

Camera Club of Central Minnesota



CAMERA CLUB OF CENTRAL MINNESOTA

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May Club Meeting Minutes

The **Camera Club of Central Minnesota** met on May 7 in the Bremmer Room of the Saint Cloud Minnesota public library. It was a well attended meeting with lots of interesting discussion. Three members had brought digital photographs stored on flash drives which were displayed, explained, and discussed. The photographs were outstanding and the club member were exposed to several good ideas.

Larry Grover presented a lesson on hyperfocal distance, explaining what it is and how the concept can be used by the photographer. Grover displayed several pictures illustrating the concept. He also explained the relationship connecting the point of focus of the camera lens with its aperture.

Richard Heath demonstrated the use of Adobe's Lightroom Slideshow. He had taken several pictures of a turkey vulture while on a trip to Alabama during March of this year. Heath show that while one could peruse the photographs, the Slideshow with its dissolving from one photograph to another and with accompanying music vastly improves the viewing of the pictures.

Next Camera Club Meeting on Thursday, 7 May

The next meeting of the Central Minnesota Camera Club will be on 4 June at the Saint Cloud Public Library building, beginning at 6:45 p.m.

During the month of May, club members will be shooting landscapes, flowers, in fact, all the signs of Spring. These photos will be brought to the club meeting for display.

Heath next demonstrated how Adobe's Photoshop could be used to transform a picture of a person into a magazine cover page. The demonstration included the use of selections, layers, and masks.

Barry Weber demonstrated the importance of lighting when taking pictures. One of the club members was the model and posed in front of a window with the sun at his back. Weber showed that the photograph taken had the model as a silhouette. Then he use a fill flash which improved the picture but left much to be desired.

The next step Weber explained was to use an off-camera flash. The off-camera flash was connected to the camera via infrared communication. Weber explained how to set up this connection between the camera and flash. Several important points in lighting when taking a portrait were learn by the members.

This issue of the newsletter contains an article concerned with lighting equipment and its use.

Bring photos on a Flash Drive as Jpegs or as Prints.

A demonstration of Photoshop by Dave Bargabus will teach us how to merge several shots of the same scene but each a with different focus, in order to make a picture that is totally in focus.

Special points of interest:

- CLUB MEETINGS
- LIGHTING EQUIPMENT
- PROTECTING FROM MOISTURE
- SECURITY OF CAMERA EQUIPMENT WHEN TRAVELING
- RECOMMENDATIONS

Inside this issue:

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Camera Club of Central Minnesota

Wedding, and Portrait Location Lighting: Part 1



Nikon

THESE HOT SHOE FLASH UNITS ARE IDEAL FOR WEDDING AND EVENT PHOTOGRAPHS OR FOR ON-LOCATION PORTRAITS.



Canon

So you want to take better portraits. Consider starting by getting a hot shoe flash one that has the ability to bounce flash, and the ability to work in wireless mode, which is important since many of today's DSLRs, like most of the Canon and Nikons, support wireless off camera hot shoe flash.

These hot shoe flash units are ideal for wedding and/or event photographers, or photographers who do on-location portraits. The key benefits are:

- Low cost
- Small Size
- Portability
- Flexibility

To do this right, you will need these four things:

- The shoe mount flash unit itself.
- A light weight portable light stand.
- An adapter so that you can mount your flash on that light stand.
- Some kind of diffuser to soften and spread the light from the flash.

Flash Unit

NIKON: If you're a Nikon shooter, you can't beat the SB-800 Speedlight hot shoe flash. It's \$315 (from B&H Photo), and honestly it's amazing what you can do with this one little flash, and if you have a Nikon camera that has a built-in pop-up

flash, you can use it to make your SB-800 an off-camera wireless flash, which is your goal. Other great things about this flash: it comes with a plastic snap-on diffusion dome, which helps to soften and spread the light a bit; it also comes with a little flat table stand, and it comes with some color gels so that you can color balance your light, or use them to add color.

Nikon has recently began selling the SB-900 flash unit. It is more powerful than the SB-800, and easier to use, but cost more.

CANON: If you're a Canon shooter, the Canon 580 EX II is an excellent flash, but there are two downsides over the Nikon flash: (1) it's more expensive at around \$410 (from B&H Photo) and (2) you have to buy either a second flash, or a transmitter to use the flash in wireless mode.

OTHER: If you don't have a Nikon or Canon camera, sell it first, then we'll talk about flashes (kidding, kind of). If you have another DSLR, take a look at the Metz flashes, like a 58 AF-1 flashes. They run in the \$360 to \$399 range.

Lightstand

These flash units don't weight that much, so you don't need a big heavy lightstand (in fact, lighter is better), and you don't need it to go higher than 8 feet tall. I use

an "Impact" (that's its brand name) stand from B&H Photo; it only weighs 2.4 lbs. and it runs around \$35.



Hot Shoe Adapter/Swivel

The idea here is that you'll raise the stand, and then angle the flash so the light comes down at an angle at your subject. This means the adapter you get must let you do just that — angle the flash. But beyond that, the fourth thing you're going to need to do is diffuse the light, and the most inexpensive way is to use an *umbrella* to soften and spread your light. You're going to position your flash so it shoots right though the umbrella. So, you'll want an adapter that not only tilts your flash, but holds and tilts your umbrella for you at the same time. Impact makes one of those, too, called the *Impact Umbrella Bracket with Swivel Mount and Flash Shoe*, and it's only around \$14.



