

TEXAS PROFESSIONAL
PHOTOGRAPHER

Oct/Nov 2016



Jadyn
by Keith Evans

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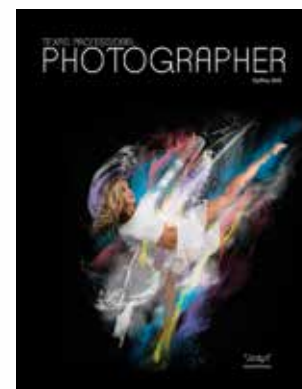
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TEXAS PROFESSIONAL PHOTOGRAPHER

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VOLUME 51 - #6 Oct/Nov 2016



ON THE COVER

"Jadyn" was created by Keith Evans of Dallas Texas. Jadyn is a fabulous dancer and attends Kilgore College, where she is a member of the Rangerettes Dance Team. The photo was done using a Nikon D750 camera with a 70-200 Nikor Lens and studio lighting. After the session was completed, the image was extracted and completed in photoshop by using a set of Wood Walters Powder Brushes.

Keith Evans, owner of Keith Evans Photography, is a Certified Professional Photographer. He specializes in high school seniors, families, dance, events and sports photography.

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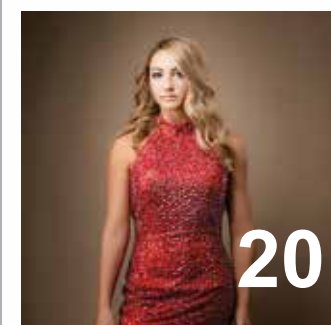
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Complete financial information on Texas Professional Photographers Association is
available to any TPPA member by contacting

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The Way I See it

by Steve Kozak, TPPA President



Preparing for Greatness

Time flies when you are having fun! Serving as the TPPA President has been an honor and a blast. Our slate of TPPA Officers did a great job of putting TPPA on track for a successful future. I believe TPPA is destined and poised for “greatness.”

Frankly, I feel like that is what each and every TPPA Member should be doing as well...preparing for greatness. “So, what does that look like?” you ask. Here are my two cents worth on how to prepare for “greatness.”

Get Certified. It is the first step in creating confidence in your knowledge and abilities in the craft. Register for Gary and Kathy Meek’s class at Texas School and knock this out. You can do it.

Start entering Photographic Competition. Quit making excuses. Not only will you learn a ton during the process, you will also have a blast when you get over the “hump” and start succeeding. Take the TPPA Photographic Competition Boot Camp at Summerfest, or better yet, start working now on your four images to enter at the Annual Photographic Competition at Summerfest next June. You have eight months to prepare.

Get involved in TPPA Events. Go to Texas School, Summerfest, PhotoGenesis and take a Texas 10 class. These tools are in place to help you become the photographer you really want to be. Think of TPPA as something of a “gym” for your career. Just like joining a gym, you will not see any results if you don’t utilize the tools that we have in place for you.

Once you have reached a certain level of success, it is time to give back and share what you have learned with others. TPPA is always looking for speakers for our events and we often look to our own membership first. However, I can’t tell you how disappointing it is when opportunity comes knocking and folks are not prepared.

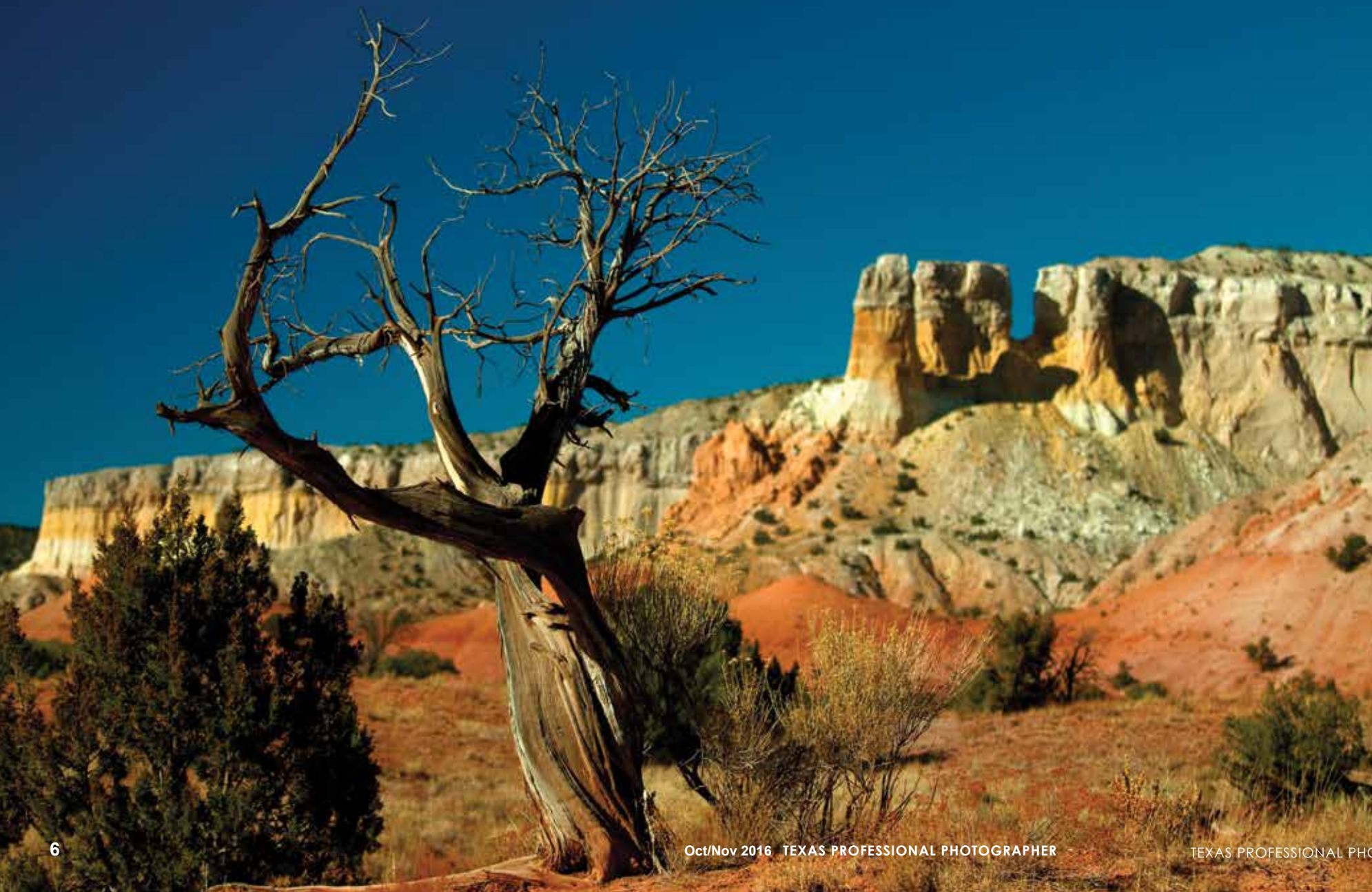
If you really want to be a speaker, get your act together...literally. Get a good, professional headshot done. No selfies. No abstract foolishness. Get a great headshot. Also get your bio written and your program descriptions. Start building your program now. Test the waters by teaching a Texas 10 workshop or a “Walk-up” Workshop at next year’s Photogenesis. Be proactive and prepared when TPPA comes knocking.

