



# Shutter Release

November 2011

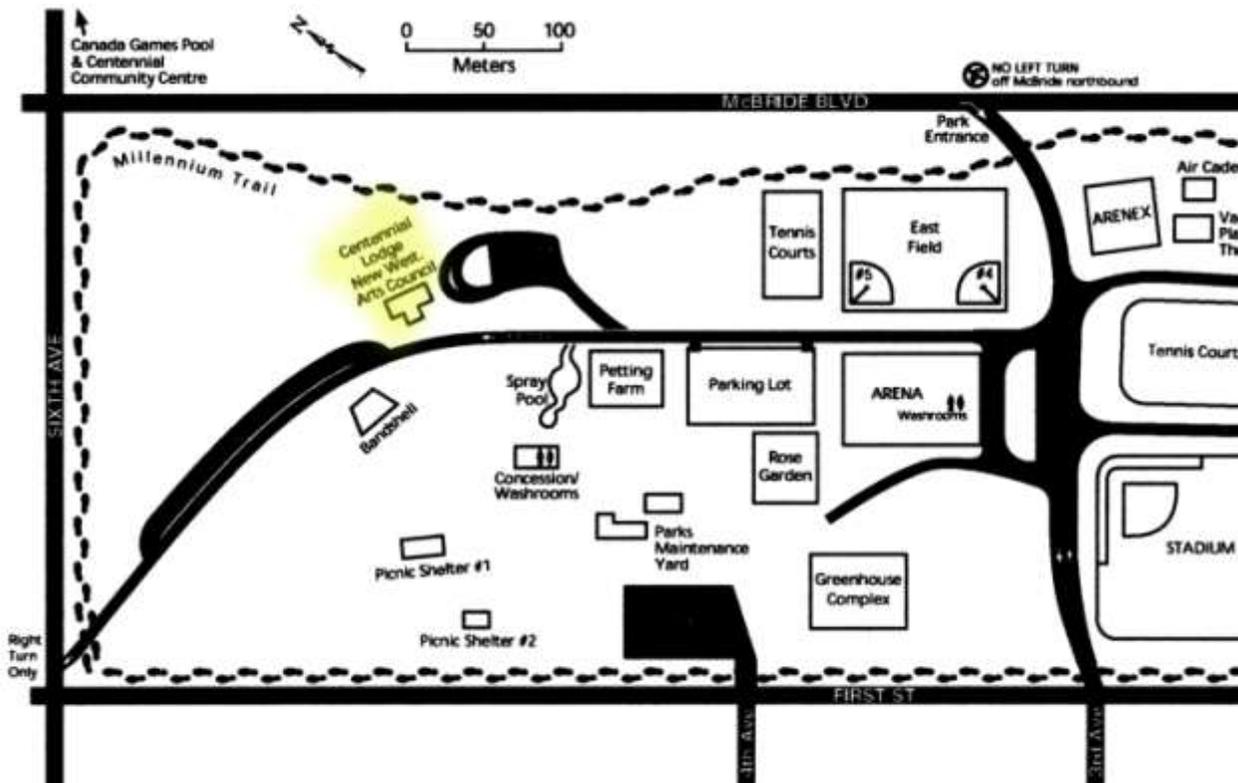
## The Big News

Of course the big news is that, effective with our first November meeting, **we are moving**. For most of you who have attended any of our pot-luck social events, you will know Centennial Lodge. For new members, here is a map (or refer to Google Maps or Google Earth). Note the one-way streets for driving (walking/cycling no problem) and as someone pointed out, it's the building with the totem poles.

We're not quite as convenient to transit but we are trying to accommodate the needs of anyone who needs a ride. If you are in that position, please ask around at a meeting. It is very likely that someone lives near you. (well, except maybe those Maple Ridge and Lillooet residents . . . ).

It's a beautiful venue with a full kitchen and lots of space. Our seating layout will be up to us, so if you have any preferences or ideas, speak to an executive member. Another great benefit is a much more reasonable cost for more hours, giving us flexibility for speakers or events.

Remember also, we will be changing to 1<sup>st</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesdays, so keep a close eye on the website calendar. Our Program Manager will do the usual reminders as well.



