



# "IN FOCUS"

Newsletter of the  
Morgan Hill Photography Club

<http://www.morganhillphotographyclub.org/>



## November 2011



Editor

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## November Meeting

### Pre-meeting Swap Meet

Members gathered their extra photographic equipment; like cameras, bags, tripods, monopods, filters, lenses, books, and miscellaneous accessories, to sell to other members looking for a bargain. Everybody wins at a swap meet, which is why the board has decided to hold one every six months.



After all the buyers examined their new toys, and sellers savored the cash in their pockets, the meeting started with four rounds of print sharing.



## 2011 Program Review

**Noella Vigeant**, who is on the board as the Program Chair, compiled a set of photographs, projected each one individually, and asked members what they would do to improve the photo, based on the concepts they had learned from the various 2011 speakers and programs. For reference, each person was given an outline of the major concepts covered by **Gary Hart, Claudia Peterson, Stephan Oachs, Betty Toepfer, and Don Smith.**



©Noella Vigeant

Several of the photos generated lively discussions, including this one of a black cat (crop it to cut off the tail completely, partially, or leave it be?). And this one of a woman on a bridge (Is there too much foreground? Could the covered part of the bridge be cropped down to add emphasis to the woman, or would context be lost?) Many opinions were offered, but the exercise was to base a judgement on one or more concepts

of good photography (allowing that what makes a photograph good is a matter of opinion). Noella emphasized that when the photographer makes conscious decisions *before pressing the button*, less work will be needed in post processing to fix a photograph. And some mistakes cannot be fixed in a computer.



©Noella Vigeant

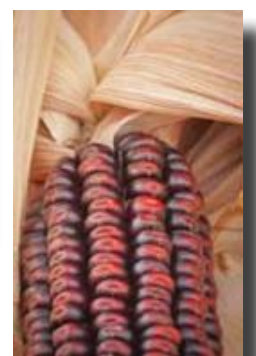
### You be the judge:

*Before continuing*, read through the **outline on the next page**, then look at these sample photos. Why is one photo more effective than the other?



How might these photos be improved?

What could the photographer have done *before snapping the photo* to either avoid a mistake or improve each one?



### Suggestion:

Print the next page, put it in your camera bag, and read through it before each photo shoot. (You can also find the outline on the Yahoo Forum, under 'Files'.)

# 2011 Program Review

## I. Choosing your Subject

- A. Make sure the subject is worthy of a photo. Envision your final image.
- B. Position yourself to incorporate one or more of the following:
  - diagonal lines (dynamic and interesting)
  - repeating lines or shapes
  - strong color combinations (opposites on the color wheel)
  - an odd number (usually more interesting than an even number)
  - leading lines that will guide the viewer to the main subject.
  - and avoid bright/light spots behind the subject.
- C. Include foreground details to add interest and a sense of depth to landscape shots.



## II. Composing your Shot

- D. Fill the Frame:
  - Getting closer to the subject makes it more powerful.
  - Include only the elements that enhance the main subject.
  - Leave space between the subject and the edge of the frame, or crop aggressively.
  - Don't clip the edges of your subject (like fingers and toes).
- E. Allow for the subject to "move" by giving more space in the direction the subject is facing.
- F. Use Rule of Thirds, or not
- G. Practice subtraction: If a photo is too complex (busy), the viewer gets tired of searching for what to look at.
- H. Look around the edges of the picture (border patrol). Don't let extraneous elements intrude into the frame.
- I. The eye moves from left to right. Make sure there is nothing on the left side of a photo to block the eye (like a dark tree trunk).
- J. Bracket perspective: Show the subject in a way most people don't usually see it
  - horizontal or vertical?
  - looking up on a subject or looking down?
  - wide angle or zoomed in? (The answer depends on the photographer's vision.)
- K. Avoid overlapping elements.
- L. Horizon must be straight.

