FOCUS!

From the President

April is a time for getting outdoors and watching the early Spring days change almost hourly in their greens, pastels, and yellows (pollen). It is a great time for the changing light, for misty mornings, and hopefully no snow. And we still don't have to get up too early to get that dawn light. Perhaps some of you will photograph the perfect image for the SunTrust exhibit in June.

This month's meeting should be an exciting one with Ben Greenberg, a former member of the Camera Club, showing us some of his latest work. We will also have the opportunity to buy his hot off the press book, Natural Virginia. His website is http://bengreenberg.com/ if you want to see a preview of some gorgeous photographs.

I hope everyone is creating fantastic images for the Brown Bag event for next month!

Cyanne

The FGCC Officers and Staff

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Frank Feigert	Membership
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Al Warfield	Roundtable Org. Hal
Tyler	Exhibits
Linda Warfield	Past President Club

Meetings are held second Tuesday 7:30 PM River Road Presbyterian Church

8960 River Road. Richmond

Why Would You Want To Use Dropbox?
by Al Warfield

I know I have hounded some of you to register with Dropbox so you can get your files for Round Table to me in proper form. Why do I do that? Well it's because some people have email programs that are not friendly for sending multiple files as attachments. They either zip the files together into one zip file, compress them more than desirable, or even lose the filenames you have supplied. That complicates transfer to the intended location. You don't really need Dropbox for that if you have a PC, and attach your files to the email. But you may want Dropbox for other reasons. It's the most popular software for file transfer. Read more to find out why.

HOW DOES DROPBOX WORK?
To use Dropbox you have to register at Dropbox.com. You will have an account that can hold files you send there, like cloud storage. To maximize usage you should download and install the desktop software on your computer, and also the mobile software on your phone and/or tablet. (If you prefer, you can bypass installing Dropbox on your computer and access your folders at Dropbox.com.) Your Dropbox folder can have numerous subfolders. Those folders are available on your phone, tablet, or computer, and any file that gets loaded into a folder will also arrive on any device where you have the software installed. That can be very convenient.

Suppose you want to send a PSD or Tiff file to someone else, or to a commercial printer. Any type of file, no matter how large, can be stored in Dropbox, and this means you can share that file with anyone who shares a folder with you. You can create a folder with any name you choose, and send someone an invi- tation (called an Invite) to that person's email address via Dropbox. Then, after the recipient joins the folder, he or she can drop files into the folder (or upload them online if the software is not installed) and they will show up in the same folder of anyone who shares that folder in Dropbox.

WHAT IS THE COST?
Registering for Dropbox is free. You get a few GB of storage space when you register. Then whenever you refer someone else, get someone to join your folder, etc., you get bonus free storage. After awhile it builds up. I have never been short of space. But I do delete the files promptly after they have been transferred,

except that I also store some smaller files, such as PDFs with info I need frequently, in general folders. Examples are manuals for your phone or computer.

OTHER ADVANTAGES
When you move from a phone to a computer via email it is not unusual for the email program to compress the files more then the original. If you send them via Dropbox they will be exactly as they were when created by your phone or tablet. There are other ways to do this in some cases, such as using *i*Cloud if you have an Apple phone or tablet. But you can use Dropbox on almost any device, so that makes for con-sistency across devices. There are surely other advan-tages I have not yet found. You can buy more storage as well, and/or set up a business account or group folder.

PROBLEMS?
The only problem I have had is that the desktop soft-ware sometimes just stops working. If that happens you can go to the Dropbox website and you will find recommendations for handling the problem. Usually you just uninstall it, reboot, download a new version, and reinstall. It's best to check occasionally for updates. When you share a file with someone you do have to send an email or text to let them know. A noti- fication will pop up if they have Dropbox installed, but it's best not to rely on that.

"I hope you don't mind, but I used the computer
to remove all those age spots and
that hideous mole you have."

Self Assignment

by Bob Coles

To photograph 29 framed oil paintings exhibited at the Westminster Canterbury Resident Art Gallery during March. The artist is a neighbor and friend.

Challenge:
Mixed lighting, framed paintings hung by the wire on the back of the frame, so they are not flat against the wall and they are located in an actively used corridor.

Equipment
Leica M Camera 24MP w/Leica EVF and RRS L-bracket; Leica 50mm f/2 lens; Manfrotto Pro3 Tripod; RRS BH-55 Ballhead; Impact 22" white reflector; Processed in LR5.

Settings:
ISO 200 (the camera's lowest setting), f/5.6, Aperture priority, Auto white balance, manual focus and the self-timer set at 2 seconds and RAW capture.
Process: I had never attempted to document an

exhibit of oil paintings. Ideally you would have the image on a flat surface with controlled lighting. You also have to be careful not to have light reflection off the oil paint. In this case I am dealing with mixed lighting with gaps in coverage. Also the tops of the framed images were not flush against the wall.