Volunteer. Our events would not be the success they are without volunteers who serve as Wranglers, committee members, picnic hosts, speaker hosts and convention chairmen. TPPA is a member-run organization and it would not function without those who give above and beyond. Make time to serve your TPPA.

I know Trey Homan will be a terrific President for TPPA and will lead the charge throughout next year as we all continue to prepare for “greatness.”

If you are not a member of Texas PPA, this is my personal invitation to you to join!
Email me personally at Steve@SteveKozak.com or call 972-601-9070.

Landscape PHOTOGRAPHY



DOUG
BOX



There is something special about connecting with nature... whether you are camping or simply traveling through an area. For me, connecting with nature includes having a camera in my hand. Making photographs causes me to research where I am going with more scrutiny than if I am just going as a tourist. I get up early and stay up later so I can show up at the right time to make the best photographs and I watch the weather so that I'm able to create dramatic photographs. Some of my best images have been right before or right after a storm.

Here are several ways I do research to help me to know where to go in areas I want to photograph. There are several sites on the Internet that aid in this research such as, www.500px.com an on-line Canadian photography community and marketplace that I use to find inspiration and connect with other photographers. It is also a place where you can potentially market your photographs. The great thing about 500px is that you can type in a location such as the Grand Canyon and you may find hundreds or thousands of photographs taken at the Grand Canyon. Click on a photograph you like and you will see what camera, lens and settings were used to create the image. Also, when you click on an image, it will use Google Maps to display the exact location where the image was taken. Another site I use is www.Fineartamerica.com. What this site lacks in information, it makes up for in inspiration and a great place to sell your images.

Another great place I use for planning my trip is Pinterest. Besides showing great photos, Pinterest has great trip planning ideas and websites to look research. One more great place is your Facebook friends. If you are like me, you have tons of photographers as friends. I have found that local folks are some of the best resources for places to go, especially the little known places.

Once you’ve chosen your destination, you must consider the time of day you want to be at that location. Begin with a vision of what you want the photograph to look like. If you are photographing the Grand Canyon, you should first decide if you want a front-lit image or a back-lit image. You must decide if early morning or late afternoon is the best time to create your vision of the scene. Google Earth is a great place to begin your plan so you can choose the best time for your particular spot. If you can, pre-scout your location to make the final determination of lighting conditions. Then, follow my first rule of landscape photography... “Take a nap at noon!” Rarely are any great shots taken during the middle of the day!

Once you have picked the right spot and chosen the right time of day, your photographic skills come into play. If I can give you any advise on improving your landscape photography, it is to slow down. When you first arrive at a scene, walk around without your camera, try different vantage points, look for leading lines and materials to frame your images, and be sure to evaluate an interesting foreground.



One way to slow down is to use a tripod. I believe your images will be better with the use of a tripod, not only because it will make you stop and think about the shot, you will usually be able to shoot at a lower ISO and no more camera shake! I use a Manfrotto 055 aluminum, plenty sturdy and not too heavy. If you want to save a little weight, you can opt for the carbon fiber. Also, I prefer a hydrostatic ball head. A reasonably priced, middle of the road ball head that will hold up to 35 lbs is the Manfortto 468MG. It is available without quick release and a few different quick release models. Check with your local camera store. Get in the habit of lifting the camera with the tripod attached to make sure your camera is secularly attached. Enough said!

Also, be sure to try something different! Shoot at night, paint with light using a simple flashlight, photograph moving water with a long exposure using a neutral density filter, do multi shot panorama images, do HDR images, try different lenses (you can rent lenses at your local camera store to test them out) or even change your camera system.

I recently changed to the Panasonic Lumix Mirrorless camera. I am having a blast, learning a new system, using all the features, enjoying the lighter and less expensive lenses. Along with this, don’t forget video. I am now adding video every time I shoot.

Once you’ve planned your assignment, get up early, let your creativity flow, go places you have never been, try something new, get out of your rut and have fun with photography doing photographs just for you!

Doug Box is teaching a Nature, Macro, Floral, Animal, Landscape, Street and Travel Photography program at the 2017 Texas School of Professional Photography, April 23-28.. This is going to be a popular program, so remember to sign up Jan 3, 2017, at 11pm CST.

