



NVPS NEWSLETTER

GREAT PEOPLE and GREAT IMAGES SINCE 1998



August 2022 Issue

This month's meeting

August 22 - Todd Pickering

Theme: Strategies in Nature Photography

Preparing for Success

Point Reyes photographer Todd Pickering will join the Napa Valley Photographic Society membership via Zoom for the Monday, August 22 meeting.

His presentation on nature photography will take up most of the meeting. No images will be critiqued at this time. Instead, participating members will take what they learn and apply it to creating three images for a triptych to be critiqued during his presentation at the August 22 general meeting.

Pickering, a popular guest speaker, received his Bachelor of Fine Arts from the San Francisco Art Institute where he concentrated on landscape photography and sculpture. Travels have taken him from above the Arctic Circle in Norway to the rainforests in Hawaii and the jungles of Sri Lanka. These days you can find him walking the Point Reyes region on the Marin County coast where he currently leads workshops at his Still Point Studio in Pt. Reyes Station.

He has been photographing in and around Point Reyes for more than three decades and says his love for the region gets down to the nuances of the land: the blackberry, the creek, the redwood, the light, the smells -- and the quiet.

Examples of Todd Pickering's photography can be seen at <http://toddpickering.weebly.com>.

NVPS meetings are on the fourth Monday of each month starting at 7:00 pm. The August meeting will be a Zoom meeting. Starting in September the meetings will be in the Oak Room at the Napa Senior Center, 1500 Jefferson, Napa.

No member-submitted photos for the August meeting. *For the September meeting members can submit one triptych image for critique.* See Newsletter Submittal Guidelines.

Field trips & workshops

Napa Valley Wine Train

Irena has secured an opportunity to photograph the Napa Valley Wine Train rail yards for the second week of September. Contact Irena Miles for more details.

Events

Quarterly city hall exhibit

Thanks to NVPS members George Bartolome, Nancy Hernandez and Marissa Carlisle for hanging photos at Napa City Hall. This ongoing project gives good recognition to NVPS. This current exhibit theme is *Growth Flowers*.

Art in the library

Philip Venable has an exhibit in the Napa County Library.

Ocean and Coastal Photography Contest

Get the information for the California Ocean and Coastal Photography Contest, a state-wide contest: <https://mycoastalphoto.com/>

Member news

Dues

Dues are \$45 annually and due at the beginning of the fiscal year, July 1.

Payments can be mailed to Napa Valley Photographic Society at 2710 Beecham St., Napa CA 94558, or to PO Box 5914, Napa CA 94581. Make checks payable to: Napa Valley Photographic Society. NVPS is also acceptable.

If your dues aren't received by September 24, you will not be eligible for submitting a triptych for critique.

Triptych

For the September meeting, submit one triptych image for critique (no more than 1920 pixels on horizontal side). Three photos must be combined into one image.

Meetings

NVPS meetings are on the fourth Monday of each month starting at 7:00 pm. The August meetings will be a Zoom meeting. Starting in September, the meetings will be in the Oak Room at the Napa Senior Center, 1500 Jefferson, Napa.

Head photo submittals

Head photos (for the top of the newsletter) taken by members are needed for future newsletters. See the Newsletter Submittal Guidelines.

Articles

Using a Smartphone Camera

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If top-quality smartphones provide photographs with image quality as good as DSLRs, what are some of the disadvantages of using of using phones for professional and fine art photography?

Image Stabilization

The greatest invention of digital photography is electronic image stabilization. It provides the equivalent of an extra three stops or more when taking photos. Many DSLRs have it, and most phone cameras have it. Make sure it's turned on in your phone camera. But is it enough?

You hold a phone at one point making it especially susceptible to movement. You usually hold a DSLR at two points: one hand on the body and the other on the lens; this makes it less susceptible to movement.

How does one overcome this disadvantage? Being conscious of using physical stabilization wherever possible. Lean against a tree, railing, building, vehicle, or anything solid and unmovable while standing to take a photo. Keep your elbows close to your body and hold your breath. Or, rest your elbows on a solid surface; sit on something solid.

If you're on something moving or vibrating (e.g., vehicle, boat), don't try to stabilize by leaning against something. Bend your knees to absorb some of the shock of the movement or vibration. If you're taking photos during an earthquake, bend your knees to absorb the shock.

The moral of the story is that phones are more susceptible to movement than DSLRs, and you need to be more careful. Since top-quality phones cameras have now incorporated optical telephoto lenses, stabilization is particularly important.

Viewfinder

Framing a shot with a phone camera is a major problem outdoors. Viewfinders are just easier to use and work better; and phone cameras don't have them. Phone screens are often difficult to see outside, particularly when it's sunny. They're impossible to see while wearing sunglasses. Consequently, many of your outdoor shots are going to be "iffy." What can you do?

