



Focal Point

April—May 2008



**The Iceman
Cometh: a profile
of Steve Harman
Opinion by Gary
Faulkner and
“Thanks” from
Karen Mesick**

MEMBER BIOGRAPHY: Steve Harman

I am an ecologist employed as a civilian employee by US. Army Corps of Engineers, Department of the Army. In 1972, the Corps was assigned by congress under the Clean Water Act to regulate any type of construction or work in waterways and wetlands on both private and government lands. My job duties involve the identification of areas that would be classified as wetlands under this legislation. This process involves an evaluation of three parameters for identifying wetlands; plants, soils and hydrology. This work is performed year round, requiring me to identify plants outside their growing period (i.e. winter) from relic parts that remain such as bark, twigs, and parts of flower part remaining. My almost weekly travels to the "field" over the years have allowed me learn when and where to travel to capture unique photographic natural subjects such as the flower bloom of a certain herb or shrub species or where seasonal conditions create interesting subject matter or plays of light. where water meets the land. It also gives me an opportunity to discover new locations for photo opportunities that I can share with club members.

My hobby in photography grew out of interest in bird watching I developed in college. I bought a film camera and lenses to capture images of the birds as a record of the birds I was seeing while birding. I enrolled in a basic photography course in 1980 at Harford Community College where I met a member of the BCC and joined for two years. After raising two children, I rejoined the camera club about six years ago. I also began to buy and sell camera equipment on eBay and with the profits acquired all my digital equipment. The better equipment, reading of books and articles, and participation in club competitions has improved my photographic skills.

OPINION: Confessions of a Film Junky

Film will never die! Yes, I said those words to many people over the last several years when the subject of digital cameras was discussed. As the years have moved forward and the equipment and printing has greatly improved and became affordable photography is now charting a new course.

I have been working with a digital camera for around 6years now having first worked with one as part of my job needs. I still use this camera, Olympus C-3000 at 3.3MP, and although slow it still produces fine images for the purpose. Than I purchased a Canon A560 at 7.0MP which I have been using as a pocket/family camera with great results.

Resisting getting a good digital SLR because of the "I like film syndrome" the cost made me reevaluate my thinking. I usually worked with B&W and color transparency films and although the cost of B&W is still reasonable, and the processing at home, color transparency film has become very pricy and finding a good developer is getting harder everyday. Cost of one roll of 36 exp. plus developing is \$16-\$18. So stepping up to a good digital SLR just made good financial sense.

Now that I have been shooting away with my Nikon D2x I find that as a camera it is so versatile. Want to change ISO while on the trail, can do; want to adjust the white balance between indoor and outdoor, no problem; want to get over 200 images on a 2gig card in fine jpeg format, a snap and want to capture an image in camera raw to convert later with a program to get high dynamic range, yes!

I think my days are numbered with using film for my photographic interest. And the darkroom, no more mixing, cleaning, standing in the dark and can't stop in mid process are almost over.

It's a digital world so get out there!

Gary Faulkner

Wow What a Year at The BCC!



I wanted to share with the membership in this Focal Point issue some of the wonderful things that have happened at the BCC this year.

We have officially achieved a current paid up **membership of 100!** A three fold increase in three years. That's fantastic! Thanks to everyone for bringing new members to the club and for renewing on going memberships. We are becoming a real force in the photographic community in Baltimore. We will continue to deliver what you want and ensure that your experience is a great one so that you will continue to spread the word!

Through our programs this year, organized by **Lewis Katz**, we have hosted four exceptional professional photographers in their field, Tony Sweet, Middleton Evans, Ian Plant and upcoming on April 24, Joseph Rossbach. We are very fortunate to have had the time each one of these important photographers has given to our club.

Through our field trips and mentor programs we will have been to local venues such as Harford Glenn, Fenwick Island, Delaware, Great Falls, Virginia, Chestertown, Maryland, New York, New York, Susquehanna State Park, Rocks State Park, The Baltimore Book Fair, The Corcoran Gallery, Edgar Allen Poe's Grave and more, with upcoming trips to the BMA and the weekend trip in June to Wisp. Now that's what I call getting around!

Thanks to **Steve Harman** and his desire to start and administer the Mentor Program, we have coached 23 mentee's, through the efforts of 18 mentors. Mentees have learned to use their cameras, through sharing of knowledge and candidly talking about photography in the field and on line, process images through the use of technology and benefited from one on one instruction. Mentors have openly provided feedback on images mentees have created, enabling the mentee to see differently when creating images in the field.

Additional learning experiences happened , thanks to Buzz Chernock, who initiated the pre-meeting instructions on Photoshop and for lugging his gear in for each session that so many enjoyed.

