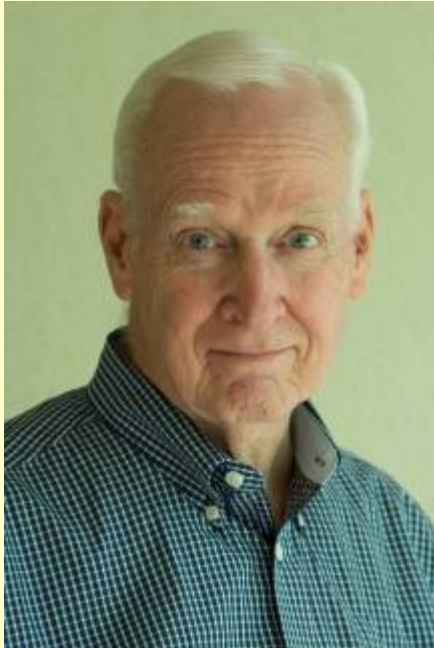


## Focus on the Foothills



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From the president...

What a year it's been!

Who would have thought, a year ago, when we put out the signs at NGTC and waited to see how many would show up for that first Foothills meeting that we would today have ninety-three members?

And who could have predicted that in that first year of the club's existence we would have held numerous workshops, gone on some fantastic field trips, hung gallery presentations, conducted charitable events, experienced photo critiques, have a web site and Facebook page, and been the recipients of many informative and entertaining speaker presentations?

I've been told often that the founding of Foothills Photography Group filled a need. After all, we live in an area that has one of the premier photography schools in the state.

I expect that there is truth to that but there is another truth: That need would have gone unfilled had it not been for the club's fantastic Board of Directors. They need to be mentioned here by name: Sharon Alicea, Lane Gresham, Steve Griswold, Jim Johns, Barb Johns, Chuck Lotts, Colby Moore, Wendy O'Connor, and Rich St. John.

And while I'm in the business of recognizing contributors to the club I cannot leave out Jim Loring and Jeff Gulle. These two (both instructors at NGTC) did some behind-the-scenes facilitating that resulted in FPG's meeting at the college. And both of them volunteered their own time to bring presentations to the club meetings.

As president I wish to thank all of the folks mentioned above and, on behalf of the board, give a "thank you" to all you enthusiastic members. You make the meetings and events fun and educational for us all.

And...Merry Christmas!

John Martin

Cover Photo: Marie Neese provided this striking black and white winter scene. If you have an image you think would make a good cover send it to the newsletter editor: [jmartin@hemc.net](mailto:jmartin@hemc.net)

# Merry Christmas

The club's Christmas party was absolutely great! Although the food was marvelous, the fellowship was even better

The picture here (by Barbara Taylor) shows president John Martin reading the text of the "Member of the Year" award given to Colby Moore:



***This Member of the Year Award recognizes and honors Colby Moore for his outstanding volunteer service to Foothills Photography Group. Throughout the year he has selflessly shown a spirit of commitment, professionalism and dedication to the goals of Foothills Photography Group. Through his leadership and***

***willingness to share his considerable knowledge, he has been an inspiration to us all.***

Events like the annual Christmas Party don't happen by themselves. Months of planning and organization by Sharon Alicea and Barb & Jim Johns brought together all of the elements. The club owes them a big THANK YOU for this volunteer effort. And let's not forget Cat and Chuck Lotts who washed and folded all fourteen white table clothes.

## *Just for Beginners!* Blurry Backgrounds

When a photo is created with a blurry background, the main subject is emphasized and given visual importance. The viewer's eye is drawn to the sharp, main subject, because the background contains few distractions. This simplicity can add feelings of depth and drama. Here is some information about producing this technique on purpose.

The basic methods are using a large aperture, a telephoto lens, a macro or close-up lens, and placing the subject far away from the background.

The camera automatically sets a large aperture in its Portrait mode. Alternatively, the photographer can shoot with a large aperture (lens opening) in the aperture priority mode. The result is known as shallow, narrow, or small depth of field. Only a small area of the image looks sharp, which allows the background area to be out of focus to some degree. Thus the portrait subject will appear distinctively sharp against a softer, less distinct background.

