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FEATURES:

People & Places
Pages 1 & 2

Meeting Information
Page 3

Nature Calls
Page 3

Contact Information
Page 4

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by John Hitzeman

Beauty deprived of its proper foils and adjuncts ceases to be enjoyed as beauty, just as light deprived of all shadows ceases to be enjoyed as light.

- John Ruskin
English Writer
1819-1900

PEOPLE & PLACES

SNR Youth Photo Contest

MoNEP has once again joined with **Shaw Nature Reserve** (SNR) to sponsor its 2012 youth nature photography contest. ***Take A Shot!*** is open to children ages 14 and under. Entries must be taken at Shaw Nature Reserve between **March 1st and June 15th, 2011**. All entries must be received at the SNR visitor center by **4 p.m. on Friday, June 15th**.

Submissions should represent one of the following four categories:

- Flora – any plant found at SNR
- Wildlife – amphibians, reptiles, birds or mammals found at the Reserve
- Miniature World – insects, spiders, mosses or fungi
- People in Nature – people enjoying nature or evidence of people's impact on nature.

MoNEP will provide the judges for the contest as well as the prizes. Judging will be based upon the subject matter, composition, creativity and technical difficulty of the images. There will be 1st, 2nd and 3rd place prizes in each category and honorable mentions.

Visit **www.shawnature.org** for Nature Reserve hours and other contest details, including how to submit images, acceptable formats, entry forms and delivery instructions.

Holiday Show CDs

A number of members have not yet picked up the CDs they submitted with images for the holiday show. Please stop by the membership desk at the back of the auditorium at our next meeting and collect your disks from **Vicki or Shawn Northrop**.

Camera Club Seminar

The **St. Louis Camera Club** will be hosting its annual seminar on **Saturday, March 31st**, from **8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m**. The presenter, **Jennifer Wu**, is one of Canon's elite **Explorers of Light**. She is an award winning nature, landscape and night sky photographer.

Jennifer will talk about the five elements of composition for nature photography, techniques for getting great shots, including using polarizing and neutral density filters, use of white balance settings and reflectors and hyperfocal distance focusing. She will also discuss maximizing Camera Raw, the tools and best practices when editing your images and how to make them pop. She will finish with a segment on the Amazing Night Sky and how to create images of the stars and moon.

Registration for this event, to be held at **Maritz in Fenton**, is **$25** and includes lunch. For registration information visit: **www.stlcameraclub.com**. To learn more about Jennifer Wu, visit her website at **www.jenniferwu.com**.

Membership Renewals

A reminder that 2012 dues are past due! Many MoNEP members have not yet renewed for the year. If you are among them, please submit a completed renewal form along with your payment in the form of cash or a check payable to MoNEP to the Membership chairs, **Vicki or Shawn Northrop** at the February meeting. You can also mail your form and dues to: **Vicki and Shawn Northrop, 1111 Wilmington Avenue, St. Louis, MO 63111**. **Dues are $25 per person** or **$35 for a two-member household**.

Members News

Scott Avetta's close-up image of a water lily bloom was featured in the **Spring 2012** ***Missouri Botanical Garden Bulletin*** in the article ***Getting the Shot***. Scott and four other photographers were asked to share their tips for capturing great images at the Garden.

Member **Tina Crist** has relocated her custom picture framing and art restoration business from Crestwood Mall to nearby **9120 Watson Road, Suite 200**. ***Home Is Where The Art Is*** is open for business in its new location. However, Tina is currently meeting customers by appointment only. To schedule an appointment, contact Tina at **314-968-9558** or on her cell phone at **314-791-6424**. You can also go to: **ArtandFrameRestoration.com** for more information or **hiwtai.com**.

Webster University is presenting a special concert honoring **Dennis Owsley**, a long-time MoNEP member, Jazz Radio Personality and Jazz Historian. Dennis has recently donated his extensive collection of jazz recordings to the university. The concert, **Musical Reflections on Saint Louis Jazz History**, will be held on **Monday, March 19th at 7 p.m.** at Webster's **Moore Auditorium**. Tickets cost $5 for the general public and $3 for seniors. Call 314-968-7128 for more information.

Richard Spener and **Toni Armstrong** have just presented a talk on **Paddling Alaska's North Slope** at the **Canoecopia** in Madison, Wisconsin. The event has an attendance of 22,000 people over three days.

