



New Westminster Photography Club

Shutter Release

September , 2011

New Adventures Await

Welcome to the 2011-2012 season of NWPC. Don't you just love September? Cooler weather, the start of fall colours... and that great back to school feeling where we all return from summer holidays in our new clothes, with enthusiasm for the upcoming year.

Some people know from the first time they pick up a camera that they want to capture the beauty of nature, or record their travels, and that's what they do. Many of us go through experimental stages and end up photographing what we prefer. Either way, we can end up in the same place. The rut. The rut can creep into life too: same job, same friends, same activities, same TV shows... Ah, but you're ok because you have a hobby. You photograph flowers. And then you join a camera club.

We all know you get out what you put in. At least that's what grandma, and other wise ones, say. And if you do the same thing all the time, your brain dies. And we should eat less fat and salt and get more exercise. Who are we kidding? Life is busy and who has time. (See "Finding Time" in this issue).

But it doesn't have to be that way! Sure, eat less fat and get more exercise. Take your camera for a walk. Don't make excuses. (Like it's raining. Of course it's raining. Look at a map!) Rainy days make the most moody, fantastic photographs you can imagine. Fog, mist, reflections, splashes, umbrellas. Or stay in, take a photo (maybe try a still life?) and apply a whole bunch of different Photoshop (or Topaz or whatever) filters to it and see if it helps you express whatever you were thinking of when you took that photo. If not, why not? Just what were you thinking anyway?

Stop making excuses. Take the kids or grandkids on the walk with you. They will see things you wouldn't have. Take their photos. Look where they point. Move in, move out, move the camera. Take the camera to work. Take photos while you wait in line for lunch. Sit the camera on the table and take candid. Look at the curve of those stairs... Talk to people. Find out their stories. Ask if you can photograph them, or their dog, car or motorcycle. Then you will have a photograph and a memory.

Now you are on the way to becoming an artist. Here's where the New Westminster Photography Club can help. We put in front of you all kinds of options to learn something new, try something new or even renew old skills. Art takes some work! So take advantage of our programs, speakers, member feedback, Theme challenges and outings. Sure, maybe it's not what you photograph, but you will love the results! And you will be **so** out of the rut.

One of our very enthusiastic new members, Jim Furey, summed things up pretty well. He said *"...what do we really want to do? ? ? Have fun and take some cool pictures. Or be cool and take some fun pictures. Whichever comes first."*

So keeping that in mind, let's have a great year learning and sharing.

Shona LaFortune,

Program/Themes

Who's What (New Executive)

Let's start by introducing the 2011-2012 Executive and Officers. Remember, all these people are unpaid volunteers, so please give them all the support, respect and assistance that you can. **Robert** is our new **President**. He is a relative newcomer to the club as well, and kudos to him for stepping up. Robert says he will bring new ideas to the club and looks forward to serving and growing the club. Our **Vice-President** is our former President, Keith. (Yes, we work backwards here; isn't that fun?!) **Shona** has taken on **Program**, is continuing with **Themes** and is temporarily doing **Newsletter**. **Justin** is again contributing his imagination to give us the most edgy **outings** in the lower mainland. You will regret missing any of these. Our new **Treasurer** is **David Love**. He gets to take your money and keep a budget. New members **Karen** and **Nathan** have taken on **Refreshments**, also a very important position. But remember, we all share the bringing munchies part. Another "must never miss a meeting" job is **Projectionist**, something we often take for granted. Derek has been doing this job a long time, in addition to his webmaster position. This year, **Jim Furey** will be manning the laptop while **Derek** will continue to maintain the website. **Peter** will coordinate and record our competitions, both in-club and out. Last but not least, **Agnia** will continue to look after **Special Events**, specifically our two social events (Christmas and wind-up). Thanks to all our great volunteers and special thanks to last year's retiring executive.

Parking reminder

Especially for visitors and new members, a reminder about our **parking** (off the lane behind our meeting place). If you arrive early, please **do not block** in the wall and centre spots for those who arrive later. The caretaker prefers that the spots against the wall be filled first, so unless you need to be first out, please save space so that others in the club can park! (Note there are some spots behind the building also). Apparently no one has been towed from the front of the building so if you find all those steps difficult to navigate, there is usually street parking available, even in the "loading zone" in front of the hall. (This is based on experience; we will not pay for your parking ticket).

Your Vote Counts

Many of the program and outings decisions for the 2011-2012 season will be based on the results of the year end surveys you completed (paper or online) last spring. This is another area where your vote counts big. Or, to put it another way, if you didn't vote, you can't bitch. Both Program and Outings directors have tried to incorporate your requests into this year's activities. Feedback and suggestions are always welcome. We know we can't please all of the people all of the time, but we will try to keep you stimulated. Of course your participation is key. We want to take advantage of all the enthusiasm and skills our members have, so be prepared to share your photos, participate in workshops and share your areas of expertise and comments with us.

