



The Reflector



www.delawarephotographicsociety.org • Delaware Photographic Society
PSA Award Winning Publication

February 2006

President's Message

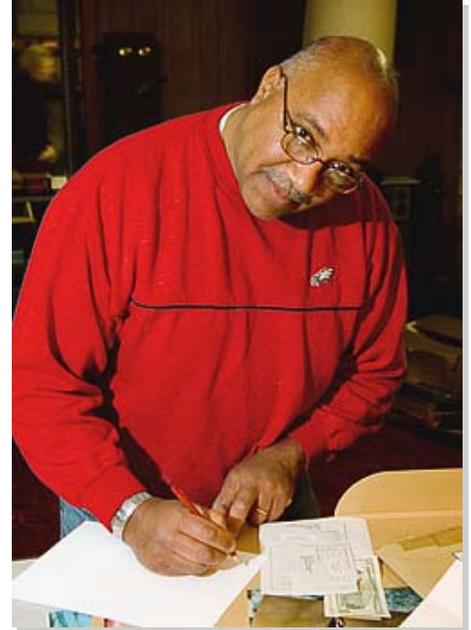
I would like to begin by encouraging our members to explore the DPS-Exchange Group (Yahoo Groups) that has recently been created. This web-based forum offers us yet another means to interact, show our photos, ask questions and exchange information. Among other things, I will now be able to share the many notices of workshops and exhibitions that I receive, without using e-mail to send them to those who are not interested. I know that many of the members, who have joined this group, have found it valuable, and I expect that more of you will. More information appears on page 6 of this issue.

I would also like to take some

time to make my comments, on comments. I believe that the primary objective of the various competitions we sponsor should be the educational value. This is primarily derived from the commentary. However, I feel that on many occasions, practices that interfere with valuable commentary have become the norm.

In recent years, it has become common to insist that those calling for comment explain their reason for doing so. I believe this is usually unnecessary. Good judges should be able to explain why a certain image works well or not-so-well, in their opinion. I believe that, to hear the explanation, is

(Continued on page 3)



WIEP Chairman, Bob Hunt performing last minute processing duties. WIEP Update, page 10. Photo by Bob Coffey

Marty Malgieri – Fairs and Festivals of India

February 27, 2006 • 7:30 pm
Cokesbury Auditorium

Always a popular visitor, Marty Malgieri returns to present *Fairs and Festivals of India*. This presentation will highlight various parts of India and their colorful festivals and fairs. Among these, *dusserah*,



celebrated in the royal palace in south India, features a parade of elephants, adorned in golden embellishments. We will also witness festivals of the Himalayas, where monks clad in colorful brocade costumes dance to the spirits that dwell in the snow-capped mountains, experience the colorful pushkar camel fair, and

see various desert villages and meet their people.

If possible, join us at 6 p.m. for Dinner with the Speaker in a private Cokesbury dining room.

Reservations must be made in advance to Bob Coffey at bobcoffey@aol.com/610.388.2741. Dinner cost is \$15, all inclusive. The check should be payable to DPS. Sorry, no walk-ins. Limit 30.

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2005-2006**

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www.delawarephotographicsociety.org

The Delaware Camera Club (DCC) was established January 28, 1931. DCC is a charter member of the Photographic Society of America and The Delaware Valley Council of Camera Clubs. In 2002 the name was changed to the Delaware Photographic Society (DPS) and the Society became a tax deductible charitable organization.

Instruction Night



Instruction night sessions are held the first Monday of the month in the DuPont Pavilion. Questions, contact Karl Leck at usesa@earthlink.net.

- February 6: *Panoramic Prints from Film and Digital*

Join us to see some really wide views. Panoramic images are those with a horizontal/vertical aspect ratio of 2/1 or higher. The ultimate panoramic image is all around the camera or 360 degrees. Many wide angle, rotating lens, and specialty film cameras were made over the past 100+ years to make panoramic images on a single piece of film. Karl Leck will show several such cameras and the pictures made with them. Some of the cameras are costly to buy and use.

In the digital era there is no longer a need to spend a fortune

to make panoramic images. A photographer can simply make a series of overlapping still images with a digital camera and easily 'stitch' them together with the help of appropriate software. During the instruction session the process of stitching images together will be demonstrated. It is fun and easy. The resulting picture can show a far wider view than you could ever see without turning yourself in place. Inkjet printers that accept roll paper can be used to print the panoramic images.

