

Newsletter of the



Poly Speaks

Edited by Jim Mildice

**Poly Photo
Camera Club**
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“Bryce Canyon” – by Joan Harris

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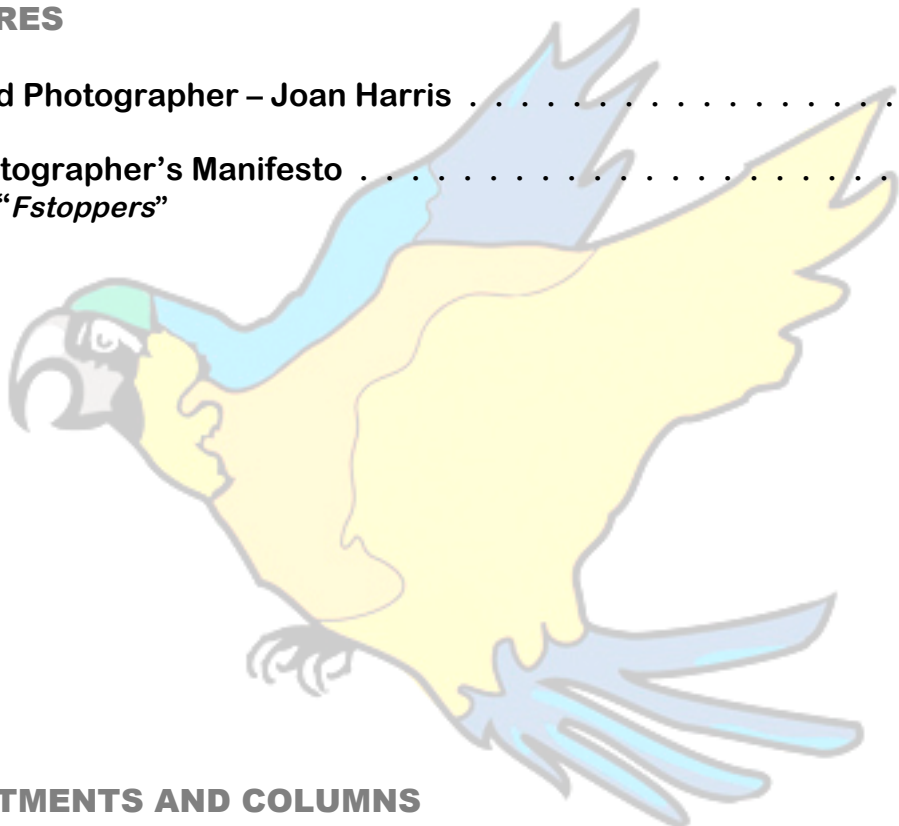
“The Photographer’s Manifesto”

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Poly Speaks is published by the Poly Photo Camera Club, in San Diego, California. Editor – Jim Mildice
President – Alan Haynes | Vice President – Darlene Elwin | Secretary – Josi Ross | Treasurer – Aseem Gupta

From the Editor

Our featured photographer for this month is Joan Harris. She says she has come a long way in her photographic career, and her obvious skill at this time testifies to her successful journey. Also, I noticed that her images submitted this month focussed on beauty, and her favorite animal pictures on Page 4 all focussed on love. I think that those two qualities in her outlook and work have also helped her greatly along her journey.

At last, after a lot of campaigning by both sides, it's election time. No, we are not adding political discourse to this publication. I don't mean the mid-term Congress or the Governor. I mean the important one – “*two or three images*.” Personally, I'm glad it will all be over soon.

After listening to the arguments, I still think they resolve into the two main issues that we mentioned last month:

Enter three images per person per month. Leave the rule the same as it presently is!! “I want objective feedback on more images. (33 vs 22 per year, max)”

Allow only two images per person per month. Change the rule!! “There are currently too many images (usually around 100 in ‘open’) submitted for a single meeting and good feedback.”

So, come to the November 1 meeting and vote.

As long as I have been an amateur photographer and belonged to camera clubs, formalized competition has always been a very important part of the activities. As we have said many times, it's an opportunity to get critique and feedback from a more expert photographer/judge. It is also an opportunity for affirmation of our photo skills, and a way to gauge our progress against others.

This month, I found the “*Photographer's Manifesto*” article on an interesting web site from a group called “*FStoppers*.” It helped quantify a few ideas that have been bouncing around in my head for a while now. I think they are important to camera club members in particular, and also to photographers in general.

The Manifesto says that if we let competition be our **highest goal**, to the exclusion of everything else, we'll miss the best parts of what photography has to offer. Competition is valuable as one of the stepping stones on our way to great, enjoyable photography. But more important issues involve community and sharing.

We published a shortened version of that article. You can read the full version with more details and examples on the web site at: fstoppers.com. While you're there, don't forget to look at some of their other features, pictures, and articles.

Quote of the Month –

“Seen from one perspective, photography is much more about elimination than inclusion. The images we make with a lens typically eliminate eighty percent of our field of view and everything that is out of our field of view. The shutter slices time, eliminating all moments before and after it opens and closes. Three dimensions are reduced to two. And in some cases color is removed.

