

# THROUGH THE LENS

Great People and Great Images Since 1988

Website: [www.arlingtoncameraclub.org](http://www.arlingtoncameraclub.org)

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Vol. 22, Issue 6  
March 2010

## President's Comments



### *Calling All Photographers!*

Spring is in the air, I think I saw a robin!!!

Our next meeting, March 3, will feature Bill Skinner presenting his program on portrait and lighting photography. We realize that some of our 85 members are still snow-birding it in warmer locations, but it would be great seeing more of our members at this program. Our new location does seat 100+ people so there is plenty of room to spread out and enjoy the evening.

Also, in the past the camera club has been asked to volunteer our time and expertise photographing the various parades

and programs the Village of Arlington Heights has during the summer. Even though we **have not** been officially asked, please mark your calendars for the following dates:

- ☀ Memorial Day Parade - This is a great opportunity to work on your people and dog photography.
- ☀ Frontier Days (July 1-July 5) - Last year we spent an evening out photographing night action. During the days we were asked to photograph the different games and activities.
- ☀ Arlington Heights Garden Walk (July 11, we would photograph **July 10**) - Want to practice your flower shots along with getting some great gardening/landscaping ideas? Then this is the one for you.

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### March 2010

#### 3 Program

*Bill Skinner - Lighting and Portraits*

#### 17 Program

*Scanning and Restoring Old Photos*

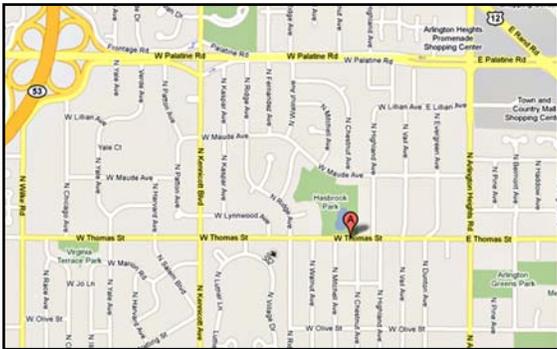
**Officers and Committee Chairs**

Bill Kruser	Co-President	<a href="mailto:co-president@arlingtoncameraclub.org">co-president@arlingtoncameraclub.org</a>
Cindy Kuffel	Co-President	<a href="mailto:co-president@arlingtoncameraclub.org">co-president@arlingtoncameraclub.org</a>
Norm Plummer	V.P. Programs & Workshops	<a href="mailto:vpprograms@arlingtoncameraclub.org">vpprograms@arlingtoncameraclub.org</a>
Carol Arnolde	V.P. Competition	<a href="mailto:vpcompetition@arlingtoncameraclub.org">vpcompetition@arlingtoncameraclub.org</a>
Cathie Berner	Treasurer	<a href="mailto:treasurer@arlingtoncameraclub.org">treasurer@arlingtoncameraclub.org</a>
Bill Kruser	Membership Chair	<a href="mailto:membership@arlingtoncameraclub.org">membership@arlingtoncameraclub.org</a>
Kent Wilson	Special Events Chair	<a href="mailto:specialevents@arlingtoncameraclub.org">specialevents@arlingtoncameraclub.org</a>
Roy Matcke	Chief Judge	<a href="mailto:chiefjudge@arlingtoncameraclub.org">chiefjudge@arlingtoncameraclub.org</a>
Diana Jacobson	PSA Representative	<a href="mailto:psarep@arlingtoncameraclub.org">psarep@arlingtoncameraclub.org</a>
Diana Jacobson	Newsletter	<a href="mailto:newsletter@arlingtoncameraclub.org">newsletter@arlingtoncameraclub.org</a>
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Bill Kruser	Arlington-In-Pictures	<a href="mailto:arlingtoninpictures@arlingtoncameraclub.org">arlingtoninpictures@arlingtoncameraclub.org</a>
Joe Beuchel	Webmaster	<a href="mailto:webmaster@arlingtoncameraclub.org">webmaster@arlingtoncameraclub.org</a>
Kathy Wessels	Yahoo! Group Site	<a href="mailto:yahoogroups@arlingtoncameraclub.org">yahoogroups@arlingtoncameraclub.org</a>

