# FOCAL POINTS

SIERRA CLUB CAMERA COMMITTEE NEWSLETTER

JULY 2016



# A Day at the LA Flower Mart

By Joan Schipper

On a Saturday late in May at 7:00am, six Camera Committee members met up at Eliseo's Wholesale in the Original Los Angeles Flower Market on Wall Street. It was just the start of a very long day. We were about to launch the Camera Committee's first modern flower photography field trip and studio session in remembrance of Ray McSavaney. It turned out to be a very good day, too. As an early Camera Committee outings leader, Ray McSavaney used to take members to the flower markets on the Saturdays before Valentine's Day or Mother's Day, when the volume of flowers was peaking. Shopper traffic would have been peaking, too, but those were great times to buy flowers, to photograph flower stalls and carts banked with colorful blooms and to catch candid street portraits.



By the time Ray transitioned to his second career as a fulltime artist and photo instructor, he excelled in flower portraits and street portraits, so naturally those morning outings morphed into very popular three-day photo workshops based out of his studio in the Brewery Artist Lofts. Ray and his teaching assistants conducted portfolio reviews on Friday night. On Saturday morning everyone shopped for flowers and took the opportunity to shoot in the markets before returning to the studio where Ray had set up individual shooting stations bathed in the gentle natural light of his north-facing windows. Those were pre-digital days, so they'd shoot all day then go home to their darkrooms to process black and white film for review and maybe even printing on Sunday. In the course of those three days, Ray shared volumes of information on flowers, composition, exposure and lighting, and printing. It was well worth the tuition and the time. Some needed a day or two to recover and weeks to assimilate the information.

Ray's Tulips©Ray McSavaney. Used with permission of the Ray McSavaney Archives



Flash forward to 2015, admiring Ray's flower portraits online and at the memorial service, Alison Boyle and Joan Schipper thought members might enjoy and benefit from a flower market/ flower portrait experience in the spirit of Ray McSavaney. Without Ray's years of experience and expertise, they knew the outing would be more exploration than instruction, but, digital photography had introduced new tools that would make the learning more immediate and more varied. They were game to give it a try.

They chose to scout the market scene and try their hands at some still life photography on Friday, July 3. The market was awash in red, white, and blue. ©Joan Schipper, all rights Reserved



Even wedding flowers were on offer in the patriotic colors. Alison and Joan persevered and managed to have a good morning in the market and get home with blooms in natural, subtle colors. Their studio was patched together in Joan's backyard and started with nice pearly June-like light that burned off in a hurry. A little breeze ruffled backdrops and tumbled arrangements but gave a bit of relief from the heat that withered their flowers.

It was good test run and they decided to offer the outing with alterations. some They would go earlier in the year light, better for avoid holidays, and while the yard was nice, an indoor studio would be a welcome backup.



When Spring 2016 rolled around, they were ready. Picturing it as a collaborative experience for outing leaders and participants alike, they chose a Saturday in May and made arrangements and announcements. They limited the group to six participants and were happy to get only four interested people. The trip sheet included all the logistics of time, place, parking, etc. but it also suggested pre-outing homework looking at photos and other botanical artwork. The participants (as pictured) included Joan, Denise Castro-Bran, Gail Taylor, Alison, Vel



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da Ruddock, and Ed Ogawa. They brought a mixed bag of taste, style, interest and experience and they took the assignment and ran with it. Via email, they supplemented the trip sheet, sharing photos and recommending artists. Enthusiasm fairly glowed around this outing.

The market segment of the outing was excellent for shopping and okay for shooting. Spring flowers abounded and the graduation-focused theme was not overwhelming or garish. Arriving about 7:00 am, they missed most of the trade business and some good shooting opportunities, but it was fairly calm in terms of foot and cart traffic so they navigated easily with camera bags and had little interference while lingering over a composition.

On site, the group was a loose confedera-

tion with individuals searching out specific types of flowers and interesting com



©2016 Joan Schipper, all rights reserved positions and reporting back with findings.



