Issue 1 January, 2020

FOCAL POINTS

VIENNA PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

January Dates to Remember

January 1 -

Annual Washington Gardener Photo Contest January 1-22

January 8 -

7:30-9:30 Speaker Bernard Chen. In the Moment of Inspiration

PSA Interclub Competition starts - deadline Jan. 19

Glennies Nature Salon Entry opens

Begin Upload of digital images for Jan. 22 competition

January 19 -

PSA deadline 11:59

Deadline for Jan. 22 competition

January 22 -

7:30 - Competition night. Themes - Peacefulness, Abstracts, Open digital and Open prints

January 26 -

Glennies Nature Salon Deadline

Bernard Chen

We are delighted to have Bernard Chen as our speaker on January 8th, the topic will be, In the Moment of Inspiration

Bernard is an award-winning landscape photographer based in Northern Virginia. He has unlocked a passion that combines a fascination with the visual image with a profound appreciation for the natural world. Driven by a burning desire to become ever more accomplished, creative and ambitious in his photography, he rapidly advanced his skills and began to discover the true potential of what he held in his hands.

Please join us for a fun and informative evening with Mr. Chen!

Congratulations to Kathleen Furey!!!

Kathleen Furey won first place in the Photo Arts Show at Nature Vision Photo Expo this year!!

WOW!! How awesome is this!! When you see Kathleen please be sure to extend your congratulations to her!!!

MEMBER IN THE NEWS!

Vienna Arts Society
presents
Nature's Wings
by **Julie Cochran**
December 3, 2019 - February 1, 2020
Tuesday - Saturday
513 Maple Ave. West
Vienna, Va. 22180

I gathered these images from my vast collection to show nature's beauty and peace of our winged friends with whom we share this world.
From birds of prey, like the Eurasian long eared owl, to the delicate monarch butterfly, they all show their strength, grace and beauty. Even when not in flight.

Antietam Battlefield

Thank you to Paul Laurenza who was the first to respond to my request for information for my first newsletter! On the first Saturday of December, Antietam Battlefield is lit up with 23,000 luminaries in memory of the 23,000 soldiers killed, wounded, or missing in the worst single day loss of life in our country's history. I did not know that they did this and after seeing Paul's photos it will definitely be on my short list of places to see this impressive and memorable display. To see more of Paul's photos from his visit please see his Facebook page. Even though Paul took his photos from inside his car, I think you will agree that the meaning of the night has not been lost.

HOLIDAY PARTY!!!

The 2019 official VPS Christmas party took place on Saturday, Dec. 14. Our host was Gary Perlow who kindly opened his beautiful house to our members for the occasion. There were approximately 30 in attendance, food was available in abundance, the wine and beer flowing, and everyone was enjoying a good evening with a feast and congenial company. Carol Carrol had organized the details and. instead of the usual photo competition, we had an exchange of Christmas ornaments. Participants each had a number and chose a package when their number was called. It proved to be a popular event.

Many thanks are due to Gary for providing such lovely surroundings for our annual Christmas celebration, and for those members who were unable to attend, you were missed and we send you best wishes for a very happy holiday season and look forward to seeing everyone again in the New Year.

Big thanks to Patricia Deege for the lovely article and the following photos!

Conowingo Dam by Paige Counts

The hydroelectric Conowingo Dam is in Darlington, MD. Every winter, well over 100 Bald Eagles gather at this dam on the lower Susquehanna River to feast on fish which are sucked through the turbines as the dam generates electricity. I believe there were about the same number of photographers, shoulder to shoulder, along the fence at the river's edge!

Evidently, when the fish go through the dam's turbines, they are somewhat stunned and are easy prey for the eagles because they float near the surface for a while. When an eagle swoops in and snatches a fish, immediately one or two other eagles give chase and try to steal the bounty. The eagles move fast and capturing these battles is a challenge but can yield you the "money shot" of your day! I will be going back to give myself a second chance!

Although the vantage point for birders (either with binoculars or cameras) is terrific, the action is generally rather far away. I was shooting with a 600mm lens and then cropped the images for a closer look. The exception was when one eagle with a fish, escaped to the trees directly behind the viewing area. I was able to get what felt like a close-up of him scowling at the buzzard who was hoping to share!

Some advise:

- Arrive before dawn to get a prime spot along the overlook. You will also capitalize on the sun's direction on the rocks where the birds are sitting.
- Bring food and water. There are Don's John's but no concessions.
- Be patient—the dam releases water a few times a day (announced by loud horns and flashing lights) but there are long lulls between feeding frenzies. Many people had chairs.
- Call the Conowingo Dam's info line after 5PM for the next day's operating schedule @ 888-457-4076. They do warn that the times frequently change!
- Peak viewing for Eagles is from November to February

VERY IMPORTANT
If you put "Conowingo Dam" into your GPS, you will get to the dam but NOT the viewing area where you want to be.
Instead put in:
Conowingo Dam's Fisherman's Park, 2569 Shures Landing Road, Darlington, MD.

It is truly unbelievable! Paige Count