**ACC meets at the Christian Church of Arlington Heights, 333 W. Thomas Avenue, three blocks west of Arlington Heights Road, across from Hasbrook Park on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of the month, September through the 1st Wednesday in June. Meetings start at 7:30 p.m.**

**ACC Mailing Address:**

126 E. Wing Street, Suite 242  
Arlington Heights, IL 60004



**Coming in March**

April 7 - Competition  
Open to All Paid Members - Guests  
Welcome

April 21  
Digital Competition and Critique

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**President's Comments** (cont'd from p.1)

☀ Irish Fest (July 16 and 17) - This is just a fun event to photograph. There is continuous live Irish music, step dancers, pipe bands, great food and drink, and also vendors selling anything Irish. There is also a "Best Legs in Kilt" competition and raffle.

Keep watching our newsletter and website for more information.

*Cindy and Bill*



**MARCH TREATS**

March 3      Larry Arends  
                  Patty Colabuono

March 17



ACC Eagle Outing

Photographic Society of America  
72nd International Conference of Photography



Charleston, South Carolina  
October 3 - 9, 2010

*Arlington*  
Camera Club, inc.  
Since 1988.



## ACC Competition Results - February 2010

### **Slides - All Classes**

Diana Jacobson	Blacktail Pond Overlook	23 pts.	AW	SOM
Diana Jacobson	Notom-Bullfrog Road	22 pts.	AW	
Bill Ditman	El Capitan Emerging	21 pts.	HM	
Bill Ditman	Sequoia Red	21 pts.	HM	

### **Small Monochrome Prints - All Classes**

Ken Olsen	Petersen's Barn	23 pts.	AW	
Carol Arnolde	Pretty Fred	23 pts.	AW	
Patrick Grady	Tree Growing on Rock	21 pts.	AW	
Walter Hoffman	Door and Window	22 pts.	HM	
Ken Olsen	Wagon Shop in Winter	21 pts.	HM	
Larry Arends	A Detailed Staircase	21 pts.	HM	

### **Large Monochrome Prints - Class B**

Patrick Grady	Hidden Lake	23 pts.	AW	MPOM
Michele Thrane	The Cook	22 pts.	HM	

### **Small Color Prints - All Classes**

Kent Wilson	Butter Butt	25 pts.	AW	
Michele Thrane	Small Blue Heron	24 pts.	AW	
Jeanne Garrett	Muscovy Duck	24 pts.	AW	
Barrie Burr	Normandy Beach	23 pts.	AW	
Joe Beuchel	You Looking at Me?	23 pts.	AW	
Kent Wilson	Bluebird and Redbuds	23 pts.	HM	
Norm Plummer	Yellow Finch	23 pts.	HM	
Judie Reynolds	Spanish Church	22 pts.	HM	
Kathy Grady	Study in Green	22 pts.	HM	
Carol Arnolde	Japanese Garden	22 pts.	HM	

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## ACC Competition Results - February 2010 *(cont'd)*

### ***Large Color Prints - All Classes***

Kent Wilson	Watching	26 pts.	AW	POM
Larry Arends	Cold Wind	23 pts.	AW	
Stan Humienny	Jordan Lake - Acadia	23 pts.	AW	
Norm Plummer	Statue in the Garden	22 pts.	AW	
Kent Wilson	Taking a Break	24 pts.	HM	
Patrick Grady	Zion Box Canyon	22 pts.	HM	
Kathy Grady	Saint Mary Lake	22 pts.	HM	
Nancy St. Clair	Blue and White Tile	21 pts.	HM	

## ACC Digital Competition Results - February 2010

### ***Monochrome Prints - All Classes***

Judie Reynolds	Sleight Tracks	22 pts.	AW	DPI MPOM
Jim Beck	Flying Egret	22 pts.	HM	

### ***Color Prints - All Classes***

Carol Arnolde	Yellow "S"	22 pts.	AW	DPI CPOM
Judie Reynolds	Tango Silhouette	21 pts.	AW	
Joanne Trahanas	Peruvian Women	22 pts.	HM	
Jim Beck	Ding Darling Egret #2	21 pts.	HM	



# So What's With The Blurry Pictures!

by Joanne Trahanas

Many of you have heard of the Lensbaby and may wonder what the attraction is, while others of you may have heard about these lenses and wondered if they and their optic swap system might offer you interesting, creative options. Whatever your opinion, one thing you should know is that these lenses are not easy, and they are not just about blurry pictures. They are a challenge to learn and use, but they are also lightweight, less expensive, and FUN! What they are not are lenses accompanied by much instructional information, so it is a lot of experimentation and practice, practice, practice.