Initially I did some handheld test shots to check lighting. I used both a gray card and auto white balance. The latter seemed work fine. The remaining steps were as follows for each image: With the camera mounted on the tripod I

used the bubble level on the tripod head to level the camera and verified that the camera was parallel to the painting, I straightened the image as needed on the wall to get it as square as possible. Using liveview I set up the shot and focused, put the reflector in place and took the picture using the self-timer.

In LR5 I cropped and leveled each image as necessary and made only minor basic adjustments.
I made a virtual copy of each image and cropped out the frame on the second image. I ended up with two images of each painting, one showing the framed image and the other just the painting. I provided the artist with large JPG files and a PDF of the images. Below to see the accompanying..

These Images are the work of artist H. Scott and may only be used with the artist's written approval.

Visions of Modern China   *By Cindy Krumbein*

Spring has Sprung
By Gilpin Brown

Fieldtrip Calendar: Debbie Roberts, coordinator

Sat., April 26th Richmond Zoo (804) 739-5666

8300 Beaver Bridge Rd., Moseley, VA 23120 (Chesterfield Co.) www.metrorichmondzoo.com/
Group rates 10-25 people: Adults $14.75, Senior $13.25, Child $9.75
Open Mon.-Sat. 9:30-5:00
Cheetah cubs will be out and•visible•to the public.

Sat., May 10 & 11 Mid Atlantic Balloon Festival

Meadow Event Park, 13111 Dawn Blvd, Doswell VA
 www.midatlanticballoonfestival.com/
Adult 1-Day Pass•$15.00
Child 1-Day Pass•$5.00, 5-12 yrs. (4 & under free)
VIP Package•$55.00 (2 adults, VIP Parking, 2 commemorative
wineglasses.)

Sat., June 7th Bill & Linda Lane Workshop (804) 883-7740   Nature's Image

Photography Workshops
15325 Mountain Road, Montpelier VA 23192
www.lanephotoworkshops.com

Cost TBA. Payment by May 24th.
Workshop held at the Lanes' home in Montpelier.
Includes early morning shoot, time for Q&A, lunch by Linda. Opportunities for shooting macros.
Bring your laptop for a critique on the day's images.

Sat., July 26th Kenilworth Aquatic Gardens "Lotus Flowers"

1550 Anacostia Ave NE, Washington DC 20019•(202) 426-6905
http://www.nps.gov/keaq/index.htm
Free Admission
An age-old dance of wind, water and land combines here with acres of ponds filled with pink and
white lotus blossoms. Anacostia Park dates to a 1926 act of Congress to preserve the forests, water
quality, and recreation value of•the waterways of Washington, DC.

If we carpool, we can•choose a central spot to leave our cars in Richmond. •Depart at 6:30AM for a pho-
to-day in D.C.

Sun., August 24th River Boat Cruise and Canal Walk

14th & Dock Streets, Richmond, VA, 23219 (804) 649-2800
Time: TBA. Cost $6.00•+Boat Captain's tip
www.venturerichmond.com/experience/canal/rides.html
www.venturerichmond.com/experience/canal/index.html
The boat leaves the Turning Basin at 14th and Dock Street and follows the canal through the heart•of
downtown. There are photo ops of Richmond and if we take an early boat, there should be good light.
The tour is•about 45 minutes and Capt. Rusty Gross will be narrating as we go.

While we are there, we can take the Canal Walk. The group will decide where we'll explore. Check the
website & read about an area that appeals to you. Share what you have learned as we go!

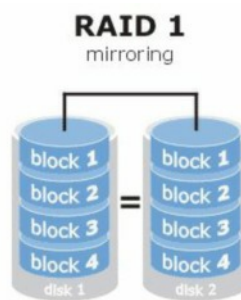## A Follow-up On Paranoia (Or, Is It Prudence?)

Frank Feigert

A number of members have written, asking some fol-lowup questions. Please note: I am NOT an expert on these questions, and my answers simply reflect my own experiences.

1. What is a RAID computer? Basically, it is a com-puter with built-in storage redundancy. Following from Wikipedia:

A RAID system used as secondary storage•is **not** an alternative to backing up•data. In RAID levels greater than zero, a RAID protects from catastrophic data loss caused by physical damage or errors on a single drive within the array (or two drives in, say, RAID•6). How-ever, a true backup system has other important features such as the ability to restore an earlier version of data, which is needed both to protect against software•errors that write unwanted data to secondary storage, and also to recover from user error•and malicious data deletion. A RAID can be overwhelmed by catastrophic failure that exceeds its recovery capacity and, of course, the entire array is at risk of physical damage by fire, natural disaster, and human forces, while backups can be stored off site. A RAID is also vulnerable to con- troller failure because it is not always possible to migrate a RAID to a new, different controller without data loss.

