

Focus

Chicago Stereo Camera Club

The *Journal's* occasional feature entitled **Focus** on a member or member-club turns now to the **Chicago Stereo Camera Club** and a somewhat unusual situation where a Photographic Society of America member-club uses a photography exhibition to help those whose sight is a problem. A past president shares a bit about this over 50-year old club and the direction it takes to help others.

Never Take Your Vision or Depth Perception for Granted

Eugene Mitofsky
Lincolnwood,
Illinois
Past President,
Chicago Stereo
Camera Club

"Never take your vision or depth perception for granted" is the unofficial motto and the club "roots": the how and the why of the Chicago Stereo Camera Club (CSCC) when founded. The club, which is involved in the visual arts, is proud to have adopted a charity that helps those with vision problems. Other clubs might like to consider developing relationships which other charitable organizations. Helping charities and developing club "roots" and traditions has given the club a direction to follow. The Chicago Stereo Camera Club holds the honorable distinction of being the oldest, continuous stereo club in the USA with members active in photography organizations including the Photographic Society of America (PSA), National Stereoscopic Association (NSA), and International Stereoscopic Union (ISU).

In March, 1952, when stereo photography was on everyone's mind, the Chicago Lighthouse for the Blind sponsored a "Snow Ball," an annual fund-raising event. A feature of the intermission was an invitational exhibition of 3-D photography. Well-known personalities, including actor Harold Lloyd and the drugstore chain's Myrtle Walgreen, were invited to exhibit.

The "Snow Ball" became the foundation stone of the CSCC. A group of stereographers under the guidance of Robert L. McIntyre, Camera Editor of the *Chicago Tribune*, organized the club with the hosting of the Chicago Lighthouse International Exhibition of Stereo Photography as one of its primary purposes. The club joined PSA in 1952 with the result that exhibition had to conform to PSA's

rigid exhibition standards. Workshop parties were held often and club members attended not only to participate but to support, serve and cheer those who were doing the work. At public presentations, ladies of the club wore gowns and the gentlemen dressed accordingly, a sign of the lofty position the club held in Chicago society!

Today CSCC has several goals. Promoting and sharing stereo photography remains one of the club's goals. This year the club has had several public stereo showings, home workshops, a picnic at the lake and the annual Lighthouse Exhibition (a PSA-recognized exhibition). CSCC judged the Stereo section of the annual PSA International Exhibition in 2004. The club's most important goal is to help those who are blind or visually impaired. In doing this charity work, CSCC has reached a special distinction. The Chicago Stereo Camera Club is the oldest continuous contributor to the Lighthouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired. During the past 56 years, meeting locations have changed, membership has changed, and the world has changed but the CSCC's Lighthouse Exhibition has continued as a binding influence for the members as well as a fundraiser for helping the Chicago Lighthouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired.

Helping those in need is a worthy activity. Clubs should consider linking one of its club's activities with a helpful cause. Everyone wins! And as the Lighthouse Exhibition always ends, "people should never take for granted their vision and ability to see depth perception for granted." 🌐

Any mention of products or services in this article or anywhere else in the *PSA Journal* does not constitute an endorsement or approval of those items.