With the guidance of **Jim Eichelman**, who relied on feedback from members to redesign the Camera School agenda, we will hold a camera school on April 26 and 27, with a modified agenda, from previous schools and optional attendance choices. With the support of five technically proficient members we will offer afternoon workshops in processing images as a part of the school agenda. We will have our second school field shoot associated with Camera School and have seven talented members committed to instruct.

Through the use of digital technology we have viewed an all time record number of images submitted through our digitally projected competitions, with the administrative help of **Gary Faulkner** and **Jeff Wolk**, both in organizing the images and in the execution of the competition, with Jim Eichelman keeping tabs.

Also thanks to Gary who purchased the Microphone equipment and built the box to house the amp and speakers!

Thanks to Gary we are now offering Baltimore Camera Club mugs for \$5.00 to our members, as he helped design and order them for members and guests to enjoy.

Thanks to **George Skepton** we launched the club website <http://reservedata.com/bccphotos/login.php> for member galleries and upload for feedback and continued learning experiences. Let's see more

Michael Boardman, our treasurer has logged in more checks and updated the member list more times than in recent history!

Karen Dillon, our competition Chair Woman, has handled more competition entries and secured judges with the assistance of the many members that have supported her either through, contest execution, image upload to the website or record keeping thanks to Russ DeRose. This is a huge job in the club that requires many hours and support from club members. Karen also refurbished our Print Comp box over the holidays and did an exceptional job! What a handy woman to have around!

Jay Daley (aka —ED) has produced some outstanding, humorous and informative *Focal Points* with many points of view. He will always welcome contributions.

Behind the scenes we have **Paul McKeown** keeping our web page updates going! Thanks Maria for adding insight during those early on board meetings.

So it takes a lot of great folks to keep it all going and I just want to thank everyone for all their contributions to make the BCC a great place for friends, and photographers to meet and share and grow in their photographic endeavors, whether you come just for fun or if you want to grow your profits as a professional photographer, every photographer can find something at the BCC. So, if someone (like Gordon) asks if you want to volunteer for a post this year, don't be afraid to say yes. We have great folks who can make great things happen! We welcome new members and embrace new ideas.

What a great place to be, The BCC!
Looking forward to the Annual Awards Dinner on June 12th, where we will recognize the best of the BCC for the year 2007-2008. Thanks to **John Davis** for organizing the event at Pappas Restaurant on Taylor Ave. (more details to follow) Be there!

Karen Messick
President BCC

And, let us not forget **Karen Messick** herself for her enormous contribution to the cultural and artistic vitality of the BCC as well as her continuing strong leadership, imagination and drive. —**ED**

EDITORIAL: Gifts we give each other

Funny thing, art. 40 years ago, when I originally took up photography seriously, and joined the Baltimore Camera Club, photography was not considered art. "Anybody can do that" was what we heard all the time. The world has come a long way since then. And yet, there are those who will say in the age of digital photography and computer generated images that "Anybody can do that." Well, I am here to tell you, having done "wet work" (darkroom), manual focus and manual exposure, exposed for shadows, printed for highlights, mastered the art of choosing which of those 56 tones of gray to capture on film and then deciding how to get those tones onto b&w paper where there are only 8 tones of gray. All of that in itself was an art. It was an art which distracted from the other things necessary to making a good print. Composition, balance, impact, depth, color, tone.

Today we can put that technical aspect largely behind us (except Gordon) and concentrate on what Karen Messick aptly refers to as making *compelling* images rather than just pretty pictures. Look at what we are giving to each other every week: *ideas*. Steve Harman's icy macro images, Karen's moving camera abstracts, Lewis' moving water with rainbow reflections, Don's HDR work. There is something here for everyone: artfully photographing automobiles, creating "painted images," photojournalism, exposing in fog, action photography and the age old art of what used to be called "pictorialism."

Forty years ago my personal mentor made the image below with a Hasselblad on 2 1/4 square Ektachrome negative film. He printed it in his own "wet" darkroom through a 16 x 20 piece of sheet litho film onto which he has previously printed an etched steel pattern (called a texture screen). He got the fog by getting up early, he hand tinted only spring house.



I have printed my mentor's image before because I still consider it the most beautiful photograph I have ever seen. I am still aspiring to this image. My "Sheep in the Meadow" image (below) has some striking similarities to the image at left, although artless by comparison. However the Sheep image is a composite of three images: base scene on film, clouds (digital) and a third digital image for the blur.

So, I personally am still striving to execute an idea which was *given* me 40 years ago. —ED

ON OUR COVERS (Front & Back)

The leaf image was taken by Steve Harman January 26th, in a 40 by 15 foot iced depression along the Gunpowder River, at Jerusalem State Park, in Kingsville, MD. Taken with a Canon 30D with a Sigma 70 mm f/2.8 macro lens mounted on a Gitzo 2220 tripod at ISO 100, f/8.0, 1/6 sec.

Back cover: Karen Mesick



