Beach Photography
A Message From The Editor

The sun, the surf and the sand, oh my! Pictures taken on or near a beach may be one of the most common images captured by photographers. Beaches set the scene for family outings, weddings, prom pictures and intimate getaways. Beaches are great places to photograph animals too. Birds such as seagulls and sandpipers frequent beaches. Beaches are rife with opportunity for macro shots and creative abstracts. Some typical examples are: seashells, crabs, footprints in the sand, faded or chipped paint on boats, driftwood on the shore, children's toys or intersecting blades of dune grass. The vivid and varied colors and textures at the beach add excitement to all your photographs. There is a reason beaches are so photographed. They are so beautiful. However, with these beautiful opportunities come a few challenges, namely the sun, the surf and the sand.

Shooting in harsh direct sunlight can lead to images that have high contrast, blown out highlights, hard shadows, lens flare, washed out images and for portraits, generally unflattering features and the 'squint factor'. Harsh sun means heat and heat can affect your digital camera's images. Extreme heat could damage the camera itself.

The surf and moisture can have long-term damaging effects on your gear while trekking at the beach if you don't take care.

There is nothing that frightens some photographers more than the thought of sand getting into a camera. Cameras have moving parts and to get something as gritty as sand into them can quickly trash your camera or scratch an expensive lens. Always wear the safety strap around your wrist or neck so you don't drop your camera and never, ever put it down on a sandy surface. Sand also gets into our camera through carelessness. This includes obvious no-no's like handling the camera with sandy fingers, changing memory cards while your friends are shaking sand out of a blanket, or similar stupidities.

Ultimately the only sure protection against the sun, the surf and the sand is not taking your camera to the beach. Of course this is not acceptable. You'll need to do what you can to minimize the effects of the harsh sun and limit the risks of damage to your expensive gear.

This edition is filled with articles which discuss the difficulties and joys - the agony and the ecstasy of beach photography. You will read about ways to resolve space (vast horizons) and time (exposure) issues and how the use of filters and fill-flash can minimize the effects of the sun. Don Chen shows us how reflectors can be used to re-direct light. Pat Turner provides some ideas on what to shoot.

I've given you all sorts of warnings, but don't get discouraged. If you use ordinary common sense, you won't be bothered by any of these gremlins and you'll be ready to take great shots at the beach.

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Share Moments — Share Photography
A Message From President - Ron Meyers

In past years the summer months have typically been a slow period for our club. However, in recent years our membership growth has developed the LCCC into a very active club year round. This year are we very active!

With the club sponsoring the PhotoEXPO, outstanding attendance at program nights, excursions and shutter café, the club calendar is full, or so one would think. Club members are getting out in force to take pictures in small groups. In recent weeks we’ve seen a strong turn out of LCCC members at events all around the Chicago area. Several club members are also competing online and/or sharing their work on websites like Pixoto.com, 500px.com and aday.org.

This is a great time of the year to be taking pictures. If you are looking for company on a photo shoot use the Yahoo! group message board or our Facebook page to communicate with other members and please don’t hesitate to share your work and achievements.

You may know there are newly elected 2012-2013 Board Members. John Williams is going to make an excellent president. Under his guidance and leadership abilities the club will continue on a path of continual growth and improvement. The new board structure makes for good continuity from year to year with the past, present and future presidents all full and participating board members. The newly elected Board Members are:

President: John Williams
President Elect: Mike Trahan
Past President: Ron Meyers
Secretary: Terry Ferguson
Treasurer: Jim Ross
Vice President, External Operations: Michelle Cox
Vice President, Internal Operations: Bill Sullivan

Visit our website [www.lakecountycameraclub.org](http://www.lakecountycameraclub.org).
We meet the first Thursday of every month at:
418 N. Prairie Avenue, Mundelein, IL 60060.