A large aperture alone may not be enough to produce the desired level of background blurriness. The use of a telephoto lens causes much more softness in the areas farther away from the subject in focus. The resulting look is characteristic of a shallow depth of field. Typical examples are images of a bird in a tree, a zoo or wild animal taken from a distance, or a sports player on a faraway field.

Close-up photography measures its depth of field in millimeters or fractions of an inch. This is why it is so difficult to photograph a flower or insect in complete sharpness. Any part of the flower or insect that is behind or in front of the focused-on point will be out of focus to some extent. The background itself will be the blurriest area.

The farther away the background, the blurrier it will appear. The understandable reason is that a camera can focus on only one exact point. Everything else is not in complete tack sharp focus. The most blurriness occurs with a large aperture and a telephoto lens.

[Carole Kropscot](#) writes this column for the *PSA Journal*. She has given our club permission to include her articles in *Focus on the Foothills*.



## What a great event!



We competed with a Christmas parade in Cornelia and free Santa pictures all over the county. (Next year we plan to hold the event in early November.) Still there were twenty some odd portraits made.

Sharon was overheard to say: "If we make one portrait we have done what we intended to do."



And the volunteers had a great time also. Happiness was the mood of the day at every portrait set-up station. If you needed a lift, Help-Portrait was the place to be.



As an added bonus Jeff Gulle and Brad Budd put on a studio lighting seminar for the volunteers.

Thanks go out to all the club members, Jeff, and NGTC students who helped make Help Portrait day the success it always is.

The January meeting...January 19.

## Camera Care and Maintenance

Colby Moore will lead a presentation on care of your expensive gear. He'll cover protective cases (Colby is the KING of camera packs.), protection while shooting, storage, cleaning, etc.

John Martin will give a five minute talk on the interesting ways you can create equipment problems when leaving the air conditioned house or entering the warm house.



While all of that is going on Berrie Smith (of Berrie Smith Camera Repair) will be doing professional cleaning on members' cameras. Full camera cleaning is \$30 and lens cleaning is \$10. The camera cleaning includes the sensor, the interior and exterior of the camera, mirrors & mirror box, and the card receivers. Berrie's station will be in the upstairs meeting room.

Be sure to bring your camera/cameras. He will take his first camera at 6:30, e.g., it will probably be mine (John Martin).

The February meeting...February 16.

Check out this web site and you will see why we are excited about having Tom Vadnais speak to our club:  
[www.tomvadnais.com](http://www.tomvadnais.com)



Tom leads the Fall Workshops at the Great Smoky Mountains Institute at Tremont. He is in his fourth year on the Board of Directors of the Georgia Nature Photographers Association. He has been President of the Roswell Photography Society and is a founding board member of the North Georgia Camera Club Council.



Tom's talk to our club is entitled "Photo Gear for Nature Photography."

Hint: There is a lot more to nature photography than lenses as long as your leg.

Some snap shots...



In case you want to really get into macro photography, this is a good starting place. Despite the name there is a lot of information here for the beginner as well as the more experienced. [extreme-macro.co.uk](http://extreme-macro.co.uk)



There is some talk about forming a Special Interest Group (SIG) pertaining to UrBex. For the uninitiated, UrBex (as far as photographers are concerned) is the practice of making images of abandoned buildings and other structures. It often involves trespassing onto private property but, of course, we wouldn't do that. For a good example see Tanya Jacobson-Smith's recent series posted on the Foothills Facebook page. UrBex photos can be quite dramatic and thought provoking. Drop Tanya an email if you are interested. [tanya1951@live.com](mailto:tanya1951@live.com)



November 2015 issue of *Pixology* magazine is now available and can be downloaded by following this link: <http://pixologymag.com/download/November2015.htm>



Club officer elections are coming up in February. If you would like to be an officer of the club or would be willing to serve on the club's board of directors, please drop an email to John Martin ([jmartin@hemc.net](mailto:jmartin@hemc.net)). The board has vacancies for the coming year in the areas of publicity, field trips, newsletter and hospitality.