



THE CURRENTS

River City Camera Club

January, 2013

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Did you know you can pay for your membership and donate to the club from the website? Even order club logo clothing.

See <http://rivercitycameraclub.org/membershipsandproducts.html>

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

"Twelve significant photographs in any one year is a good crop." - Ansel Adams

Ansel Adams is one of the masters of photography. He didn't expect to get more than 12 excellent photographs each year. Granted, those were the days of film and the learning curve and capacity for a specific quantity was limited. Today with the technology advancements the learning curve is faster and there is nearly unlimited capacity for a reasonable price.

But technology differences don't mean that everyone will be an Ansel Adams. However, it does mean that with practice and attention to learning how to see light, understanding composition and properly using the technical controls on the camera, we have a better chance to capture more great images. The ability increases especially with the nearly instant feedback on the camera and unlimited capacity for capturing photographs.

The key is getting out there to get photographs. Twelve images doesn't seem like very many for an entire year's worth of photos but even when I look back at my years of making pictures, I believe the number is about right. They may not have been Ansel Adams excellent, but they were for the level I was taking photos.

Go back and see what you photographed last year and find those twelve excellent images. Compare them to the best twelve the previous year. Do you see improvement? I'm certain you will.

SUNSET MANOR

The schedule for Sunset Manor. We are still looking for a couple of speakers later in the spring. This is a major fundraiser for the club. Any help would be greatly appreciated.

January 4	Cal Dyk	Senegal, West Africa
February 1	Cal Dyk	
March 1	Larry Heydenburg	Nova Scotia
April 5	Marilyn Keigley	
May 3		
June 7		

FROM THE EDITOR

I hope everyone has/is having a wonderful holiday! Hopefully your 2012 has been great and as we look forward to 2013, that it will be better!

I've made some more minor changes to the newsletter this month. Let me know what you think.

We are lucky to have a new contributor this month Martin Stanish. Thanks for contributing.

I was hoping to have a couple of extra features in this month. I want to start having a member interview column every month. So I will be asking people questions for that. I was also hoping to start having authors photos next to their article. Neither happened due to the press of the year. Hopefully next month.

I'm still looking for authors or regular column contributors. If you like to write, or just have a tip for me, please send it in. The address is:

fundraiser@rivercitycameraclub.org

I really would like to hear what you think.

COOKIE BRIGADE JANUARY

Seth Christrup
Audrey Adams
Kelly Walkotten

THE JANUARY MEETING PHOTOSHOP ELEMENTS 101

The Photoshop Elements graphics and photo editing software package is a condensed version of the popular Adobe Photoshop. Lesser priced, it contains most of the features of Photoshop. Elements was designed with the photographer in mind and is ideal for any photography enthusiast, home user with photos they want to organize or edit, or for anyone wishing to do basic photo manipulation with minimal graphic arts. Navigating through Elements and completing tasks is simple. Whether you want to share, organize, or edit photos, you can do it quickly and easily using Elements.

During this presentation, you'll learn your way around Elements to make navigating it a breeze. You'll also learn many of the features and how to utilize the options so that editing, organizing, and sharing your photos is quick and fun.

Kelly will take you through her standard work flow. She will work with selection tools, cloning, color correction, histograms, levels, adjustment layers, brightness, contrast, saturation, vibrance, sharpening, and saving your photos.

It doesn't matter if you already use Elements or you're completely new to the software. Please join us at the January club meeting, when Kelly Walkotten will show you the basics about Photoshop Elements, so that you can easily edit and share your photos.

ASSIGNED SUBJECT: PINK

Make sure your image has plenty of pink in it. Pink is not be hard to find. A few ideas on this are: clothing and accessories, various modes of transportation, toys, signs, glassware, art, a mural, cloth, flowers, mineral rocks, shells, buildings, home & building interiors, clowns, candy, fish and crustaceans, ice cream, drinks, cans, crayons, pencils, paper, paper clips, books, stuffed animals, sunset skies, appliances, and much more.