Questions or comments about this newsletter? Please contact Ken Johnson, Newsletter Editor at ken.johnson@lakecountycameraclub.org.
Mick’s Picks
By Michelle Cox

June has finally arrived and with it a fresh start to a new season of photography. Opportunities abound and I have more things to share than space to put them. So be sure to keep an eye on the Yahoo Groups for more "picks."

In June get ready to take a deep breath of fresh air, enjoy a sunset and listen to the gulls - all at our wonderful local beaches and water fronts. Enjoy Lake Michigan at the same time you enjoy the following events.

On June 2 and 3, head up to Kenosha, WI. for the family fun of the Out Of Site Kite Flight. The event will be held at Kennedy Park, 4051 5th Avenue, Kenosha. While there enjoy a burger, brat or hot dog or bring a picnic lunch. More information available at: http://www.kenoshacvb.com/events/outta-sight-kite-flight.

If you need more to do on June 2 and 3, be sure to consider the Port Washington Pirate Festival in Port Washington, WI. This event is right on Lake Michigan with a wonderful group of reenactors. Besides the colorful folks to photograph, there is a sea to shore battle for our photography entertainment. AND the town of Port Washington has great old buildings to photograph. For more information check this fest out at: http://www.portpiratefestival.com/index.html.

While not on Lake Michigan, A Celebration of Summer will be held in Lehman Park, Lake Villa, IL. This park is located on Cedar Lake and holds the Cardboard Boat races. This event hosts one of the first fireworks of the year (usually bug free!). Take a look at their flyer at: http://www.lake-villa.org/2012/cos2012.pdf.

Don't forget Father’s Day on June 13. Create a special memory for a Father and share your photography skills on this holiday!

Enjoy your June!

Dates To Remember

May 31 “Doors” Challenge Due
June 7 Program Night “Nature Photography”
by Mike Trahan
June 9
June 13 Board Meeting 7:00 PM - All are invited
June 16 Shutter Café 8:00 AM. Join us!
June 23 Photo Excursion - Architectural Tour
University of Chicago
June 30 “Scapes (Land, City, Sea)” Challenge Due
Here in Australia we love to hit the beach.

We’re one big island and most of our population is scattered along the coast line so the beach is a natural place for us to go both on day trips and longer holidays.

Beaches present digital camera owners with a number of wonderful opportunities as they are places of natural beauty, color and interesting light. However they also present a variety of challenges including camera damage, privacy issues and making large open spaces interesting.

While it’s not really beach going weather at present here in my part of the world I know that many readers are getting close to summer and beach photography will be high on the agenda of many (I’m so jealous).

Here are 10 tips for when you head to the beach with your digital camera next:

1. Look for focal points

A friend of mine once told me that they don’t bother taking their camera to the beach because all beach shots look the same. I thought that that was a pretty sad thing to say because when I go to the beach I see it as a place brimming with photographic opportunities if you have the ability to look beyond the cliché shots. For example while many people take shots looking out to sea I find it interesting to go to the water’s edge and then turn completely around and see what’s in your frame from that angle. One common problem with landscape beach photographs is that while they might capture a beautiful scene they actually have no point of interest and can as a result be rather empty and boring. When taking a shot look for a point of interest or focal point that will give those looking at your photo a place for their eye to rest. Perhaps it’s a pattern in the sand, a set of footprints, the crashing of waves over a rock, a life saver’s tower etc. Also look for the little things that tell the story of going to the beach like shoes at the waters edge, sand castles, sunglasses, sunscreen lotion etc. Sometimes these can make wonderful little feature shots to break up your vacation album.

2. Timing is important

The start and end of days can present the best opportunities for shooting at the beach. For starters there will be less people there at that time of day but also you’ll find that with the sun shining on an angle that you often get more interesting effects of shadows and colors – particularly in the evening when the light becomes quite warm and golden.

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3. Watch the Horizon

One of the most common problems in beach photography where there are wide open spaces with a long and often unbroken horizon is sloping horizons. Work hard at keeping your horizon square to the framing of your shot. Also consider placing your horizon off center as centered horizons can leave a photo looking chopped in half.