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2017

42nd Annual Texas School

April 23 - 28, 2017

by
Don Dickson

The 2017 Texas School of Professional Photography will once again be held at the Intercontinental Hotel and Conference Center in Addison, Texas. Classes will be held April 23 through 28, 2017.

Over 1,000 photographers attend Texas School and we look forward to another great year in 2017. The hotel, located north of Dallas, just off the North Dallas Toll Road, is the setting for this event.

The 523 room Intercontinental Hotel has agreed to a room rate of only \$121, so more people will be able to stay at the host hotel. More information is available on the Texas School website at www.texaschool.org. You might want to go ahead and book your room because they will sell out fast.

Online registration for Texas School '17 begins at 11pm on January 3, 2017. Last year the first class booked in only 3 seconds with several

others within 2 minutes! If you've never experienced Texas School, you've missed out on one of the best learning experiences available to photographers in the world. There will be at least 36 classes covering every topic imaginable and all are designed to help your business grow and be successful.

As everyone knows, the photography industry is changing. You have to be on top of your game. Texas School offers everyone the best education in the country and at the most affordable prices. Along with classroom instruction, there is a fun and exciting social life at Texas School with parties, meal events, entertainment and an impressive trade show. Another good reason to attend is that all evening meals will be FREE, thanks to our many sponsors.

So, mark your calendar now for April 23 - 28, 2017, and come and see what the "Texas School Experience" is all about.

2017 Texas School Instructors

Lindsay Adler
Melanie Anderson
Ross Benton
Doug Box
Gary Box
Ana Brandt
William Branson III
Margaret Bryant
Carl Caylor
Tony Corbell
Bry Cox
Gregory & Lesa Daniel

Cris & Deanna Duncan
Kristie Elias
Steve Ellinger
Kay Eskridge
Neal Freed & Bryan Blanken
Mike & Suzy Fulton
Jeff Gump
Russ Harrington
Nikki Harrison
John Hartman
Jamie Hayes & Mary Fisk-Taylor
Elizabeth & Trey Homan

Steve Kozak
Don MacGregor
Gary & Kathryn Meek
Gail Nogle
Sandra Pearce
Thom Rouse
Marilyn Sholin
Richard Sturdevant
Billy Welliver & Mitch Daniels
Janice Wendt
John Wilson
Steve Winslow & Sophie Lane



Scholarships Available

Texas School of Professional Photography

by
Don Dickson

Each year the Texas Professional Photographers Association grants a number of scholarships to the Texas School of Professional Photography to be held at the Intercontinental Hotel and Conference Center in Addison, Texas. These scholarships are available to newcomers to the profession as well as photographers who have been in photography for several years and meet certain requirements. You may qualify!

Two types of scholarships are available. The first is a classroom scholarship that pays the week's tuition to a class. To be eligible for this scholarship, you must be a member of TPPA by July 1, 2016, and you must renew your 2017 membership prior to attending the 2017 Texas School. In addition, you must not have received a Texas School scholarship during the previous ten years. Also, you must not have been in photography for more than five years, or if you have been in photography for more than five years, you must have earned a minimum of 20 Fellowship Points from TPPA. The final requirement is that only one application per studio or firm will be accepted.

The second type of scholarship is a "Wrangler Scholarship." To be eligible, you must be a current (2017) member of Texas PPA, have

attended the Texas School in the past, willing to work, able to get along well with people, able to take directions well, must have a car, must have satisfactory computer skills, and must be available by 9 am on April 23, 2017.

If you want to be a part of a very elite, fabulous, hard working group of people who are a very important part of the success of Texas School, and would like to be considered as a wrangler, then apply online today at <https://www.texaschool.org/wrangler-application/> to obtain a Texas School Scholarship or Texas School Wrangler application.

If you have any questions, ask any of the trustees, talk to someone who has been a wrangler in the past, or contact Cindy Romaguera, at 504-799-9729 or email her at Cindy@Romaguera.com. Remember, a Wrangler Scholarship is a "working scholarship." When you are a wrangler, you get very close to your instructor, classmates, other wranglers, and the Texas School staff.

Sign up now and check the website and this magazine for further Texas School updates.



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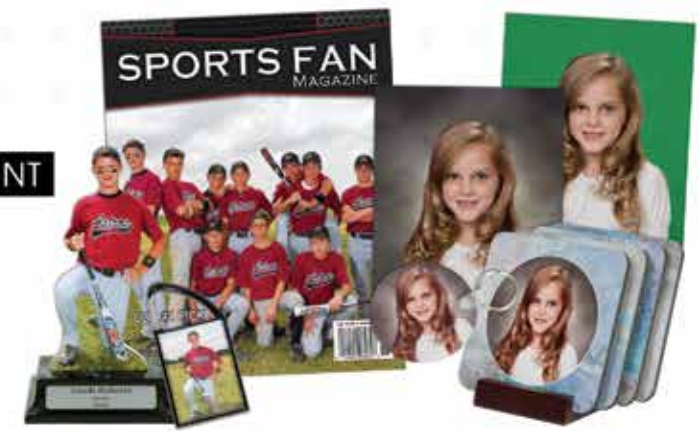
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with just a little bit of Encouragement

by Russell Graves

When I was only eighteen years old, my dad slid a June 1988 copy of the Texas Parks & Wildlife magazine across the table to me and said, “When you get some pictures in this magazine you’ve really done something.” I was just out of high school but already I’d shown a love for photography.

Just about a year prior, my older brother, William, gave me an old Vivitar camera that our older sister had given to him. That old camera was used for about a year until, out of nowhere, it stopped working. The repair shops confirmed that the relic was too old to fix. I was crushed. Loving photography and not wanting to ask for any help from my parents, I approached my boss. My part-time job was reading water meters for a rural water system for \$75 a month. There were about sixty meters to read and maintain so that the customers were appropriately billed for their water usage.