A phone camera is a point & shoot camera in essence. If you don't know how to point and shoot, you need to learn and practice. You can't worry about getting a perfect frame. A reasonable practice is to overshoot; that is, shoot a larger frame than you need. In postprocessing you can crop around the edges to get the exact frame you want.

It seems to me that overshooting is a reasonable practice for DSLRs too. Not only does it give you the flexibility to crop around the edges in postprocessing to get the perfect frame, but it also gives you the capability to crop around the edges after you have rotated a photo in Photoshop (i.e., when needed to align elements in the photo to be vertical or horizontal).

Although overshooting is a good practice for DSLRs, it's an essential practice for phone cameras.

Sometimes, under some lighting conditions, holding the phone screen close to your eye as if it was a viewfinder works the best to get a good shot. It's far from perfect, but it's something to try when nothing else seems to work.

Stepping into some dark shade can often help you see the phone screen better. Be aware of your environment when outside. Note where the shade is located that might make your shooting easier.

If you put a hood over your head (with a hole for the phone camera lens), you can see the screen well and frame your shot well. But that's more than anyone wants to do during normal photography; it's so inconvenient. For tripod photos, however, it's not such an annoyance. Tripods are inherently inconvenient and adding the inconvenience of a hood does not seem an unreasonable burden. After all, in the early days of photography using a hood was de rigueur.

Phone Tuning

To give your phone the greatest responsiveness to the camera controls (screen taps), you need to make sure it works at maximum speed. Some actions you need to take before shooting are:

- Use an app to remove unnecessary files (cleaning app)
- Use an app to remove viruses (anti-virus app)
- Use an app to close unnecessary apps running in the background
- Make sure your battery is charged
- Reboot (makes a lot of digital problems disappear)

You certainly want to do this before a planned shoot, and you may want to do it again during an interim in your shooting for the day.

Cleaning

Clean off the phone screen. It's a touch screen. The screen will become more unresponsive the dirtier it gets (e.g., fingerprints). Use a spray, or at least water, together with a tissue or cloth. The more you use your phone, the more often you need to clean it.

All your camera controls are on the phone screen. If the screen isn't responsive, shooting becomes more difficult. It's amazing how a simple screen cleaning can make things easier for you.

Clean the lens too. A phone in a pocket gets lint on the lens. Be ready to clean lint off your lens regularly. Or, use a lint-free case.

Practice

Practice isn't something you think much about when using a DSLR. A typical DSLR has easy-to-use physical controls that enable you to make the most of the routine adjustments you might use for normal shooting.

On a phone, all the camera controls are images on a small clumsy-to-use screen. And it's a pain in the arse to use them.

Practice (attention to manual dexterity) is important to using a phone camera in a professional manner.

Lanyard

Chances are you keep your DSLR on a strap around your neck or your hand when you shoot. It's just a safety measure in case you drop the camera. But you seldom, if ever, drop the camera. Nonetheless, the strap gives you confidence that your camera won't be damaged. One less thing to worry about.

Use a lanyard for your phone (around your neck or hand) to provide the same confidence. Put the phone in a shirt pocket when not shooting, or use a quick release on the lanyard to put the phone in a pants pocket or case when not shooting.

You can buy an eye for your phone case to which you can attach a lanyard. If you buy a phone lanyard, the eye is included.

Tripod

Using a tripod with a phone camera looks a little "over the top." Unfortunately, a phone camera requires stabilization just as much if not more than a DSLR. To get the sharpest photos to print at the largest sizes, you will need to use a tripod just as you do for a DSLR. This is particularly true for short telephoto shots (e.g., 3x) as it is as for longer telephotos. If you need a tripod for a DSLR shot, you probably need it even more for the same phone camera shot.

Watch Out!

Watch out for new ideas in using a phone camera and for new features in new phone cameras. These cameras will get better and better and easier and easier to use.

One of the advantages of phones is that new models come out yearly. If you subscribe to a major service (e.g., AT&T), you probably get a new model smart phone every two years. If not, you will need to provide your own phone for many inexpensive services. One way to approach staying up to date is to buy a new phone every year and immediately sell your one-year-old phone (e.g., on eBay). You can stay up to date for several hundred dollars a year and use a phone service that costs \$15 to \$25 per month (e.g., Mint Mobile, a reseller for T-Mobile).

In other words, it's cheaper to keep up to date with phone cameras than it is with DSLRs.



Equipment

Nikon 70-300mm AF-S VR f/3.5-5.6g IF -ED new in box for sale. Only \$100!

Lanny Johnson, 707- 363-1866.