THE FEBRUARY MEETING GETTING THE MOST FROM YOUR SPEEDLIGHT

RCCC member and staff photographer for Meijer Inc Mike Mitchell will present "Getting the Most From Your Speedlight".

The flash in your camera bag is a powerful tool, when used effectively it can open up many creative possibilities. Mike will discuss ways to use your flash more effectively on as well as off of your camera. He will demonstrate what you need to use your flash off camera and will discuss using light modifiers to help improve your lighting.

ASSIGNED SUBJECT: ABSTRACTS

An abstract is a part of something, or something separated/abstracted from its context or original place. It is zeroing in on a part of the whole subject and photographing only a portion of it. Another sense of the word is, that it is something done in a way that was not meant to be an exact representation of the original. An example would be to photograph a portion of a building, person, or object. Quite possibly someone other than the photographer would not know what the image they are looking at, was a part of.

Quote of the Month

“Don’t only practice your art, but force your way into its secrets. For it and knowledge can raise men to the divine.” – Ludwig Van Beethoven

PHOTOSHOP TIP OF THE MONTH

TEXT REPOSITIONING

KELLY WALKOTTEN

When the text tool is active, you can reposition your text without switching tools. Just move the cursor away from the text and it will automatically change to the move tool icon.



Now click on the text and drag to reposition the text.



A grid will be placed over the entire area. You can use this for a much more accurate placement of your text.

JANUARY PHOTO OPPORTUNITIES SHARON VANDERBOON

January 4-5, 2013: Ice Sculpting Competition in downtown Holland, MI

January 12, 2013: Annual Vintage Snowmobile Show (The Twisting Trail Snowmobile Club hosts its annual Great Lake Show Drifters Antique, Vintage & Classic Winter Snowmobile Show featuring raffles, radar runs, slalom runs, and vintage snowmobiles.)

January 18-19, 2013: White Lake Annual Perch Festival (Includes a chili cook-off at the VFW in Montague.)

January 24-27, 2013: Grand Haven Winterfest (Many events, like Cardboard Sled Race, snowboard competition, and photo contest.) Check with the CVB or Chamber for times and events.

January 26, 2013: January Slide on Hansen Hill at North Mears in Whitehall, MI 1:00 pm

January 26, 2013: Wintervention 11:00 am-1:00 pm downtown Zeeland (snowman building competition)

January 29- February 2, 2013: 29th Annual Greater Muskegon Jaycee’s Snowfest in downtown Muskegon (Check the Visitors Bureau web site for details.)

A word to the wise: Double check the dates and times listed above with the respective cities’ Convention & Visitors Bureaus or Chamber of Commerce. Seldom, but occasionally the source of this information is incorrect. And then of course there is me typing it! Check before you go.. Feel free to contact me with questions.

HANDS FREE PHOTOGRAPHY (AUTOMATIC REMOTE CAMERA TRIGGERING: A TECHNICAL DIY)

MARTIN STANISH

Editors note: Martin does photography from a kite, I thought this might be interesting to those that may want to try it.

For time elapse photography it is desirable to automate the triggering of the camera with consistent and precise time intervals. To do this you would need to remotely trigger the camera with an external device. With today's digital cameras and the availability of inexpensive controller boards, deploying an automated triggering technique is now easier than you might think. So let's start with the basics and build up from there.

There are four methods that I've used to remotely trigger cameras, which is the best to use will be determined by the camera in question. The two easiest ways to remotely trigger the camera are through a native direct wire port or IR interface. Most midrange and higher end cameras usually have either one or both of these interfaces. The Canon Rebel series provides both: a three wire direct interface using a 2.5mm jack (which is electronically compatible to an open collector TTL output control) and a 38.4 KHz carrier pulse IR interface. If the camera provides a direct hardwire interface, then that is the easiest method to use.

The next two interface methods are to either hack into the camera's electronics to create a hard wire interface or to use an external mechanical trigger mechanism that would simulate a physical finger press. For older cameras that are mechanically based, an external mechanical trigger will be your only choice. Luckily, these older cameras typically accept a plunger trigger cable that makes adapting a servo activated mechanical trigger easier than its digital counter part.