“Let me ask you a question, Mr. Lackey,” I said.
“Do you trust me?”

“Sure,” he replied. “You’re a good kid and you do a good job.”

“Well...” I continued, “you know how much I like photography and my camera broke. Could you give me a year’s advance pay to buy some more gear?” He agreed. With \$900 in my pocket I bought a Minolta X-7a camera and a few lenses. This marked the beginning of my photography career.

In those early days and with my dad’s encouragement, I always aspired to be a magazine photographer. At first, I’d package slides and send them off to magazines. We lived about five miles from town and those slides were rejected so fast they almost beat me back home. But my parents kept encouraging me.

Photographing everything possible near my rural Fannin County, Texas, home, I honed my craft 24 frames at a time. At 19, I had my first article and photos in a magazine. At 20, I had my first cover. Seeing my pictures in print and getting paid for them was (and still is) exhilarating.

For the next five years, I continued my education at Grayson County College and East Texas State University and earned a degree in Agriculture Education. While in college, I started dating my wife, Kristy, and continued to photograph and submit images to magazines. Our courtship was financed by taking pictures of bull riders on a Sunday and then returning the next Sunday to the bucking arena and selling the cowboys prints of them riding.

In 1993, we moved from Dodd City to Childress, Texas. With a new wife in tow, we spent the weekends traveling the area and shooting pictures. Through my twenties, I continued to publish images and articles, wrote a book or two, and honed my craft both creatively and from a business standpoint. In 1999, even though still teaching agriculture science at Childress High School, photography and writing became my main source of income.

Nearly thirty years after picking up a camera for the first time, I can say that I am truly blessed. In the ensuing years, I had around 450 magazine covers, thousands of images in print, written six books, produced some television, have had perhaps 500,000 words published in magazines, and hundreds of speaking engagements. Nearly every photo and every word printed or spoken have been about a subject that’s dear to my heart... rural Texas.

I’ve worked with some of the biggest celebrities in pop culture but it’s regular people living remarkable lives in rural Texas that are most fascinating. It’s the wildlife and the agriculture



of our state that inspires me and it’s seeing my kids growing up and experiencing a rural culture in much the same way I did that motivates me to pick up a camera again and again.

Through my journey I’ve never strayed from my singular pursuit of documenting rural Texas. I’ve never shot weddings, senior portraits, or baby pictures to fill in the gaps when the work got slow. Since those early days of shooting pictures of cows on my family’s northeast Texas ranch, I still like to be out in the pasture with cattle on a warm summer day.

It’s hard to express in words, but my gratitude for getting to take pictures of people and places on my terms for so long is palpable. I am blessed by the legions of editors for whom I’ve worked and for the experiences I’ve had since those first words of encouragement from my dad.



Russell Graves



“On the Fence” was made by Angela Navarette, of Plano, Texas. The image won Best Illustrative in the General Exhibit and Best Wildlife at Summerfest ‘15.

“I took that image with my d700 and my 70-200 on a walk along the pier in Destin, Florida. I needed a case filler for IPC.

Inspired by my friend, Maria Bernal, who can whip up beautiful artwork in no time, I gave myself a strict time limit (literally 3 hours) to work on this particular piece and stuck to it. I was pushing myself to be creative and have fun. I pulled items from various photos I had taken on our family trip such as the clouds, umbrellas, grass, and tried my hand at a little painting in Photoshop.

Having recently met Sandra Pearce at IPC that year, I was completely blown away by her work and was especially drawn to her whimsical pieces. To make the image a little more fun and give it a story, I added the fish last, rolled the bird’s eyes up and called it ‘On the Fence.’

Even though this piece did not merit, I still love it because it helped me to grow. I love the whimsy of it. Having fun with your work is even more important than gaining merits because I feel like that is what pushes your growth. It did win Best Illustrative General Exhibit and Best Wildlife at Summerfest 2015. Can’t beat that for just having fun!”



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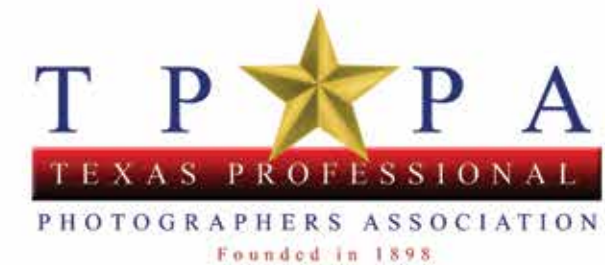
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What Photographers Are Saying About the Texas Professional Photographers Association



"The most important and valuable thing TPPA has given me as a member the past three years is the camaraderie of other photographers. The members I've spent time with have been so helpful and encouraging. It has completely taken me to a whole new level in my photography to be able to learn from and interact with so many great individuals."

Linda Sherrill

"Many many years ago, a wise and experienced photographer encouraged me to become a member of PPA, TPPA, go to Texas School and the summer seminar (Summerfest). This good advice has been golden. Texas PPA and its national award-winning magazine is head and shoulders above other photography associations across the country."

Bob Boykin



Membership Categories & Rates

Professional Membership \$95 - Open to individuals who conform to applicable laws as pertain to a business establishment; and to employees of other Professional members as described above and to in-plant photographers employed by a firm whose main purpose is not selling photographs.

Active Membership \$95 - Open to individuals seriously interested in photography and are engaged in an occupation other than photography.

Student Membership \$50 - Open to full-time students preparing for a career in photography in a college, or approved vocational or technical school. Students must present proper credentials regarding school, course and instructor.

Service Firm \$90 - Open to all manufacturers of photographic wholesalers or stock houses, and manufacturers of photographic frames, mounts or other related items.

Staff Associate Membership \$55 - Open to individuals who are employed by Professional members or manufacturers and suppliers of service and supplies to the photographic industry.

