

Mile High Wildlife Photography Club

February 2008 Volume 32, Issue 2

We Are All Students

by Cathy & Gordon Illg

The other day, while thumbing through some coffee table books, Cathy and I both came down with case of 'big-head-itis'. The books featured photos by some of the giants in nature photography, Art Wolfe and Franz Lanting to name a few. Unbelievably, we had images that were stronger than many of theirs! Of course, the books were ten or fifteen years old. When we compared our work with more recent photos by the same photographers, we were cured. It was no longer a problem getting our heads through the doorways in our townhouse. As frustrating as it may be to those of us trying to compete with them, the best are still getting better. In fact, all of us are either learning, or we're getting passed by.

Luckily, Cathy and I are also still learning and stretching our horizons. The old saying about teaching an old dog new tricks is not necessarily true. And when we look at our material from ten years ago, or even a few years ago for that matter, it suffers when we compare it to our most recent images. The down side to accumulating all of this new knowledge is that we have to keep returning to places we thought we had already covered well.



Between new techniques, improvements in old techniques, and new equipment (not to mention changes in the local conditions), we never tire of visiting the same old places. When revisiting these locations, we always shoot more film than we thought we would, for there are always more new things to try than we allowed for. There's something new to try every year, even at sites where we've shot hundreds and hundreds of rolls of film, like Arches National Park and Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge.



True, the new techniques don't always work out. When they do work out though, it makes all the experimentation worthwhile. National Geographic Photographer, Chris Johns, said, "If every picture on your roll is perfect, then you've failed." It's pretty obvious to anyone looking in our trash that Cathy and I try to live by this philosophy. And we encourage each of you to waste a

**2008 Membership Dues are due
Single and Family memberships: \$20**

few shots of your own this summer in the pursuit of creativity.

At the Last Meeting...

Competition

New critique category for folks looking for feedback but not wanting to enter the regular competitions. Anything goes that fits a regular category

Entries

Max of 4 total entries with a max of 2 in any one category and one in each of two others

Digital Adjustments

Minor Photoshop adjustments or alternations that don't materially change the subject or theme of the photo belong in the regular competition categories. The Open category is for highly manipulated images where the main subject(s) is significantly altered. Examples: Adding a Full moon in a Utah arch belongs in the Open category. Taking out a stray branch or darken/blurring a cluttered background on a wildlife subject goes in the regular category.

Submission Window

We need more time to get entries organized for the competition. Look for a new submission window of two weeks but closing a week before our meeting. Make sure you are signed up for emails on the website and you will get reminders as to when the submission window is open/closed.

File Names

To make it easier to organize images please follow the naming convention for competition entries.
 FirstNameLastName – TitleWithCapitalsFor
 EachWord
 i.e. ChrisLoffredo – RedFoxPortrait

Of Interest...

Jeane Keane, Homer's famed "eagle lady", recently lost her small compound to a fire. Many of us have visited Jean's yard and the adjacent campground and benefited from her 25 years of hard work. If you would like to make a donation, please send a check here: Jean Keane PO Box 1932 Homer, AK, 99603.

Field Trips

Wild Horses

May 3

We have scheduled another Wild Horse field trip. We have space for only 20 people since the trip is also open Parker Artists Guild. Contact Charlie Summers, 303-840-3344 (H), 303-887-5666 (C), Charlie at wildimages.biz

Roxborough State Park

February 16

Meet in the parking lot of the Chase Bank, next to Safeway at Waterton Rd and Rampart Range Rd at 7:45 am. Contact Chuck Winter, (303) 972-2538
cwinter@mii-rmcc.com

Photo Ops

Greater Prairie Chicken Tour Wray, CO

Weekends march 29-april 20
 Contact wraychamber.net

Lamar Snow Goose Festival Lamar, CO

Feb 22-24
 More info at www.lamardaily.com

Monte Vista Crane Festival Monte Vista, CO

March 7-9
 More info at www.cranefest.com

Upcoming Programs

February – To be announced

Nancy Stocker will present a brief slide program on the Colorado Prairie Wildlife Trail.

Braggin' Rights

Irma Backelant won Best of Show in Digital Photography at the recent Parker Artist Guild art show.

Fi Rust has seven images published in the book "Rocky Mountain Mammals" published by University Press of Colorado and the Rocky Mountain Nature Association.