Officers & staff

Elected Board members

President - Phil Venable
Vice president - Terry Smith
Secretary - George Bartolome
Membership Secretary - open
Treasurer - Irena Miles
Past president - Gary Sampson

Appointed board members & chairs

Member-at-large - Lanny Johnson
Program chair - Betty Malmgren
Website manager - Carolyn Younger

Newsletter - Joe Sinclair
Exhibit chair - Chris Sauer
Ongoing-exhibits chair - George Bartolome
Hospitality coordinator - open
Field trips - Irena Miles (Karen Noyes, Ann Seronello, Geoff Hansen)
Workshops - Phil Venable
Publicity - Zach Berkowitz
Zoom coordinators - Roland Dumas, Phil Venable
Digital projectionist - Angie Johnson (Roland Dumas, Peter Guenther, Phil Venable)
Facebook posting - Karen Noyes
Fundraiser chair – open



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Newsletter Submittal Guidelines

Submittal deadline

The submittal deadline for newsletter text + photos (content) is the third Monday of the month.

Members' photos for the meeting

Members may submit images for the meeting and should be prepared to make a brief verbal explanation. To submit your photos for a meeting, send your images to the regular critique site in the usual format (no more than 1920 pixels on the longest side) no later than the Saturday prior to the monthly meeting. The file name for an image should be:

members first&last name_title or theme_order number

Examples: John Everest_Harvest Time_01 and John Everest_After the Harvest_02

Send the files to: NVPS.Photo.Critique@gmail.com. Only photos taken by members accepted.

Newsletter head photo

If you desire to provide a head photo for one issue, submit a JPG 1920 pixels horizontal. The vertical can be between 450 and 900 pixels. Anything outside these parameters cannot be used. The file name should be your name plus the title of your photo, the word *head*, and the date:

name_title_head_date

Send the file to jt@sinclair3.com with the subject-line: HEAD PHOTO (in all caps). Only photos taken by members accepted. And photos that have been published before on the NVPS website or in the NVPS newsletter are not eligible.

This month's meeting

Follow the guide for *Articles*.

Field trips & workshops

Announce of field trips and workshops should include all information including leader + contact info, date, time, meeting place, miles to location, cost, and nature of the photography as well as a general description. These are *participation* events. Announcements can run in successive issues *before* the event.

Events

This is an announcement of a photo exhibit, contest, or photo op of interest to members or one that includes a member or multiple members. It can run in successive issues *before* the exhibit.

This category also includes a call for member participants in future photo exhibits or contests with complete information on applying and participating.

If an event is a duplicate of full information elsewhere, it should be a brief announcement with a hyperlink.

Member news

This is a one-time *brief* announcement of a member's *past* achievement, such as an exhibit, a photo experience, a travel-photo experience, a photo learning experience, and the like. Use a hyperlink to indicate where full information is available.

If this is the sole information on a substantial achievement, it can be written like an article with full information; but it shouldn't be a duplicate of full information published elsewhere (use a hyperlink instead).

NVPS administrative news or other news is also appropriate for this category.

Articles

Articles (e.g., magazine-like articles) written by members can be posted in the newsletter for one issue. They will be assumed to be published by permission. They must be relevant to photography, of course.

Articles published by non-members are likely to be copyrighted. See *Copyrights* for the treatment of non-member articles.

Generally, only one article per issued will be published with membership-written articles given preference.

Equipment

Equipment for sale or giveaway can be listed here for one newsletter issue. Provide full information.

Photos for newsletter

Photos submitted for the newsletter should be: no more than 1920 pixels on the longest side. File names should be:

category_title of writing_author_title of photo_date

Photos taken by members will be assumed to be published by permission. Photos taken by non-members are likely to be copyright protected. See *Copyrights* for the treatment non-member photos.

Send the photo file to jt@sinclair3.com with the subject-line: PHOTO (in all caps).

Photo captions

If you want captions for you photos, include them in the photos. For instance, you can attach a white strip with text (in Photoshop) at the bottom of the photo for the caption.

Submissions

For all information (text) submitted, use a file name that identifies the subject matter and author. Send the file to jt@sinclair3.com with the subject-line: NEWSLETTER (in all caps).

Subject-line email

Unless you use the subject-line words requested for text or photos, your submission might be lost in the 400 emails received each day.

In the email, explain your submission. Example: *This photo goes with my article on shooting wildlife.*

Copyrights

For articles and photos by non-members, NVPS must have written permission for publication. The exception is articles or photos in the public domain; for such articles or photos, the author and source of the public domain archive should be stated.

One way to circumvent copyright problems is to use a hyperlink to the article or photo published elsewhere.

Typography

Use italics for emphasis. Use emphasis sparingly. Don't use bold or all-caps. Bold and all-caps are difficult to read. Nonetheless, all-caps are acceptable for acronyms and designations.

Suggestions

Suggestions for the newsletter format or otherwise should be sent to jt@sinclair3.com with the subject-line SUGGESTION in all caps.

Your editor

Your current newsletter editor is half-deaf with a short-term memory (25 seconds on a good day and getting shorter each year), lives in Vallejo (doesn't know Napa very well), and receives about 400 emails every day. Although the newsletter editor reserves the right to edit submissions, the newsletter editor's job is to *receive* content (information + photos) for the newsletter, not create it. So, please submit publish-ready content according to these guidelines. And please, no verbal submissions.