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Texas PPA 2017 Calendar of Events

April 23 - 28, 2017

**Texas School of Professional Photography
Intercontinental Hotel in Addison, Texas**

Join 1,000 photographers for the biggest event of its kind in the country! It's the best education value in the country for world-class instructors and plenty of fun. More info at www.TexasSchool.org.

June 25 - 28, 2017

**Summerfest '17
La Torretta Lakeside Resort in Conroe, Texas**

Combine a vacation and a seminar at this beautiful resort on Lake Conroe. It's for the entire family! Watch for more information in this publication or at www.TPPA.org.

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ONE LIGHT CAN BE ENOUGH

Cris j Duncan M.Photog.Cr . CPP

We have all heard the Genesis story about how God created light and it was good. “One light to rule the day and one the night...” it continues. When I was a new photographer, using only one light seemed odd to me. You see, I was taught how to use a five light studio setup (main, fill, accent, hair, background). I also find it interesting that in God’s lighting diagram, the light is stationary and the subject moves, thus creating different patterns and designs.

So, what can we learn from this? The answer is that, while some occasions call for multiple light sources and directions, there are other times when one light can be, and often is, enough. In fact, I have begun to love “one light portraits” where a single stroke of the brush from one direction is used for sculpting and shaping a scene. Not to sound trite, but if it works for God, surely it will work for me.



The following images were created with a single light source, or at least appear to be a single source, from a single direction. While the modifiers and techniques may change, the principles are the same. By understanding some foundational properties of light, we can make it work for us. Note that, in some cases, a reflector is used as a fill. However, it is used in a way as to not diminish the power of the main light but rather to enhance its qualities, while still achieving a single light source image.

One of my favorite techniques is to use a 1’x4’ or 1’x6’ strip box and place it overhead, with the box parallel to the floor. I will place the box just above the head of my subject.



This does two things. First, a soft light quality is produced due to the size of the source and its distance from the subject. Second, because it is so close, the light fall-off is very rapid, allowing a nice gradient of light across the subject. The image on the previous page of the young man demonstrates the look achieved with this. Note that a 6’ long strip will give you a larger spread of light than the 4’ box. To control the spread of light, consider using a soft-grid as well.

Using that same modifier (even though the 1’x6’ box works better for this), position the box to the side of the subject with the box now perpendicular to the floor and it creates a beautiful light for full-length portraits while still maintaining a fall-off and spread to create an image with depth and texture as seen in the full-length image of the young lady above.

Try adjusting the angle of the box on its center axis, rotating it left or right, while still keeping it perpendicular to the floor, to get the desired light pattern. By rotating the box in this manner, I was able remove light from the bottom of her dress and direct the viewer’s eye to the face while still maintaining a pleasing quality on the face. This rotation also allowed more light on the background.

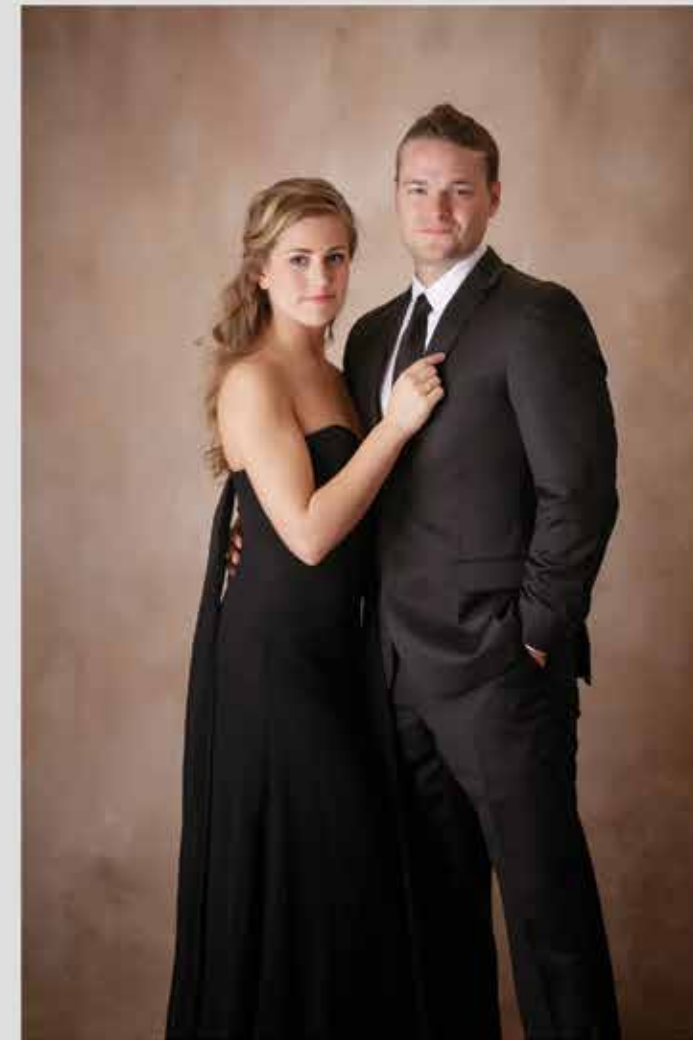


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The images covered so far have been more dramatic in nature, which was intentional. But sometimes you need less ratio. This can still be achieved with a single source. When lighting couples or groups, I will use either a single 5' octa-box, a 7' umbrella or a large diffusion panel such as a Translum® or a simple white sheet. The image of the family on the previous page was achieved with a single source feathered in such a way that the fall-off across the group was kept within a .5 stop range. The distance of the source from the subject and the relationship of the subject to the background allowed me to get light on the background and successfully light my subjects creating depth with only one light source.