Hospitality for January Meeting

A big thank you from all of us!

Snacks:

Drinks:

Here Come Da Judge...

Have you ever wondered what the judge was thinking when he gave that image 8 when you were thought it was a 10, or maybe a 6? Here's a chance for you to find out what goes into judging a photo and maybe you can be a judge and let everyone else wonder what you are thinking.

The club is trying to develop a pool of member judges for the in-house competitions. The goal is to have enough judges in the pool so that we will call on each member judge no more than once a year to serve as a judge.

Anyone who has an interest in judging our in-house competitions, please email Fred Stearns flstearns@q.com so that your name can be added to the list. If you only have certain months when you can be available for this honor, please indicate that as well.

If you want to learn what goes into judging a photo so that you yourself can judge a competition, Russ Burden has volunteered to present a seminar on judging. Notify Fred Stearns (flstearns@q.com) if you're interested in attending. The time and place will be announced.

Nature's Best Submission for 2008

Summary

The club will submit an entry to the Nature's Best Photography Windland Smith Rice International Awards for 2008 in the Photography Club category. Each MHWPC member may submit up to ten (10) images before the end of the March meeting. No images will be accepted after that time. Digital-capture images must be in the form required by Nature's Best (low res, high res, and RAW if available). Film-capture images must also be submitted in digital form (scans) and be submitted before the end of the March meeting. In addition, the original film image (not a dupe) must be provided and labeled according to the Nature's Best specs, before the beginning of the April meeting if the image is selected for the second round of judging. A panel of five judges will evaluate all of the images submitted by the members. The images will be shown anonymously and in a random order. Fifty (50) of those images will be presented to the club at the April meeting, and each club member in attendance that night will vote for the top twenty (20) images. That is, each member will have twenty (20) votes to select an image to submit to Nature's Best. The twenty (20) images with the highest number of votes will be submitted to Nature's Best.

Contact James Hager at 720-219-4248 with any questions.

Image Submission

Each member may submit up to ten (10) images before the end of the March 12th meeting. You may send your entries to James Hager at 343 E. Allen St. #11, Castle Rock, CO 80108, or you may bring them to the March club meeting. Images must be received before the deadline, and no images will be accepted after the deadline.

The images must fit into one of the Nature's Best (NB) categories (www.naturesbestphotography.com/pages/categories.html) and meet the NB guidelines (www.naturesbestphotography.com/pages/guidelines.html). In summary, all images must accurately reflect the subject matter as it appeared in the viewfinder. Nothing should be added to an image and, aside from dust spots, nothing should be taken away. Normal processing of RAW image files and minor adjustments to color and contrast are acceptable, as is minimal cropping. Exceptions: *anything goes in the Creative Digital category. Stitched panoramas may be entered in any category, but they must be identified.* Also, no captive animals are allowed, except for images submitted to the *Zoos & Aquariums* category, and such images must have been taken at American Zoo & Aquarium Association (AZA) member zoos and aquariums.

Digital images must be provided in each of the following formats:

- Low-resolution (72ppi) JPEG in sRGB IEC61966-2.1 color space measuring 1000 pixels on the longest side
- High-resolution (400ppi) uncompressed and unsharpened TIFF (in any color space) measuring 8000 pixels on the longest side
- RAW file if available

The file must be labeled with your first and last name, the image title, and the category it is to enter (the standard NB category, not *Camera Club*.) For example, file names should be like JamesHager_CrownedPloverAdultAndChick_Birds.jpg. If an image is in the *Creative Digital* category, provide the details of all techniques used in a text file with the same name as the image file. Burn the files onto a CD or DVD, and label the CD or DVD with your first and last name and phone number. Images not in the proper format by the end of the March meeting will not be accepted.

CDs or DVDs will be destroyed when they are no longer needed.

Film images must also be submitted in digital form (scans) according to the digital image specifications given above. In addition, for

images that make the second round of judging, the original image (not a dupe) must be received by James Hager before 7:00 pm on April 9, 2008. Photographers with film images that make the second round will be notified so that they may submit their original image before the second round of judging. The original slide or large format transparency must be in a protective plastic sheet, and each slide mount or transparency mount must bear the photographer's name, phone number, and state or country of residence. Glass mounts will not be accepted. Images not conforming to the specifications will not be accepted.