Finding Time

They say that if you want to get something done, ask a busy person. Busy people tend to organize their time and multi-task, but if you are one of the 80% of the members who, in our survey, cited lack of time to shoot for Theme or internal competitions, here are some ideas to squeeze more photography into your day.

Despite the title, time isn't something you **find**; it's something you **make**. You can take a photo in **1/60** of a **second** (or much less!). And if something has presented itself, all you have to do is get that camera to your eye and click. Our first outing will demonstrate how easy that can be. Photojournalism type shots do not lend themselves to a tripod and careful setup. Train your eye to see, then shoot.

A point and shoot camera is ideal for quick photography, and they are very inexpensive these days. But your SLR is fine too – stick on a medium zoom lens (35-70 type thing) and, for time saving, put it on program. Once you view the results, you will start to recognize which situations require more care in f-stop and shutter speed selection.

Do you watch TV? Bad doggy! It's a huge time-waster, especially if you watch re-runs. Or, if you can't quit cold turkey, cut just half an hour a night off your TV viewing (intro and commercials?) and photograph a macro of a kitchen grater, the pet, knick-knacks, views out the window (like the tree shadows), the bookshelves... (Do NOT photograph dust bunnies; that will just make you feel guilty and distract you from photography). Making photographs of mundane objects you see every day can teach you to really **look** and really **see** (different angles, shadows, reflections, lighting...) Do you commute? Shoot from Skytrain or the bus. The results might not win prizes, but you might be surprised at capturing a great PJ (photojournalism) shot! Walk the dog? – when he stops to pee, take a shot (of something else please!) – a fence, a roof line, a gateway, park bench... All this trains you to compose quickly and naturally.

Bring the results to a member sharing night. We aren't looking for prize-winning stuff (that's for the competitions). We are looking for ways to improve our photography. In just a few consistent minutes a day, you will have made time, and soon, because "practice makes perfect", you will find you can get prize-winning photos while you watch the kids at the playground, wait around for your oil change or have your lunch.

Having said all that, there is plenty of room for carefully composed and crafted images. Some of our outings and workshops help you that too. But if you can take a photo fast that doesn't look like a snapshot, the rest will come much more easily.

Program

Expect a mix of speakers and workshops this year for the first meetings. We will continue to use the second meetings of the month for photo sharing and competitions.

September 6: Starting the year, we will have CAPA evaluator Allen Bargen comment on a selection of images entered in our summer online Theme competitions. Allen is an excellent evaluator, so don't pass this up. We will then view the slide show results of the competitions to see how the members' opinions compared to Allen's.

September 20: Member sharing of results of the September 17 outing; in-club competition (digital).

October 4: Guest Benjamin Luk, a local professional photographer, will talk about professional photography with an emphasis on working with models and clients, and we might even have time for some studio setup work. **Not** just for wedding photographers or wanna be pros; this is all good information for general shooting!

More program details on the website (www.nwphoto.org) or email program@nwphoto.org.

Outings

We have outings like no other club, all interesting, fun, challenging and sometimes "out there", which may likely introduce you to some types of photography you may not usually do. Justin says (taken from our website):

I am adding new genres and hope people will try them. Some are new to me too! The intent of all outings is to have fun and learn. They are planned in great detail to allow people of all skill background to participate, even if only with a disposable camera and very limited funds. You will be asked, in the weeks preceding an outing, if you are coming. I need to plan for

materials, costs, transport arrangements etc. Don't feel I am pestering if I ask several times. There is a learning part to each activity. Often, some photocopied materials will be given out. Please read them! You may also like to do a little web searching. In an attempt to give everybody something, many outings are doubled up in their skill or genre sets. Go for the walk to do PJ stuff, and get a chance to do product/ food photography too!

The first outing, **Foot and Mouth** is **September 17** (Saturday). It is a walk on Main Street. (Having done this walk in the past, I **highly** recommend it – Ed.) Photojournalism and any subjects you see, ending in food photography at a buffet. **Meet at 10:30 a.m.** at the McDonalds near the Main Street Skytrain Station. More information in the outings section of www.nwphoto.org. If you still have questions after that (or no Internet access) contact Justin at outings@nwphoto.org or cell 778-891-4774.

Remember, after any outing, you can upload your photos to the website yourself. Just **log in** to the website, go to Activities, select Past Outings and click on the little camera icon you will see there. Remember to resize your images. You will be prompted with some instructions and you can add a comment to any image if you like. Also, **NEW!** this year, we will ask you to share your outing shots with the club members at the most convenient meeting following the outing.

