



Volume 2, Issue 4

April 2009



Special points of interest:

- * Woofstock Practice
- * DCC Spring Salon
- * Member Spotlight

Inside this issue:

April and May 2009 Meetings	1
Club Officers	1
Member Spotlight	2
From Your CICCA Rep.	2
Woofstock Practice Photos	3
Day's Workshop	4 - 5
From the President's Desk	5

APRIL 2009 MEETINGS...

Thursday, April 23:

This meeting should be full of information. Stephen Haas, a photographer with the Herald and Review will be giving a presentation. When you look through the paper, look for images that have credits with his name. Also, take some time to look at his website: (<http://www.haasphotography.com>). Be sure to ask questions. I am sure he will share anything he can with us.

Discussion on Decatur Camera Club Spring Salon and CICCA Spring Salon information.

Don Chamberlain has sent some info out about CICCA and our year end Competition. Be sure to read up on it and participate with some of your pictures. Remember, only a few people will win, but it is all about having fun. Contact Don if you have any questions.

MAY 2009 MEETINGS...

Thursday, May 14:

DCC End of Year Competition. Be sure to enter some of your photos. You just never know you might win.

Thursday, May 28:

Results of CICCA Spring Salon. Summary of the DCC Year.

DECATUR CAMERA CLUB OFFICERS...

President: David Staff • Vice-President: Curt Knapp
 Secretary: Phyllis Hunt • Treasurer: Suzi Morrow
 Member at Large: Louis Neal
 CICCA Representative: Don Chamberlain
 Newsletter: Phyllis Hunt, Cindy Clemens
 Website Committee: Curt Knapp, David Staff
 Program Committee: Kathy Bassette, Phyllis Hunt, Don Sheffer, Don Chamberlain
 Publicity Committee: Suzi Morrow, David Staff, Bobbie Henneghan

MEMBER'S SPOTLIGHT...

Two photos from Sherry Martin:



Photo from January practice by Dianne Spaniol:



FROM YOUR CICCA REPRESENTATIVE...

The 2009 CICCA Salon will be held in the Quad Cities on Saturday, May 16.

Competition is available in three divisions: photo slides, photo prints, and digital slides. This is an individual competition with no club results being recorded. You are responsible for your own entry fees (\$4.00 per division).

Each member can enter up to five entries in each division (i.e. five prints and/or five digital images and/or five photo slides); if you entered all three divisions your total entry fee would be \$12.00 (check made out to CICCA please).

All three divisions have sub-categories: For digital slides and film slides the categories are Nature, Pictorial (General) and Contemporary (highly manipulated with PhotoShop etc). For prints there are two categories: Color and Monochrome (black and white).

The deadline for entry is May 1! Though it is an individual salon they would like all digital images from each club on the same CD. At the first April camera club meeting (April 9) I will discuss the Spring Salon; at the second meeting (April 23) I will collect entries and mail them for members.

More entry rules and guidelines can be found in the last three pages of the Feb/March CICCA Courier recently emailed to members. I will have hard copies at the April 9 meeting. Further questions? Contact me at 429-6456 or email me at decmindmeld@comcast.net.

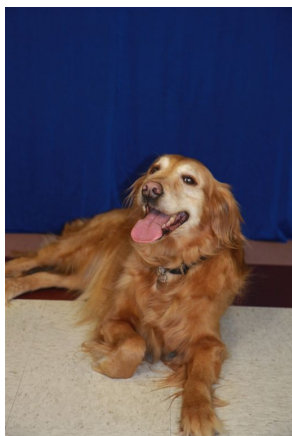
Don Chamberlain, CICCA Representative

WOOFSTOCK PRACTICE...

Photo by David Staff



Photos by Eldon Muench



DAY'S WORKSHOP COMMENTS...

I think that everyone who attended the Day's Workshop found it to be very informative and enjoyed some great photography. This the second time I have seen the presentation and I still came away with some new information. I have asked two members to share their thoughts about the workshop in this month's newsletter. If you enjoyed the workshop send them an email to let them know Everyone enjoys a pat on the back. office@daybreakimagery.com.

Richard and Susan have some opportunities at their property that some of us may want to participate in. They have a weeklong workshop on butterflies and dragonflies photography. They also allow camera clubs to photograph butterflies and dragonflies on their property and also will allow a few people at a time to photograph birds from their blinds. We will talk about these briefly at the next meeting.

David Staff, President

As a beginning photographer, I found almost all of what they presented to be new and useful to me.

Susan's presentation focused on how to make your property inviting to birds by providing for the three primary needs of birds, namely, food, water, and nesting.

Flowers for hummingbirds need to be tubular and contain moisture. Since hummingbirds feed while hovering, they need space around flowers. Good flowers for hummingbirds include Columbines, Fuchsia in hanging baskets, Salvia, Bee Balm, and Dropmore Scarlet Honeysuckle. Purchasing and planting salvia in a big mass is a good way to first attract hummingbirds. For feeders, use 1-part sugar to 4-parts water and be sure to change the sugar water periodically to prevent mold. Hummingbirds tolerate people well and can be photographed without a blind. A hummingbird garden can be planted in pots on a deck, picking flowers that bloom at different times. Hummingbird migrations can be tracked on <http://hummingbirds.net/map.html>. (They are almost here!)