Can we accurately call these kinds of artifacts unaltered? The act of creation is an alteration.”

– John Paul Caponigro

Featured Photographer of the Month – Joan Harris

My photography hobby started when I received my first “Brownie” camera. Even though most of my older photos have faded, my memories will last forever. I can’t help but say to myself, “You’ve come a long way baby.”

My road trip from New York City to Los Angeles was the beginning of my photographic journey. As I became more passionate about photography, I enrolled in photography classes at a community college and learned how to develop and process film. Having my own darkroom was considered, but with two young children at the time, realized it was better to use the lab at school. My camera was always in tow ready to shoot any occasion or event.

After attending a demonstration about a new concept in photography – “digital” – no more film, just a small memory card, I bought my first digital camera – a 3.4 megapixel Nikon – and entered photos in the Del Mar Fair. I also printed my own photos with my small inkjet printer – one couldn’t tell if it was a print made from film or digital. I’ve been entering photos in the Fair ever since. Last year I was awarded three 3rd place ribbons and an Honorable Mention.

Photography classes, photo shoots, photo competitions and photo clubs, like Poly, are an inspiration – yes, I’ve come a long way!

Bryce Canyon – (on the cover)

There are many beautiful national parks in Utah. Bryce Canyon, known for its brightly colored spires and Hoo Doos, was extraordinary! Every view point was spectacular and I was lucky it stopped raining in time to capture this image.



Grasshopper Macro – Macro photography is my favorite challenge — unpredictable, catch-me-if-you-can, moment in time. I don’t have to go very far to find interesting subjects to shoot. This tiny green insect appeared on a bougainvillea flower on my patio. Getting close was a challenge, especially without a telephoto lens at hand – the slightest movement would make him move. Lucky for me he didn’t!



Hugs and Kisses – La Jolla Shores is a great place for photographers – whether it's seagulls flying by, cormorants hanging out, pelicans showing off their mating plumage, or seals and sea lions, there is always something to shoot. I titled this image "Hugs and Kisses." How cute is this?

Zoe – My little rescue dog, is a sweetheart. Sitting tranquil in the comfy chair, I was lucky to capture the moment. I used a filter to give the photo a portrait-like quality



Together – The San Diego Zoo is my go to happy place. An hour a day keeps the stress away! I love this photo of the orangutans. Although it can be difficult to shoot through the glass, especially when there are other spectators, I managed to capture these two – let your imagination tell the story!



“Aspens” – It’s fall and the Aspen trees are in spectacular color. I took this photo at 10,000 feet elevation on our scenic drive to Cedar Breaks National Monument in Utah.



“Lily Pond” – Balboa Park – especially when flowers are in bloom – is a photographer’s delight. I love the reflection pool, especially the lily and lotus flowers. I used the “oil paint” filter in Photoshop to give this image a painted look and to emphasize the shape and color of the delicate lily pads. I loved the results.

This and That

By Clark Winsor

Hi all. November is upon us. Our last competition and business meeting is here. Here are a few things to think about.

We will vote on reducing the competition entries from three to two at the first November meeting.

The points in favor of the change in Bylaws include:

1. It will reduce the time the competition takes.
2. It may encourage more members to enter the competitions.
3. Fewer accepted images at year-end mean a larger percentage of accepted entries making it to our year-end competition.

The points against changing the Bylaws are:

1. Some judges will have more time to find fault with the entries.
2. The competitions are not taking too long so the change is not necessary.
3. Each person will get feedback and critiques on three images instead of two every month.

The club officers are also looking at our yearly dues, both the amount and the way our two tier system works. We're healthy financially, so maybe the annual dues can be lowered.

The club is looking at ways to encourage our members to do their part keeping the PAB open on Sundays and Saturdays. The Saturday obligation only applies for June, July, and August.

You, the members, control this issue. The number of dates for a club's obligation is allocated on the basis of a club's total membership. Every member adds to the number of hosts we need to provide. So if every member doesn't volunteer as a host, others have to pick up your part of the load.

If you have signed up for, and hosted the building this year, you're part of the solution. If you have not, you're part of the problem.

We'll look at this more in the next issue.

Clark



The Photographer's Manifesto

From Ben Sasso, "*Fstoppers*"

Let's change things.

"I'm talking to you – to the part-timer, the student, the pro, the educator, the Instagram king, and to everyone else. We are all crucial parts of this art form and we all have the power to push it forward."

Competition can tear you down, community builds you up.

It seems pretty obvious, right? Let's all be **friends**. I have seen so many photographers become islands. Lonely, discouraged, and negative little islands. Somewhere along the line, someone thought it would be a good idea to view each other as competition and I have no idea how that stuck. Let me set one thing straight right away: your life and art will suffer greatly if you believe that, I promise.

