

SOUTHERN APPALACHIAN



NATURE PHOTOGRAPHERS

SANP News

Sharing the Awareness of Nature
through Photography

Visit us on the web at www.sanp.net

Volume 15, Number 11

Published monthly except June and July

May 2006

May Meeting:

“Through eyes of silicon-backyard astronomy in the 21st century”

Knoxville amateur astronomer Mike Fleenor will present a program entitled “Through eyes of silicon-backyard astronomy in the 21st century.” He will display vivid celestial imagery acquired from his backyard and provide insight on how he accomplishes this feat while in the presence of menacing light pollution. He also will discuss how we can get started in astrophotography using SLRs and DSLRs.

Interested in the night sky since early childhood, Mike often dreamed of working at Kitt Peak or Mount Palomar in the American Southwest. This vision would inspire him to design and construct a robotic observatory that operates every clear night from his backyard.

He first began to photograph the night sky during the apparition of Comet Hale Bopp in 1997 using a manual SLR camera and wide angle lens. Soon after this he began experimenting with modified webcams and eventually constructed a cooled CCD camera for astronomical use. This is actually a close cousin to today’s commercial DSLRs; however, the design is optimized for low-light applications. Today he uses state-of-the-art equipment that he has built as well as off-the-shelf hardware to measure the positions and determine the physical attributes of asteroids, follow the decline of supernovae, and capture high-resolution deep space imagery.

Living in East Tenn. is far from optimum when it comes to observing the night skies. Light pollution as well as the hazy, humid conditions limit what can be accomplished. Mike discovered that the use of narrowband filters effectively mitigates the limitations of light pollution. He specializes in this technique where narrow emission line filters effectively block manmade skyglow and pass light from the object. While this is not effective with all objects, it does permit high contrast details to be captured in monochromatic light from emission nebulae in our own galaxy.

Mike’s work has been published nationally and internationally in astronomy periodicals and textbooks. His images have been used by the Space Telescope Science Institute and he has been featured in an exhibit at the Smithsonian’s National Air and Space Museum. He has recently appeared on the DIY channel’s nationally syndicated Weekend Entertaining program while filming a star party. He also has worked as a scientific imaging consultant for the US government and academia.

Mike maintains a personal website displaying some of his astronomy related work at <http://www.mikefleenor.com>. He presently works at ORNL and lives in West Knoxville with his wife, Beth, and daughters, Chloe and Olivia.

SANP Dues Are Due... Update Your Membership Now!

It is that time of year again! SANP annual dues were payable by May 1, 2006. If you missed that deadline and still want to be a member, please complete the membership application form found in this newsletter and return it to Alice Reed at the May meeting. The application and dues can also be mailed to the address on the membership application. According to the bylaws, dues shall be payable within thirty days after May 1, 2006. Dues of a new member shall be prorated to one-half the current rate if joining after December 1, 2006.

Remember: Membership Dues are payable by May 1, 2006, plus 30 days. The form, enclosed in this newsletter, should be returned to Alice Reed either at the May meeting or to the address on the form.

Sheppard CD file correction

During the Saturday Seminar session, Rob Sheppard sold some of his CDs, tapes, etc. Rob has informed us that a Quicktime file on one of the CDs was corrupted and he will put a corrected copy on his website (<http://www.robsheppardphoto.com/>) to be downloaded.

SANP Officers and Committee Chairs

| | | |
|------------------------|---------------------------|--------------|
| President | Lee Ownby | 865.690.8460 |
| Treasurer | Joyce Wilson | |
| Secretary | Margarete Ohnesorge | |
| Membership | Alice Reed | 865.481.6237 |
| Programs | Paul Hassell | |
| Newsletter | Open | |
| Workshops/Trips | Kendall Chiles | 865.693.2448 |
| Salon 2006 | Alice Reed & Bob Epperson | |
| Publicity | Open (any volunteers?) | |
| Web Site | Shawn Grant | |

Elected Board Members:

| | |
|-----------------|---------------------|
| Bill Carter | Harold Howell |
| Chuck Cole | Ron McConathy |
| Gloria Epperson | Alice Reed |
| Mark Frankel | Margarete Ohnesorge |
| Shawn Grant | Mike Williams |

The SANP Board meets monthly. If you have issues you would like the board to discuss, contact Lee Ownby, leeownby@mindspring.com.

SANP News is published monthly except June and July to provide information to members. Articles or ideas from the membership are welcome.