Original slides or large format transparencies will be returned to the photographer when they are no longer needed.

Judging

Preliminary judging will take place online after the March meeting using private, secure, web-based voting pages. A panel of five judges will score each image from one (1) to five (5). Images will be presented anonymously and in a random order. The full low-resolution JPEG image will be shown as submitted along with a 250x250-pixel one-to-one crop of the high-resolution TIFF file in order to evaluate sharpness. The top fifty (50) images will move on to the second round of judging, with the following provisions.

Because each photographer can only have three (3) images in the club submission to Nature's Best (NB), if a photographer has more than three (3) images selected by the preliminary judging, only the top three (3) of that photographer's images will move to the second round and the next highest scoring image from an eligible photographer will be included. Limiting the number of images per photographer at this level will reduce any potential bias by the preliminary judges.

In order to present a balanced portfolio to NB, at least one image from each category that has an entrant will move to the second round.

If there is a tie in the ranking, there will be a run-off vote to select the images to move on to the second round.

Second round judging will take place at the April 9, 2008 club meeting. Fifty (50) images

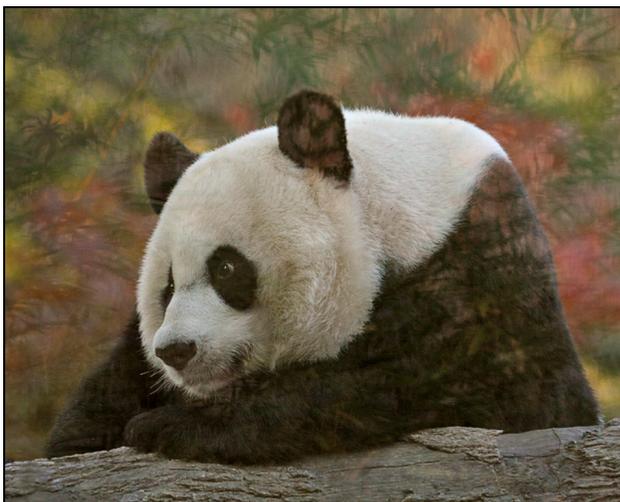
will be presented to the club. (If the original copy of a film image has not been received by James Hager before 7:00 pm on April 9, 2008, the next-highest scoring eligible image from the preliminary round will be presented.) The images will be grouped by category and the category will be shown, but the individual images will be anonymous and be shown in a random order. The low-res JPEG image will be shown as submitted along with a 250x250-pixel one-to-one crop of the high-resolution TIFF file in order to evaluate sharpness.

Each club member in attendance will vote for the top twenty (20) images. That is, each member will have twenty (20) votes to select an image to submit to NB. The twenty (20) images with the highest number of votes will be submitted to NB. If there is a tie in the voting, there will be a run-off vote to select the winning images.

Contact James Hager at 720-219-4248 with any questions. A copy of these rules will be posted on the club website (www.mhwpc.org) under the News & Information menu for reference.

Competition...

Wildlife HoM – 8 entries



1st Place
Panda With Bamboo Reflection
 Rita Summers

- | | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------|-------------|
| 2nd | Mountain Bluebirds | James Hager |
| 3rd | Peregrine Falcon | Fi Rust |

Scenic – 21 entries



1st Place
Black Hills Sunrise
 Reb Babcock

- | | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------|----------------|
| 2nd | Oregon Sunset | Chris Loffredo |
| 3rd | Evening Waves | Dick York |
| HM | Storm | Nick Burden |
| HM | Arkansas Autumn | Frank Weston |

Open -- 10 entries



1st Place
Kelp Gull Flying Through Ice Arch
 Charlie Summers

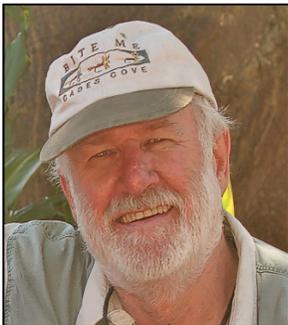
- | | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|--------------|
| 2nd | Three Leaves | Roger Kinney |
| 3rd | Neon Rockhopper Heads | Rita Summers |

Wildlife – 30 entries**1st Place**

King Penguins Brace as a Group Against Katabatic Winds up to 100 Knots
Charlie Summers

2nd	Rockhopper Jumping	Rita Summers
3rd	Northern Harrier	Fi Rust
	Chasing Ducks	
HM	The Hug	Jan Forseth
HM	Village Weaver	James Hager
HM	Bighorn Sheep Rams	Fi Rust

Critique – 4 entries

Getting to Know You...**Charlie Summers****1. What drew you to nature/wildlife photography? When?**

I took my first photography class in high school so I've always been interested.