Hacking into the lower cost camera that does not have a native direct wire trigger port does have advantages, the biggest being that it is a lower cost camera. The best example I can give for going this route is with the digital cameras that I have adapted for Kite Aerial Photography (KAP). Mainly, I need a light weight camera, and given the risk of crashing the kite and camera 1 out of 10 flights, using a \$50 camera instead

of a \$500 camera just makes economic sense. Another example, is setting up to do an ultra long term time elapse shoot (i.e. a seed to flower blooming sequence), dedicating a lower cost camera for the entire sequence frees up your higher quality camera. With the dozen or so cameras that I have hacked into, I have developed methods to modify the electronics in order to mimic the TTL compatible interface found on the more expensive cameras. The simplest hack is to pick up the shutter focus and click switch contacts of the shutter button and bring these wires out to form the hard wire interface. In some cases I was able to add control lines to "awaken" and advance the camera into to a desired "preset-scene" setting; making the lower cost camera sometimes better suited for long term time elapse shoots.

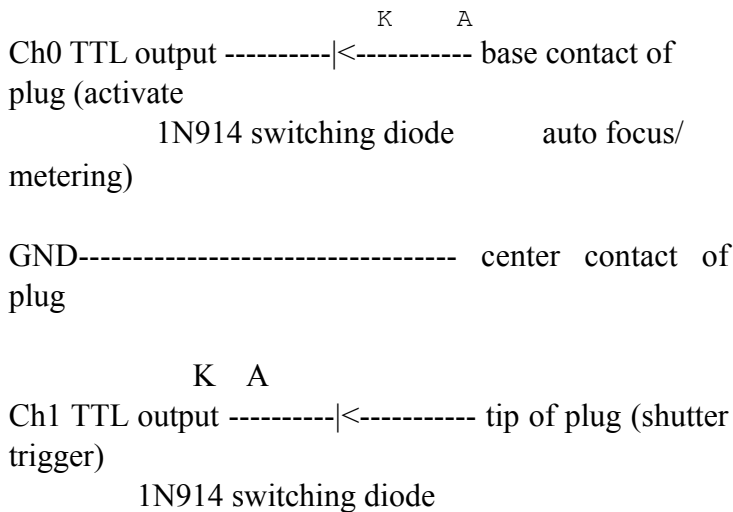
I selected an embedded controller as the platform that was economical, light weight, self contained, and easily programmable. The Pololu Micro Maestro 6-Ch controller can be ordered for \$20 from www.pololu.com (Item Number 1350) and a 12-Ch version for \$30 (Item Number 1352). This controller can be powered from a 9V battery and all the programming development tools are included for this price. The manuals for this product can be downloaded from the site so I will only highlight the general features in this article and put out the offer to answer questions on its use and programming.



The Micro Maestro servo motor controllers are intended for hobbyists controlling simple robots, so it has more than adequate control capability for our use. Each servo motor channel has the flexibility to be

reconfigured as a TTL input, TTL output, or analog input. There is also a TTL level RS232 interface that can be used to connect to a RF link. The USB port is used to download programs into the device (re-programmable) as well as allow for a computer to interface during run time for code debugging and providing a control tether. The servos that this board is designed to control are the type used in radio control airplanes and start from about \$10, with the units in the \$15 to \$20 price range being best suited for building a tilt/pan rig (like the one I designed for my KAP application). Typically the remote camera trigger interface requires two digital TTL outputs. This leaves the other I/O for controlling servos or to be used to monitor for a trigger event. In software, a timer with 1msec resolution can be used to create a time delay from trigger event to camera shutter click or a fixed time interval can be created to repetitively trigger the camera. Both the hardware and IR interfaces provide the option of activating the auto-focus and metering before the shot is taken.