## III. Setting the Camera Controls

- M. Aperture comes first. Every composition has an ideal aperture, which controls depth of field (DOF)
  - Shallow DOF will emphasize a close subject that is in sharp focus.
  - Distant mountains with a strong foreground subject need maximum DOF
- N. Dynamic Range: The camera sensor is limited in the range of light it can capture. When the range is too great for the camera, the photographer has options:
  1. Choose which is more important: detail in the light or detail in the shadow.
  2. Recompose to eliminate the light or the dark areas.
  3. Return at another day/time when the light is more even.
  4. Bracket shots and use HDR software in post processing

## Member News & News for Members

### Executive Board

#### Susan Brazelton

President  
Newsletter Editor

#### Noella Vigeant

Vice President  
Program Director

#### Open Position

Second  
Vice President

#### Dan Gregg

Treasurer

#### Noel Calvi

Membership Chair  
Marketing Director

#### George Ziegler

Web Master  
PSA Liaison

#### Michael Sue BrownKorbel

Photo Diva

#### Roy Hovey

Web Master

#### Pat Stone

Molly Gaylord  
Members-at-large

We were very happy to see **Howard Hall** at the November meeting. Back in July, he and his wife and two granddaughters were involved in a head-on collision near Stockton and suffered extensive injuries. Howard looked great and the rest of the family is slowly progressing toward recovery.



**Noella Vigeant** will be teaching four digital photography classes in December, offered through Gavilan Community Education.



Classes include:

- Advanced Photoshop - Layers & Masks
- Beyond Snapshots
- Getting the Most out of Your DSLR Camera
- Editing in Photoshop Elements

For full class descriptions & starting dates go to:

<http://www.gavilance.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=1010#>

## 2012 Dues Are Now Due

For just **\$20** you get to

- Meet with & learn from friendly photographers every month
- Join Focus Groups,
- Display your photos in any of 3 Gallery Shows
- Share your photos on Flickr
- Ask & answer question on the Yahoo Discussion Forum
- Participate in shoot-outs
- Be a member of the best photography club in Santa Clara County

Show your club spirit  
by having the  
logo embroidered on  
your favorite shirt or  
jacket



©Mike Winn

### Next Gallery Show

## “Transportation”–

### Electronic Submission Deadline

**6PM on Sunday, 11 December 2011**

The “Exhibition Rules” with all the deadline dates and instructions for submitting your photos can be found on the Yahoo Discussion Forum under “Files”

<http://tech.groups.yahoo.com/group/MHphotoclub/files/>

(In case you didn't save the email that was sent on 10 November)

## Focus Groups Review

Focus Groups are self directing, with the members deciding where and when to meet and how they want to pursue their interest. Each group has a facilitator who is the contact person for the group and helps organize the meetings and activities. If you are interested in joining a Focus Group (must be a member of the club), please contact the facilitator.

### **Point and Shoot Cameras - Dan Gregg:** [dwgdvm@aol.com](mailto:dwgdvm@aol.com)

Even though the P&S group is taking a holiday break, members are shooting the fall colors for critique and discussion when they reconvene in January. View P&S photos on the group's Flickr site:

<http://www.flickr.com/groups/1605480@N21/>

**Next Meeting: Thursday, 12 January 2012, 7:00pm**



©Roy Hovey

### **Lightroom - George Ziegler:** [George@gwzphotography.com](mailto:George@gwzphotography.com)

Learn how to use the many tools and modules in Adobe Lightroom. The group often watches short instructional videos, and members share tips and short cuts that help them make full use of the software.

**Next Meetings: Thursday, 22 November 7:00pm at George's house**

### **Macro Photography - Susan Brazelton:** [brzltm@garlic.com](mailto:brzltm@garlic.com)

Jean Myers has offered her home studio in Gilroy to practice shooting macro on **Sunday, 4 December from 9am to Noon**. Subjects will include miniature feathers, natural items, beads, dead bugs and bug parts, thread, and human-made items. There is room for 10 photographers.