In this final example of the couple above, I used Transom®, a roll of diffusion material that can be purchased at Arlington Camera. A single strobe is placed behind the material at a distance so the light is fully illuminating the panel from corner to corner, typically 5'-10'. Translum® is 54" wide and the roll is 30' long so I can create a very large source efficiently and affordably without the need for large boxes or modifiers.

For this couple, I used two methods. One was positioning the panel in a location the a soft-box would normally be on camera left slightly in front of my subjects. This gave me a very large, soft source to light both the subject and the background with minimal fall-off. The great thing about a product like this is it affords me the opportunity to light full-length and still have a soft direction of light.

In this instance, the roll was approx. 8' high and went to the floor. I then changed camera position and re-posed the couple to create a silhouette and used the Translum® as the background and the light source. I prefer this type of silhouette because you can still see soft light creating depth and shape to the subject as opposed to a clean edge around them. The next time you are lighting your subject or packing gear for a job, remember that often times less is more and one can be enough.

It has worked for this planet and I hope this article will allow it to work for you. Happy creating.

Cris Duncan owns and operates CjDuncan Photography in Lubbock, TX with his bride, Deanna. They offer both portrait and commercial services. Cris and Deanna are Texas School Instructors and founders of Find Your Focus Photographic Education. Learn more at www.cjduncan.com.



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Spotlight Pics

A gallery of images submitted by members of TPPA and others, Spotlight Pics is a means of sharing great images, ideas, and techniques with fellow photographers. To submit an image, go to TexasProPhotoMagazine.com or email the Editor at Editor@cablelynx.com.



"How to Pick Up Bitches" was made by Dominique Harmon of Lubbock, Texas. As she explains, "I had seen an ad for 'men' on some weird website that popped up in my junk folder and some smart mouth guy said something about 'why would you want to pick up a bitch?'" Immediately, my mind went to 'female dogs.' I had another dog in mind but he was too big for my chair, so my assistant had a friend with a Boxer who was old. Therefore I knew he would sit still. To make the illusion of the dog reading, we covered the book with peanut butter and I put my reading glasses on him, and voila!" The image won the trophy for "Best Portrait of an Animal" at Texas PPA Summerfest '16.

The Perfect Alternative To A Live Receptionist



Mark McCall

The phone is the lifeblood of most businesses. Prospective clients are calling to get pricing, availability or information about what you offer as a business. We simply have to take those calls to stay in business.

Budgeting for a receptionist or assistant to answer your phone can be tricky. Few studios nowadays have the resources to allocate to a single person to answer the phone. Usually, a studio employee who is busy with other tasks must stop to pick up the phone or you, the studio owner, must do it, which makes it the least financially effective way to communicate with your client base.

Years ago, I stumbled across a company called Evoice. The advertisement stated they offered phone answering services and client communication options. I read up on the company online, and it sounded almost too good to be true.

Evoice is a personal answering service that accepts your business calls. Callers can be screened, robocalls can be ignored and important calls can be answered immediately. If your caller reaches a pre-recorded greeting, the transcript of the message can be sent to a cell phone via text or email. Audio of the message is also attached the email.

The digital receptionist isn't just an answering machine, it's an interactive service that allows the caller to use their touch keypad to direct them to the party they are trying to reach in your studio.



Here's How It Works

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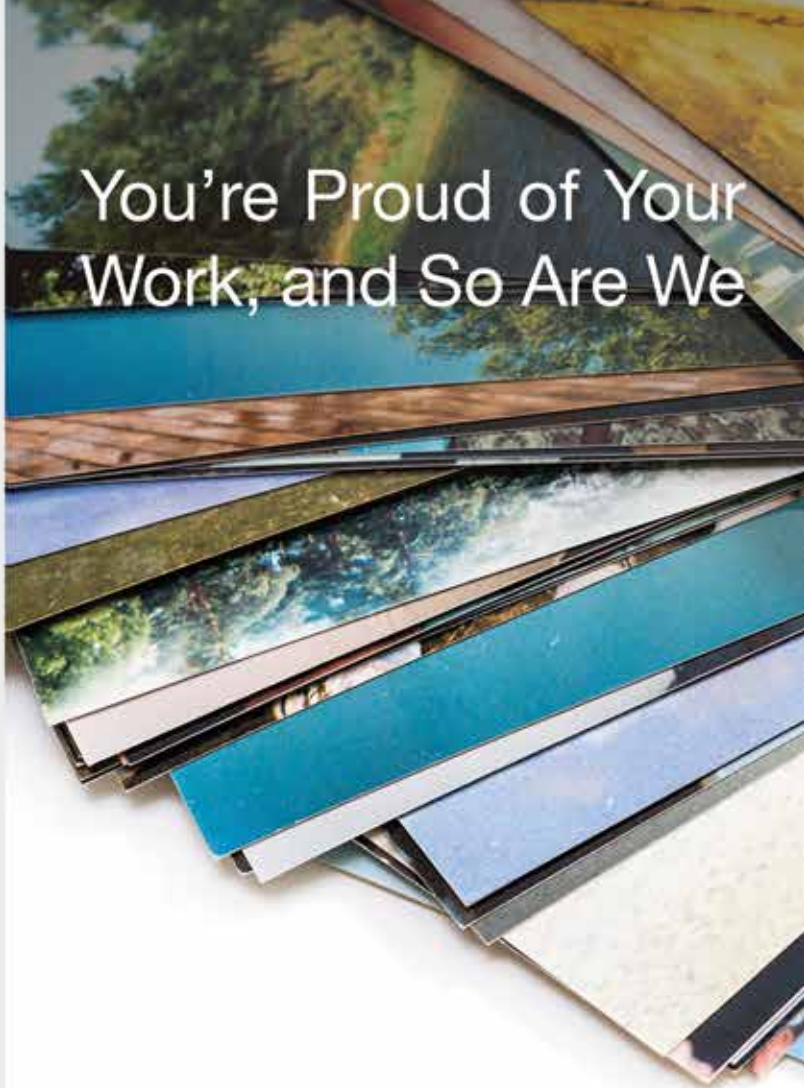
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Since up to 6 phone lines are included, you wouldn't even need a land line unless you wanted one. Up to 6 phone numbers come with the base level service, which can be either local or 1-800 numbers. You get 2 extensions as well. You can route incoming calls to multiple other phones, free forwarding of messages to email (extra fee for text) all for \$12.99 a month. That's about the price you'd pay a receptionist for one hour of her time!