Umbrella

The cheapest, lightest, and easiest way to diffuse your light is to shoot it through a white translucent umbrella, and as luck would have it, Impact makes one of those. It's 33 inches and it's dirt cheap, at just \$10. There are photographers that are not a big fan of umbrellas. However, it's really cheap and it will get the job done, especially if you shoot through it, rather than shooting into it and having it reflect, which is the method many photographers don't particularly like. In **Part 2** of this treatise we'll consider an alternative to umbrellas. But when it comes to price, umbrellas are the cheapest ticket in town.

Some Tips When Using dSLRs in High Humidity

For those of us that live in dryer climates humidity can be a mysterious factor to account for when traveling. Significant moisture in the air around us can impact equipment in a variety of ways in some instances quite drastically. With that in mind the following tips should be considered when using a digital SLR in high humidity environments.

Use Desiccant Packets

Desiccant packets are often found in new product shipments to absorb moisture. As I can, I save these packets to reuse in my camera bag when traveling. If you're not the saving type it is possible to order new desiccant packets online. While its impossi-

The Bottom Line Cost

So, your whole kit; flash, stand, swivel umbrella/flash adapter, and the umbrella itself, would run about \$375 for Nikon users, or \$475 for Canon users (*Note: if you're a Canon user, to use your flash off the camera which is what you want to be able to do during portrait shoots for formal bride shots, you'll also need to buy either Canon's wireless ST-E2 transmitter for \$210, or a sync cord to connect your camera to your flash on the stand, so figure on another \$70, for that.*)

For A Little More

If you don't mind paying a

ble for these packets to absorb all the moisture in a camera bag that you're in and out of often, they can make a difference on segments of trips where a camera bag is not opened or opened infrequently.

Keep Sensitive Equipment in Ziploc Bags

While not perfect, keeping sensitive equipment in Ziploc bags can also reduce the negative effects of high humidity. Ziploc bags do wear out if opened and closed often, so this tactic might be best for equipment that is used less frequently. Combining the use of desiccant packets and Ziploc bags could be a great hybrid approach.

little more for some better gear, you still have to get the same exact flash unit (Nikon or Canon), so that doesn't change, but you could buy higher quality accessories like a Westcott umbrella and spring for the 43 inch model at only \$10 more, and a Bogen/Manfrotto 3361 light stand for around \$69, and maybe a nicer umbrella swivel like the Lumedyne, for around \$40.

Well, that's it for **Part 1**, and our *Super Budget* location shoot kit. In the next issue we'll take it up a notch, and see what can be done with a little more cash, a desire for more flexibility, and the next level of lighting control.



Umbrella

Your whole kit; flash, stand, swivel, and the umbrella, runs about \$375.

Dry Your Hands

Dry your hands before changing batteries and CF cards. This will minimize introduction of moisture, inside the camera, that might later condense upon returning home. Keep in mind this will be particularly true the sweatier you are.

Bonus Tip

Toward the end of your trip utilize a hotel room air conditioners to dehumidify your gear. No need to place your gear too close. Having your equipment out and your camera bag open can be enough to help pull away a build up of moisture.



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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.



Think Tank Airport Security 2

A Next Level Rolling Camera Bag

I have recommended the LowePro Pro Roller 1 in the past as one of the best rolling bag, and it still is an excellent bag. However I've recently discovered the *Think Tank Airport Security 2*. It is the rolling camera bag of my dreams. It has totally replaced my beloved LowePro Pro Roller 1, which served well for the past two years, but this Airport Security rolling bag is truly that next level of bag, and now there's no looking back.

The Airport Security is a carry on that fits under the seat and in the overhead compart-

ment, fitting straight in or horizontally for the smaller commuter airplanes.

There are many instances when photographers must check some or all of their gear. It is absolutely vital that this gear be secured from theft. This is why the Airport Security's zippers have special built in combination locks. Combination locks are located at both openings to the inside of the bag. The picture to the left shows the combination lock which can be opened by a TSA official with a TSA key.



TSA combination lock to lock zipper

Recommendations

My Top Five Workhorse Fonts

- Helvetica (This classic in the middle of a huge comeback.)
- Myriad Pro (When I need something hipper than Helvetica)
- Minion Pro (My Serif font go-to choice)
- Trajan Pro (When I want something to look really elegant, this is where I turn.)
- Gil Sans Light (For a san-serif font, it can be both elegant and casual, depending on how you apply tracking).

My Top Five Photoshop Plug-ins

- *Photo Frame 4*, by OnOne Software
- *ColorEfx Pro 3.0* by NikSoftware
- *Noiseware Professional*, by ImageNomic
- *Viveza* by Nik Software
- *LucisArt 3 ED* by Image Content Technology

Five magazine's for Photographers

- *Outdoor Photographer* (for landscape and nature photographers), www.outdoorphotographer.com
- *PDN* (For working pros in advertising and stock photography), www.pdnonline.com/pdn/index.jsp
- *Digital Photo Pro* (I love it!), www.digitalphotopro.com
- *Professional Photographer* (PPA's member magazine), www.ppa.com
- *Shutterbug* (It's better than ever) www.shutterbug.net

Look for more recommendations in future issues of the newsletter.