



F o c a l P o i n t

September 2009



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Photo by Steve Dembo



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FROM YOUR EDITOR: My Summer reading list included several great books on photography (of course!). I enthusiastically recommend 1) *Tao of Photography – Seeing Beyond Seeing* (Grosse & Shapiro) - a wonderful read on the spirituality and vision of photography, and 2) Michael Freeman's *The Photographer's Eye – Composition & Design for Better Digital Photos* – (the subtitle says it all).

In this seasonal opener issue are included your president's Welcome Back Message; photos from members' recent excursion to the Baltimore Book Fair; *Notes from the Field* with some gorgeous photos by Lewis. Another Collectors Corner by Gordon; winners of PSA's annual competition; and more. Enjoy!

Thanks to Lewis Katz, Gordon Risk and Karen Messick for their contributions this month.

BCC Gets Out



Used Book Browsers at the Baltimore Book Fair

photo by Karen Messick



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WELCOME BACK!

Message from the Club President

by Karen Messick

Welcome back to the Baltimore Camera Clubs Best Season yet~

It is exciting to have so many returning members and new members as well!

We have a power packed calendar for the year with weekend events, professional presenters and member presentations, not to mention the monthly competitions and critiques from the volunteer judges!

We are sponsoring a daylong seminar with Travel and Nature Photographer Brenda Tharp in March 2010.

We will hold our annual day long "Camera School" in the spring 2010.

We have 50 members and guests signed up to attend the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra in February.

It will be a fun filled, year with great friends, old and new, photos and learning!

Our first group outing at the Baltimore Book Festival was lots of fun. I enjoyed the shoot and made some images there. [see this issue - ed]

I look forward to serving as your President for the coming year.

Thanks for joining the Baltimore Camera Club!
Karen L. Messick



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NOTES FROM THE FIELD

GREAT SAND DUNES NATIONAL PARK

by LEWIS KATZ

I recently had the opportunity of spending two days in a most unusual place: the Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve. Located about 170 miles from Colorado Springs and 230 miles from both Denver and Albuquerque this National Park only receives approximately 300,000 visitors per year. Within this park you will find the largest sand dunes in North America with a maximum height of 750 feet and encompassing 30 square miles.

Most of the sand originates in the San Juan Mountains and from the floor of the San Luis Valley. The grains are carried by westward winds until they encounter the Sangre de Cristo Mountains – they are then trapped and over time have formed this amazing landscape.

Water plays a large role as well as Medano Creek originates in the Sangre de Cristo Mountains and carries additional sand and larger pebbles into the dunes. The creek usually starts running with the snow melt in late May and is just about gone by early August.

The nearest town is Alamosa which is approximately 30 miles from the entrance to the park.

There are no accommodations located within the park itself. The park

is open 24 hours – a full moon over the dune field would produce some amazing images! The weather for my visit was fairly stormy which gave me some great clouds and skies but made shooting on the dunes – due to wind – a bit problematic. As my daughter now lives in Colorado Springs I will have other opportunities to visit the park. I would certainly include a visit if you are planning a comprehensive trip to Colorado.





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NOTES FROM THE FIELD (cont.)





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NOTES FROM THE FIELD (cont.)



Night Dunes

by Lewis Katz



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Collector's Corner

Jack Wenig-Olympus XA

With the passing of another long time member of the club, Jack Wenig, I was reminded of his work in Photography. He was a dedicated shooter. And photographed his children growing up. We saw many portraits in black and white in competition over the years. His other passion in photography was street shooting, walking about a busy part of town with a small 35mm camera shooting people going about their daily lives.



One of Jack's cameras of choice was the Olympus XA. A small clamshell 35mm camera with a great reputation. The XA was first produced in 1979 and quickly caught on for its size and ease of use. This rangefinder type camera had a 35mm f/2.8 Zuiko lens with a CDS EE shutter with speeds from 10 seconds to 1/500 of a second and aperture priority metering. Over the next 10 years, Olympus produced 4 more models in this clamshell style. The XA1, which was produced last and had a simple selenium meter around the fixed focus 35mm f/4 lens.



By Gordon Risk

The XA2 was similar to the XA was similar to the XA but with a fully automatic programmed shutter to 1/500 and a 35mm f/3.5 lens with zone



focusing. The following model, the XA3, is an XA2 with DX film sensors and an auto load function. The fifth model is the XA4, unique in its departure from the 35mm lens to a 28mm f/3.5 with macro settings to 12 inches, unlike the others which focus to 2.8 feet. The XA4 has programmed exposure from 2 seconds to 1/750 and DX or manual film speed settings.



Olympus made four flashes for these cameras that fitted to the side of the bodies with a small screw. The XA4 is the hardest to find as it was only produced for a year. The XA is the best lens of the group and has the advantage of aperture priority exposure. The XA2 is the most common and easy to use with its zone focusing and programmed shutter.



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Collector's Corner (cont.)

The Olympus company has been around since 1919, making microscopes and made their first camera in 1936. Over the years, they produced some classic cameras: the Olympus PEN F, half frame SLR in 1963, the Olympus XA compact rangefinder in 1979 and of course, in 1973, the Olympus OM series of classic SLRs, just ask Louise [Katz].





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News About Members

PSA Awards

Congratulations to the following PSA award winners:

Camellia :

2 Small Black and White prints
1 Color Print
2 Photo Travel Prints
1 Photojournalism Print

Kay:

Photojournalism Print photo story entry, took First
Photojournalism Digital photo story entry took First
Photojournalism Slide photo story entry took Second
Travelette (Photo Travel division) digital photo story entry took Honorable Mention
EID (Electronic Imaging Division) photo story entry took Honorable Mention
3 Photojournalism Slides
1 Photojournalism Print
1 Pictorial Print
3 Travel Slides

Diane:

had 1 monochrome digital image accepted in the Electronic Image division
and 2 digital images accepted in the Photojournalism Division

Arthur:

had 3 prints and an Honorable Mention in the Photojournalism Division and 2 acceptances in the Pictorial Print Division

Pictorial Print of the Month



The May winner is *Kittens on Guard*, by **Maria Drumm** of Baltimore, MD. **Jim Martin, APSA**, was the May judge, who said that, "two kittens come alive in an excellent print framed in an old window with outstanding clarity and color along with strong composition."

To participate in future *Pictorial Print of the Month* contests, contact Director **Joe Hearst, APSA**, 685 Glen Road, Danville, CA 94526 or e-mail at joe@jhearst.com

To view the POM gallery, go to <http://www.psaphoto.org/pom-gallery/>



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MORE BCC GETS OUT

The Baltimore Book Fair



All photos by Karen Messick