Graphic shows what an email message looks like. I can read it very quickly or click on the attached audio file to hear the actual voice message left by the caller.

Evoice takes all my studio calls, fits my brand and gives a polished feel to my business. In a competitive world as ours, every small business owner needs every advantage he can find. So, if you are constantly interrupted throughout your busy day by legitimate callers or even those pesky telephone solicitors, eVoice is a way to maximize your time and resources. To find out more, go to www.evoice.com.

Mark McCall is a Past President of TPPA and operates a studio in Lubbock, Texas. In 2002, he opened his first studio in that area and, in 2009, opened one of the first "co-op" studios in the state. He is a firm believer in photographic education and teaches a Print Competition Boot Camp at TPPA Summerfest. His high energy combined with his technical and artistic skills make him a valuable commodity for TPPA.



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The Elements of Inspiration

by
Martin Grahame-Dunn
FMPA, FRSA, QEP, Hon.FMPA
London, England

If one were to ask what the roots of photography were, I am sure we would receive a wealth of answers all to do with light to plates, plates to glass and glass to paper, coupled with distinguished names from photographic history books but perhaps it would be far easier to look at its purpose.

Man has always sought a way of glorifying and recording his exploits and status in life whether a hunter of Bison, a man of the Church, a trader or merchant or even a President or Monarch. The photographer is simply the artist painter of yesteryears empowered with the vision to see people as they are or even exaggerate just a teeny weeny bit. What the stroke of a brush did then, Photoshop now seems to emulate. Our mission in life has always been the flattery of our subjects. In my Texas School classes, I have dissected photographic practices, embedded core skills that, with the advent of digital seem to be dwindling and, above all, taught my willing charges to see and use light. So, away with the jargon and vocabulary of our industry and back to basics.

Without light we see nothing, create nothing and are nothing. But to master it in some measure enables us to construct images of beauty and meaning. Much of my life has been spent in studios creating light. Whether it was to be with a blonde, a redhead, a swimming pool (and no, I am not talking Heff's Playboy mansion here!) or even a strobe or domestic light bulb, it made little difference as masters of our craft. We all need to learn to "Paint with Light."



A pair of images worked with a series of Nik Color Efex 3 filters for that surreal approach. In both cases the 'hot' colour becomes the focal point and I challenge the viewer by enhancing a primary opposite with the bright blue posts in the same plane of focus. Just having fun on a training shoot really.



For too many years, I have been out of the game and teaching worldwide. But there comes a time in every teacher when they must return to their roots and this is a small part of my journey to share with you. A few short years ago, I decided to go back to doing some shooting. At that time, the thought of running around crazily shooting weddings again bore nothing but horror for me as, quite honestly, I feel I am “getting on a bit” (even though I have the mind of a teenager). So there were two choices: shoot something wedding related as I did back in the late 80’s and 90’s or do a little bit of fashion stuff... maybe even do a little of both just to “keep my hand in,” so to speak. Well, finding a market for both was not too tough as I have always been one for maintaining and building relationships. Off to Italy I go first. My quest was to work with natural light with just a hint of cool LED video light for a bit of fun and drama. Time is of the essence and I have always shot like I was using film. I want to enjoy my photography and not spend endless hours in the “digital darkroom” processing repetitive images for the sake of volume. Just how many diamonds do you need in one ring?

Each of the shoots I embarked upon were done and dusted within an hour and a half, including walking from location to location. The venues were “cold” inasmuch as there was no opportunity for a “recce” visit and there was a requirement to shoot both reactively and responsively. There is always a time to decide if a shoot should be “real” or “idealistic” as the need to strive for clear backgrounds can often divorce reality and context from the real life experience. To question if it is better to isolate one’s subjects by technique and allow others to simply gaze on can add a “truth” which is often absent from our imaging. As I get “longer in the tooth,” I question more and more exactly what “rules,” if any, need to be faithfully applied to our imaging and indeed if the application of the same can adversely affect the spontaneity and creativity in any measure.

This initial impetus to get me back behind a lens as a practitioner has proven to be a revelation in my life and re-visit all I know and ponder upon what I still need to learn for it is in essence a never-ending story. In nearly all of my life, photography has never been a hobby. It was left to family to record those precious moments and holiday memories as I was always pre-occupied with other things. In retrospect it was an attempt to separate my professional and personal life as I have long firmly held the opinion that the downfall of so many photographers is ego and a strong emotional attachment to their images that makes them hostile to criticism and indeed, evaluation. I have seen careers and friendships ripped asunder over images and that was a paddling pool I simply didn’t want to play in! And yet I became an educator of photographers whose specific business has been to illuminate, inspire and reinforce the fragile ego’s of so many who doubt their abilities on a daily basis. At least I am still capable of maintaining that professional divide.

My true hobbies and interests in life have involved a deep interest in the ancient world and a search for esoteric knowledge and, before that all gets to sound real spooky, don’t worry! There are several maxims that seem to rule our lives and one I particularly love is “What goes round, comes around.” Photography is no different. Indeed we all learn from our pasts and that knowledge often dictates the future albeit the military strategies of Alexander the Great or the spiritual teachings that govern our lives and actions. In photography itself, I wish I had a dollar for every “newbie” in the industry that tells me they have suddenly discovered that shooting portraits outdoors (what we in Europe call Environmental Portraiture) is an innovation! They have actually been inspired by Cinema, DVD’s or, in some cases, a day out to an Art Gallery. So, the penny has dropped that there might just be a market for creating beautiful naturally lit images outside.