SNR Spring Wildflower Sale

Are you trying to establish a native butterfly or bird garden or create wildlife habitat in your backyard? **Shaw Nature Reserve** will host its annual **Spring Wildflower Sale** on **Saturday, May 12th from 9-4**. If you are a Garden member, there is a members' pre-sale on **Friday, May 11th** from **4-7:30**. In addition to plants from the Reserve, there will also be half a dozen premier nurseries from around the state. The sale will feature the largest selection of native trees, shrubs, ferns and annual and perennial wildflowers available in the St. Louis area. For further details visit **www.shawnature.org**.

January Speaker Recap

In January, **Greg Basco** took us to the Central American country of Costa Rica, which is the size of West Virginia and has more bird species than Canada and the U.S. combined. Although he talked about some of the challenges of photographing in the extremes of light in the tropics, many of his ideas are applicable anywhere. He shared ten ideas for adding a little something extra to your images:

- Be exacting in your composition.
- Use flash to solve problems and be creative.
- Learn to see photo opportunities.
- Meter and expose carefully.
- Look for motion. It lends a sense of drama to images.
- Make order out of chaos.
- Use space and include the environment.
- Get eye level with the subject.
- Don't be afraid to push your equipment.
- Wait for special moments, such as a bird calling.

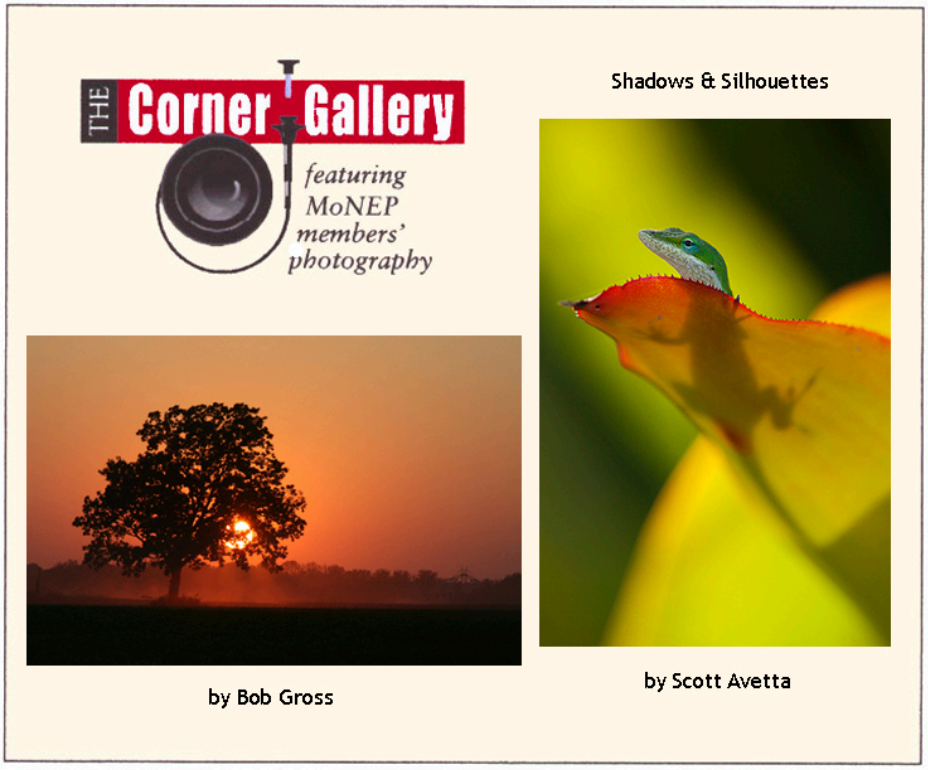
Greg then led us on a tour of his images, explaining how he visualized the end result before ever pressing the shutter, how he compensated for the lighting and choices he made about aperture based on his desired result. It was a truly inspiring talk, and we thank Greg for a great presentation.

February Speaker Recap

Scott Avetta's presentation on composition at the February meeting provided a reminder to move slowly and carefully consider how to create order out of the seeming chaos of the natural world. We often suffer from blindness due to inattention only to return home, view our images and find distracting elements that we might have eliminated by recomposing in the field. Scott's suggestions to help avoid that disappointment included:

- Check that the edges of your frame are clean.
- Avoid mergers.
- Don't crop too tight. Give your subject some space to breathe.
- Diagonals help lead the eye into a scene.
- Triangular shapes help trap the eye in the frame.
- A shallow depth of field can lead to a pleasing background.
- Busy scenes are hard to shoot well. Including a foreground, mid-ground and background help.
- The more layers you include, the more there is a sense of depth.
- Anchors, such as rocks, can contribute to a strong image.

Many thanks to Scott for his fine presentation and for reminding us of the elements of a good image.