Dues

The club membership is excellent value. It's like having a whole year of photo courses, with mentors, workshops, speakers, outings, competitions and fun. Unfortunately, there are a few costs to this: a meeting place, Arts Club and CAPA (Canadian Association for Photographic Art) dues, competition entry fees and the odd \$20 or so to a guest speaker to pay for travel. That's where you come in.

Dues for 2011-2012 have been set at **\$45** and we appreciate your prompt payment to help with budgeting. Please see our Treasurer, David Love, at the first or second meeting.

Note that non-payment of dues will result in your membership being set at "inactive" and then you will be removed permanently. If you cannot attend the first few meetings (travel or such) please try to let us know so that we don't "delete" you. (And if you have an unexpectedly nasty financial issue, perhaps a quiet word with our Treasurer.) We just hate to have to keep reminding you, so please remember: bring \$45 to the first meeting, cash or cheque payable to New Westminster Photography Club.

Club Competitions

We participate in monthly internal (club members only) competitions for digital images and print. These are easy-going, fun competitions so don't stress. Feedback will help you hone those images so they will be contenders for "Outside" competitions. Currently we enter two: Fraser Valley Invitational (digital images) and Crescent Beach Black and White Invitational (prints).

Digital entries for the club competitions (and, for that matter, our digital member sharing photos) must be sized to 1024X768 pixels. 768 is as tall/high as it can be, so vertical images will be 768 X 5xx depending on your cropping. They do not have to be saved to 100% - usually 80% is good enough, but magnify your image to about 200% to see if you have fringes and horrible pixels before you send. You don't want them too big either. All our digital entries are sent, **before** the club meeting, to photos@nwphoto.org. No exceptions. We cannot accept images on meeting nights. (Well, you can try to whine and beg to the projectionist, but you have to appreciate, there is some advance preparation required).

Print entries. For the club internal competitions, a print 8X10" or larger is acceptable. If your photo wants to curl, please mount it (double sided tape on the corners is OK) on something stiff, like cardboard. Nothing fancy required, although presentation can sometimes squeeze a point out of a judge. Our club images are not judged for presentation, just content. For outside competitions, the rules are provided, but generally a 16X20" are the maximum outside dimensions, and the photo should be larger than 10X10". Bigger is usually better, we find, and an 11X14 print, which can be done at reasonable cost, mounted on a 16X20" matt (you can't go wrong with white, and it is required in some competitions) is usually acceptable. You can pick up cut matts at places like Michaels or London Drugs. If your print is an odd size, you will have to have a custom cut done, so don't leave it for the last minute.

Themes

Our monthly themes are Online only, but we do show the results in the club meetings. Great for challenging your creativity and imagination. You have at least 6 weeks for each theme, and can enter 3 shots for each. You and other members can comment on each other's, resulting in some good feedback as well. Once the theme closes, it enters **voting** phase for a week. During that week, the title is revealed and you may **vote** (um, that's why it's called voting phase) for your top 3 (but not your own). Great fun.

Current running themes are:

Fool me Once has been open since June, and closes **September 11**.

Lined Up closes **September 18**.

Film Noir opens September 1 and closes **November 13**.

Questions: email themes@nwphoto.org. (Use that email also if you mispost, double post, etc.)

www.nwphoto.org

It's definitely a different world than it was when the club began, and most of our club's activities are recorded on our website, including:

Program and Outing details and dates

Executive contacts

Member information (as much as they choose to share)

News, newsletters, announcements, notices

Theme competition (current and past)

Outings (upcoming and past – with descriptions and photos)

Articles and presentations

Member galleries (you can have as many as you like)

... and more ...

All paid-up members have access to the public (of course) and member only sections. To access the member sections, you must log on. If you are a new member, one of the executive will enter you as a member, but you will have to set a password, etc. If you go to Resources, then Articles, there are directions at the bottom of the page. Or go here:

<http://www.nwphoto.org/resources/articles/HowToLogin.pdf>

Members are also encouraged to fill out their **bio** so we can all get to know you a little better. A picture is great too, so we can put a face to your name (unless you're hiding from the law or otherwise opposed... we understand). Add your interests too! You may find a new friend or two.

Photography tips – composition (submitted by Peter Ellis; source unknown)

Refreshers never hurt, so here's a little summary of some compositional elements (framing and lines). Source unknown.

The shape of the photographic frame often affects the statement made by the image. That doesn't mean the metal or wooden frame that may surround the picture, but the edges of the print or image – the borders.

Square format lends an air of stability, of calmness.

Vertical format is associated with gravity, monumentality, dignity, importance.

Horizontal format suggests a wide-spread panoramic effect.

The purposeful use of four fundamental lines will give pictures either -

Grace, with the curved line

Grandeur, with the vertical line

Serenity, with the horizontal line or

Drama and action/tension with the diagonal line.

Ideally, the eye will be first caught by the main subject of the photograph, led easily through the image so that nothing is missed.