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As up close and personal as it gets! Combining lines with a strong tilt and a decisive expression, to me, always feels like a winning formula but watch out for distortion when not using an appropriate lens.

The use of our own senses of perception and the control of the same is indeed the first of my "Elements of Inspiration" which give us the firm grounding we need to begin our journey as image makers and keep our feet on firm ground for the duration of our careers – the understanding of composition.

Composition itself is a subject that many have attempted to apply rules to rather than embarking on a quest to understand and reason exactly why human kind is captivated or inspired by certain shapes, figures and combinations of the same. In

essence, what exactly is it in those elements that invoke different emotions on the viewer? Before I get too deep into this stuff, let me assure you that there is no "all powerful" council who has the authority to sit in judgment or to make and enforce so-called "rules" of any kind. It is in no one's power to command us to like or appreciate something simply because it is written somewhere that accept or be damned! After all, in the world of art, our personal perceptions of aesthetics is down to the masterful statements of "I like it!" or "I don't like it!" and, although we may sit in the presence of distinguished judges in print competitions, we may appreciate their points of view and pontifications but are just as likely to walk out of the room at the end thinking, "I don't know what he was drinking last night when he was judging that image but I'm going to get me some!"

Until I expound further, I am going to leave you with a few images and a little game. Look around you everywhere you go and just think how often you see the square, triangle and circle in our daily lives and exactly what each of those shapes does for you. A tease I know but just maybe you will open your eyes just a little further.



Martin Grahame-Dunn, from London, England, has been an instructor at the Texas School of Professional Photography in years past where he has captivated the attention of students by his unique insight and photographic skills.

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GUILD NEWS



Contributors: Austin - *Tim Babiak*; Brazos Valley - *Sallie Gillispie*; Dallas - *Debra Klawetter*; Heart of Texas - *Tom Sergent*

Austin Guild - The July meeting of the Austin Professional Photographers Association was held at Precision Camera and Video in Austin. Kathy Norwood, from College Station, presented a program on "How to Increase Profitability through In-Person Sales." She covered many aspects of the sales process as well as explaining how projection sales can increase revenues. Participation in the monthly print competition continued to be strong. Katie Amber received the award for first place, John Rogers placed second and Joe MacKay placed third. Katie Amber also received the award for Speaker's Choice.

The August meeting was also held at Precision Camera and Video and Margaret Bryant presented a program on "Pet Photography: More Than a Squeaky Toy and a Good Camera." She covered many aspects of pet photography as well as explaining how to market and sell to pet lovers. In the monthly print competition, Valerie Steinkoenig received the award for first place, John Rogers placed second, and Jim Debth placed third. Valerie Steinkoenig also received the award for Speaker's Choice.

Brazos Valley Guild - The Brazos Valley Professional Photographers Association was happy to bring home the trophy again this year from TPPA Summerfest and guild members had a great time volunteering for the festivities, classes, and all the other activities. In August, the guild hosted a three hour, hands-on program presented by Rob Hull called, "It's All About Light."

At the September meeting, Dave Doeppel presented an evening program on "Lightroom." Scheduled for October, is an exciting program by Ted and Jennifer Penland on "Creating the Classic Pin Up." Come and join the fun!

Dallas Guild - Dallas PPA enjoyed the inspiration and artistry of Barbara Breitsameter at their August general meeting. In her touching program, she described her journey toward her distinctive, award-winning dog photography even while dealing with Parkinson's disease. Barbara encouraged us to break out of our own comfort zones. On the following day, Barbara presented a workshop on her genre, with seven "models" from Chihuahuas to Great Danes.

These programs followed our three day Little Red Schoolhouse seminar entitled "Mastering the Masters" and was presented by David Edmonson, Luke Edmonson, and Maria Bernal. Nearly ninety participants learned about their creative process, from conceptualization and preparation, to creation, to completing works of art. Our vendor partners provided meals and generous giveaways. The weekend ended with an IPC watch party, complete with popcorn provided by our gracious hosts, PCS Production Company. Dallas PPA wishes to thank Brooke Kasper for an outstanding job coordinating Little Red Schoolhouse.

August print competition winners, first and second place, respectively, included Illustrative: Don Champlin, Chrystal LeGrand; Wedding: Yosef Yetimgeta; Scenic: Pam McGraw, Shawna Hinkel; Portrait: Bree Adams, David Quisenberry. Bree Adams earned the overall top score. Learn more at www.dallasppa.com.

Heart of Texas Guild - The Heart of Texas Professional Photographer's Guild held its monthly meeting at Coach's in Waco in July. Guest speaker, Ashley Diamond Siegert presented an exciting and informative program on infant photography and sales. Her program was very well done and is highly recommended to other Guilds. In the monthly Professional competition division, Rhonda Williams won first place, Heather Hitt won second, and Cecy Ayala finished third. The Challenge competition topic was "Landscape Photography" and it was won by Heather Hitt. Darrell Vickers placed second and Rick Duhrkopf placed third. In the Associate Division, Rick Duhrkopf was victorious and Darrell Vickers finished second.

At the Heart of Texas Professional Photographer's Guild's August meeting, guest speaker was Jose Yau. Jose presented a fast-paced and informative program on sports photography and hosted a question and answer period afterward to address individual sports questions. He shared many sports photography techniques and a secret or two which should be very helpful to our members. The Professional photographer of the Year competition was won by Heather Hitt. Cecy Ayala finished second and Rhonda Williams garnered the third place ribbon. The August meeting also featured a Black and White Challenge competition with the challenge being to demonstrate "Bokeh." Winner of this event was Tom Sergent with Rick Duhrkopf finishing in second.

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