Newsletter Deadline: First of each month

Send submissions to **[your name in lights... who will it be?]**

SANP mailing address:

P.O. Box 32324, Knoxville, TN 37930-2324

Member News

Don't be shy! Notify the newsletter editor if you have a service to offer members, have been honored, or have achieved something noteworthy. This is your newsletter. Let others know what you have done or what you are doing in photography.

Items for Sale

Bob Epperson is having a huge photographic equipment sale (~100 items). The equipment includes photo backpacks; cases; rain hoods; tripods and extras; Canon EOS film pro level camera, lenses, and attachments; flash units; camera/lens plates; and a complete slide presentation system. Contact Bob for details at bgepperson@comcast.net or by phone at 865.577.7474.

Ron McConathy is selling a Minolta Auto Meter IIIF ambient light/flash meter. The meter is in excellent condition and comes with reflected-light and incident-light attachments, a case, strap, manual, and two batteries, all for \$69. He is also selling a ColorVision Spyder with PhotoCAL software. This Spyder will calibrate both CRT and LCD screens for accurate and consistent color. \$29. Contact Ron at 865.376.3976, mconathy@aronsha.com.

SANP Newsletter Editors Retiring

It is time to spread the joy! Sharon and I are feeling the need to relinquish the responsibility of preparing the SANP monthly newsletter. Therefore, this will be our last issue.

We thank all of you for giving us the opportunity to create the SANP newsletter for the past 4 years. Pulling together the information for each issue has been fun and challenging, but our schedule and other commitments are piling up, and we don't want the quality of the newsletter to suffer from lack of attention.

We hope you have benefitted from our mix of news about SANP meetings and activities along with other nature photography related tidbits.

Many of you have helped us by contributing to each issue. Filling the pages hasn't been that much of a problem, but it does require several hours each month to assemble and edit. Family and business commitments are making those hours more precious to us.

Therefore, it is time for someone else in SANP to step forward and put on the editor's cap. If you have been hankering to give it a try, we'll help you make the transition to a newsletter that reflects your vision, and we'll show you how to post it on the SANP web site. Less than 20 copies are snail-mailed each month.

Think of it as a chance to develop another creative outlet. The main requirement for the job is desire (along with a reasonable amount of interest in writing and some skill in WordPerfect or Word). Or perhaps your vision is an on-line newsletter done in HTML! This is a great opportunity. Don't be shy!

Contact us at 865.376.3976 or Kendall Chiles at 865.693.2448 to volunteer or to discuss the job. Change is good!

Ron McConathy

Upcoming Meetings

- **June/July:** Summer break; no meetings
- **August:** TBA

BioCommunications Association Annual Meeting in Knoxville

The BioCommunications Association, or BCA, is an international association of media professionals who create and use quality images in visual communications for teaching, documentation and presentations in the life sciences and medicine. The BCA annual meeting is in Knoxville, July 11-16, and SANP folks are invited to attend if interested. It covers several days of seminars, workshops, a juried exhibition of work, and business meetings of the association. The keynote speaker is Jim Clark, www.jimclarkphotography.com, who for the past 30 years has been an award-winning nature photographer, writer, speaker, and instructor. He has focused his efforts exploring two unique regions: The Allegheny Highlands of his home state of West Virginia and the fabled Eastern Shore of coastal Maryland and Virginia. Jim is a past president of NANPA. On July 16th Bill Fortney, Nikon Professional Services and past SANP member, will lead a full day field trip to the Smokies.

Go to the BCA web site at www.bca.org for more information.

Still Photography in National Parks

The following information was contained in an email from the North American Nature Photography Association (NANPA) to its members. On April 14, 2006, the National Park Service issued a press release announcing the implementation of legislation relating to fees for commercial filming and still photography. Unfortunately, the press release was vague and caused an uproar among nature photographers who did not understand the implications. NANPA talked with a knowledgeable official of the National Park Service and reported the following:

The rules are not being changed concerning still photography. Federal legislation (Public Law 106-206), which has been on the books for several years, provides that the Park Service cannot require a permit or assess a fee for still photography if the photography takes place where members of the public are generally allowed and the photography does not involve models or props which are not a part of the site's natural or cultural resources or administrative facilities.

The Park Service is not proposing to require permits for this kind of still photography and, indeed, the Park Service could not legally do so because it would be in violation of the federal statute.

The reason that this is all coming up now is that Public Law 106-206 does provide for permits and fees for motion picture and video photography and the Park Service is now implementing those permits and fees.

So go out to the National Parks and shoot. So long as you are shooting the landscape and the local wildlife at times at which and from places where members of the public are generally allowed, fees and permits cannot be imposed.