To create the hardware open collector interface for the Canon Rebel the following isolating diode must be added between the Maestro controller board and the Hardware Plug of the camera:



For the IR interface method, because of the complication of the 38.4 KHz carrier, it is easier to purchase a cheap IR remote controller that is compatible to your camera and hack into its electronics to bring out its trigger contacts as one would have done for the camera. The alternative is to create 38.4 KHz oscillating circuit using a 555 Timer chip and control

the reset pin of the 555 to generate the required pulse patterns. The down side of the IR trigger method is that it typically works only 4 out of 5 times. To insure you get the shot within the desired interval, you want to trigger several consecutive shots.

For the curious, the Maestro controllers are programmed using a FORTH scripting language. FORTH is not as intuitive as BASIC or C because its variable access is strictly stacked based. Assuming a direct wire interface to the camera and a simple time elapse application, I have attached to the end of this article the required script that is heavily annotated. The two main control variables for this application are the time intervals between shots and the total number of shots. The time between shots is expressed in number of second and has a range of 5 seconds to 18 hours. For this simple application I am assuming the camera will use the auto focus/metering mode prior to shutter trigger. It is for that reason that the program has a minimum time interval of 5 seconds.

(Editors note: Martin continued the article with a bunch of code which is kind of long. If anyone wants it, I'll try to get it up on the web site as a zip file, or see either Martin or I at a meeting.)

APRIL MINI PROGRAMS

Plan ahead! April 2013 is Mini Program month. Imagine a theme, combine some of your photos and give us a show. You could be the winner, of the audience's vote, and receive your very own River City Camera Club t-shirt. Possible theme ideas are Hobbies, Flowers, Travel, Your Favorite Place, A Tribute, An Event, an Activity, or your own theme.

Mini-Program Rules:

1. **Format:** DVD, Flash drive or Slides with your own slide projector.

2. **Content:** Photos and music. No videos.

3. **Program Time Limits:** 3 minute minimum and 5 minute maximum

4. Submission requirements:

- DVD, Flash drive or Slides
- Written title
- Short written descriptive paragraph
- Deadline: April 3, 2013, 7:00 pm
- Submit to: Kelly Walkotten

5. **Limited number of programs:** Only the first 12 programs submitted are eligible.

6. **Voting:** All members present will be able to vote for their favorite mini-program.

If you need help putting together your program or are willing to help someone else in our club, contact Patrick Gaffney at vicepresident@rivercitycameraclub.org.

DIGITAL CUMULATIVE SCORES	
Huff	518
Povenz	518
VandenBoon	504
Dyk	502
Keigley	498
Tamblin	481
Eichner	349
Walkotten	338
Wysocki	338
Gaffney	320
Christrup	222
Greer	149
Heydenburg	76
Heibel, K.	74

PRINT CUMULATIVE SCORE	
Walkotten	256
Keigley	130
Heydenburg	65



REMINDER

Competition entries are due the Wednesday before the meeting.