- March 6: *Easy Digital Color Corrections* — Karl Leck et al
- April 3: *Digital Masking* — Jane Strobach
- May 1: *Sharpening: The digital super tool and how to use it well* — Karl Leck



Bombay Hook Fox
© Eileen Furlong
January Slide Entry

President's Message

(Continued from page 1)

the primary reason for requesting a comment. If, in fact, the caller wants a different question answered, for example, "Where is that?" or "How'd you do that?", they should feel free to say so. It is not necessary, and, sometimes, in my opinion, somewhat rude, to ask why a comment was requested. It has also happened that, if no one owns up to having requested a comment, the image is passed over without having been

...the primary objective of the competitions should be the educational value.

commented upon. If time permitted, I'd prefer commentary on each image. Time probably does not permit that, but if a particular image spurred someone to request a comment, I believe it is probably worth commentary, even if the requester is either shy or absent when comments are addressed.

I also believe that commentary should come from the judges. We have been working to get a variety of judges, who at least appear to be well qualified, although admittedly, some turn out not to be so. The quality of their commentary will vary, and the subjectivity of their opinions will inevitably make some judges less than popular with some of our competitors. Judging the judges is a thorny

issue we're still trying to get a handle on. However, on any given night, we've invited these people to give us their opinion, and they deserve the opportunity to do so. Challenging their opinion, or having their opinions drowned out by the opinions of members of the audience denies us their point of view. I particularly advocate a variety of judges from whom different points of view might be anticipated, and would like our membership to politely listen, even if it is so far off the wall that there are no buildings in sight. I personally think it would be great to have a panel of 4-year olds some night.

I'm well aware that there are among us members who are very competitive, and for whom points and winning are very important. Too important for my taste, but live and let live. In the long run, it doesn't matter if a judge gives everyone 3's, 4's, and 5's or 6's, 7's and 8's, as long as they are consistent, and can explain the difference between a 5 and a 6. I also feel that with any sort of artist, you should take chances, expect to fail, expect that some of your successes will not be recognized, and not take it too seriously if a particular critic is dense. If you can find out that critic's opinion, you can decide to ignore or credit it, and act accordingly. And if it is not about the art, what is it about?

Jeff

February Field Trip

Field trip coordinator, Tom Oathout is planning a February outing to the Italian-South Street district of South Philadelphia. The date will be announced at a February meeting. Contact Tom at 302.836.0148.

Vignettes



- Instruction Night is held the first Monday of the month at 7:30 p.m.
- Competition nights are held on the second and third Mondays starting at 7:30 p.m.
- Program night is the last Monday of the month, 7:30 p.m.
- Location: Cokesbury Village, DuPont Pavilion, 726 Loveville Road, Hockessin, DE 19707.
- Membership dues should be addressed to: DPS Treasurer, Tom Hallenbeck, 621 Sandys Parish Road, Landenberg, PA 19350. Dues are \$35 for individuals, \$25 for others at the same address, and half the individual for junior or nonresident members. Dues for first-year members are \$20 per person.
- *The Reflector* is published by the Delaware Photographic Society, September through June, and printed by Academy Printing, Wilmington, Delaware. No material may be reproduced without written permission. Contribution deadline is the third Monday of the month. Send announcements and/or articles to Sharon Coffey, 48 Partridge Lane, Kennett Square, PA 19348, 610.388.2741 or SESCoffey@aol.com.

• Visit our Web site at:
www.delawarephotographicsociety.org

Questions & Answers

Contributed monthly by Erik Kissa

Q I bought a Tamrac camera bag but it is unsteady because the center of gravity is as high as the attachment point of straps. Can you advise which camera bag I should buy?

A I have ten camera bags, including the Lowepro, Tamrac, and Tenba bags. Most bags are inconvenient in the field and seldom leave the house. I have three bags I like. The Lowepro Mini Trekker backpack holds two SLR cameras with lenses mounted, two additional lenses, two flash units, with diffusers, filters, a small flashlight, a sweater, a plastic poncho, and other accessories. The Mini Trekker fits under the seat of an airplane. The only drawback is the access to the contents while the bag is on the back. Tamrac solved this problem with the Velocity 7 Photo Sling bag and Adorama improved the design with Slinger bags. The Slinger bag is used as a backpack but can be rotated and opened in front. The bag holds a D70 camera, a flash and the needed accessories. The Slinger Pro is larger and has space for an additional lens. A practical camera case for travel by car is an 18" long Arctic Zone cooler, customized with cardboard partitions. The insulation keeps the camera cool and the case is stealthy, in case the trunk is opened. On location, I transfer the equipment needed into a photographers vest.