4. Head to the Beach When Others Avoid it

Another timing issue is that the beach can really come to life on those days that everyone avoids it because of inclement weather. Stormy seas, threatening and dramatic clouds and wind slowing lifesaver flags and trees over call all make for atmospheric shots.

5. Exposure Bracketing

One of the challenges of shooting in the middle of summer on a beach is that it can be incredibly bright and your camera could want to under expose your shots if you’re shooting in Auto mode. If your camera has a manual mode it can be well worth playing with it at the beach and experimenting with different levels of exposure. I find that I get the best results when I look at what the camera wants to expose the shot at and then over expose it by a stop or two. Of course this depends greatly from situation to situation – brightly lit landscapes are generally very tricky – especially if you have shady areas as well as bright ones. Sometimes it’s a matter of working out which area you want to be well exposed and focusing on that area as to get everything right is often impossible.

6. Spot Metering

If your camera has spot metering you can overcome some of the above exposure problems. Spot metering is a feature that some cameras have whereby you tell the camera which part of the image you want to be well exposed and it will get that bit right. This is particularly useful in bright light when you want to get a shady area exposed well. It will optimize the shady area (and the other areas will be over exposed – but at least your main subject will be ok). This can be effective especially when photographing people as it allows you to face them away from the sun and to meter on their shadowy face and therefore avoid squinting (a common problem with photographing people at the beach).

7. Fill Flash

If you’re photographing people at the beach as a portrait and it’s bright you’ll find that they will almost always have shadows on their face (often cast by hats, glasses, noses etc.). Switch on your flash and force it to fire when shooting in these situations and you’ll find the shadows eliminated and your actual subject is well exposed. This is particularly important when shooting into the sun when without a flash you could end up with your subject being at some stage of becoming a silhouette). If your camera gives you some level of control over how strong a flash to fire you might want to experiment with this also as firing a full strength can leave your subjects looking washed out and artificial. If your subjects do look overexposed and you can’t decrease the flash strength try moving back a little from your subject and using your zoom to get a tighter framing as this will decrease the impact of the flash. As usual – experimenting is the key.
8. UV Filters
UV filters are useful for DSLR owners for a couple of reasons in beach photography. Firstly they act as a protection for your lens (see below) but also they do filter out ultraviolet light in a certain range. This can cut back on atmospheric haze (often a blueish haze/tinge). The visual impact that they have is not great but they are the first thing I buy when I get a new lens for my DSLR.

9. Polarizing Filters
One of the most useful DSLR lens accessories that you can add to a digital camera is a polarizing filter. Without getting too technical, a polarizer filters out some light that is polarized. This means that it reduces reflections and boosts contrasts. The most noticeable places that this has impact is with blue skies (potentially it can make them incredibly rich and almost dark blue) and in water/ocean in which it can give a variety of effects. The way many people explain the results of a polarizer is the difference that polarizing sunglasses can make when you put them on (in fact I know quite a few photographers who shoot through their sunglasses if they don’t have a polarizer with them). Get a polarizing filter and experiment with it and you’ll quite literally be amazed by the results.

10. Black and White
One technique that I’ve been using a lot lately in beach photography (and other genres also) is to do a little post photo production and see what impact stripping a photo of color has upon it. There’s something about a black and white shot at the beach that completely changes the mood and feel of a shot. It’s also a great way to bring to life beach shots taken on dull or overcast days which can often leave a beach scene looking a little colorless.

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Darren Rowse is the editor and founder of Digital Photography School. He lives in Melbourne Australia and is also the editor of the ProBlogger Blog Tips.

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Keep It Clean. Your camera that is. Once you have returned from the beach be sure to carefully clean your camera. At a minimum give it a good wipe down with a soft cloth and a touch of an approved cleaning product. You want to get rid of any and all residue, including salt, sand, dirt and dust.
Beach Photography and Digital Camera Maintenance

By Darren Rowse

In the previous article, I mentioned that taking photographs at the beach is not only a place of wonderful opportunity but one of challenges.