For seed-eating birds such as Cardinals, Gold Finches, Chickadees, Indigo Bunting, and more, good flowers are Sunflowers, Purple Coneflowers, Black-eyed Susans, and Zinnias. Don't deadhead blooms and don't clean up garden in the fall as birds will eat the seeds on dead blooms. These flowers attract butterflies as well.

Eastern Bluebirds, Wrens, and Chickadees like birdhouses in open grassy areas. Evergreens provide good shelter for many other nesting birds. Hawthorn is also a popular nesting tree as thorns deter predators and birds eat the berries. Serviceberry bushes, Viburnum, and Winterberry also produce berries that attract birds. Susan and Richard also encourage nesting by putting out baskets of nesting material such as twine cut into 6 to 8 inch lengths.

Unlike hummingbirds, butterflies like clustered plants. Good plants are Zinnias, Coral Hairstreak, and Butterfly Bush. Different butterfly species must have a particular host plant such as Milkweed for Monarchs, Pipevine for Pipevine Swallowtail, Rue for Giant Swallowtail, and Parsley for other Swallowtails.

Susan said a good source of water attracts more birds than anything else you can provide. Water must be shallow enough for birds to stand and squat in. Moving water is particularly attractive to birds. As a final word, Susan stressed that creating an inviting environment for birds and butterflies can be developed over many years, as theirs was. She strongly suggests using native plants, staying away from plants from "big box" stores, and eliminating any use of pesticides.

Richard's presentation described how he takes advantage of the environment they have created to photograph birds, butterflies, and dragonflies. A first recommendation for bird photography is to know your subject and be a keen observer and student of bird behavior. He uses a blind for over 95% of his bird photography as it creates less stress on the birds and he is able to capture more natural and unusual behaviors. He constructed a portable blind that has two openings for the two cameras he uses - one a fixed 600mm lens, and the other a 100-400mm zoom lens for the times he wants to include a larger field of vision.

(continued on next page)

DAY'S WORKSHOP COMMENTS (continued)...

He rarely uses a teleconverter, but recommends extension tubes as an inexpensive alternative to more expensive macro lenses. Richard says you should use a shutter speed of 250 or higher for bird photography. He usually uses an ISO under 200 but will go up to 400 if he needs to. He rarely uses flash, but might use it in shaded area with minus 1 or 2 thirds setting. Another exception to using flash is when attempting to photograph hummingbirds in flight.

Richard makes extensive use of props such as small trees in pots that can be moved around, a piece of picket fence, discarded Christmas trees, barbwire, vines, Christmas Wreaths. He takes advantage of bird's behavior of perching on an object before feeding on a lower food source. He often places grape jelly or meal worms to attract birds to perch in a particular setting. He says to watch placement of bird feeders to keep them out of wind and to have a pleasing background.

Richard doesn't approach nests until after eggs have hatched. The mother bird may fly away from the nest after he sets up his blind. If the mother doesn't return in 20 min or less, he goes away and doesn't attempt to photograph that nest again. Richard says a beginner's error is to try to fill the frame with the bird or to crop extensively. He says a better photo will include some of the setting. I observed that in most of the photos he displayed, the bird took up only about 25% of the frame.

Richard gave several tips on photographing butterflies and dragonflies. He uses a monopod for this type of photography. If butterfly flies away as you approach, stay put, as it is likely to return to the flower it was on. Butterflies and dragonflies are less active when it is cool, such as early in the morning. This is a good time to catch them with their wings extended. You can also photograph them in the middle of the day, using flash to fill harsh shadows. He suggests using a greater DOF, usually about F11, to get more detail.

This workshop was very educational and enjoyable for me. I hope the club can host more of these types of presentations in the future.

Virginia Kickle

We found the Days' workshop very interesting and informative. We especially liked Susan's session on what flora attract birds and what plants & trees work best in Illinois. It was very interesting to learn how Richard "stages" he photographs of the birds.

Eldon & Liz Muench

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK...

We are looking at forming some committees for next year's projects. Some are formed and some need to be formed. Think seriously about joining one or two of them. The more people that put get involved the more it becomes our club. So be involved and share in steering it in a direction that is good for everyone. We need some people to help in planning this summers activities, to come up with some new ideas for our presentation this fall at the library. Remember this has a place that has brought in a lot of members. Send an email to David@DavidStaff.com if you are interested.

This has been a good year for the club. We have grown in numbers and have tried some new things. I want to thank each and every one of you for participating when possible. I hope it has been encouraging and educational for each and every one of you. It has been busy this year, but it has been fun.

Please note the deadline for information for the May Newsletter is April 29, 2009

We are on the Web!
www.decaturncameraclub.net