

PSA Conferences... My View



By Marty Welter

Well, another conference has come and gone and I wanted to take a look back from a bit of a different perspective. I have been a PSA member since January of 2015 and this was my third conference. My first one was in Yellowstone. It was not only my first conference but I volunteered to help out as a “Staff Photographer” under the guidance of **O. Truman Holtzclaw, APSA**. The experience was a good fit for me as I

am used to photographing large events and have some good organizational skills and workflow. It was a great learning experience and at the 2017 Pittsburgh Conference I was able to put into action some of the things I learned. That was also the first conference for which I was in charge of the staff photographers. Again, I came away with a whole new outlook on ways to improve on the task at hand.

So, what is a Conference Staff Photographer, you may ask? Well, it is our job to document all of the activities that happen throughout the conference including meetings, workshops, tours and awards ceremonies, not to mention the guest speakers and receptions, print galleries, vendor areas and so much more. This year I was assisted by **Richard Lynch** of Salt Lake City, who is a brand new PSA member. Like me, he volunteered to help out at his first conference! From the moment we arrived, we were both ready, cameras in hand, to start capturing images. Between the two of us and a few others who contributed, we ended up with around 2000 + images. There are many individuals, committees, divisions and groups that need these images for their newsletters, websites, the *PSA Journal* and there are many other uses after the conference...



the challenge is how to get the images in the hands of those who need them as quickly as possible. After the Pittsburgh Conference, I was struggling with this issue. One part of my photography business is to build good, basic websites so I took it upon myself to create a new website to get all of these images in the hands of those who need them... www.psaconferencepictures.org was born. If you visit the website, you will see images from Pittsburgh and now Salt Lake City. Follow the instructions and you will be able to view and download the images as needed.

Now that we have that out of the way, let me share some of my thoughts and views on how this year's conference went from my perspective. It certainly was a busy time for me; in fact quite a few attendees noted that I seemed to be everywhere. I would jokingly answer that there were really three of me. All kidding aside, I did keep myself and Rich busy but that was our job. We got to enjoy much of the conference along with all of the work. The highlight of the trip for me was the Sunday Morning Sunrise Wild Horse Tour. In my other life, I am a professional rodeo photographer, so this is the one tour I did not want to miss. I was really excited and fortunate to be able to come away from the tour with some awesome pictures that left even some of our societies best photographers complimenting me on them. It made me feel really good. In fairness, along with being in the right place at the right time, I did have my horse sense advantage working in my favor.

There were three great evening presentations with a packed room for each of them. They all had their specialties and offered great tips and advice on how to improve our own photography. The vendor area was great with Canon, Olympus, Tamron, Panasonic and Hunt's Photo leading the group and rounded out by Rob's Wild Horse Tours and his The Vest Guy business, Wilderness Photographic Safaris, PSA's own store and much more. One of my favorite areas was the Print





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Galleries including the main Print Room, the PSA Print Collection and the Youth Showcase. All of these areas are so inspiring and impressive with the amount of talent we have in our Society along with the Youth Showcase, the upcoming talent we have to look forward to.

There were so many tours throughout the week that no one could make them all but I know in talking with my fellow conference goers, that all of the tours were great in their own way. Antelope Island was a favorite stop for many, including myself. Other tours included Temple Square, the State Capital, Silver Lake, the Salt Lake City Zoo, Weber Valley Train Ride and Red Butte Garden. If you were bored, it was your own fault.

One of the great things about being a conference photographer is that you get to interact with pretty much everyone at one time or another during the week. It affords an opportunity to get to know members from all over the world as we are now truly an



international society; I believe 13 different countries were represented this year. I got to visit with old friends I have met in past years and make new friends who I look forward to seeing again next year. Looking back not only through my lens but also with open eyes, this year's conference was a great success because of all of the hard working volunteers that make it happen. If you could not make it this year, I hope you can attend the 2019 Conference in Spokane Washington. If you really want a rewarding experience, step up and volunteer to help out for at least a couple of days. PSA is on a new path for conferences and you don't want to miss out on all the exciting times to come.

Until Next Year...

