

Photography West Board Meeting
September 11, 2017

Board Members Present:

President: Patricia Casey
Treasurer: Bernardine Ginsberg
VP of Education: Tom Williams (by FaceTime)
Secretary: Ron Appelbaum
President Ex-officio: John Obradovitch
Member at Large: Gerry Rosen

Absent:

VP of Operations: Greg Swinney

Guests:

Larry Tannenbaum
Barbara Freedman

The President called the meeting to order at 3:28.

The minutes were approved as submitted and posted on the website.

Financial Report: \$11,283.70 in checking and \$10,146.72 in savings for a total of \$21,430.42.

Committee Reports:

Tech Committee: Greg Swinney is out of the country. Patricia indicated that a new light switch was put in the training room so all lights can be out when judging. The air conditioning vents have been modified so that people are not freezing.

Ron said that there is not an e-blast anymore when the Focus is out. The Board felt that we should be notified when the new one is on line. Patricia said that Lois Van Reese was supposed to be handling the e-blasts, but she has moved. We need a replacement. We felt that when the Focus is completed an e-blast should be sent out. Barbara Freedman said that Al Licause might be someone who can handle e-blasts.

Some people have suggested that there be periodic contests for photos taken with cell phones. It should be brought before the competition chairs (Beth Tewhill and Bob West). Tom suggested a separate category for cell phone photos which might get more people involved in competitions.

Five people have signed up so far for the Chile and Argentina trip. We found out that a bus company that was contacted wants \$1,100 per day for the bus and driver. Overnight trips we would need to pay for the driver's lodging. The Board felt that the cost was prohibitive. We will probably do car pool trips. Bernie said there was a new travel agency that was listed in Grand Season magazine. She will see if she still has the magazine.

Treasurer: Bernie brought up the budget. She would like input before the October Board meeting. Patricia said that we might want to look at getting a new TV and 3 new Apple computers. Also our connection to the internet is too slow for some of the applications that we use.

Education Committee: Tom Williams said we might want to see about negotiating with the computer club a few times a year for specialized training before we should proceed on changing our internet.

The bulk of our members who are taking courses have been in the club one or two years before going into the mentor program. We have just a few instructors who teach year after year. He liked the course where there was a field trip to Tucson. Maybe we should have a meeting of Masters people to see what courses would be of interest to them. What about having a contracted instructor coming in. Tom said we need more engagement from our membership. Perhaps manufacturers coming in.

Tom wrote a paper regarding training which follows:

THE EDUCATION FUNCTION AT PHOTOGRAPHY WEST DISCUSSION PAPER, FALL, 2017

A cursory look at the number of registrants for workshops and education activities in the Photography West Club suggests that we have a healthy vibrant program. Certainly, the last Club year was a bumper year for classes. But a Board's function is to look to the future, identify trends, opportunities and potential problem areas. The purpose of this paper is to provide a framework for such a review over the next 15 months.

Toward a framework for workshops and education activities

*In the period from October 2016 to May 2017 the Club offered over **** workshops serving more than %%% registrants. This is indeed a high number of educational offerings for a volunteer photo club. Last year, while the subject content of our core offerings for inexperienced photographers remained relatively the same as in previous years, there was a dramatic increase in other new subject matter offered to the Club members. While it is to be hoped that these newer offerings will not be simply 'one of' types of courses, there is no guarantee they will continue. New subject matter offerings emanate from two sources-instructor suggestions and student requests. They are more serendipitous than the result of a clearly defined plan and they should continue to be encouraged. However, it is a concern that there is currently no formal Club framework or plan for our education offerings. Thus, the education component of the Club is not in a position to provide guidance to the Board on either operating budget needs or future capital needs. Similarly it does not provide members with any plan under which they might plan for their own development as photographers.*

Organizationally, it makes sense to have our educational activities be the product of a combination of a Board longer term plan supplemented by education initiatives that come from other sources.

Our programing is largely the result of what we have done in the past, updated as best we can on an annual or sometimes even monthly basis. The Club has not had a proactive plan for core offerings with the result that our education offerings tend to be put together in an annual, ad hoc fashion.

*Fundamentally, this is because the Club is totally dependent on a volunteer base of instructors who are usually identified only weeks before the workshop activity is scheduled. While this works (and causes immeasurable stress for the Club's Education Coordinator), it has several major drawbacks to **both** students and instructors. 1) the Club is unable to 'advise' potential registrants much in advance when they might plan their schedule to enroll in courses on any given topic and 2) when the Education Coordinator attempts to respond to pent up student demand, she/he usually is constrained by time limitations to contact instructors who have offered the course **previously**. This staffing process has 2 costs;*

i) we really are reaching a crisis of instructor burnout as we have over-used a small group of dedicated instructors for several years running and

ii) we simply have not begun to develop any 'bench strength' or a new instructor base. This means that we are living on borrowed time with our currently overused instructor group and we are not benefiting from the infusion of new program ideas that a small group of new instructors might bring. (this is in no way a criticism of the expertise or commitment of those current, often over used instructors. It simply reflects the reality that any teaching activity benefits from the periodic infusion of new expertise, and instructional modes). The early identification and introduction of new instructors could allow the new people to potentially work together with experienced instructors thus building in continuity. It is difficult to begin this approach to using the Club's deep expertise base without the existence of a plan or framework of educational activities (longer than weeks!).