## Program

**November 1** will be our first **workshop** of the year. Bring your camera, tripod, flash (if you have it), laser pointer, flashlights, coloured gels, etc., etc. Dress for the weather as you can shoot inside and out for this one. Make sure you remember how your camera makes **long exposures**. Also, black or dark clothing might help if you want to sneak into a photo to create some light.

**November 22** will be a member sharing night to show the results of the **two** October outings (or any member choice if you did not attend). We will also have a digital competition. Send all your images (two for sharing and one for competition), by November 20, to [photos@nwphoto.org](mailto:photos@nwphoto.org).

**December 6** is our annual Christmas dinner – a pot-luck with silent auction and entertainment. \$5/person cost for decorations and beverages, bring some food to share and something for the silent auction.

More program details on the website ([www.nwphoto.org](http://www.nwphoto.org)) or email [program@nwphoto.org](mailto:program@nwphoto.org).

## Outings

At the time of publication, there are no November outings scheduled. Check the website for updates. Outing questions: [outings@nwphoto.org](mailto:outings@nwphoto.org) or call Justin at 778-891-4774. If you attended either or both October outings (well, the October 22 outing was more of a “participated in” than “attended”), you are encouraged to upload your photos to the Outings on the website to share them with everyone.

## What you missed

Our guest speaker, local professional photographer Benjamin Luk, did not disappoint and reports are, his presentation on October 4 was well received.

On October 8, we had our member sharing night as well as the in-club print competition (results in this issue). We also reviewed the results of the theme “Fool me Once”. Results of the themes are always on the website.

## Dues

If you are a returning member and have not yet paid your dues, you will soon be removed from the “active” list on the website, so if you have missed our first meetings for whatever reason, please send a quick message to our Treasurer, David Love ([treasurer@nwphoto.org](mailto:treasurer@nwphoto.org)) to let him know if you will be returning! For everyone else, um, can I say this delicately? TIME TO PAY UP!

## Themes

Remember, you can enter three interpretations of each month’s theme. Current running themes are:

**On the Wall** closes **November 6**

**Film Noir** closes **November 13**

**Decorated** opens November 1 and closes January 8.

*Here I am looking for tact and diplomacy again and as usual I'm all out. But if ICBC can use our insurance dollars to advertise courtesy, I can do it for free. So fellow members, good manners never go out of style. We have lots to cover in a meeting but please, when a member has the floor, show courtesy and stop talking. The babble of background conversation makes it very difficult for some members to hear, and is discourteous to the speaker. Thanks!*

## Titles – do they matter?

Some arguments never end, and whether to announce the titles while evaluating images, or not, is one that has been ongoing in the camera club scene.

In art galleries, the title is always present, usually with an artist's statement where they give their motivation for or explanation of their work. And, since this information is requested for consideration in a juried show, it is assumed that it is made available to whoever is making the selections.

In camera clubs, especially for print competitions, the jury or evaluators are often left to figure it out themselves.

But, does the title help? As we have seen in our online theme competitions, sometimes the title **really** helps explain things to the viewer. And sometimes you've thought highly of an image that speaks to you, only to be disappointed by the title.

And titles! Does "red leaf" (when it obviously is), "man fishing", "blue car" etc. do anything more than provide an identifier for the entry/results list? If you were moved enough to capture an image and share it with people, could your title perhaps help explain what it means to you? Maybe "red leaf" was what you liked and what you shot, but . . . would "fire in the trees" or "blood red" or "surprise in the woods" be more descriptive of your impression and/or reason to shoot?

***In the new calendar year of our season, we hope to have a "panel discussion" on this topic and a few others such as "digital manipulation – right or wrong" or "mature content". Ideas are welcome – email [program@nwphoto.org](mailto:program@nwphoto.org). We are looking for topics and debaters for the "official" table.***

## Competition Results

Results of the October print competition are:

Title	Artist	1	2	3	Total
Oregon Beach	Tim Stewart	8	9	8	25(1 <sup>st</sup> )
Orange Bike	David Love	7	8	9	24 (2 <sup>nd</sup> – tie)
One More Trip	Jim Furey	8	8	8	24 (2 <sup>nd</sup> – tie)
Smooth Styling	Peter Ellis	8	8	7	23
Fetch	Barb Adamski	8	7	8	23
Vegetable Cart	Karen Justice	7	8		23
Fire After Fire	Shona LaFortune		7	6	20
Whispers	Justin Ball	8	6	5	19
Lots of Seeds	Robert Jost	6	7	4	17

Always great to see the entries. Good job, everyone. Special thanks to our club judges. Remember, opinions vary so don't take the results too seriously. You can see from above that sometimes, if one person feels the image has flaws, it will pull the total score down (or the other way around?)