2. There are several possible configurations, most of which I do not understand. You can get a fair explana-tion of these through Wikipedia. My own computer is a RAID-1 type, which means I have two system drives and two data drives. Each system drive is 1 TB and the data drives are each 2 TB.

3.   Can these drives fail? Of course. In fact, in my previous computer one of each failed within the 2-year warranty period. And, in my present com- puter, one of the data drives failed within a week. But, they were all quickly replaced and re-built, mirroring the one that had not failed. The fact that there was another drive within the case made it very easy to re-build. I look forward to the availability of solid-state drives of these or greater capacities at acceptable pricing.

4.   There are, or course, other versions of desk-top redundancy. As I said, I now have two dead Seagate drives of 1 TB capacity acting as paperweights, and have switched to Western Digital for a 4 TB desktop backup. When it fails (and it will), DROBO is another desk-top system, but with mixed reviews.

A strong case can be made for off-site backup. I use Carbonite.com; others use Mozy.com or BackBlaze.com. Is there a single best one for every-one? I doubt it. The initial backup, for any such ser-vice, is time-consuming and may go a week or more on a 24/7 basis. But, once done, it should continue on a real-time basis, or however you schedule it. It is also important to remember that, while you dither over which one, you are using time that could have been used for backup! Or, for that matter, while dithering, you can join Google+ and invoke their Automatic Backup. It is seamless, free, and works easily. This allows time to figure which other off-site backup works best for you.

If not paranoia, as Dana Carvey said, "we must be pru-dent."

Footnote form Publisher:

Originally, the term RAID stood for "redundant array of inexpensive disks," but now it usually refers to a "redundant array of independent disks." While older storage devices used only one disk drive to store data, RAID storage uses multiple disks in order to provide fault tolerance, and to improve overall performance,

Paranoia Continued

Ron Ratcliffe

The RAID configuration that Frank described is an excellent addition to any system. One significant attribute that Frank didn't mention is the fact that most RAID systems can automatically rebuild themselves when a single drive fails. Commercial and Government users have computer cases with hot-swap capability that allows a person to pull a failed drive and replace while system is running. The RAID 1 controller will "see" the new drive and make it look like the other that is one running in background for a mirror image. A small case home type system of course, you have to shut it down to replace the drive inside.

Charlie Duggie, a systems engineer I worked with took an emergency service request to a power company office in Worcester, MA. No one was around late at night and Charlie was told that one of the RAID drives needed to be replaced. There were just two drives and he had a 50/50 chance of pulling the right one. When all the lights went out he stepped out on the fire escape to catch a smoke. It was then the cold sweat came on because as far as he could see in any direction from his high hill top advantage was darkness. It was then that he realized he upset the Northeast Power Grid monitoring. A quick replacement of the drive did nothing, but much help arrived soon without even a phone call.

Using a RAID system such as Frank's can give you piece of mind because every thing is backed up 100% and it is transparent to system. Years ago GE build the first POS (Point of Sale) system so common today in all grocery and department stores. The live testing was all scheduled at JC Penny in California. The host for all the terminals was a specially designed dual non- stop GE computer with 100% replication of all parts except one. The big test started and executives from both companies stood and watched for about an hour

when all crashed because the single power supply with the 10 year average life died first day on job. Everyone worries about disk drives because they are electro-mechanical, but they can only function when correct power is available. I have seen data totally scrambled on disk because of incorrect voltages. Data supposedly written but lost due to low voltage because dirt and lint caused power supply overheating and therefore power supply lost regulation. The power supplies used in most PCs are very inexpensive and have no correct voltage monitoring. That is left to the motherboard to watch for fans turning and voltage in the correct range. Listen to your system, if you are experiencing slight delays in reading and/or you hear a buzz or hum then data appears, you are probably getting read errors. Windows will try on read error 64 times before reporting an error. Time to clean and check voltages or maybe replace hard drive.

For a maximum availability solution, try to eliminate a single point of failure. I use RAID 1 storage but not in the same box with the system. By placing a NAS (Network Attached Storage) box on the network router, I can now have a multi drive RAID with a separate power source, a different operating system tailored to do just RAID, and a different disk controller. The NAS is mapped to drive X. So last week, the little brick power supply that runs my router smoked, but no data was lost, just temporarily unavailable until unit replaced.