When we moved to Colorado from Alabama in the late sixties I had many opportunities to hunt, but I found my photography took over from hunting very quickly. I was shooting with a Nikon F10 and Nikkor lenses at the time. I stayed with Nikon until about 1985 or '87 when Canon came out with auto-focus lenses. I left the Nikon behind then. I was doing a lot of work for United Press International at the time covering all professional sports including the Superbowl, and we needed the latest and greatest. Photography was a part-time business for me until 1982 which is when I became a full time photographer. In 1980, we went to Africa

to lecture for the Photography Society of Southern Africa, and that was where we were introduced to the possibilities of running photography tours. So we started into business of running photo tours to South Africa, and a bit later we went into the photo software business offering programs for stock photography management. I guess you could say we made a little niche in the freelance business. We've slowed down some since 1995, although I have to say it's difficult to stop – we're always working on different projects like the wild horses book and tours.

(Ed. Note: Charlie's adventures in South Africa led to him being named the BBC Photographer of the Year in 1985.)

2. Which Photoshop technique do you think would be most helpful for beginners to learn?

Curves and levels are the two most important, I think. An excellent tutorial comes with CS3 on how to selectively lighten or darken your images. The tutorial discs are wonderful. I'd say going through the tutorials, will vault you over most people. The cloning tool is an especially important tool, too.

3. What's your favorite photo shoot story?

When you've done it as long as I have, things run together, things that seemed important or scary at the time fade into oblivion – I've been in on so many happenings in nature, where my photojournalism played an important part. I guess one of the things that comes to mind was being charged by a warthog. All I could do was open my mouth, I couldn't move. It turned out to be a mock charge and he stopped about two feet in front of me. Hah, that thing came so fast all I could do was open my mouth. Rita has a picture of the whole thing. Another interesting story – that BBC picture from 1985, the one of the cheetah on the back of springbok – I didn't know if I even had the shot or not because the mirror in my camera was up. I didn't know if the shot was there until the film came back from Kodak.

4. How did you create your most memorable photograph?

The cheetah shot and the penguin shot I showed at the January meeting are the ones that come immediately to mind. The one of the cheetah was taken when we were on tour in South Africa. One of our drivers was South African and he saw the cheetah “hunting”. The cheetah had seen the solitary springbok and the driver pulled up near where we thought it was going to be. We could see the cheetah, had three cubs and could tell it was hunting. The penguin photo was taken at Right Whale Bay, South Georgia. Ohmygod, that was just an opportunity in lifetime! Everyone else was walking to the left, I looked right and there it was -- the wind, the snow and the shot. And then it cleared. I got off four shots. My camera (Canon EOS D Mark III) shoots 10 frames a second, so that gives you an idea how fast the whole thing happened. That’s the kind of time when you see “it”, you hope the Sandisk in your camera saves what you saw. That’s one of the downsides to photography. The mind can play tricks on you when there’s a delay between taking the picture and downloading it.

5. You’ve been with this club from the beginning. What surprises or delights you most about the kind of club it has become?

Yeah, I was there at the beginning. I was president for two terms, and then I went inactive when we were working the tours and building our software business. What I’ve seen is an increase in photo-capability since my hiatus. The photographer of today is better than yesteryear, the eye is better, and the equipment allows you do things you couldn’t do in the early days.

6. What do you do when you’re not behind the camera? (i.e., occupation or other avocations).

Well, I love to watch sports. I’m also a ham radio operator. I’m from the old school, where we built our own radios. I still dream in Morse code and can read it at 40 words a minute. I like to work DX which means finding a new station, saying hello and getting off. I also enjoy restoring old tube-type equipment—restoring

radios from late 40s to the first part of the 60s. Oh, I have a barn full of the stuff!



James Hager

1. What drew you to nature/wildlife photography? When?

I started with photography as a kid and I always liked the outdoors. In high school I bought my first SLR and in college I was shooting landscapes. When I left Boeing in 2001 I got more involved in shooting wildlife. Mostly I like the animals—watching different species and their behaviors.