Reminder, Allen Bargen will be back in February with a great CAPA program on “what makes a good photograph”.

## **Planning Ahead**

As mentioned previously, we will compete in the digital competition “Fraser Valley Invitational” this spring. The theme is “Street Photography”, so keep your eyes open if this is not your normal type of photography. There will be lots of clubs competing, so try to capture a perfect moment.

We will also participate in the Crescent Beach black and white event, so give some thought to your B&W interpretations.

## **The “WOW” Factor (Shona’s ramblings)**

It is not just those new to photography who wonder why some images score a 9 and some get a 5. Well, scoring is not a perfect science (or it would be just one more thing we could hand off to computers). We “score” as an exercise, to demonstrate or practice how one photograph might get selected for a gallery show and another wouldn’t. One member of the selection panel might see some meaning or quality that another does not (a good reason to have more than one judge on your panel). Although “judges” are trained to leave their personal biases out of their selection, our individual life experiences will always influence our opinions to some extent.

In the club, you will sometimes notice a little murmur when a certain image is projected. What is it about that image that elicits a response that others may not get? The “others” are well exposed, well focused and have a main subject. Why aren’t people saying “wow” to those?

Often, the “wow” images include some of the following: simplicity, strong composition, dramatic lighting, a perfectly caught moment, a rarely-seen subject or an ordinary subject shown in a different way.

When selecting an image to share with the club or enter in competition, you may have many candidates. Often, one or more make you think “Yes! Got it!” Sometimes you have to study an image to see if a little less clutter, more saturation, etc. could give it more impact. Start by asking yourself what you liked or saw in the scene. Now, will the viewer see the same thing, or can you draw them to the subject(s) to make your view more obvious to them?

Now, it can be very frustrating to today’s photographers because you often feel there is more emphasis on Photoshop than there is on the photograph itself. Back in the days of shooting slide film, exposure was critical and film and processing were expensive. You were very careful shooting and even then, lots of slides got tossed in the search for the “wow” image. Others just jumped off the light table. You can get a “wow” image right out of your digital camera, but again, you need to be careful. View the histogram before you move on. Try a vertical and a horizontal. Compose carefully so you don’t have a bunch of unseen junk on the edges. Then view them all. Do any jump out at you?

Photojournalism and documentary photography (such as nature images) may be retouched only to the extent that the original meaning of the photograph is not lost. And photography extends all the way to the “fine art” genre where just about anything goes. In that sort of image, photographers are often expressing a feeling rather than just documenting something they see. You can argue that such images shouldn’t be in the “photography” category, but they are photographic based art and so they are. In fact, many galleries would not permit any type of photography to be shown with paintings and drawings, so there we stand.

There are simple software programs (such as the free Picasa) that will allow you to do a bit of cropping or “improving” of your photographs without the learning curve of something like Photoshop or its little brother, Photoshop Elements (the author’s personal favourite). And you do not need to

learn every tool in every piece of software. A few simple changes, such as a levels adjustment, cloning or darkening a distraction, can improve your photograph dramatically and get that audience “wow”. Here’s a short example. The original image from the camera (all images © Shona LaFortune):



What is the main feature? I’d say it’s the orange foliage. But all the stick trees on the right draw your eye down the hill and you don’t really know where to look.

Let’s crop it into a vertical (left below):



Now your eye follows the bottom stumps up to the bright colour, which is also placed (as it was previously) on a line of thirds. It’s a little drab, so let’s see what happens after a slight levels adjustment and a bit more saturation to make those yellows and oranges pop out a bit (right image),



The final image above should probably still only score a 6. Why? It’s still too ordinary and it’s still got a little too much happening (“busy”). It’s “pretty”, it captures the gorgeous colours but it doesn’t have that “wow” factor. This is where many photographers might add a “painterly” filter, for example, to give a more impressionistic look. Sometimes such filters can “save” an already strong image. Sometimes they can’t. It’s an example where the technical stuff is there, and I’d be fine with this image on the cover of my book (if I had one), but it wouldn’t win any major competition. Keep looking!

Here’s one where the lighting made a much more effective impression.