So what is a Lensbaby? Well, it's a line of three camera lenses that combine a simple lens with a bellows or ball and socket mechanism for use in special-effect photography. The lens can be manipulated to move the sharpest area of focus (called the "sweet spot") to almost anywhere in the frame. So the important part of the subject is fairly sharp with

everything else out of focus, even if it is the same distance from the camera. Another fun aspect is the interchangeable aperture discs ranging from f2.8 to f22, as well as the special optic swap system with six different optics to fit your style. Finally, Lensbaby offers five accessories including the +4 and +10 macro, the telephoto, wide angle, and super wide angle lenses, and their latest step-up shade, which allows the use of filters.

So if we've peaked your interest, check out the photo gallery on [www.lensbaby.com](http://www.lensbaby.com), listen to Podcast #30 on [7photographyquestions.com](http://7photographyquestions.com), or Podcast #202 on Martin Bailey's [www.martinbaileyphotography.com](http://www.martinbaileyphotography.com). You might just find out that these lenses take you down a new path that can be challenging, creative, and lots of FUN!

Below are some pictures of ACC members experimenting with the Lensbaby.



# On Composition

by Walter Hoffman

I see Will Clay is scheduled to do a presentation this spring on Advanced Composition. This is one I need because this is where I'm stuck and I bet I'm not alone. My prints are technically somewhere between good to really good. However, they often are missing what Pat Wadecki called "the WOW factor." You can hit that factor with probably a bunch of things like color or contrast but I think you will always miss without strong composition

Having admitted I am composition challenged, I should be embarrassed to further admit I have read a few books and can't recall what some pretty good authors have written on pictorial composition. Nevertheless, I have generally retained what they said and think it is worth sharing. I wish I knew who wrote the following but since I don't, I have to summarize it so we don't get in trouble.

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Graphic elements combine to create a visual structure which we will call composition. That suffices. That's useful. But, while it's useful to settle this, it would also be useful not to settle this issue definitively. The tension set up by continuing to consider all of the ambiguities, contradictions, connections, and unanswered questions will lead to some marvelous insights. For this very reason, you should settle on your own working definition. Then continue to refine it. Because, rather than settling it definitively, by continuing to work with the question you'll benefit even more.

### ***Isolate the Variables***

Everything is composition. It involves all the physical elements we see when looking at images. Some of the elements of design include point, line, plane, shape, size, volume, color, and texture. Consider whether other dimensions exist in and of themselves or are they

instead produced by a relationship of already existing elements, such as position, space, and orientation. Some important dimensions may even arise through psychological attributions, such as weight.

The complexity of composition is sometimes hard to grapple with. However, we can make this task manageable by isolating each element. Study and practice it. Understand it thoroughly. Explore how each of the elements interacts with and potentially modifies the effects of the others. Then begin to explore the relationship each element has to other elements of composition; how it impacts and is impacted by other factors. This will increase our sensitivity to all of the elements involved. When studying each element for the first time try to be precise and concrete with maximum objectivity and minimum subjectivity

Systematic thinking is useful. There's a time to be concrete with maximum objectivity and minimum subjectivity. After your initial explorations, incorporate your personal subjective reactions into your thinking and process. Develop a relationship with your material. While we all deal with the same issues, your relationship to them will be different from others'. The goal is not to solve the problem like a mathematical equation, coming up with the same answer every time, but to deepen your understanding of the issues so that you can make your work stronger on every level.

### ***Fundamentals***

We often take the fundamentals for granted. Having worked with them unconsciously you may miss opportunities to refine and strengthen these aspects of your work with more conscious efforts. It can take distilling visual challenges to their most essential to focus intensely on a single element in order to strengthen it. This work is rewarding for any

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## **On Composition (cont'd)**

visual communicator at any stage. The complexity and order of activity may vary with development, but the fundamentals of the challenge will remain the same.