They had some eager buyers and ended up with something like fourteen different flowers (including three varieties of tulips, three bunches of pink peonies in various stages, lisianthus, ranuculus, calla lilies, spider mums, helleborus, sunflowers, and even kale). Denise and Gail remembered to buy the "fill" flowers that provide support and enhance arrangements. Before three hours were up, they were done and the markets were really winding down. They headed back to the Westside for a late breakfast at Bloom (chosen partly for its fitting name), there they discussed digital image capture on the flatbed scanner. Joan had proposed sampling this option in the write-up, so participants had time to consider the technique and look at examples. At breakfast there were two eager scanners, but in the end five out of six photographers caught the "scanner-bug" made at least one successful scan. [editor note Denise's peonies diptych © Denise Castro-Bran]



Peonies Diptych ©Denise Castro-Bran, All rights reserved

Back at the "studio" (which is really Joan's living room and backyard), we got the flowers into water in the kitchen and surveyed the shooting options including backyard open-air with garden and market flowers in full light or open shade; two table-top shooting stages in the living room with gentle north light and a variety of back drops and a scanner work station with light, dark and translucent backgrounds. There were vases and props galore. And all those flowers.

©Echinacea in the Garden, © Velda Ruddock

The collaborative spirit really kicked in. Participants explored the garden, made standing arrangements for the table top or



flat compositions for the scanner. They shared flowers and consulted one another. In the studio, they adjusted light, shadow, height, angle, support and props and tweaked everything. They shot each other's setups, compared the results, and shot them again.



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They worked and played until late afternoon and then they cleaned up! By 6:00 pm, they were headed home with flowers, digital files and photo ideas. Some needed a day to recover and several days to assimilate the information.

Thanks to Ray McSavaney who still inspires the Camera Committee.



Above: Poppy in the Garden © Velda Ruddock

Right: Elisios Sunflower ©Joan Schipper,



#### LESSENS LEARNED

- 1. Begin your shopping experience in the Southern California Flower Market, on the west side of Wall Street, for better prices. Parking there was easy, too. The Original Los Angeles Flower Market, on the east side of Wall, may have more variety and more exotics. The original market also has a more open aspect.
- 2. Vendors may have more patience with photographers who are also buyers.
- 3. If you buy delicate flowers with fragile stems, be sure to support them while walk around! The stems will crack with too much jiggling. Consider bringing a cart just like the professionals.
- 4. Get to the market early for the best people photos and the most variety in flowers
- 5. Work in the cool of the day or in a cool season. Even without studio lights, our subject started to droop. And flowers on the scanner? That's a hot stage, so work fast.
- 6. Use a board or paper-lined baking sheet to pre-stage scanner compositions and then use chopsticks or other small tools to reach into a compostion to make adjustments.
- 7. Clean the scanner glass before each new composition. Away from the scanner, gently shake pollen and debris from flowers before placing them on the scanner.
- 8. Many flowers exhibit beautiful graceful stages as they age, so keep an eye on them! Ray McSavaney has many examples of desiccated but gorgeous blooms.

#### INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

*The Markets* 

Original Los Angeles Flower Market is located east of Wall Street at 754 Wall Street, LA 90014 Southern California Flower Market is located west of Wall Street at 755 Wall Street, LA 90014

#### About Scanning Flowers

Ellen Hoverkamp creates a lot of imagery on the scanner. I particularly like her still life work. Scannography by Christian Staebler - I'd call these compositions baroque. Bob Francis in Hermosa Beach has a fine portfolio. Read about his technique this profile. Ysabella May makes hypercollages (recommended by Gail).

*Velda directed us to these resources:* 

Harold Feinstein's One Hundred Flowers,
Robert Llewellyn's Seeing Flowers: Discover the Hidden Life of Flowers,
Irving Penn's Flowers,
Mark Laita 33 photographs dedicated to his mother.
Joan Schipper

# Editor's Note: My Appologies to Joan Schipper who no doubt worked extremely hard to embed links throughout her document:

I am 2 days late getting this newsletter out! It's Midnight and I am having trouble getting any of the links she provided with her article in the right places and functioning properly (or at all). I am forced to take the easy way out and provide them here below. You will have to copy and paste them into your browser to access but I'd suggest you take the time to do this. The links are wonderful! Very nice article, Joan!

