, at least for the time being.

Adobe Lightroom CC

Smarter search tools in Lightroom CC will suggest matches even as you type.

Adobe's decision to offer a 'web-first' version of Lightroom with cloud-based image storage has opened the path to 'intelligent' searches via its cloud-based Sensei AI technol-

ogies. So Lightroom CC gets a new People View to help you quickly find "the people you care about". Lightroom CC can now automatically tag people in photographs so that you can find all the images where they appear. This feature will be available on the Mac, Windows, iOS, Android and ChromeOS versions.

In fact Adobe has improved the Lightroom CC search tools generally by adding automatic search suggestions as you type, based on image metadata like the camera used, lens, aperture, ISO, location or keywords.

Sharing options have been improved with more advanced integration with Adobe's Lightroom.adobe.com web-based service.

Sharing options have been

improved too via a Share Tab which offers an easy way to browse and share albums and images made using Adobe's lightroom.adobe.com website. You'll also be able to share albums directly with portfolios you've set up on the separate but parallel Adobe Portfolio service, using a new 'Connectors' technology which Adobe intends to roll out to third party companies too, so that you may one day be able to order prints or photo books.

In the iOS and Android versions of Lightroom CC, you'll be able to choose which images to share based on flags or star ratings.

Interestingly, Adobe has added an Apple Photos Migrator option for moving your photo library from Apple's own cloud/desktop-based service to Adobe's. Along with the new people-finder options,

LIGHTROOM CAN NOW AUTOMATICALLY TAG PEOPLE IN PHOTOGRAPHS SO THAT YOU CAN FIND ALL THE IMAGES WHERE THEY APPEAR.





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Membership is \$25 per year. Members should provide: Email Address, Mailing Address, and Phone Number.

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The Camera Club of Central Minnesota publishes a monthly newsletter which is distributed via e-mail. The newsletter will contain information about up-coming meetings, summaries of previous meeting, recommendations for photographers, announcements of photographic workshops, and other material that seems appropriate.

If you would like to send suggestions, comments, or other communications concerning the club or newsletter, please send your e-mail to rheath@tds.net.

this seems like a deliberate attempt to win over new or novice users to the Lightroom CC ecosystem.

Lightroom Classic CC and Adobe Camera Raw updates

Adobe is keen not to lose its existing 'desktop-first' customers, so it has also brought in several improvements for Lightroom Classic CC—the 'old' desktop-based Lightroom.

The company has focused on performance updates and image editing enhancements in line with its Adobe Max 2018 message – create better images, faster.

HDR and Panorama fans now get to combine the two with a new HDR Panorama Merge option, so that you can now capture bracketed, overlapping frames and get full dynamic range at the same time as capturing stitched wide-angle views. Previously, this would have been a time-consuming two-stage process. This feature will also be available in Adobe Camera Raw.

Lightroom Classic CC

Need to merge bracketed HDR exposures AND stitch panorama frames at the same

time? Lightroom Classic CC now has it covered.

Adobe has also introduced improved Lightroom Classic CC tethered shooting for Canon cameras, bringing a big increase in speed and stability and image transfer times between 1.5x and 2x faster. It says it's working on similar improvements for Nikon cameras, which will come in a future release.

Also new in Lightroom Classic CC and Adobe Camera Raw is a Depth Range masking tool to be used alongside local adjustments. This won't work on any old image, though – it requires depth information about object locations in three-dimensional space captured as an additional image channel by the latest smartphone cameras – one example is the iPhone's Portrait mode.

As with Adobe's Photoshop CC updates, these are improvements to Lightroom and Adobe Camera Raw rather than revolutionary changes. Lightroom CC does not yet have full feature parity with Lightroom Classic CC, and there are search features in Lightroom CC that the Classic version does not have.



**Happy
Thanksgiving!**