DECEMBER DIGITAL COMPETITION

FIRST	LAST	CATEGORY	SCORE	TITLE
Cal	Dyk	Assigned	21	Dahlia
Cal	Dyk	Assigned	22	Peacock Feathers
Elaine	Christrup	Assigned	21	Forest Floor Collage
Elaine	Christrup	Assigned	20	Gilled Mushroom
Jack	Eichner	Assigned	21	After the Rain
Jack	Eichner	Assigned	22	Kloster Eberbach
Patrick	Gaffney	Assigned	22	Old Brick Pattern
Patrick	Gaffney	Assigned	20	Various Textures
Linda	Greer	Assigned	22	Golden Angel
Linda	Greer	Assigned	22	Texture of rust
Lori	Huff	Assigned	21	Black and White Patterns
Lori	Huff	Assigned	22	Scaled Texture
Marilyn	Keigley	Assigned	20	Fuzzy Bee
Marilyn	Keigley	Assigned	21	Stay Back Please
Kevin	Povenz	Assigned	21	Gator Tough
Kevin	Povenz	Assigned	23	Leaf Veins
Julie	Tamblin	Assigned	22	Beach Textures
Julie	Tamblin	Assigned	21	Lily Blossom Textures
Sharon	VanderBoon	Assigned	21	Backlit Alligator Flag
Sharon	VanderBoon	Assigned	23	Flamino Feathers
Lori	Wysocki	Assigned	22	Circles and Beads
Lori	Wysocki	Assigned	20	Birch Food Source
Elaine	Christrup	Creative	21	Patches of Blue
Marilyn	Keigley	Creative	24	Great Lakes Art
Marilyn	Keigley	Creative	21	Once Upon a Time
Kevin	Povenz	Creative	23	Steelwool
Julie	Tamblin	Creative	20	Fisgard Lighthouse
Sharon	VanderBoon	Creative	20	Framed White Water
Cal	Dyk	Photo Journalism	21	Young Red tail in Training
Lori	Huff	Photo Journalism	22	Harris Hawk
Sharon	VanderBoon	Photo Journalism	20	Congressman Upton in Parade
Elaine	Christrup	Nature	21	Bears Head Tooth Fungus
Cal	Dyk	Nature	19	Pileated Woodpecker
Cal	Dyk	Nature	22	Mallard in Flight

DECEMBER DIGITAL COMPETITION

Jack	Eichner	Nature	21	Balancing Act
Jack	Eichner	Nature	21	Creeping Clouds
Lori	Huff	Nature	21	Western Kingbird
Marilyn	Keigley	Nature	24	Looking up
Kevin	Povenz	Nature	21	Floating
Julie	Tamblin	Nature	20	Superior Shore
Lori	Wysocki	Nature	21	Immature Red Tail Hawk 2
Elaine	Christrup	Open	21	Open Petals
Elaine	Christrup	Open	21	Sunflower
Cal	Dyk	Open	24	American Kestral
Jack	Eichner	Open	20	Clam on the Half Shell
Jack	Eichner	Open	21	Quit Shoving
Patrick	Gaffney	Open	21	Evening Lovers
Lori	Huff	Open	22	Female Costa at Rest
Lori	Huff	Open	23	Lark Sparrow Reflection
Kevin	Povenz	Open	21	Sunset
Kevin	Povenz	Open	23	Fishing
Julie	Tamblin	Open	22	Beach Tree
Julie	Tamblin	Open	21	Ibis
Sharon	VanderBoon	Open	20	Great White Egret
Sharon	VanderBoon	Open	23	Post Sunset Lighted
Lori	Wysocki	Open	20	Distorted Reflections
Lori	Wysocki	Open	21	Giant Sunflower

NOVEMBER PRINT COMPETITION

FIRST	LAST	CATEGORY	SCORE	TITLE
Marilyn	Keigley	Assigned	21	Sandhill Feathers
Marilyn	Keigley	Assigned	20	The Feel of My Favorite Pillow
Marilyn	Keigley	Open	20	Rockford lites
Marilyn	Keigley	Creative	23	Eye Sea The light
Marilyn	Keigley	Creative	23	I'm Nosy What's Up There
Marilyn	Keigley	Nature	23	Green Darners Laying Eggs

PHOTO TALK

STEVEN SCHERBINSKI

The end of another year has come. A time of celebrating, reflecting on last year, wondering what the next will bring, and trying to make resolutions.

I do it every year. I make a list of specific resolutions that rarely last more than a couple of months into the year. So this year I'm not making specific resolutions. I'm making general ones. Ones like, take more photos, write more, or try to get the club newsletter out earlier....

Hopefully I won't feel as stressed when February rolls around, the winter blahs have set in, and all my resolutions are in the proverbial toilet.

I hope your New Year is great, your resolutions work better than mine, and you get to do everything you want to do in 2013! Happy New Year!

We meet at Covenant Village of the Great Lakes at 2510 Lake Michigan Drive N.W. in the community room at 7:00 pm. For driving directions, see the website at

<http://rivercitycameraclub.org/drivingdirections.html>

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