To reserve a spot, contact Jean at: [birdermom@mac.com](mailto:birdermom@mac.com)



©Jean Myers

View other macro photos taken by members at: <http://www.flickr.com/groups/mhpc-macrofocusgroup/>

### **Photographing People - Noella Vigeant:** [nvigeant@gmail.com](mailto:nvigeant@gmail.com)

In order to explore ways to take better photographs of people, members are encouraged to, "bring some images that raise questions, bring questions that raise images, bring ideas for our future projects/activities," to each meeting. To join contact Noella or Larry ([Larrycam@pacbell.net](mailto:Larrycam@pacbell.net))

### **Night Photography - Susan Brazelton:** [brzltm@garlic.com](mailto:brzltm@garlic.com)



©Diane Rocha

Are you afraid to go out after dark? Would it help if you joined with other photographers to shoot the night sky, rising (or setting) moon, and maybe a shooting star? As **Don Smith** showed us at the September meeting, another world lights up after the sun goes down. See beautiful night photographs taken in downtown Morgan Hill, San Francisco, Yosemite, and China on this group's Flickr site:

<http://www.flickr.com/groups/mhpc-night-focusgroup/>

If you have a suggestion for an additional focus group, please contact Susan ([brzltm@garlic.com](mailto:brzltm@garlic.com)) to get it started.

## Shoot-outs

Shoot-outs are a perfect opportunity to practice photography in an informal, social, and mutually supportive setting. Leaders often gain access that is not available to the general public.



**Uesugi Farms Pumpkin Patch, Wednesday, 19 October 2011**  
Molly Gaylord arranged for early morning, pre-opening access to **Uesugi Farms Pumpkin Patch** in San Martin. Well before the busses of school children arrived, eight intrepid photographers roamed the marigold fields, train tracks, and sunflower gardens to capture unique shots of this Halloween tradition.



©Bob Smith



©Duane Middlebusher



©Linda Tyson



### **Birds in a Bath Tuesday, 18 October**

A few, patient members took advantage of a bird blind next to a bird bath on Jean Myers' property.

©Dave Kutilek

View photos from all club shoot-outs at:

<http://www.flickr.com/groups/mhphotoclubshoot-outs/>

Next Shoot-out

### **Clos LaChance Winery**

1 Hummingbird Lane, San Martin (off Watsonville Road)

**Thursday, 17 November 2011**

8:00AM - 11:00AM

RSVP: Susan ([brzlttn@garlic.com](mailto:brzlttn@garlic.com)) if you plan to attend

### **Studio Macro Practice Shoot**

Sunday, 4 December

9:00AM - Noon

Reply to Jean Myers [birdermom@mac.com](mailto:birdermom@mac.com)  
to reserve one of the ten spots available

## Flickr

November: "*Alphabet*" Seek out things (natural or human made) that look like letters of the alphabet, but are not literal. A valuable prize will be awarded at the December social to someone who completes the entire alphabet.



©Luis Franco



©Rodney Myatt



©Andrea Bazely

# Beginners Only

This occasional series of articles is intended to help beginners move forward with their photography.

## Using Manual Mode

Are you ready to take the next step in creating more powerful photographs? Then it is time to take off the training wheels of using the program or automatic mode on your camera and make the switch to manual. (Note: Some point & shoot cameras do not offer a true manual mode, so if that is your camera of choice, save this article for possible future use.)

