

# Focal Plane

Volume 68 Issue 1

September 2004

A Publication of the Ridgewood Camera Club



## Calendar for September 2004

1 Executive Committee  
8 Program  
15 Pictorial Competition  
22 Nature Competition  
29 New Members Night

Host: Helen and Chick Chakarian  
Florence Robbin and Mike Riddle: "Early Stages of  
Digital Photography"  
Judge: Ralph Krubner  
Judge: William D Griffin, FPSA, NJFC

We meet every Wednesday of the month at 8:00 pm (except the first  
Wednesday) during the club season  
The Woman's Club of Wyckoff, 176 Wyckoff Ave. Wyckoff. NJ  
**Guests are always welcome at regular meetings**

## President's Welcome Message

Welcome back for another season of the Ridgewood Camera Club. Hopefully you had plenty of opportunity to practice your hobby during the summer months. Your executive committee has been working hard to organize what should be an exciting and interesting list of programs, workshops and competitions for your enjoyment.

In response to your requests, we have changed the format of some of the program evenings. New Members' Night has returned to the lineup to help the people who have recently joined the club to become better acquainted with club members and the workings of the club. Later in the season there will be a Critique Night and a Multiple Forum Night. Further information on these meetings will be forthcoming. Since digital photography is becoming more popular with each day, our first program will be "Early Stages of Digital Photography", by Florence Robbin and Mike Riddle.

I am looking forward to seeing you at our first meeting on September 8<sup>th</sup>.

Marie Kane, President



## From the Editor

Welcome back to another season of photo fun. Hope you are all well.

This season will be the start of some changes as the club tries to keep up with the rapid changes in technology. Not to worry the changes will come slow.

To make a point, when taking pictures of young children with a film camera they don't understand why they can't see them developed on the back of the camera instantly. Kodak closing most of it's film processing labs and outsourcing it's slide processing is another sign of change.

This editor also bought a digital camera (Nikon D70 ) and I must say it produces beautiful images if the person behind the viewfinder does everything right. No matter how much magic there is in that little box the basic camera rules are still the same. The only added decision besides the F-stop and shutter speed is you need to choose between film or digital.

This is my third year as Focal Plane editor and I still enjoy doing it. Thank you much for your contributions hope I can still count on you this coming season.

In this issue are a lot of articles by our members about the happenings this past summer .Thank you for sharing them with us.

Dieter

## Focal Plane

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Ridgewood Camera Club

# NEW ENGLAND CAMERA CLUB COUNCIL CONFERENCE

**July 16, 17 & 18, 2004**

*Some comments on this year's Conference by Loretta Lembo and Camille La Placa-Post:*

## Loretta:

After packing lunch, clothes and cameras, we got an early-morning start for a weekend of fun and learning. This was our third year attending the NECCC and we were looking forward to it with enthusiasm. We decided to try out the dorms, as we thought it would be more convenient to stay on campus and not have to keep moving the car and looking for parking.

Arriving around 11:00 A.M., we registered and located our dorm. When we went in to get our room key, they told us we were on the fourth floor. (Oh well!). Carrying in our luggage, we asked where we could find the elevator. "There's no elevator" we were told. We said "you're kidding, right?" (No one warned us to pack light, but what woman packs light?). After three trips to our room, we opened the windows, plugged in our fans and collapsed on our "plush" 3" mattress. Catching our breath, we decided to locate the ladies shower/bath room and found it a few corridors away. For sure, we would get our exercise this weekend!

We had pre-selected our sessions so as to get the most out of the weekend. Arriving this early gave us time to take in several sessions the first day... and good, they were. One of them was "Fine Tuning Your Photography" by Gary Stanley. It was very well presented and provided great tips for taking photos. Some sessions were instructional and some were just breathtaking presentations which took you on an enjoyable trip. They all were motivating, and I came away learning a lot and inspired to continue improving my photos. (One great feature about this Conference is that you can buy a book of speakers' notes for all the presentations. No scribbling notes in the dark and trying to figure them out later.)

This year there were many more digital sessions offered. I'll let Camille comment on these.

I didn't take any as I'm not yet into digital photography.



## Camille:

This was my first total *on campus* adventure. My previous experiences were great, although I often found myself lost or not being able to fit in all that I wanted to do or know what I wanted to do. But this year was different for me. I was more prepared and goal oriented. Actually, I was more serious about the weekend but in a more relaxed way, if that makes any sense. I think whenever you do your homework the results are always better. I already knew where I was going this time and had a sense of what I wanted to get out of the weekend. I picked the classes that I wanted to attend beforehand. My goal was to find out if and when I would get into digital photography so I attended several of the digital classes. Much to my surprise, most of the classes I attended touched somewhere on digital. I found that the same passions were there. I was becoming just as excited about my desire to get a digital SLR camera as I am about my other cameras. It's about us and what we want to do with our creative spirit. What mattered is that I wanted to go a step beyond and learn something new and it was here at this conference. Three days for myself to do what I enjoyed most....photography.