I am not your competition. You are not my enemy. **You are my fellow artist and I'm on your team.** I want to see you win. I want to see you create gorgeous things. You might think that there are only so many awards to go around but I assure you, there are plenty. Every artist out there has their own style and every potential jury has their own taste. There is always a match for you no matter how many other photographers there are in the exhibition. So here's a thought: let's quit seeing each other as threats to our own success and start looking to each other for inspiration, education, and encouragement. We are all passionate artists; let's start treating each other like it.

I want to see you succeed. Truly.

I want to see you creating awesome work and getting published in the best magazines and in the coolest galleries. With that being

said, I'm still going to feel a little jealous when I see you traveling to a totally kick-ass location and having the time of your life. When you get published in one of my favorite magazines, I'm still going to feel that little jolt of envy. It's natural. Everyone gets jealous. You can thank social media and our culture of bragging for that. Maybe the fact that everyone feels jealous at some point or another (even the people that you are

jealous of) will lend you some sort of comfort.

Work on your craft. Learn new things. Step out of your comfort zone and let your comfort zone grow to meet you. You can always, always, always improve and let's be honest here, you always want to. It's what makes humans so great at so many things. **We all want to be awesome, so let's be awesome together.**

Learning rocks, so let's share it.

Let's bounce our ideas and work together to be better than we were. Hoarding your secrets for the sake of keeping your style unique is like a cook not telling someone what type of noodles he uses because he doesn't want

someone else cooking a sauce like his. Everyone is inspired by completely different things; so even with the same exact knowledge, you won't see duplicates, you will just see more forms of awesome.

Encourage New Talent

If a new (or even a not so new) photographer asks you a question and you have the time to answer, please do. Help them out. **You were there once too. We were all there.** Obviously we can't always

Community over
competition

As you improve, we
all improve

Jealousy Sucks

Share your secrets

Encourage new
talent

Be Awesome!

answer everything, but we can always email back. We can at least say “Hey! I appreciate your question and wish I could answer every one I’m asked, but I need sleep too. Best of luck!” I can tell you from personal experience (and I’m sure most of you went through this too) how discouraging it is to not hear back from or to be completely shot down by someone you looked up to. In the beginning I had no idea how busy some of these photographers were and the photographers that might be emailing you now don’t understand that either. So even if you have to create an automated response, send them an encouraging note. Do your part to welcome in new talent and encourage positivity and community. Start them off on the same note you wish you had been started

off on. **It may seem small to you but it might make a world of difference to them.** If nothing else, maybe karma will pay you back.

Let’s slap normal in the face.

“We are artists and we can do whatever the hell we want. I know that seems pretty obvious, but I think we all (myself included) get stuck in a box of things we see others doing or we limit ourselves to creating only what we think will be popular. How about this: let’s be artists and do what inspires us. Let’s create. Let’s shake things up, step out of the box, and make people remember what it’s like to be weird. **Let’s want to be awesome, and LET’S DO IT.**”



Nature Photography “in the wild” can be hazardous to your health.

Coming Events

Darlene Elwin

November 1 – Competition.

The “Project” subject is “*Contemplative Photography.*”

November’s Judge will be Amanda Dahlgren. She is a designer, technician, and craftsman, but above all, she is a photographic artist who has always been fascinated with aesthetics and artistic expression. Her bachelor’s degree in design strongly influences her work in terms of the visual impact: thoughtful attention to composition, color theory, and design principles, but she also believes very strongly that her art needs to communicate on a conceptual and emotional level.



She has also always had a very strong desire to share her knowledge and talents with others. In addition to being an artist, she has always been—and will always be—an educator. She taught for the San Dieguito Union High School District for over 7 years, where she developed curriculum in fine art photography. Since then, she has taught photography at colleges and arts organizations such as the Museum of Photographic Arts, Platt College, The New Children’s Museum, Outside the Lens, and UCSD Extension. She currently teaches photography as an adjunct professor at Grossmont College and Southwestern College in the San Diego area. She also consults for the VASA Project, an online media center focused on

photography, digital video, criticism, visual studies, and new media, and serves as Assistant Editor for VASA’s Journal on Images and Culture.

Amanda has always been an avid student, pursuing as many educational opportunities as her schedule will allow. She earned an MFA in fine art photography from the Academy of Art University in 2011. Even with this terminal degree, she continues to seek out opportunities to learn and grow as an artist because she strongly believes that the connections and collaborations that happen while learning and teaching are what keep her alive as an artist.

As a critic and teacher, Amanda’s stated philosophy is, “*I believe strongly that every photographer, no matter their age, background, or skill level, has something valuable to contribute through the photographic arts and that it is my job as an educator to challenge and inspire each student to find powerful and authentic ways to express it.*”

You can learn more about Amanda and see examples of her work on her web site at: www.amandadahlgren.com.

November 15 – Workshop “Speed Lights at Night” with Stan Bell

Stan is an excellent photographer and an informative and entertaining teacher. He is also known for his technology explorations and for his creative (sometimes “Rube Goldberg” like) equipment use to solve photographic challenges.

We guarantee that this workshop will teach you new things about the use of speed-lights.