One of the major challenges of a place that has lots of sand, salt and often wind is keeping your digital camera protected from the elements.

Following are a few tips on how to care for your digital camera in the extreme conditions that a beach can throw at it.

**Protective Filters**

If you’re using a DSLR use a UV filter – in addition to the optical benefits it might offer a UV filter (or any other type in actual fact) offers another layer of protection to your lens both in terms of sand, grit and salt but also if it’s bumped or scratched. I’d much rather scratch a $50 filter than a $1,000 lens!

**Protect your Digital Camera’s Insides**

Changing lenses, batteries or memory cards should be done with incredible care. Try to keep the times that you open your camera up in any of these ways to a minimum while on the beach and if you have to do so make sure you’re well away from the water and if possible away from others in a sheltered place where sand will not find it’s way into the innards of your camera.

**Clean Your Hands**

After swimming try to rinse your hands in fresh water. Salt from the ocean isn’t a good thing to introduce your camera to.

**Clean Your Camera**

After your day at the beach carefully clean your camera. At a minimum give it a good wipe down with a soft cloth (I use a micro fiber one which means I don’t need any cleaning fluid) to wipe any residue from the day and to get rid of any salt, sand, dust, etc. It is probably worth investing in a camera cleaning kit for this purpose to utilize the different tools they give you (soft brushes, compressed air, etc.). Be very, very careful in cleaning your cameras to use quality cleaning products because you can end up making them worse by spreading dirt around – especially when you do any cleaning on the inside. Be especially wary of anything that blows air – while this can get dirt out it can also blow it in!

**Camera Bag**

- Obviously one of the main things to think about is how you’ll carry and store your camera when it’s not in use. On the one hand you want it to be secure and leaving it in a car might not be a wise move (partly for the security but also for the high temperatures in cars on hot days) but on the other hand you don’t want your camera sitting out on a beach all day, even in a bag, as sand tends to get into everything. Ideally a camera bag that allows you to seal your camera in will be ideal. Zip lock bags can also be useful for storing some of your gear (batteries, memory cards, filters etc). My motto for packing a camera bag when heading for the beach is to ‘pack light pack right’. Choosing to take a few useful items and leaving the rest at home can really save you problems later on.

**Battling Condensation**

My last trip to the tropical northern parts of Australia where it was incredibly humid presented me with the problem of condensation. The majority of the time my camera was in the air-conditioned, cool and dry confines of our hotel room (where it was inside it’s bag – even cooler) but this meant that when I took it outside to shoot that the lens and view finder immediately fogged up. It’s very difficult to combat this – although I found that the best strategy was simply to let the camera acclimatize before shooting.
Some people suggest putting it in a sealed plastic bag when moving between temperatures – this might work well but is not particularly practical in many situations, especially when you have a large camera. Ideally you want to warm your camera up naturally and slowly – taking it out of it’s bag and allowing it to naturally warm up tended to fix the issue most times while I was away. I also travelled with a soft cloth which I used once the condensation had mainly gone to clean any marks it had left and to remove any last moisture that remained. One strategy that I have seen friends use when visiting humid places where their camera can be exposed to condensation is to use little silica gel packs in their camera bags. These little packs absorb any moisture in your camera bag.

**Set aside time for Photography and Fun**

One last tip that I often do on the days when I’m on holiday, especially to places like the beach where there is always the worry of camera damage, is to take special visits to the beach just for taking photos and keep the ‘fun trips’ with family separate (and quite often leave my main camera at home). This way I have defined periods for photography where I can keep track of my gear and make sure it’s ok and then can truly relax when I head to the beach for fun. Of course when I go to the beach for fun I take my point and shoot with me for those fun shots – but I leave my more expensive gear at home where I know it won’t be damaged. I find this also means less frustration for those around me who can get sick of me always off taking photos when they want to relax with me.