#### Here are the links:

"flower portraits online" is www.raymcsavaneyphotography.com/gallery. html?gallery=Botanical%20Studies&sortNumber=1&skipno=0
If that doesn't work just use www.raymcsavaneyphotography.com

"memorial service" is https://www.dropbox.com/s/gbqztk9kxzgqho9/Ray%20McSavaney%20 40215.mov?oref=e&n=122835087

Ellen Hovenkamp http://www.myneighborsgarden.com/Still-Life

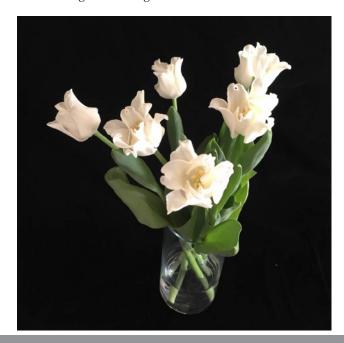
Christian Staebler http://www.scannography.org/artists/staebler.html

Bob Francis http://www.bobfrancis.com/.

Bob Francis Technique http://www.easyreadernews.com/91026/flower-power/ Ysabelle May http://ysabellemay.com/

Mark Laita http://memolition.com/2013/05/12/beautiful-photographs-of-flowers-by-mark-laita-dedicated-to-his-mother-33-pictures/

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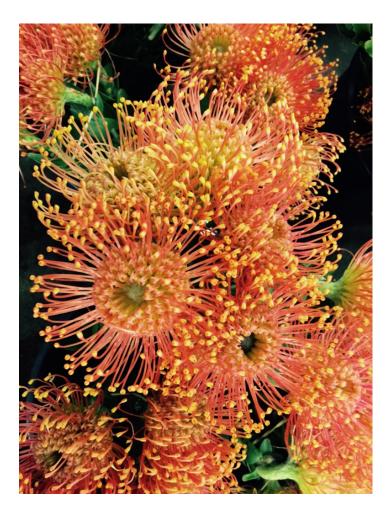


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Above and 3 Below: ©Velda Ruddock, All rights reserved







# Sierra Club Camera Committee July 2016 Meeting

When: Monday, July 11, 7:30 PM

Where: Felicia Mahood Center

11338 Santa Monica Blvd., West LA

What: Town Hall Meeting on the Future of the

Camera Committee

Please join us in July as we introduce incoming Camera Committee chairman Bob Beresh and frame a conversation on the future of the Committee. After the serious business, we'll have a short slide show by Alan Jacknow. He'll give us a preview of our potential National Parks anniversary program with photos from the 49 parks he has visited.

Since chairman Steve Anderson announced his retirement, our leadership team has been taking a hard look at how the Committee serves the needs of the Sierra Club, the Angeles Chapter, and our members. For this review to be thorough, we need your input. Please come to hear about the issues we face and share your ideas and concerns. We want to know what makes you happy, what leaves you cold, where you'd like to go and how you'd like to get there.



We'd love to see a full house at Felicia Mahood on Monday night for a lively discussion. What better way to welcome Bob to his new office and thank him for stepping up.

If you can't make it, you can still share your thoughts:

- Send an email message to SteveAnderson1138@msn.com or
- Post a comment on the MeetUp page for the July Monthly Meeting or
- Mail note to Steve Anderson (9585 Toucan Ave., Fountain Valley, CA 92708-5833) or
- Reach out to any other Committee officer or outings leader. See the leaders list at the end of Focal Points or on our web page www.sierraclub.org/ange les/camera-committee/about-us.

#### On the Town Hall agenda:

- Membership numbers have been on the decline. MeetUp has brought the Committee to the attention of more than 450 people, but has netted very few active members. What do we need to do to attract more members and to engage the people we meet?
- Our roster of active outings leaders is shrinking. Some have relocated; oth ers have just lost interest in organizing outings. How do we spark interest members to pursue certification as an outings leader?
- We host ten monthly meetings a year at Felicia Mahood. Four are member shows; the other six are typically slideshows or instruction. Does this arrangement satisfy our members? Should there be more member shows or fewer? Which programs in the last ten years were the strongest? Do you have suggestions for future meetings?
- The committee has sponsored just a few outings in the last year. Some were very successful. Others were not well-attended. What kind of outings would you attend? Would instruction be more appealing and in which areas and at what level of expertise? Are you interested in teaching a session?
- Camera Committee communications sometimes seem to miss the mark. We post trips on the Angeles Chapter Schedule of Activities, on MeetUp, and in Focal Points, our newsletter. Editor John Nilsson has expanded Focal Points over the last year with more text and more photos. He changed our delivery method so we don't crash in boxes every month. What do you think? Please tell us your preferences for our communications.

