

LOCAL BUZZ

"Uniquely Monroe" Photo Project Showcases Monroe Camera Club Talent

In 1000 A.D., the pinhole camera set the stage for photography as we know it today. This device—nothing more than a box, really—projected an inverted image when light passed through a hole cut out of the side. Since then, the world has experienced the first panoramic, underwater, disposable, and digital cameras. These impressive feats bely the camera's early and humble origins.

While photography may have started simply enough, it is today an absorbing pastime for many. Members of the Monroe Camera Club know all about the photography bug. For more than 30 years, this group has journeyed to famous, infamous and even obscure places in Monroe County that make for arresting photos.

Here's the way the club works: at monthly meetings, all members receive an assignment they can photograph any way they want. At the following monthly meeting, photos are then critiqued and first, second and third place winners named. A spot is also reserved for honorable mention.

"We name winners for each of the three categories we judge," explains Ben Anderson, webmaster and former president of the club. "The categories are Assignment, Open and Photo Art. Anything goes in Photo Art. A person can use Photoshop, special filters and other effects as long as it's their original work. Assignment and Open categories are pretty traditional in most camera clubs."

The non-traditional aspect of the Monroe Camera Club is the way in which members perceive this community. They seek to promote the people, places and events that are uniquely Monroe. This theme is so important that it became a six-month project, known simply as Uniquely Monroe, developed by Winnie Anderson, club secretary.

Winnie says, "I was in bed, awake as usual, and thought, 'Wow, you know what?'"

The 'you know what' related to 55 places/events Winnie and her husband feel epitomize Monroe. They wrote each on a slip of paper that went into a large fish bowl. Each camera club member then drew three slips and, for the next six months, repeatedly visited their selected places. Spots included the River Raisin National Battlefield Park, Monroe Bank & Trust, Erie Orchards and Cider Mill, and the River Raisin Riverwalk.

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"Uniquely Monroe," continued

Members photographed at all times of day and in all weather, then submitted the photos they liked best for judging.

"Usually members judge our contests," Winnie explains. "But we had outsiders for this one."

Judges for this monumental contest included local photographer Carey Crays, Monroe County Convention and Tourism Bureau President John Patterson and Monroe Public Access Television Director Milward Beaudry.

"We tried to get diverse representatives of Monroe," says Lana Emerson, president of the Monroe Camera Club.

The Uniquely Monroe project will be on display at Monroe City Hall from March 27 to April 10. All 51 photos submitted for the contest are also available for viewing on the club's website at monroecameraclub.weebly.com.

Winners are as follow:

- 1st place:** Ben Anderson, "Monroe County Courthouse"
2nd place (tie): Winnie Anderson, "Washington Street House"
Lana Emerson, "Santa's Arrival at Christmas in Ida"
3rd place (tie): Winnie Anderson, "The L.H.M. Mother House"
Cindy Buckley, "Sawyer Homestead"

In addition to the Uniquely Monroe exhibit, monthly photos from the camera club are always on display at Dorsch Library, 18 E First Street.

"Our assignments make us look at things very differently," Winnie says. "Even after it's finished, you still think about it. Like the way a lone tree looks in a field or an old barn."

Lana agrees. "We take hundreds of photos each month. It's a learning experience. I always learn new techniques from other members. We also critique photos during our meetings to help us improve."

For more information about the Monroe Camera Club, please visit their website or call Lana Emerson at (734) 693-3210. The club consistently seeks new members, and guests are welcome at meetings held the last Thursday of every month at First Presbyterian Church of LaSalle, 13007 South Dixie Hwy.

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UNIQUELY MONROE PHOTO CONTEST WINNERS



1st place "Monroe County Courthouse" by Ben Anderson



2nd Place tie
"Santa's Arrival at Christmas in Ida"



2nd place tie "Washington Street House" by Winnie Anderson



3rd Place tie "The L.H.M. Mother House" by Winnie Anderson



3rd Place tie "Sawyer Homestead" by Cindy Buckley