A few definitions first:

- **Automatic Mode:** The computer in the camera determines the best exposure for a given scene and sets both the aperture (f-stop) and shutter speed.
- **Program Mode:** The camera determines the exposure, but the photographer can manipulate the shutter speed or aperture.
- **Aperture Priority:** The photographer manually sets the aperture and the camera chooses the corresponding shutter speed based on what the camera determines is the best exposure.
- **Shutter Speed Priority:** The photographer manually sets the shutter speed and the camera chooses the corresponding aperture based on what it determines is the best exposure.
- **Exposure Compensation Button:** In both shutter speed and aperture priority, the photographer may add or subtract light to alter the exposure chosen by the camera. This is a two-finger operation: one to push the button and one to rotate the dial.
- **Manual:** The photographer sets both the shutter speed and the f-stop. Even in manual mode, the camera will still indicate the best exposure with a meter that can be seen through the viewfinder. Changing the f-stop or shutter speed will move the exposure needle toward or away from the center (which indicates the camera's choice for the best exposure).
- **ISO:** Sensitivity to light: the higher the ISO, the more sensitive the camera is to light.

Many beginners think that using the manual mode is complicated and too technical, when in fact, just the opposite is true. If you are ready, here is a three step process for using the manual mode. (Note: This assumes a stationary subject.)

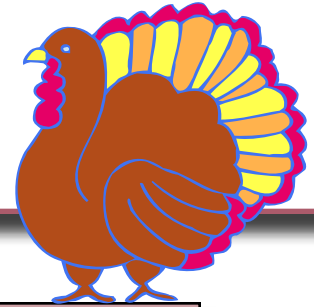
1. Determine the depth of field (DOF) that is best for the scene and set the aperture.
2. Using the camera's meter as a guideline, move the shutter speed dial until you have the exposure that you determine is best for the scene.
3. Take the picture.

It is that simple. If you want to bracket your exposure, you only need to change the shutter speed to add or subtract light. If something in your scene is moving that you want to stop (like leaves in the wind), increase the ISO so you can dial in a faster shutter speed for the same exposure.

Manual mode is not right for every photographic situation. If you are moving around (like at an event), or photographing moving subjects (like children or animals), since each shot is different and often must be taken quickly, you won't have time to adjust two dials. Under these circumstances, shutter speed or aperture priority will work better than manual. But next time you have your camera on a tripod, make the switch to manual mode, and you'll find out just how easy and satisfying it is to have full creative control.



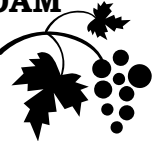
The Executive Board wishes each of you a  
Happy, Healthy, Scrumptious  
**Thanksgiving**



## November/December Calendar

**Now through 28 November**  
**“Black & White” Gallery Show**  
CRC Senior Center

**Thursday, 17 November 8:00 - 11:00AM**  
**Shoot-out at Clos La Chance Winery**  
**Susan Brazelton: [brzltn@garlic.com](mailto:brzltn@garlic.com)**



**Thursday, 17 November 7:00PM**  
**Lightroom Focus Group Meeting**  
Meet at George Ziegler's home  
**[George@gwzphotography.com](mailto:George@gwzphotography.com)**

**Thursday, 24 November - All Day**  
Thanksgiving



**Sunday, 4 December 9:00AM - Noon**  
**Macro Practice Shoot**  
Jean Myers Indoor Studio - Gilroy  
(See page 6)

**Wednesday, 7 December 7:00**  
**End-of-the-Year Party**  
(See Flyer)

**Sunday, 11 December 6:00PM**  
**Electronic Submission Deadline**  
CCC Gallery Show “Transportation”

**Wednesday, 14 December 7:00PM**  
**Board Meeting**  
Senior Center Lobby

Contact **Javier Gonzalez** for all your  
matting and framing needs.

**JAGO Frames**  
**408-665-5441**

He's fast. He's good.  
He's local &

MHPC members receive a 10% discount

**Remaining**  
**2011 Flickr Themes**

November: Alphabet  
December: Seasons

## Yahoo Group Forum

We encourage every member to join the Yahoo Forum. Just go to the site and click on, “Join” You will need a Yahoo ID, and the site will take you through the steps to get one. It's all free. Postings may include spontaneous shoot-outs, last minute changes to the calendar, upcoming events, valuable resources, and possible solutions to your photographic dilemmas. Only club members may join the site and see the messages and files.

<http://tech.groups.yahoo.com/group/MHphotoclub/>