Join us at Felicia Mahood Community Center, 11338 Santa Monica Blvd., West LA. Park in the rear or in the municipal lot just south on Corinth. Enter the Center via the door in the parking lot.



# Please Welcome Bob Beresch, the new Chairman of SCCC!

#### **Personal Statement:**

I came to the Sierra Club Camera Committee as a casual observer. When I learned about the group, I had just made the decision to leave my 12 year career at Warner Bros. in

exchange for something that I loved to do and was good at. To make photographs. The first meeting I attended was a member show and it affirmed that there were people out there interested in similar things. Some were landscape focused, some more on nature and capturing interesting species of animals and plants. Everyone had their own perspective and vision.

As I grew more comfortable with the group, I brought my own work to the next member show and the feedback offered was very important. It boosted my confidence that I had made the right decision to pivot my career path and try something new. I had made new friends and attended an outing to Joshua Tree. As an adult, opportunities like this for enrichment and learning are a bit hard to come by if you don't open yourself up to the experience.

So, my motivation for taking on the role of Chairperson of the Chapter is to ensure that the opportunities which I had been afforded are not lost to current and future members of the Sierra Club Camera Committee Angeles Chapter. My goal is to increase our membership, book out a great speaker schedule, and build attendance at outings without losing the overall character of the Chapter. I welcome all support, advice and input as we work together to keep the Chapter alive and let it thrive.

#### Bio

Based in Los Angeles, professional photographer Bob Beresh captures portraits of people and business at their best. His commercial photography includes aviation, executive and business portraiture, and product work. Bob's photos are influenced by his interests in nature, travel and sports to deliver memorable images.

Bob has been selected as a US Forest Service Artist in Residence for 2016 to interpret and showcase the beauty of the Angeles National Forest.

His fine art has benefited nonprofit organizations and been sold at the ART310 Auction, Wags and Walks Benefit Auction, and the 2015 City Hearts: Fresh Focus auction at the Leica Gallery Los Angeles. His first solo exhibition debuted in Los Angeles in October 2015.

Bob is also a member of the International Society of Aviation Photography



I had a wonderful trip to Namibia in April & May... great wildlife & night photography opportunities. I went back to two of my favorite places: Kolmanskop & Dead Vlei. Kolmanskop definitely got even more buried in the sand since I was there 5 years ago. Rooms I'd photographed before were now inaccessible while others were more interesting since the sand levels were more dramatic. In Dead Vlei I got there before sunrise and was looking for a good composition to take at sunrise which was different form what I shot last time. I found the "Frans Lanting trees", so I couldn't resist doing my own version of these iconic acacias in front of the tower-

ing dune. Got eye to eye with a cheetah in the Namib desert and stayed out late that night for the dark skies and milky way photography that is so extraordinary in Africa. Check out the Andromeda galaxy visible to the right of the tree and how bright the stars area - even as they set at the horizon. It was fun being out in the desert an night. We just had to watch out for scorpions, which we only saw one of crawling nearby us and set us into a brief panic until it was relocated a far enough distance away by our guide.

.....Beverly Houwing

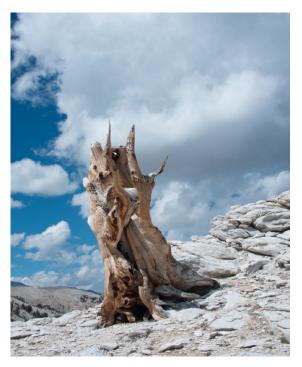




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# 2016 SCCC OUTINGS/EVENTS



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#### Car Camping - Ancient Bristlecone Pine Forest, Fri–Sun Sep 2-4, 2016

Located high in the White Mtns (east of Bishop, CA) the Bristlecone Pines are the oldest living trees on earth. Some are over 4,000 years old. They have been sculpted by the elements over the centuries into very interesting shapes. We will hike to several locations to view and photograph some of the best specimens. This year's trip is over the Labor Day weekend. The moon will set soon after Sunset (Waxing Crescent), so we plan to photograph the trees and Milky Way late Friday evening. Beginners are welcome.