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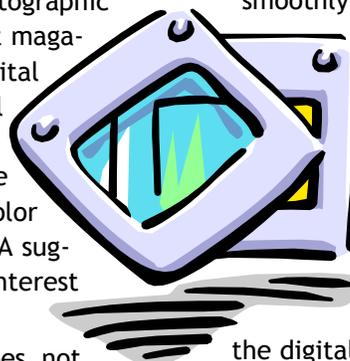
Q Why are color slides made from images captured with a digital camera?

A Color slides are used in stock photography, for publication in magazines, and in photographic exhibitions. Whereas most magazines now accept digital files, color slides are still the main medium of photographic exhibitions. The declining number of color slide exhibitions in the USA suggests, however, that the interest in color slides is fading.

The digital camera does not really have to end color slide exhibitions. When film was the main photographic medium, most images sent to photographic exhibitions or publishers were edited digitally and had the workflow: Film or slide>Scanner>Photoshop>CD>Film recorder>Color slide. A digital camera has simplified the workflow by eliminating the scanner: Digital camera>Card reader>Photoshop>CD>Film recorder>Color slide. The improved workflow of digital images suggests that the digital camera should boost slide exhibitions and contests but the opposite is true. The reason seems to be the changed habit of the consumer. Home slide projection is now becoming history. Kodak has discontinued the popular Carousel projector line. Almost all of the point-and-shoot cameras are now digital. Images are viewed on a monitor of a computer or a TV. The irony is that although it is now easier to make edited slides, the color slide has lost its prominence as the exhibition medium.

The convenience of mailing

images electronically and the ease of organizing "slide" shows have fueled the interest in digital contests. However, the replacement of color slide exhibitions with digital contests has not been going as smoothly as expected. The projection of digital images has still serious problems, the quality of the projected image being the main issue. The resolution and color accuracy of



the digital projectors are still inferior to film projection. One of the basic problems is the lack of digital projectors designed for photographic use. The projection of photographs requires a square field for accommodating vertical and horizontal images. The aspect ratio of the existing digital projectors limits the area of projected vertical images to less than a half of the area of horizontal images (174 KP vs. 393 KP)!

The decline of color slides has a serious, largely unrecognized consequence. A color slide, especially the Kodachrome slide, is the only color photographic medium of proven archival storage stability of 50 years. The future of the rapidly advancing digital technology is unpredictable. Remember the floppy disk and the 3.5" disk? The CD is being replaced with a DVD but which DVD format will prevail? What comes next? The only reliable archival storage of digital images is to convert a digital file to a color slide.

Continued on page 5

Questions & Answers

Continued from page 4

Q *The Konica Minolta stabilization mechanism built into the camera body is a great concept. Do you agree?*

A Image stabilization by moving the sensor in the camera body is a great concept indeed. One mechanism in the body of the camera stabilizes all lenses and eliminates the need to build a stabilization mechanism into every lens. Many years ago, Nikon had a great concept, too. Nikon decided to build a motor in the camera body for autofocusing all lenses, instead of having a motor in every lens. The Nikon concept made the autofocus lenses smaller, lighter and less expensive. What did happen years later? Nikon built motors into the lenses because the lens with the built in motor focuses faster. Now we have two lens stabilization systems: stabilization in the camera body or in the individual lenses. Time will tell which of the two stabilization mechanisms is more effective, easier to build, less expensive, produces sharper images, and is more rugged.

Q *I am looking for a carbon composite tripod and the choices are overwhelming. Can you give me advice on what tripod and ball joint I should buy?*

A The carbon fiber tripods were pioneered by Gitzo. Most carbon fiber tripods are Gitzo look-alikes, except for the Manfrotto tripods. The Gitzo listing of tripods is very confusing with many Model numbers and Series numbers. The carbon fiber tripods

have the Mountaineer designation. A higher Series number indicates a wider upper leg diameter and a sturdier construction. Manfrotto tripods are less expensive and very popular among professionals.

The most important properties of a tripod are the weight, maximum height, minimum height, and ease of opening. The fundamental rule is - the heavier the better. Carbon fiber tripods combine a light weight with sturdiness and do not transmit vibrations. However, when the wind is blowing, the weight of the tripod counts.