I too like Frank separate systems software from data with different drives. My system drive is a 2 ½" SSD (Solid State Drive) good for millions of writes. I use a very reliable SSD for the system since it as about 10-20 times faster than rotating disk. These drives have thermal protection and use SMART with some auto error correction. The data drive is standard rotating disk. There is no need to run a RAID here since a current image of system drive is on an attached USB drive and all files are backed up on external RAID.
    Continued

MEMBER NEWS

Bob Coles will have 5- new images (never shown before) in the first floor "Resident Art Gallery" at Westminster Canterbury. They will be on display from 4/1 until 5/31.

Storage drives use S.M.A.R.T. (Self-Monitoring, Analysis, and Reporting Technology) to check S.M.A.R.T. go to a command prompt and type the following:

Wmic

diskdrive get status

```
Copyright (c) 2009 Microsoft Corporation.

C:\Users\Big Ron>wmic
wmic:root\cli>diskdrive get status
Status
OK
OK
OK
OK

wmic:root\cli>exit
```

There are four drives in above example on system and all responded with OK. SMART will notify you of a drive that seems like it is running but has some errors. If you want a detailed description of drive status, download a free copy of CrystalDiskInfo from:
http://crystalmark.info/software/CrystalDiskInfo/index-e.html
A hard drive that fails a S.M.A.R.T. test should not be considered reliable. •Even if your hard drive doesn't die completely, it could corrupt•portions of your data.

Next month: What is a surge protector, and UPS.

Apple users

Almost all the previous discussions were pertaining to Windows operating systems, A NAS RAID storage unit will work the same on your router as Windows systems. In fact, you can share files between Apple, Windows and even Linix

Nik Silver Efex Pro 2
Cyanne

One of the pieces I had at the Glave-Kocen Gallery was done almost entirely with Silver Efex Pro, my new favorite app. I began with a few corrections in Photoshop, like removing power lines and creating a little more contrast. I have found that the Nik software does a much better job of producing the sepia image I want than working it through multiple layers in Photoshop. I did a comparison of doing the same image both ways and Silver Efex won.

After doing some minor tweaking I copied the color image to a new layer and saved it with the original title plus the addition of a letter since I often pursue several different ideas and want to be able to look at all of them.

Original:

The new layer I converted to a smart filter since it would allow me to tweak the Silver Efex layer later if I decided to change something. This is very important since once one hits the return button, the image will be sealed in cement. I have done this and then have to start all over again.

The tutorials from the Nik website can help explain in detail how to work the unlimited choices in the programs. For this image I chose a vintage camera look in the preset library and then moved to the right side of the program and worked my way through the different adjustments until I liked what I saw. Once I settled on the look of the sepia toning and the border I wanted, I hit the return button. I found that using the curves adjustments in Photoshop

were more to my liking than in Silver Efex. I made two different curves layers to get what I wanted in the contrast of the mountains and the fog. I also used Dfine (from the Nik collection) to remove some of the noise that I found distracting. Then in Photoshop, I sharpened only the barn and silo.

The final image was printed on Epson Hot Press Natural.

Final:

Spring Flowers

By Ron Ratcliffe and Photoshop

By Debbie Roberts

Kenilworth Aquatic Gardens

Month	Day	Activity	What	Contact
April	3	Board Meeting	All are welcome	Cindy
	8	Club Meeting	Former FGCC member Ben Greenberg will show images from his new book	Cindy
	28	Deadline	May Newsletter	R o n
May	8	Board Meeting	All are welcome	Cindy
	13	Club Meeting	Brown Bag Finale !	Cyan
	26	Deadline	June Newsletter	R o n
June	5	Board meeting	All are welcome	Cindy
	10	Club Meeting	In honor of our opening at SunTrust Gallery, we'll have a gala there to celebrate our photography and our new show.	Cyan
		Suntrust Exhibit	June - Dates TBD	
July		No Meeting		
August		No Meeting		
	25	Deadline for Newsletter	September newsletter	R o n
September	4	Board meeting	All are welcome	Cindy
	9	Club meeting	TBD	
	29	Deadline	October newsletter	R o n
October	4	Show	Deliver to James Center 9am	Vicky
	5	Show starts	James Center 10/5 - 10/26	Vicky/Peggy
	9	Board meeting	All are welcome	Cindy
	14	Meeting/Reception	James Center 6 PM to 7:30 PM	Vicky/Peggy
	25	Show ends	Pick up work after 2 PM or on 26th before 10 AM	Members
	27	Deadline	November Newsletter	Ron
November	6	Board meeting	All are welcome	Cindy
	11	Club meeting	*The Annual Critique*	Cindy
	24	Deadline	December newsletter	Ron

Board Meetings are 5:15 PM at 1650 Willlow Lawn Drve, suite 201

Club Meetings are 7:30 PM 8960 River Road, River Road Presbyterian Church