Camping is primitive (at 8,000 ft). We will be driving on dirt roads and hiking trails with a little over 11,000 ft elevation. Group size is limited. To reserve a spot on the trip send a \$30.00 check (payable to the Sierra Club Camera Committee – refunded at the start of the trip), an email address or sase, phone numbers and carpool info to Peter. When I receive your check, I will send you the trip sheet with all the details to help you plan for the trip. A participant list will be sent about a week before the trip so carpools can be organized if desired. Please call if you have questions. Peter Mason - Co-Leader, Jeremy Evans - Co-Leader.

#### Front Page Photo Credit:

Spyder Mum Scan © 2016 Denise Castro-Bran, All rights reserved

If you would like to send in a front page photograph and accompanying article for consideration, please send photo

#### IN PORTRAIT CONFIGURATION.

Size 11.5" on long side by 9" on short side. Minimum density of 10mp and Resolution of 300dpi.

Please Send to:

## dtlanow@gmail.com

New photographers are selected as often as possible. Questions on how to size your cover photo submission to fit are welcome.



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# Member Announcements

#### John Nilsson, Editor, writes:

Your contributions to the newsletter - both written and pictorial - are important!

I view the Focal Points as by and for the membership of the Sierra Club Camera Committee and I can only continue to provide a fresh and interesting newsletter if I receive lots of new content each month.

I'm sure you are all out there shooting!

I look forward to your contributions and remind you of one overriding concept: This is your publication - anything you present to me that is appropriate to the Sierra Club Camera Committee will be published in Focal Points. Keep 'em coming!

Thanks!

#### **Steve Anderson Writes:**

The Monrovia Association of Fine Arts will have its annual Summer Art Walk on July 30th. It will go from 7 to 10 PM on the east side of South Myrtle Ave along the 400 block. Come see all the great variety of art work along the street. Steve Anderson, the current chair of the committee, will have photographic work displayed and for sale.

# Do you know anyone who would like to become a member of the Sierra Club Camera Committee?

We are seeking new members to share their outdoor experiences and photographs. If you have a friend or acquaintance whom you feel would benefit from and add to our membership, please ask them to join us at our next meeting.

Membership only costs \$15.00 per year! A tremendous value for certain.

#### More members - More to share

CST 2087766-40. Registration as a seller of travel does not constitute approval by the State of California. All participants on Sierra Club outings are required to sign a standard liability waiver. To read the liability waiver before you participate on an outing, go to: <a href="http://www.sierraclub.org/outings/chapter/forms">http://www.sierraclub.org/outings/chapter/forms</a>

Member Announcements, continued

## Joan Schipper Writes:

#### We Want Your National Parks Photos and YOU!

We want you and your national parks photos for a Camera Committee Project. Please join us – or at least send us some images!



Several years ago a group of Camera Committee members devoted images, time and talent to create a program we titled IMAGES OF THE WEST. The program was originally conceived as an introduction of our Angeles Chapter CamCo to the New York City Sierra Club Photography Committee, but it became our introduction to the Angeles Chapter, too. The finished program included music scored just for the show and excellent narration by John Boyle. The show went to NYC and came back to travel around the LA Basin to numerous Sierra Club groups.

Now, with the National Park Service anniversary celebration in full swing, the Cam-Co leadership thinks a fresh program with a focus on National Parks would be an excellent contribution – and a fine new calling card for us. So we are calling for your best National Parks images and if they show the hand of the National Park Service more's the better. Also, we welcome all interested members who want to contribute to the production, i.e. to discuss the theme, logistics, presentation and organization of the project.

If you are interested in being involved in this effort, please contact Joan Schipper and John Boyle at CamCoNPS@gmail.com. Thanks in advance for your anticipated contributions of talent and photography.

#### Member Announcements, continued

#### Allan Der writes:

This looks like fun!

#### Announcing:

July 30th, 2016 Lonely Speck Meetup at Trona Pinnacles, California On July 30th, 2016, Lonely Speck is traveling to Trona Pinnacles National Natural Landmark in California for a night of camping and astrophotography. Wanna join us?

#### The Banning Ranch Conservancy writes:

PLEASE CLICK THE LINK BELOW FOR A VIDEO ABOUT THE BANNING RANCH INITIATIVE:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b0rYp2jtXsw&feature=youtu.be



If you have an idea for a trip that the Camera Committee might like to plan for, tell a leader. They are always open to ideas of new places to go, new places to shoot. See the end of the newsletter for a list of contact information for the leaders.