The selection of a tripod depends on the intended use: a lightweight tripod for travel (better than nothing), a medium weight for outdoors, and a heavy weight for studio use. A tripod weighing about 4 lbs (without the head) is quite comfortable outdoors. I have the tripod in a tripod bag and carry it on my shoulder like a rifle. The bag has enough space for a light sweater. When I open the tripod, I drape the strap of the bag over the tripod and the bag does not get lost. I used to carry an 8 lbs tripod all day on a rough terrain but now prefer a lighter version.

The maximum height of 70" is sufficient for every situation but a height of 55" is a reasonable compromise. A center post adds instability and is useful only as a last resort. The minimum height of the tripod, preferably 10-12", is important for low level nature photography. The length of the tripod when folded is important as well. A shorter tripod is easier to carry but a larger number of sections means more time needed for opening the tripod. Lever (pinch) locks are easier to operate than collar locks.

The tripod head is an essential part of the camera support. Three types are used: A ball head, a three-way controlled unit, and a pan head, mostly for video cameras. A single action, grip ball head allows a quick adjustment of the camera but lessens the stability of vertical shots. The tripod head with three controls is the most precise but the slowest to adjust. Ball heads are most convenient. As a rule of thumb, a larger ball is better but heavier. A premium quality ball heads weigh up to 4 lbs! A medium ball head weighing 1 lb can support a camera with a telephoto lens of medium weight but is not as smooth as a large ball head with friction control.

The stabilization (vibration control) does not eliminate the need for a tripod. A tripod helps to select the best composition and to adjust a graduated filter.

An important tripod accessory is the quick release. Several designs are available, some more rugged than others. I have been using the Strobframe Quick Release for years with good results. The plates are light, yet reliable and very easy to use.

Q *My point-and-shoot (PS) digital camera is small and it is difficult to hold it steady while looking at the LCD screen.*

A To hold the camera steady, support your elbows against your chest. Some PS digital cameras have an optical stabilizer.

Send questions to ekissa@aol.com

Focus on... Theresa Knox

It was early July 2003. I was in my office at Delaware Technical and Community College, Wilmington Campus, where I was employed at the time as the Coordinator of Admissions and Counseling. I had taken a moment to go over requested information from the Office of Pensions that outlined my creditable State service and pension compensation. A calculation of 31 years of service plus social security benefits revealed that I might need to reconsider my spirited plan to work until I was seventy. When I got to the line that read, "If you have any further questions...." I could barely *focus* as my head began to spin. Was it time to take step number seven towards another new *beginning*? Indeed it was. (*There's a philosophical explanation as to how I came up with the number seven.*)

August 1, 2003, my retirement date, was the first day of my most recent *beginning*. Since then, the past two and a half years have been filled with discovering the many possibilities that exist every day for experiencing pleasure, satisfaction and happiness. Undisputedly, much of the credit goes to my newly acquired passion, pho-



A New Beginning © 2004 Theresa Knox

tography. While I have always owned a camera and have taken pictures for many years, I never realized or appreciated until recently the power of a camera—how it can influence the connection and relationship with your surroundings. As an aside, I must share that I recently discovered that photography, as with anything that brings joy, can also bring pain. A photographer's nightmare upon downloading images to the computer—what happened to those images that I saw on my LCD!!

It was three years ago after I purchased my first digital camera, a Fuji 5000, and began taking pictures of nature, places and things

that I realized that photography goes far beyond "taking pictures" of birthdays, graduations and holidays. Since purchasing my Fuji, I have acquired two Nikon D70's and other photography equipment too numerous to mention here—you know the story. My greatest challenge at this time is to read at least a few of the manuals that came with all of these items so that the results of my photography will somehow justify the money I have spent.

Finally, I am glad to have an opportunity to express what a pleasure it is to be a member of the Delaware Photographic Society. What I learn from presentations and competitions is invaluable — but what I value more is your individual eagerness to help and support a fledgling photographer. For this, I sincerely thank you.

The image pictured here was actually taken with my Fuji two years ago. I'm sure the program mode was set to automatic, as I had no idea what P, S, A, M meant. ☺

DPS Forms Exchange Group

DPS-Exchange Group was launched late last month and has already become a lively forum. The biggest benefit is being able to contact all subscribers immediately with a question, such as which digital camera should I choose and why are my images underexposed?

Answers have been posted from

multiple respondents with their explanations and suggestions. Not only are the questions and answers distributed instantly, but they remain posted for future reference. As more members subscribe, this will develop into an increasingly valuable resource for everyone, thereby providing another benefit as a DPS member.