Sometimes we're not sure where we want to go with our photography; sometimes we are frustrated and feel our pictures always come out the same. Then all of a sudden we become inspired by something we read, or saw, or tried, or a piece of music that inspires us, or a child or whatever – and it's all new again. It's there everyday and we don't see. Then we go away and try something new and we're alive again. That wonderful feeling of a new adventure, a new idea, a new way at seeing through our lenses - our friendships grow with people who share this journey with us, our creativity is renewed.... all as a result of attending this 3 day weekend in New England.

The weekend had many quotes to be remembered. One in particular....

***"The real voyage of discovery consists not in seeing new landscapes, but having new eyes."*** Marcel Proust.

Continued on page 5

# Venice

Venice is a photographer's dream. Everywhere you turn you can find an image to fill your viewfinder. Walking through the city with camera and tripod ready gives you the opportunity to discover and capture on film the unparalleled beauty of Venice.

In Venice it is charming to get lost in a maze of narrow alleyways and then to enter a courtyard—sometimes a sunny, shabby one with a weathered well in the middle, and an old church on the side. You may see an array of facades of gothic windows with dirty laundry hanging down and beautiful flowers cascading from window boxes



For so small an island, Venice is a busy, bustling place. There are people everywhere. Tourists are wandering around marveling at all the wondrous structures. Photographers are clicking away with their cameras trying to capture the essence of the city. The Venetians always seem to be on the move. Some are rushing back and forth to work. Older people are slower but purposeful in their steady amble over the many bridges that seem to be everywhere. Children are going to and from school and later playing in a courtyard with a beautiful church in the background. All of these Venetians are seemingly immune to the incredible beauty around them.

The ultimate thrill of being in Venice is to be in St. Mark's Square. Here is the heart and soul of Venice. Standing in the courtyard of San Marco you are energized with a jolt of pleasure that only St. Mark's immediately provides. There are pictures waiting to be taken everywhere. You can view the glittering Byzantine splendor of St. Mark's Basilica, enjoy the

waves of ascending pigeons, watch crowds of tourists milling back and forth or sitting at ease in the outdoor cafes or simply admire the colorful vendors and bright flags.

Looking across the canal from St. Mark's Square you can see the white domed church of Santa Maria della Salute, the great Baroque Church at the entrance to the Grand Canal. Inside the church there are paintings by Titian and Tintoretto. This beautiful church was built in thanksgiving for the city's deliverance from the plague of 1630.



Venice has been painted, photographed and described thousands of times so it is possible for you to think you know the city without actually being there. I visited Venice this past April and I discovered that my preconception of the city has now been replaced by my very real photographic images which I will treasure forever.

*Nancy Merena*

## Florence

After making our presence known in Venice for five days, we were on our way to Florence. On Monday, April 26, we met our Fototreks Tour guides, Brenda Tharp and Jed Manwaring. Three other happy shutterbugs joined us.

It's absolutely impossible to explore magnificent and bustling Florence in three days, but we gave it our best. To investigate and photograph the nooks and crannies of this jewel and to allow time to visit the museums, one must spend no less than a week. Our accommodations were in

a beautifully restored 12<sup>th</sup> century palazzo (The Torre Guelfa), centrally located and five minutes from the Ponte Vecchio. We began to get ourselves in shape for the Tuscan hills rather quickly when we “hiked” up to Piazzale Michelangiolo to photograph a sunrise and the roofs of Florence. We visited the Uffizi Galleries and enjoyed seeing many of the Renaissance artists’ masterpieces.



## The Tuscan Countryside

Photo Ops Abound!! This region is glorious. . . the landscapes resemble a patchwork quilt. Having seen the landscapes in the spring and summer, I feel the terrain in the spring is more beautiful. The wheat hasn’t matured yet, so there are multiple shades of green sweeping across the horizon. The farmhouses dotting the landscape make wonderful images, especially if one is using a long telephoto lens. Visiting the hilltowns is like going back in time. Each hilltown is unique unto itself, exuding its own charm and “personality”. The medieval wells and piazzas in these hilltowns are gathering places for the village folk, affording me wonderful photographic memories. It’s a rare Tuscan who will say “No” to having his/her picture taken. Besides winning the prize for “most natural photo models,” the Tuscans are gracious and cordial. One wonderful experience that stands out in my mind is when our group, strolling through a hamlet one early Sunday morning, was invited into a couple’s house for biscotti and espresso coffee. This charming stone house most likely dates back to the 15<sup>th</sup> century.

I dare not end this trip report without mentioning

the delectable and very interesting cuisine, offering, for instance, smoked duck as an appetizer or a first course of wild boar sauce over pappadelle pasta. All the dishes marry well with an outstanding glass of Chianti Classico Riserva. And, of course, one never begins the day without a cappuccino or even manages to get through it without a double or triple scoop of gelato or sorbet in every flavor imaginable.