### ***Keep It Simple***

Put these principles into action through exercises. Intellectual understanding is a very different thing than internalizing the information well enough to act on it, sometimes without thinking. Keep the language of your thinking on this subject simple. Simplicity makes things memorable. Simplicity makes things useful. In the sciences simplicity is often seen as a sign of greater probability of correctness and along with this there is often an attempt to move from the particular to more universal principles. The same attitude works well in the arts. Simplicity is very different than taking a simplistic attitude towards things. A simplistic approach can be adopted instantly by taking a casual or even uninterested stance to a subject or issue. On the other hand, it takes a lot of work to make complex subjects simple. And, it takes experience (discovery, action, reaction) to see and feel deeply about things that at first seem simple but ultimately are profound. The ability to do these things is often seen as a sign of mastery.

### ***Principles of Visual Dynamics***

An orator can speak more effectively with an understanding of grammatical rules and conventions than without an understanding of them. It's the same for anyone who makes visual statements. Verbal language is composed of elements, principles, concepts, and conventions. The same can be said of visual language. A designer can work without consciously understanding the foundations of visual language, but his or her work will be stronger with an understanding of them. An understanding of these foundations is not a substitute for either inspiration or passion.

When this material is truly understood it enables greater discovery of one and expression of the other. It fuels the fires.

If you like rules, remember exceptions prove the rules. Being too insistent on the application of hard and fast rules can blind you to many exceptional opportunities. If you don't like rules, remember that while there are no absolutes there are forces at work that have consistent tendencies. Denying or ignoring universal principles will lead to unpredictable unrepeatable results; you'll achieve success far less frequently and be far less able to repeat your successes.

Forget rules. Forget absolutes. Forget musts. Rather, develop an awareness of visual principles. Look for the unique power each element has to influence a composition. Develop a sensitivity to how each element and combination of elements make the forces at work in a composition stronger or weaker. Instead of composing by formula, you'll then be able to improvise. Understanding the principles of visual dynamics will help make your decision making process more informed, it will not make choices for you. Awareness is the key. Better awareness brings better choices bringing better results.

### ***Photographic Composition***

Photographic composition deals with all of the same elements as any other two-dimensional image making process, but has additional considerations that are specific to the medium. Painters "synthesize" while photographers "select." The great photographic historian John Szarkowski rendered more clearly an important distinction with respect to photographic composition by this choice of words. Not everything a painter renders in a single composition was before his or her eye at one time and it may not be rendered exactly as seen. The opposite is true for us photographers. Painters can

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## On Composition (cont'd)

choose to render elements indistinctly or not to render them at all, while photographers must use frame, angle of view, or exposure (brightness or duration) to subdue or eliminate elements. Photographers deal with what can be an overwhelming balance of concerns that extend beyond composition to include time constraints and changing conditions. We often have to grapple with what to leave out of an image or if we can leave something out of an image.

Like any art, the art of photography is in many respects the art of compromise. Because photography does so much, because everything within the frame is typically included in the final composition, the compositions it generates are often not ideal. I think this means that before you release the shutter you have to ask yourself if this is the best composition possible. If not, what compromises are you making and are they the best compromises available to you?

## Adorama Learning Center

*by Diana Jacobson*

Have you checked out the Adorama website lately? If not, you may be missing out on some very useful tips and tutorials. Adorama has a section of their website called the "Adorama Learning Center" which has a lot of useful information - for free. If you are interested in HDR, take a look at their tutorial "Basic HDR with Photomatix". Just go to their website

([www.adorama.com](http://www.adorama.com)), click on the Adorama Learning Center, go to the section with techniques and how-tos, click on "Digital Darkroom" and you will find the HDR (along with some other interesting subjects) tutorial. After reading the tutorial, I was encouraged to try a little HDR myself - now all I have to do is purchase the Photomatix software.



"The mystery isn't in the technique, it's in each of us."

*Harry Callahan*

"When your mouth drops open, click the shutter."