To subscribe, simply e-mail a request to DPS-Exchange-subscribe@Yahoogroups.com. Yahoo will respond with a confirmation. Reply to it as instructed and you will receive a welcome note from the group moderators. If you have questions, contact Bob at bobcoffey@aol.com or Mark at mark@pfeifers.org.

73rd WIEP Update



Slide processors, Mike Elliott and Val Donor

Directions to Arsht Hall, 2600 Pennsylvania Ave. (Rte. 52) just north of Greenhill Ave. and across the street from Tower Hill School. The Wilmington campus is well marked and easy to locate. See you there!

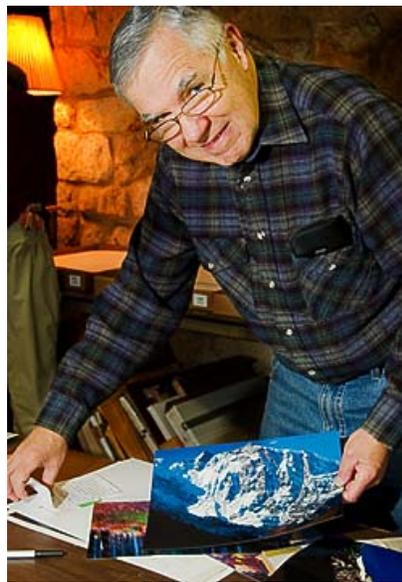


June McKenney

Our job isn't complete, as we still need your enthusiastic help for the exhibit at Arsht Hall.

Please don't forget hanging day, **Friday, February 17**, and make a point to view prints and the digital shows on **February 19 and 26**. To volunteer, contact Bob Hunt at makingcopy@aol.com or 302.764.1363.

Selected prints will be framed and hung at Arsht Hall, U of Del., Wilmington Campus from February 19–26, 2006. Digital presentations will be presented on two Sundays, February 19 and 26, at 1 p.m. and 3 p.m. Admission is free and ample off-street parking is available.



Tom Hallenbeck processing prints
Photos by Bob Coffey

WIEP is a rewarding endeavor on many levels. Our thanks to all the dedicated volunteers who graciously appeared each week and helped to make the 73rd exhibit a reality. DPS can be proud of a job well done!

It's not too late to support the 73rd WIEP! Patron donations received by February 6 will appear in the exhibition catalog.

Patron's Reservation

Please include me among the Patrons of the 73rd Wilmington International Exhibition of Photography.

Enclosed is my contribution of \$_____ payable to DPS.

Catalog should read as follows:_____

Mail to: Tom Hallenbeck, 621 Sandys Parish Road, Landenberg, PA 19348

Donations to DPS are fully tax deductible.

Photoshop Tools to Avoid Like the Plague!

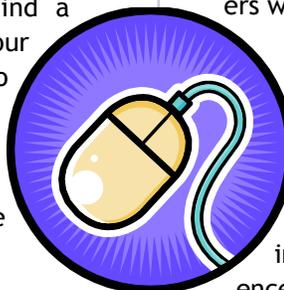
By Sandro Cuccia
sandro@imagemedic.com

Way back through the mists of time to the olden days – about five years ago – when we film photographers worked in our wet darkrooms, we had many tools at our disposal: chemicals, easels, enlargers, color wheels, dodge and burn cutouts, and many more. Now as digital photographers, we manipulate our images in our digital darkroom – our computer and Adobe Photoshop. We utilize many digital tools: histograms, curves, filters, plugins and more. But, there are also those tools in Photoshop that are to be avoided in the name of preserving the integrity of pixels in our digital images. In fact, our goal as digital photographers should be to maintain a Pixel-Safe Workflow. Let's look at the three most unwholesome Photoshop tools we could possibly use – Brightness/Contrast, Dodge and Burn.

Brightness/Contrast – New Photoshop users seem to gravitate to this tool of pixel ruination! Sure, it offers the path of least resistance in “fixing” those ubiquitous underexposed digital shots, and all photographers know what brightness and contrast means. They don't want to deal with unknown concepts such as histograms, curves and adjustment layers. They just want those two simple sliders!

The problem is that this command applies changes in a linear, destructive fashion to your image pixels. For example, if you choose this tool and decide to brighten an image by a value of 10, then ALL the tonal values in the image will be increased by the same amount.

A great way to blow out already bright highlights! When applying a contrast adjustment, the end points in the histogram are brought together or spread apart proportionately. Not good. Find a better way to use your time by learning how to use Curves where changes in brightness and contrast can be targeted exactly where you want them.