2. Which Photoshop technique do you think would be most helpful for beginners?

Grasping the whole idea of layers, that you can make adjustments, and never change your original. Use layers so you can go back to your original directly, it’s easier, as you work you can go back to a prior stage and carry on. Another technique that is fairly easy in terms of basic concept is masks. Once you get into masks it’s a bit more difficult, but it’s pretty straight forward to start with.

3. What’s your favorite photo shoot story?

One of my most exciting shoots was in Kenya, in the Samburu Nature Reserve. This was in February or March of 2005. We had arrived at a leopard late and couldn’t get in close enough for a shot. Then that cat suddenly got down from its perch, and five feet from our vehicle it started to mosey on a path directly towards me.

4. How did you create your most memorable photograph?

That would be the silhouetted pine tree in Jasper at Athabasca Falls. Basically the falls are easily accessible, and I got there at first light. I was the only person there, just watching the light, when suddenly there was some light in

the fog creating a rainbow. Just made the image pop.

5. As Webmaster for the club's website, what are your short-term and long-term goals for the site?

One of the things I'd like to do is add an online dues payment feature. Another is it create a way for members to join online. And perhaps in the future have a photo critique area where people can anonymously critique, rate and offer feedback for posted photos.

6. What do you do when you're not behind the camera? (i.e., occupation or other avocations).

I'm sitting behind the computer, editing, doing web development work where I get most of my income from.



Reb Babcock

1. What drew you to nature/wildlife photography? When?

When I moved to the west from Illinois in 1978 I originally came out to ski, but then I became infatuated with

nature in Utah – the mountains, the deserts and the animals. I'd gotten my first camera back in Illinois, didn't take photography seriously until the 80s. After my first trip to Alaska in 87, I really got an understanding that you could do exciting stuff with cameras. Only in last three years have I picked it up in a more serious way.

2. What software do you use to manipulate your photos? Why?

Photoshop CS2 right now. Basically I don't like to manipulate beyond what's real, but CS2 helps clean up the images a bit. And, of course, if you are shooting digital you want to bump up colors to equal the colors of film. Yes, for minor upgrades and "optimizing images" I use Photoshop.

3. What's your favorite photo shoot story?

The first time I was in Denali in Alaska I had the most amazing experiences, including a really mind-opening one. I had a new "used" Canon lens that had been repaired. I'd been using it for week a half and before I realized it wasn't functioning properly. I had 30 rolls of black pictures! It was then I realized it was the experience and not the photos that mattered most. There were amazing sunsets and great wildlife there, but it was the moment of being there that was the key.

4. How did you create your most memorable photograph?

It was sunset and I was shooting, or trying to shoot, foxes at Red Rocks National Wildlife Refuge outside of Yellowstone. I'd been up there for a couple days, watching the foxes. We had had crummy weather, and the last evening I was there, I figured I wouldn't get much in way of light, but I drove up to where the foxes were anyway. They were out playing, and it seemed too dark to get a photo with film, so I basically sat and watched and snapped off a few shots, then right at sunset, there was just enough of this super golden light to get a shot. But the foxes had gone away, and I was sitting there thinking, "If only one could come up and do something..." and sure enough one did. One came out and looked around; I fired off six shots, shooting with a 500m lens at 1/15th, from a bean bag on a window. Two of 'em came out real sharp.

5. If you could change one thing about Camera Club what would it be?

I'd like to have a few more judges who judge from a more artistic set of criteria. And I think still doing the prints competition every few months is a good idea, too.

6. What do you do when you're not behind the camera? (i.e., occupation or other avocations). Construction management.

Right now I'm unemployed and living in Buena Vista, but I hope to stay involved in the club as much as I can get down to the city and attend meetings.

From the Webmaster

The MHWPC Website: www.mhwpc.org

Would you like to receive email notices when competition image submission windows open? Would you like to receive email notices about upcoming meetings? Do you have a photography-related website and want a link to it in order to drive traffic to it? Have you moved or changed email accounts lately? Would you like to post a picture of yourself to be included in the online Membership Directory?

If you answered yes to any of the above, login to your MHWPC website account and go to your Manage Account page. The "Login" button is tucked away in the extreme upper right corner of each page, and after you login, a "Manage Account" link will appear at the very top of the page.