MEETINGS & programs

Meeting Dates and Share & Show Themes

Tuesday, March 20th – Shadows and Silhouettes
Tuesday, April 17th – New Beginnings

Meetings begin promptly at **7:00 p.m.** at ***Powder Valley Conservation Nature Center***.

Share and Show Nature Images

Members are invited to share their **nature** images at each MoNEP meeting. If you wish to participate, you should prepare up to **four (4) nature-related images**. Be sure to:

- Resize your images so vertical images are 768 pixels high and horizontal images are 768 pixels wide.
- Save your images as .jpg files.
- Place your four resized images on a drive or disc in a folder with your name and the meeting date.
- Give your images to **Jerry Miller** no later than 6:30 p.m. the night of the meeting.

For more information about *Share and Show* formatting please see ***Resize an Image for Submission*** in the photo tips section on the MoNEP web site, **www.monep.org**.

March Meeting – James Trager

Join us at the **March 20th** meeting for a presentation by **Dr. James Trager**, staff biologist at Shaw Nature Reserve. James will be speaking on the natural history of some of his favorite subjects, insects. He will focus on the order Orthoptera, which includes the katydids, crickets and grasshoppers. He will also discuss techniques for insect photography.

James has a PhD in entomology from the University of Florida and worked for seven years as an ant researcher and part-time university instructor before joining the Shaw Nature Reserve staff in 1991. However, he has been interested in the natural history of insects, ants in particular, since he was five years old. He has said "My bills were paid for eight years by fire ants, so I have mixed feelings, but mostly positive, about them." That's quite an endorsement, given how much fire ant bites hurt!

April Meeting

Ray Kersting from **Schiller's** will be presenting at the **April 17th** meeting. Ray has worked at Schiller's for nearly 17 years and is a sales manager. Look for more detail on the subject of his talk in the April newsletter.

Saint Louis Art Museum Photo Exhibition

The Saint Louis Art Museum is hosting ***An Orchestrated Vision: The Theater of Contemporary Photography*** through May 13th. This exhibit brings together over 40 works by a group of international artists. The works blur the lines between fact and fiction and are meant to illustrate the potential of photography in modern art practice. For more information visit www.slam.org

NATURE CALLS

NANPA Events

NANPA has announced its 2012 Road Shows and Regional Events. Regional Events are shooting events that take place in the field with five different field trip leaders at each event. Road Shows are one-day classroom-based seminars featuring one speaker. Upcoming Regional Events include workshops in the **Great Smoky Mountains** from **April 26th-29th, Bend, Oregon, July,** and **Acadia National Park,** in Maine from **October 4th-6th.**

The Great Smoky Mountains Event will be based in Townsend, Tennessee, and will be led by: **Bill Campbell, Jamie Konarski Davidson, Richard Day, Kevin FitzPatrick** and **Paul Hassell**. Details about the Oregon and Maine Events will be available soon on the NANPA website, **www.nanpa.org**.

Ansel Adams Exhibit

The **Cedarhurst Center for the Arts** in **Mt. Vernon, Illinois**, is hosting ***Classic Images: Photographs by Ansel Adams*** through **May 6th**. The exhibition features 72 photographs that Adams personally printed for his daughter. It is one of his Museum Sets, a portfolio he conceived in the 1970s as the best images of his career. The Center is open Tuesdays through Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sunday, 1-5 p.m. Admission to the exhibit is $5 except on Thursdays, when it is free.

Carnivore Lectures

You can hear Dr. **James Halfpenny**, a carnivore ecologist, animal tracker, educator and author at any of three free public lectures this month. The lectures are co-sponsored by University of Missouri-St. Louis, Missouri Department of Conservation and the St. Louis Academy of Science. Each lecture is on a different species of mammal, and each is being held at a different location. They are:

- Cougars in Missouri Friday, March 23rd, at Powder Valley from 7-8:30 p.m.
- Yellowstone Wolves: Restoration, Science, Management and the Future Monday, March 26th, at Belleville East High School from 7-9:30 p.m.
- Bears of North America Tuesday, March 27th, at Saint Louis Zoo 7:30-9 p.m.

For more information, visit **academyofsciencestl.org/events** or **ce.umsl.edu**.

Macro Boot Camp

Mike Moats will be holding one of his Macro Photography Boot Camps in St. Louis, **September 28-30**, at the **Hilton Hotel in Chesterfield Valley**. For information and to register, visit **www.tinylandscapes.com**.

OFFICERS & BOARD MEMBERS	*BOARD MEMBERS*	*VOLUNTEER SUPPORT*	*MISSION STATEMENT*
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Visit our web-site at www.monep.org			

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