

Focus

Upper Uwchlan Area Community Photography Club

This month the *PSA Journal's* occasional article, *Focus*, which features a member or member club, turns to the Upper Uwchlan Area Community Photography Club from Chester Springs, Pennsylvania.

Building a Photographic Community

A Brief, but Dynamic History

A new photography club was started in the spring of 2010 with a simple theme—bringing local photographers together. The founding group of five members has now grown into the Upper Uwchlan Area Community Photography Club or UUACPC and during these few short years has expanded to over 35 strong and is focused on making a real impact on our “photographic community.”

The mission of the club is to create a dynamic and inviting environment that would encourage anyone in our community with a passion for photography, novice to professional, to join our unstoppable pursuit of becoming better photographers—building a club atmosphere where the objective of sharing knowledge and encouragement among our members is the number one measure of success. The commitment to this endeavour has enabled all of our members to enhance their skills and passion for photography by supporting the following core objectives.

- Learn how to capture the best image possible, in camera

- Create unique programming to develop and enhance photographic skills and overall creativity
- Establish a diverse set of activities and events that will ensure continuous opportunities to keep the camera “in our hands”
- Provide a robust network of resources that will further expand individual and club accomplishments
- Develop lasting friendships

Since April, 2010, the club has progressed in numerous ways. Our club meetings create a fun learning and social environment that is built around an active exchange of information and critique. Each meeting starts with an accomplished photographer presenting on a range of technique, creative, or situational topics. Presentations are followed by the membership and presenter providing constructive feedback on a range of monthly photo assignments.

The club also sponsors a variety of photo events every month that are both formal and informal, with wide ranging themes to appeal to all of our members. In addition, the growing enthusiasm for

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Members Charles Hoopes and Bob Gross supporting our local township events.
Photo © Stephen Beckman



learning has ripened into a robust desire by many members with specific areas of interest to host ad hoc programs in addition to our monthly meetings, enhancing the overall club experience.

Growing Impact of PSA

UUACPC joined PSA in July of 2010 and over the first few years utilized PSA resources to help define the operations of the club and adapted tools so the club did not have to recreate materials such as by-laws, communication tools, and procedures.

After the club was established, we evaluated what programs within PSA would be a good fit for UUACPC and membership felt the Pictorial Print Division (PPD) seemed like a great place to start. First, the UUACPC got familiar with the division and its programs by participating as a host club to judge the International Club Print Competition (ICPC). The club hosted in 2012 and 2013 and it was a great learning experience. The membership developed competency on how to judge a contest, but also was exposed to the quality of images required to participate successfully. So UUACPC jumped in as a participant, for the first time, this competition year and the experience has been both positive and progressive. After the first two rounds, UUACPC was right in the thick of things and the club performance progressed from five honourable mentions in round one to our first members being recognized for second place ribbons in the small color (SC) and creative altered reality (CAR) sections. As we come to the close of this year's competition, the club is striving to improve on our past performance and finish on a progressive note. Ultimately, we hope ongoing success will be the springboard for UUACPC and individual members to explore and utilize the vast array of resources, events, and networking that PSA provides to improve their photography.

Community Outreach

Similar to PSA, Upper Uwchlan Area Community Photography Club has made an organizational commitment to community service, taking the benefits and knowledge generated within the club to individuals beyond the membership.

In less than four years, the club and individual members have shared their knowledge, support, and enthusiasm through a range of activities including:

- Presenting free workshops at our local library and other non-profit organizations
- Investing club dues into other non-profit organizations supporting community enrichment
- Providing free photography support to our local township to capture different events such as their annual block party
- Providing speakers and other support to our neighboring clubs
- Participating in a number of projects with the local school system



Members James Mudd and Fiona Keys enjoying some time behind bars at Eastern State Penitentiary photo event. Photo © Stephen Beckman

- Establishing a permanent exhibit to enhance our local library, and much more

Future Aspirations

UUACPC aspires to expand on our goals of creating a fun environment to develop and explore the wonderful world of photography. We look forward to the club growing both in numbers and community outreach and believe that PSA will provide a wealth of resources and confidence that will help us to exceed our expectations.

Always Welcome

The UUACPC always welcomes new members to come visit our meetings or to establish a partnership with other PSA club members. The club maintains an active website www.uuacpc.com and invites you to explore our galleries or join us on one of our next events. ■