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**Things to Photograph at the Beach**

By Pat Turner

The beach offers endless photo opportunities and is a great place to visit all year long. I enjoy shooting at the beach because it provides so many interesting subjects and they’re constantly changing. Here are a few suggestions of what to look for on your next trip to the shore: waves crashing onto the rocks or pier, seaweed, driftwood, birds, shells, dunes and patterns in the sand. People and man made objects also make great focal points such as: windsurfers, kayakers, piers, boats, lifeguard chairs, umbrellas, seawalls, lighthouses, sand castles and even the dog parks. Even little details like a cooler, beach towel, sandals or suntan lotion left behind in the sand can make great focal points and help tell a story.

Since the beach is constantly changing along with the weather, don’t rule out going during the winter or because of inclement conditions. Dreary, foggy, gray skies and icy, snowy shores open up a whole other set of picture possibilities.
Reflecting Light on a Beach

By Don Chen

There are few things we all know that make shooting at the beach difficult. There is no shade to hide in. We hardly have any control over the orientation of the coast line or the direction of the sun. Many times the camera meter gives us good overall exposure but leaves under exposed or unpleasant harsh shadows on our subject’s face. Don’t think that you can easily fix this in Photoshop. There is a better way for controlling harsh light and shooting at the beach which can save you some heavy labor in the post production. Bring a reflector.

Take a look at the two pictures on the right taken during one of our club model shoots at Waukegan beach. Both exposures were exactly the same. The sun was in the high right corner. In order to get details of model’s white gown and overall scene, the model’s face had to be under exposed by about 1 stop. In the second picture, I was lucky to have an “assistant” to hold a reflector and bounce the light back to the model’s face. What a difference this made.

Here is another beach shot with a reflector placed on the opposite side of the sun to the left of the camera to fill the shadows. I didn’t take a picture without the reflector but you should have no problem to imagine the presence of the harsh shadows. The side bonus by using the reflector in this picture is that it created nice catch lights in model’s eyes.

So, next time we shoot at the beach, bring a reflector.
Painting Like a Child - a Viewpoint

By Stevan Tontich

I recently had a chance to visit the Museum of Photographic Arts in the beautiful Balboa Park area of San Diego. This museum is one of only three dedicated photographic art museums in the nation, so I could not pass up the opportunity. I thoroughly enjoyed the time I spent there. The museum consists of a large atrium, gift shop and the main exhibition space, which was broken down to allow for a natural flow of visitors through the art photography on display.

I was amazed with what I saw. Each photo was a world into itself. Some were a little difficult to comprehend at first, but worth the journey into the mind of the photographer to find value and meaning. The photos were filled with emotion and all in a different way. Some were over 100 years old, and they still impressed. Some were much newer, more modern in approach and materials. Some were beautiful, some ugly and hard to look at. All were interesting.

It was not long, though, that I started to notice that pretty much all of these photos would not do well in a camera club competition. Blown highlights, lack of detail in the shadows, blurry images with no good focal point, strange shadows and artifacts...one print was actually made with a negative that had a big X scratched across it before the print was made. There was all kinds of interesting stuff and all so appealing. How did this make any sense?

As I thought about this, I began to realize that camera clubs tend to be, in my humble opinion, places good for learning all the skills a photographer needs to master to create a technically perfect, well-exposed, balanced, well-focused image. This is also highly valued in a club competition. When it comes to the art, camera club images, at times, are very artistic - but at other times (even some competition winning photos) are just perfect shots. Perfect shots with all the known elements of a competent photographer well aligned to make a completely pleasing image. There is nothing wrong with this. However, what makes them artistic?