Dodge & Burn Tools – Familiar holdovers from our wet darkroom days, in our digital world they become problematic. These tools do indeed dodge (lighten) and burn (darken) pixels but the changes are applied to the actual image pixels, and once saved, and the file closed, you cannot undo the changes. The result – destroyed pixels! Learn instead to use Adjustment Layers to create a “dodge & burn” layer so that any dodging and burning will be applied in such a way that original pixels are not affected, AND you can return to the file at a later time to tweak or undo your tonal adjustments. See my technique: “The Dodge & Burn Adjustment Layer” at my website www.imagemedic.com.

A Word About Adjustment Layers Remember: the name-of-the-game is Pixel Preservation. You want to limit your use of Photoshop techniques and tools to the ones that allow you to: 1. be able to undo your pixel tonal corrections, and 2. be able to come back to them at a later date for any eventual changes. The latter is typically necessitated by either the need to

repurpose photographs or because your idea of a tonal correction conflicts with the desires of your client. The big secret of Photoshop pros is the use of Adjustment Layers whenever possible.

When you select an item from the Image > Adjustments menu (e.g.; Brightness/Contrast) you are changing the pixel values in the selected image layer. Our preference – the Adjustment Layer – doesn't actually change pixel values. Instead, it is simply a set of instructions that tell Photoshop how to change an underlying image – sort of like a filter – and you can finetune these instructions at any time or delete them altogether thereby restoring your original pixel values. If you change your mind about how your image needs to be changed, or you decide that you aren't happy with the results you've produced, you can simply modify the Adjustment Layer to produce the look you have in mind. An incredibly flexible tool! It should be clear by now that Adjustment Layers also permit you to confidently experiment with your images without worry.

To create an Adjustment Layer, click the New Adjustment Layer button at the bottom of the Layers palette. You will then be presented with a pop-up list of all available adjustment layers. Simply click on the option for the type of change you want to make.

This article is just an introduction – so take time to experiment and to learn to use Adjustment Layers, and turn your Digital Workflow into a Pixel-Safe Workflow! ☺

Exhibits

☛ The Helen Graham Cancer Center at Christiana Hospital, is looking for local artists to exhibit work in the lobby and/or the library. Space is available for only 5 items, no larger than 16"x20". Subject matter should be meditative, reflective, and calming. Each exhibitor will have their work up for one month and may offer their pieces for sale. If you would like to participate, contact Dave at DavidHutton18@comcast.net or 302.731.4815.

☛ Biggs Shot: Juried Photography Exhibition, Biggs Museum, Dover, through February 26, 2006.

Photo Ops

The first Mud Sale of the season is just around the corner. Mud Sales are fundraiser-auctions that benefit Lancaster County (Pa) community fire companies. This is an opportunity to photograph a bustling Amish community and a lively auction, where everything is available, including the kitchen sink.

Strasburg – February 27

Besides the Mud Sale, Strasburg also offers a beautiful small town with many 18th and 19th-century houses. From Rte. 41 go west at Gap on Rte. 741 to the center of Strasburg. The Fire Hall is just down the street on your left.

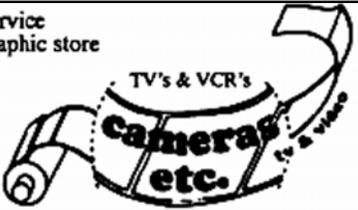
PSA

The Photographic Society of America (PSA) is the largest organization of its kind in the world, bringing together amateur and professionals in all the varied fields of photography, including color slides, nature, pictorial prints, stereo (3D), electronic photography, video/motion pictures, photojournalism, travel photography, and devotees of every process in which the world-wide membership is interested. Help from experts and educational programs is available to all members. Find out more about the PSA from these websites: www.psaphoto.org and delawarephotographicsociety.org.



Blouses © Tom Tauber, January Digital Entry

a full service photographic store



James F. Cycyk - President

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Coming Events

- **February 6**
7:30 p.m. Instruction Night
- **February 13**
7:30 p.m. Slide and Digital Competitions
- **February 19**
1–5 p.m. 73rd WIEP, Arsht Hall, U of D, Wilm. Campus
- **February 20**
7:30 p.m. Print Night
- **February 26**
1–5 p.m. 73rd WIEP, Arsht Hall, U of D, Wilm. Campus
- **February 27**
7:30 p.m. Speaker Night
Cokesbury Auditorium
- **March 3**
Digital entry deadline for March competition