Recommendations:

- 1) that in 2017/18 the Club develop a rolling multi-year **plan** of core course offerings that is published annually to the membership. This framework of basic offerings can be supplemented as appropriate with new workshops and activities or, additional sections of current options if enrolment dictates.
- 2) that in 2017/18 the Club address the issue of instructor burnout and the need to identify/recruit/train and develop a new group of instructors to be used in future years. This process needs to begin asap and should start with a meeting of our key instructors to solicit their ideas and advice.

Our programing should and will always have a core of workshops, largely oriented toward inexperienced photographers. As we have expanded our offerings, there is now a need to rationalize the **course content** of those core offerings. Informal feedback suggests that students often experience either considerable repetition or, content gaps as they progress from workshop to workshop. The Club needs to address this issue in its core offerings.

Recommendations:

- 3) that in 2017/18 the Club identify groups of either core workshops or, sequenced workshops with a view toward developing **minimum** curricula content to be covered in each workshop. This process should involve recent instructors and/or others with expertise in this area.
- 4) that in 2017/18 the Club consider identifying prerequisites for courses with more advanced content.

Modernizing the delivery of photography education; perhaps a move toward the twentieth century?

Most of us recognize from our working life that the delivery of instruction in any organization, be it a public institution or private, has changed dramatically in the last few decades. There has been an explosion in new ways to provide adult learning activities to students of **all** experience levels. It is sobering that one has only to look at the education offerings of our photo club to see that we really haven't progressed very far in the ways we deliver instruction. The model used in the vast majority of our offerings is a small classroom group (with the size of the group dictated by the classroom's dimensions and/or hardware) faced by an instructor with a white board or projection screen. (In all probability, this reflects the way in which most of the members of our generation were taught in grade school. The reality is that there have been incredible strides in the delivery of instruction that are both more effective and more efficient). While there certainly remains a place for this dominant approach, we can't in all good conscience continue to ignore new ways to deliver or complement instruction to our members. Developments in the last few decades clearly indicate that there are more effective ways for people to learn in an applied field such as photography than solely through the 'talking head' model. Rather, we should learn from the experience of corporate and/or government agency trainers that very simple changes to our instruction model that link in class instruction with supervised

practical application sessions result in much improved learning for students. There is ample research evidence to suggest that in applied learning fields, such as photography, a blend of classroom and in field, applied settings is a far more effective way for students to learn. (Although done on a much more intensive basis, our flagship mentor/ mentee program uses this 'newer ' approach). Moving in this direction is overdue. The move will require Board leadership and, it must be done with sensitivity. It could be introduced initially to a meeting of our instructors explaining what we are trying to achieve and simply asking them to consider ways in which they might work with their students not just in a classroom session but also in an applied setting where the students have the opportunity to use and practice the skills that they learned in the classroom. (it must be recognized that this approach has costs; it requires more instructor time and more learner time. But if there is sufficient lead-time for both instructors and learners to plan their schedules, this should not be an insurmountable hurdle.)

Recommendation

5) that in 2017/18, the Club work with a volunteer group of our instructors to explore ways in which they might introduce an applied or field component into their courses. All instructors should be encouraged to at least consider this as well. This emphasis should be incorporated into a revamped set of guidelines to be provided to all of our instructors.

Recommendation

6) that the Club encourage the development of more field based course work such as the Tucson workshop offered in 2016.

The Club has countless retired education professionals in our membership who could provide guidance on new teaching approaches we should consider. We also have well placed members in photography-oriented organizations that are well known for their education offerings-PSA, Arizona Highways and others. We need to learn from those organizations what works for them and how we might learn from what they do and possibly even leverage their resources.

Recommendation

7) that in 2017/18 the Club begin to investigate the possibility of having some of our programing delivered electronically. Recommendation 8) that we explore the possibility of joint programing with some of our sister ACCC members.

(Both of these last 2 recommendations may be particularly suited to some of our master photographers who are currently very underserved by our program offerings).

All of the recommendations in this working paper require Board commitment and profile. (Interestingly, these recommendations initially require no significant financial resources). They do require something much scarcer-considerable person power from the membership.

It is proposed that this paper and its proposals be discussed at an early Board meeting with the results being presented to the membership at one of the Friday meetings.

Gerry Rosen: We should have more new member orientation meetings. Maybe whenever we have about 20 new members we could have such a meeting.

Patricia Casey: Rik Scairpon is taking care of renewing the website. We need to find someone who can work with Java Script to help with the website.

Our next meeting is scheduled for October 9th.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:42.

Submitted by:

/s/ Ron Appelbaum

Ron Appelbaum, Secretary