Pablo Picasso once said, "It took me four years to paint like Raphael, but a lifetime to paint like a child." I think this quote begins to unravel this question for me. Raphael was a great artist, but a realist - Picasso, anything but. I relate the four years Pablo spent in the Academy of the Arts as the camera club experience - at least some of it. After you master these skills - it is time to spend lifetime thinking like a child (you can still attend the club, of course). This does mean, eventually, breaking the technical aspects down to serve the artist's vision - trading highlights for emotion, perfect focus for a connection with the audience, composition for impact, and balance for thought.

This is a lifetime journey. Paint like a child.

To visit the museum website: www.mopa.org.

If you would like to enter an art photo exhibition, go to www.internationalfinartphoto.org.
Who Was Up To The Challenge
By Margie Hurwich

Faces...they are all around us; not only on people, but animals, the moon, clocks, and even rocks. And when I put forth the Challenge of "Faces"...I received them all!

I have the benefit of seeing the images for the Challenges as they are submitted. There were two that really stood out to me. Both have great humor, although I have to admit...I wouldn't want to come across any of these faces!

And as I mentioned, "Faces" can be found everywhere.

People

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Animals

© Linda Kruzic

© John Williams

© Bob Marx

Even the Moon, Clocks and Rocks

© Michelle Cox

© John Rouse

© Jim Ross

Are you up to our next Challenge? Images for the May Challenge, "Doors", are due by Thursday, May 31. And then get ready for our June Challenge, "Scapes (Land, City, Sea)" due on Saturday, June 30. Have fun and be creative!
The Lake County Camera Club (LCCC) PhotoEXPO will be held on June 9, 2012 in Grayslake, Illinois. This event promises to be an exciting major photography educational experience for Northeast Illinois photographers.

A few of the activities at LCCC PhotoEXPO include:
Two nationally recognized keynote speakers, George Lepp and Hanson Fong provided through Canon - a major sponsor of the event.
Over 20 classes taught largely by professional photographers.
Additional computer labs and workshops available, 1.5 to 2 hours in length with hands on instruction (additional fee may be required).
Vendor showcase featuring a variety of manufacturers, retailers and photography related products.
Capacity for nearly 500 attendees from the Chicago metro area, SE Wisconsin through Milwaukee, N Illinois through Rockford, and some from NE Indiana.
Venue is the University Center of the College of Lake County, Illinois; voted one of Chicagoland's best conference facilities.
Box Lunch & PhotoEXPO Merchandise can be purchased at registration.
Hosted by the Lake County Camera Club, a member of the 38 Chicago Area Camera Clubs Association (CACCA) and the Photographers Society of America (PSA).

**Classes, Workshops and Computer Lab Choices**

Wedding Techniques from the Eyes of a Pro
The Composition of Architectural Photography
Mastering Off Camera Flash for Beautiful Portraits
The Ultimate Lighting and Portrait Photography
Travel Photography
Digital Arsenal Tips and Tricks in Photoshop
Using Elements10 to Improve Your Images
Table Top with a Twist
Painting With Light
High Dynamic Range (HDR) Photography
Taking the Mystery Out of Food Photography
Lightroom - Organize, Edit and Optimize Your Images
Scott Kelby’s 7 Point System for RAW and Lightroom
Close Up Photography
Basic Digital Photography
Four Proven Marketing Methods
B&W Digital Photography
Photographing Birds and Mammals
Envisioning the Landscape
Use One Light to Improve Nature Photography
Color Management from Capture to Print
Dynamic Angles and Patterns of Wedding Photography

**Featured Instructors**

Walt Anderson  Larry Becker  Bob Benson
Don Bolak  Joe Brady  Don Carter
Fred Drury  Hank Erdman  Dirk Fletcher
Hanson Fong  Eric Futran  Steve Gettle
Bruce Hudson  Jerry Hug  Chris Knight
Marian Kraus  Hector Martinez  Bill Skinner
Chicago Photo Safari

**BlackRapid** has agreed to sponsor the after event network social. Be sure to come early and stay late to see all of the vendors and take advantage of networking opportunities.