On the Manage Account page, you can update your contact information, control the amount of contact information that is shown to other club members, add a picture of yourself, edit your email preferences (to receive notices or not), and add a link to your photo-related website.

If you and your family member(s) have different contact information, like individual phone numbers or email addresses, you can add this information by adding an additional family member in the "Other Family Members" section of your Manage Account page. All members of the family share the same account (membership status) and physical address, and each member can have his or her own name, phone number, and email address.

In order to prevent spam filters from intercepting emails from the system, add "system@mhwpc.org" to your list of approved email addresses. Emails that are sent through email lists retain the from and reply-to information of the original sender.

If you have any questions, or suggestions for how to improve the website, contact the webmaster (webmaster@mhwpc.org).

Library News from the Lamb's



Be sure to stop by the Library Table at the next meeting. We have lots of things for you to read by the winter fires. Photos are everywhere so keep shooting. We will continue to have a

checkout drawing so come to the table and, as the books and CD's would say, Check us out!"

Irma Backelant will be standing in as librarian this month.

Joe and Betsy Lamb

inblamb@comcast.net or 303-841-2565

For Sale

Canon 1D Mark II, body only for \$2500.00 as well as the original manuals and DVD. I will be posting it on Craig's List for \$3000.00 next week. Contact Marcia Lawrence, marcialawrence@comcast.net.

Workshops and Seminars

Russ Burden's Photography Tours
Visit russburdenphotography.com. Contact Russ at 303 791-9997, rburden@ecentral.com

Destinations include:

- Apr 19 - 25, 2008 - Monument Valley / Slot Canyons
- May 10 - 16, 2008 - Arches & Canyonlands National Parks
- May 24 - June 2, 2008 - Oregon Coast - 10 day trip
- June 6 - 12, 2008 - Tetons and Yellowstone Natl. Parks in Spring
- Sept. 24-Oct. 3, 2008 - Tetons and Yellowstone Natl. Parks in Fall - 10 days
- Oct. 21 - 26, 2008 - Hunts Mesa - Aerial perspective of Monument Valley and Capital Reef NP for red rocks and fall color.
- Nov. 2 - 8, 2008 - Bryce Canyon and Zion National Parks

- Dec. 10 - 16, 2008 - Bosque Del Apache / White Sands Natl. Mon.

Cathy & Gordon Illg – Workshops:
Adventure Photography 303 237-7086
gordon@advenphoto.com
www.advenphoto.com

- Galapagos, February 4-14
- South Texas Birds, May 5-10
- Wild Horses, May 27-31
- Wildlife Babies, June 16-19
- Alaska Coastal Grizzlies, June 26 – July 3
- Rocky Mtn Wildflowers, July 20-25
- South Dakota Badlands, September 14-19
- Costa Rica, November 10-19

We are offering our NANPA discount to all club members also--\$50.00 discount on less than 5 day tours and \$75.00 discount on all other domestic tours.

James Hager Photography - Small Group Photo Safaris
www.JamesHagerPhoto.com
James@JamesHagerPhoto.com

- Bats in Aug 2008: shoot bats in flight in a controlled setting, Arizona, Aug 30- Sept 3
- Kenya in Oct 2008: Classic safari to Samburu and Masai Mara National Reserves, 16 days, Oct 16-31
- Winter Wildlife in Jan 2009: wildlife models in winter (wolf, Siberian tiger, snow leopard, mountain lion, lynx ...), Montana, Jan 25-29

Mile High Wildlife Photography Club

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Competition: *Russ Burden*
Competition Scoring: *Chris Loffredo*
Competition Entries/Judging Coordinator:
Fred Stearns 303 400-0385
Snacks/Greeters: *Nancy Stocker 303-759-4056*
Publicity: *Buzz Soard 303-779-9933*
Library: *Betsy Lamb 303-841-2565*
Webmaster: *James Hager*
<http://www.mhwpc.org> johager@earthlink.net

BOARD of DIRECTORS

Rita Summers * Russ Burden
Chuck Winter * Fi Rust * Frank Weston

February Meeting

Wednesday February 13
7:00 pm – 10:00 pm
at
THE WILDLIFE EXPERIENCE
10035 South Peoria

Competition: Digital

January Attendance: 58