*Harold Feinstein*

"I've been doing a series of spirals. You know how it is with us artists. We take one idea, and then beat it half to death."

*Stu Jenks*

"When you photograph people in color, you are photographing their clothes. When you photograph them in B&W, you photograph their souls"

*Ted Grant*

"The limitations of photography are in yourself, for what we see is only what we are"

*Ernst Haas*

## ACC Photography Displays

by Carol Arnolde and Michele Thrane

During the month of February we had a framed wall display and a small cabinet display at the Ela Area Public Library in Lake Zurich. The woman who oversees the display for the library commented that our display was "amazing" and that we had some very talented photographers. How nice to hear her kind and encouraging words. Thank you to all the members who brought their images and helped set up the displays that night. We have great support in our Club.

Our next display will be at the Arlington Heights Village Hall and will be shown there for four

months. Again, this is a framed exhibit and most every members has an image on display. Showing our images in the Village Hall is an honor and a privilege, so thanks to all of you who submitted your JPEG image and brought your photos to be hung. Be sure to tell your friends and family to stop by the Village Hall and see for themselves your beautiful work.

Thank you again for your support and for sharing your hobby with the surrounding communities.



### *Happy Birthday!*

Kent Wilson	March 7
Jim Nordin	March 18
Nate Silvers	March 29
Norm Plummer	March 30



## Ask Tim Grey

[www.timgrey.com](http://www.timgrey.com)

*Question: Regarding a recent question on split grads, you recommend a 2-shot technique with a blend. Could you explain how to properly use "Blend If" for this? I have never been quite able to figure it out, and it seems it would be a good tool to use.*

Answer: The technique you refer to is one of those that makes for a remarkably cool demo, and that is quite incredible when it actually works. The problem is, with the vast majority of situations you'll run into it simply won't provide a good solution.

The concept here is relatively straightforward. Using the Blend If sliders, you can hide pixels from an image layer so the pixels on an underlying layer are revealed. That blending occurs based on tonal values, so that for example you can hide all of the brightest pixels in an image to reveal the not-as-bright pixels in that area in the underlying image. The problem is that often you'll find the brightest pixels aren't entirely in the area you want to hide. For example, let's assume you have a scene with a relatively high dynamic range, and you want to take two captures (one optimized for the brightest areas, one optimized for the darkest areas) and blend them together. This particular scene happens to be a relatively dark foreground scene with a very bright sky. So in theory, you could put the image optimized for the dark areas on top, and then hide the bright sky from that image in order to reveal the darker sky from the underlying image.

The problem is, just because an area is bright in the top image doesn't mean you necessarily want to hide all those pixels to reveal what is on the layer below. In other words, you can't always isolate areas of the image you want to blend based purely on the tonality of the individual pixels. I've found very few real-world situations where this technique works.

In response to your specific question, I can indeed explain how to actually perform this task, now that I've helped set realistic expectations.

The first step is to get the two images into the same document and in perfect alignment so you can actually perform the blend. If you're using Photoshop

CS4 you can select both images in Bridge and choose Tools > Photoshop > Load Files into Photoshop Layers from the menu. For prior versions you can open both images and use the Move tool to drag one image into the other, holding the Shift key after you start dragging so the image you drag will be centered in the destination document. This assumes, of course, that you captured both exposures from a tripod so they will properly align. If they're not in alignment you can reduce the Opacity for the top layer and move it around to get it into the best position (you'll later need to crop the image if you need to shift the images around to get them aligned).

Once the two layers are aligned, double-click on the thumbnail for the top layer on the Layers panel to bring up the Layer Style dialog box with the Blending Options section active. Near the bottom of the dialog box you'll find the Blend If sliders. The top one (This Layer) allows you to block pixels from the current (upper) image based on luminosity, and the bottom one (Underlying Layer) allows you to reveal pixels from the underlying layer based on luminosity on that layer. To hide pixels from the top layer and reveal those below, drag the black slider for This Layer if you want to hide the dark areas, and the white slider if you want to hide the bright areas. Set the slider to the best position you can based on the effect within the image. Then you need to apply some "feathering" of the transition. Hold the Alt key (Option key on Macintosh) and click on one half of the slider you adjusted to drag it away from the rest of the slider. This will cause a transition between the pixels that are hidden and those that are not, resulting in some partially visible pixels.