The above is not wording that Park Service personnel will salute. Carry a copy of applicable parts of Public Law 106-206 with you if you are concerned that a Park Ranger will question your ability to photograph in a National Park. Based on conversations with other nature photographers this is not a common problem, but there have been isolated cases where still photographers who look professional have been asked about permits. Live and photograph by SANP's "Guidelines for Ethical Nature Photography" and you should be OK.

Maximizing Digital Exposure

A good article titled "Maximizing S/N Ratio in Digital Photography" can be found at www.luminous-landscape.com/tutorials/expose-right.shtml. This is a great discussion on using the histogram to maximize digital images. All digital photographers should read this and apply its information to their photography.

Calling All SANP Members with Web Sites

Many of us now have personal or photography-related websites. Some are designed to offer services and/or products; others may simply offer information.

One service we can offer each other is to provide links from our sites to yours. If you are interested in including links to sites of other like-minded individuals, send the URL of your site, particularly your "Related Links" page, to mconathy@aronsa.com and we'll compile a list that we'll share with all who respond.

The more web sites that provide links to your site, the higher your ranking will be in the search engines. Plus people visiting your site will have a chance to visit other sites you recommend. It's a win-win situation all the way around.

Let us hear from you!

EXPAND YOUR PHOTOGRAPHIC HORIZONS!

A good web site focused on photographs of the sky can be found at <http://www.missouriskies.org>. This month's meeting is focused on astrophotography, or things beyond our planet. The Missouri Skies website looks at the interface between the land and space. SANP tends to focus on photographing things occurring on the earth's surface. By being a scenic photographer, looking at the Missouri Skies website, and attending the May meeting you can admire photographs of almost everything in the universe. Impressive!

Comparisons of Digital and Film

The Luminous Landscape website has another good article titled "The Great Luminous Landscape 2006 State-of-The-Art Shootout."

Four professional photographers set up a test using their own equipment and time. They looked at state-of-the-art digital 35mm and digital medium format compared to drum-scanned 4x5 Velvia film. They found that state-of-the-art digital and film images are, for practical purposes, equivalent. Read the short article and view their example images, and prepare to be amazed.

<http://www.luminous-landscape.com/essays/back-testing.shtml>

Southern Appalachian Nature Photographers Membership Form Due May 1, 2006

The Southern Appalachian Nature Photographers (S.A.N.P.) fiscal year ends April 30th of each year. Membership dues for the period of **May 1, 2006 to April 30, 2007** are **payable now**.

Please complete this form with your name(s), mailing address, phone number(s), email address, and membership category. Make your **check payable to SANP** and return your check along with this completed form to:

Southern Appalachian Nature Photographers
ATTN: Alice Reed
102 Capital Circle
Oak Ridge, TN 37830

If you have any questions concerning membership renewal, please contact Alice Reed at 865-481-6237.

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

Home Phone: (____) _____ **Work Phone:** (____) _____

Email Address: _____

_____ **Full Membership** **\$25.00 Annually**
For one person having full privileges of the club and one vote.

_____ **Family Membership** **\$35.00 Annually**
For all members of a family residing together (or away at school).
All family members having full privileges of the club and two votes.

_____ **Student Membership** **\$12.50 Annually**
For one person, attending any accredited school, having full
privileges of the club and one vote.

_____ **Associate Membership** **\$20.00 Annually**
For a business wishing to support the club. Privileges are limited
to monthly meetings and no vote.

_____ **Non-Resident Membership** **\$12.50 Annually**
For one person living over 100 miles from Knoxville having full
privileges of the club and one vote.

_____ **Family Non-Resident Membership** **\$17.50 Annually**
For families residing together over 100 miles from Knoxville having
full privileges of the club and two votes.

New Membership: If joining after December 1, dues are half price.

| | | |
|--------------------|--------------------|------------------|
| New Member: No Yes | Check/Cash: | Badge: |
| Date Rcvd: | Gave to Treasurer: | Membership List: |
| Rcvd How: | Notify Newsletter: | Changes: |

Southern Appalachian Nature Photographers

P.O. Box 32324

Knoxville, TN 37930-2324

In This Issue

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- **Newsletter editors are retiring: This is your big chance! Volunteer!**
- **Still Photography in National Parks**
- **Used Equipment for Sale**

Southern Appalachian Nature Photographers is a nonprofit organization dedicated to “Sharing the Awareness of Nature through Photography.” The club meets the last Tuesday of every month except June, July, and December at the First United Methodist Church on Kingston Pike in Knoxville at 6:30 p.m. for social time and 7 for the program. Visitors are welcome!