#### Dan Gee Writes:

Dear Fellow SCCC members: Your support would be greatly appreciated for my entries into "The Incredible Blue Hills Photo Contest". The Blue Hills Reservation is just outside Boston and is comprised of ~7000 acres. It is a great suburban park in the heart of the Boston metro area. I really like Ponkapoag Pond and have been shooting there for fall colors over the years.

I have submitted two entries but you are allowed to only vote once for any photographer. I think that voting closes Sept 16.

Here are the titles of my two images that were submitted:

a) Monet's Brush at Ponkapoag Pondb) Morning Fog at Sunrise, Ponkapoag Pond.

To Vote go to The Incredible Blue Hills: Photo Contest Voting Site:

#### friendsofthebluehills.org/photo-contest-voting

Friends of the Blue Hills maintains the Blue Hills Reservation's trails, helps control invasive plants, and advocates for policies that protect the park.

Here is a blurb from the state parks brochure: "The living treasures of the Blue Hills include flora, fauna and natural phenomena – from coyotes to copperheads, dogwoods to lady's slippers, and turkey vultures to dragonflies. Trails traverse upland and bottomland forests, marsh, swamp and pond edges, meadows and an Atlantic white cedar bog. A great variety of plant and animal life thrive in the diverse habitats, including several rare and endangered species in Massachusetts, such as the timber rattlesnake."

Your vote is appreciated......Dan

Monet's Brush at Pnkapoag Pond ©2016 Dan Gee, all rights reserve



Morning Fog at Sunrise, Ponkapoag Pond ©2016 Dan Gee, All Rights Reserved



#### This Month's Member Photos

© 2016 Steve Anderson, All Rights Reserved

# **Steve Anderson** A trip to the 4 Corners



Canyon De Chilly



Four Corners Petroglyphs



Pueblo Bonito

## This Month's Member Photos continued

John Nilsson



A potpori of scenes from a recent trip to Northern Arizona Canyon Country



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Buckskin Canyon

Canyon De Chilly

Lower Antelope Canyon





## This Month's Member Photos, continued

.....Basil Katsaros

Montana: Blackfoot Reservation Pow Wow.....and Timber Wolf





# This Month's Member Photos, continued





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#### This Month's Member Photos continued

©2016 Butch Mazzucca, All Rights Reserved

Butch Mazzucca......

Garden of the Gods Glacier National Park







#### This Month's Member Photos continued



Thomas Cloutier.....

Images from Olympic National Park



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# For Sale By Members

**Have:** Kodak and Fuji film, which has been refrigerated, that I want to give away. Contact Chuck Gonzales at cphotog@att.net

#### NIKON EQUIPMENT: All Professional grade Full Frame

Nikon D800e Body -	Very nice camera - sharpest Nikon made.  Perfect condition\$2,000.00
Lenses:	
Nikon AF-S Nikkor 14 -24 1.2G ED -	Workhorse professional wide angle with little distortion. Glass Perfect \$1,200.00
Nikon AF-S Nikkor 24 - 70 1.2G ED -	Professional quality mid-range zoom\$1,200.00
Nikon AF Nikkor, 50mm 1:1.8 D -	Quick focus, very sharp, compact and light
Nikon AF-S Nikkor, 28-300mm 1:3.5-5.6G	Very versitile, short and light \$600.00
Sigma (Nikon mount) 150-500mm APO DG OS Optical Stabalizer	Very sharp and fast focus \$750.00
Zeiss 50mm manual (Nikon mount)	Super well built and very sharp \$600.00
ioShutter for Canon -	Use your iPhone as a remote shutter controller! This is a really slick littlem t you'll wonder how you ever did without! Contact me and I'll go over details or see at www.ioShutter.com\$25.00
Manfroto Digital Director -	Real-Time Live View Monitoring on your iPad Air Controls Camera Functions from iPad Interactive Focus and Digital Zoom Remote Shooting Control
	Brand New, never used. Sells new for \$500.00\$350.00

Contact: John Nilsson - dtlanow@gmail.com - 970-390-7600 - I Take Credit Cards



Mancos, CO COWboy ©2016 John Nilsson, All rights reserved

#### **Leader Contacts**

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Alison Boyle, Leader, Co-Chair: Outings - 310-842-8384 alisonboyle@ca.rr.com

John Boyle, Leader, Co-Chair - 310-842-8384 midlandbp@ca.rr.com

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