Fine-tune the two sliders (each half of the original slider) to achieve the best result, and click OK when you're finished. If you ever need to refine the results, you can double-click on the thumbnail for the layer on the Layers panel

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[www.timgrey.com](http://www.timgrey.com)*

## ACC Calendar

September 2, 2008	Program with Alan Kaleta. Long-time local photojournalist Alan Kaleta shares some of his recent work.
September 16, 2008	Composition by Will Clay. Professional nature photographer Will Clay specializes in large and intimate views of the American landscape in all seasons. He is the sole photographer of 11 books and a contributor to Digest, Outdoor Photographer and Sierra Club.
October 7, 2008	Competition -- Open to all paid members. Please arrive early so that your entries can be registered. Competition begins at 7:15.
October 21, 2008	Critique Workshop -- We will discuss photos from the October competition with an eye toward improving them or learning why they work.
November 4, 2008	Lou Nettlehorst: Adding Pizzazz to your photographs. Lou returns with a newly updated program on Adding Pizzazz - Photoshop Not Required. He explores creative techniques that can be used in the field rather than on the computer such as multiple exposures, montages through glass, and enhancing natural subjects.
November 18, 2008	Pizzazz Workshop - We'll bring in lights and props so you can practice some of the techniques that Lou showed us in the previous program. Feel free to bring your own props too!
December 2, 2008	Competition -- Open to all paid members. Please arrive early so that your entries can be registered. Competition begins at 7:15.
December 16, 2008	Critique Workshop -- We will discuss photos from the December competition with an eye toward improving them or learning why they work. <b>Holiday Party Too!</b>
January 6, 2009	Erwin Barrington - Enhancing your photos for competition using PhotoShop Elements. Also tips for mounting your photos for competition.
January 20, 2009	Mike Hohol - All about photobooks - resources, choosing a vendor, building you book and much more!
February 3, 2009	Competition -- Open to all paid members. Please arrive early so that your entries can be registered. Competition begins at 7:15.
February 17, 2009	<b>Digital Competition: Please submit your images prior to the meeting. Critique Workshop -- We will discuss photos from the October competition with an eye toward improving them or learning why they work.</b>
<b>March 3, 2009</b>	<b>Bill Skinner - Lighting and Portraits</b>
<b>March 17, 2009</b>	<b>Scanning and Restoring Old Photos</b>
April 7, 2009	Competition -- Open to all paid members. Please arrive early so that your entries can be registered. Competition begins at 7:15.
April 21, 2009	Digital Competition: Please submit your images prior to the meeting. Critique Workshop -- We will discuss photos from the April competition with an eye toward improving them or learning why they work.
May 5, 2009	Will Clay - Advanced Composition - the follow-up to his September 16 presentation. Don't miss this event!
May 19, 2009	TBA
June 2, 2009	End of Year Competition and Election of Officers

# Members Gallery



*Normandy Beach*  
by Barrie Burr



*Japanese Garden*  
by Carol Arnolde



*Watching*  
by Kent Wilson



*Tree Growing on Rock*  
by Patrick Grady



*The Cook*  
by Michele Thrane



*Fragile Flutterer*  
by Joe Beuchel



*Saint Mary Lake*  
by Kathy Grady

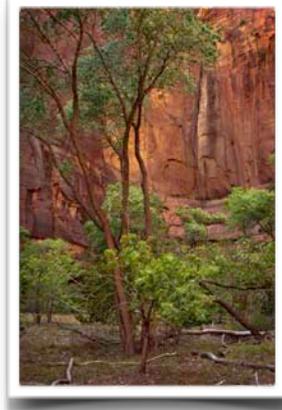


*Spanish Church*  
by Judie Reynolds

# Members Gallery



*Statue in the Park  
by Norm Plummer*



*Zion Box Canyon  
by Patrick Grady*



*Cold Wind  
by Larry Arends*



*Petersen's Barn  
by Ken Olsen*



*Butter Butt  
by Kent Wilson*



*Yellow "S"  
by Carol Arnolde*



*Ding Darling Egret  
by Jim Beck*