The RCC’ers are the greatest people to travel with . . . never a dull moment!!

I urge you all to visit my Beloved Tuscany for that little slice Heaven.

*Pat Gordon*

### RCC winning entries at the New England Camera Club Council

Black & White Print HM

Della O’Malley – Pelican Close-up

Color Print Medal

Judge’s Choice Gold Medal and HM

Vinnie Kempf - Staircase

Color Print Popular Vote

Peter O’Malley – Green Heron

Peter O’Malley - Multi Colored Dahlia

Nature Slide HMs

Della O’Malley – Fall Colors at Stony Brook

Vinnie Kempf - Get Back with the Rest of the Harem

Pictorial Slide HMs

Vinnie Kempf - N.Y. Stock Exchange

## OUR SUMMER TRIPS

by Della O'Malley

Summer has zipped by quickly and a new RCC season will begin soon. We made a few photo trips this summer and now we are looking forward to another season of photographic competitions and activities. Above all, it will be wonderful to see our club members regularly again to exchange thoughts and ideas to improve our photographic skills.

Peter and I made a self-guided photo trip to Maine and a weekend trip to the NECCC Conference at Amherst, MA. Maine has a beautiful, scenic coastline and it has more than sixty lighthouses along the Atlantic Coastline. We decided to start from Acadia National Park on Mount Desert Island and then travel southward to Portland to cover as many lighthouses as we could. We visited seven of them by the end and some lighthouses are extremely photogenic and majestic. Shown are two lighthouse photos: Bass Harbor and Portland Head lighthouses.

We set out to photograph the scenic spots each day at Acadia National Park during our stay in Bar Harbor. We visited Sand Beach, Thunder Hole, Cadillac Mountain, Jordan Pond, Bubble Pond and Monument Cove. Due to heavy fog on some mornings, we had to revisit the same area a number of times. We also drove along Mount Desert Island to check out the various harbors, such as Seal Harbor, Northeast Harbor, Southwest Harbor and Bass Harbor. Across from Bass Harbor, there was a lobstermen's village named Bernard, which was a great spot for photography.

We drove to Bass Harbor a couple of times in order to get good shots of the lighthouse in the morning light and at sunset. We took a nature cruise to get close to the Egg Rock Island Lighthouse, where this small island is fully inhabited with seals and birds. After leaving Bar Harbor, we drove along the coastline to visit more lighthouses. We also stopped at Camden, Rockport, Owl's Head and then finally arrived at Portland to photograph the majestic Portland Head Lighthouse. We found many photographers there taking pictures of the same subject from all directions. It is one of best-kept lighthouses. Almost every time we visited a lighthouse, we found that we needed to carefully climb on the precarious rocks in order to get better angle for our shots.

I remember when we visited Maine many years ago; we only used a few rolls of film. Our photographic interest has certainly changed since then and this time we shot 22 rolls of slide film and more than 2,000 digital images between us. The SLR digital camera provided us with tremendous freedom. Since no film cost was involved, we bracketed to check for the best exposure and zoomed in and out from close-up to wide-angle landscapes with various lenses. We also purchased a gadget called an "Apacer" portable CD burner for this trip. It is about as large as your palm and easy to carry. We burned the images on CDs after returning from each day's shooting and the CF cards were ready for re-use the next day. Besides the ease and freedom of taking pictures digitally, the even more important thing is the fun of

shooting digitally. The freedom and the instant feedback we receive translate into a greater expression of our creativity. I can see the reasons that the digital camera is becoming ever more popular today and the sales figures of them are doubling ever faster.

On the second trip we made to the NECCC Conference, twelve of our RCC members arrived at the campus and we tried to meet for our meals at the Dining Room each day. Peter and I thoroughly enjoyed the exchanges and camaraderie from our club members. It was a busy two and half days and we attended all the workshops we possibly could. We submitted our slides and prints for competitions and we also tried to find time to take shots of the models provided for us at the conference. At the end of the trip to the nearby "Magic Wings Butterfly Garden" before is a swallowtail butterfly from "Magic Wings."



conference, we made a "Magic Wings Butterfly" returning home. Shown butterfly from "Magic Wings."

All in all, we have had an enjoyable and productive summer and we are now ready and looking forward to another season of fun, challenge and creativity.



# RCC Picnic at Jean and Bob Bader's home



Jean and Bob  
Thank You



## Assigned Subjects for 2004-2005

1. **Night shots:** Photographs taken after sunset or before sunrise.
2. **Patterns:** Repetitive patterns, designs.
3. **Pairs:** Two of the same kind. Set of two.
4. **Creative:** Is defined as a departure from reality created by the use of filters, digital manipulations, reflections, montages, multiple exposures, or any technique that results in a picture that would not normally be seen with the human eye



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