Branching Out '87: A Retrospective

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Branching out '87, the 57th Annual Meeting of the Biological Photographic Association (BPA) was held recently in Ann Arbor, Michigan. As the theme indicates, the meeting attempted to reach out and bring into its many functions disciplines and ideas that were fresh and new. The feedback from the over 275 attendees was that the goal was indeed reached.

One of the major goals of the association is education; this meeting provided a wide array of opportunities for the novice as well as the advanced professional. Workshops were offered in such topics as videotape production, portrait photography and even subspecialties such as Otolaryngological Photography. Being a group of image makers who are constantly dealing with changing needs, additional workshops were held on topics such as natural science photography, electronic publishing and computer graphics. SlideTek of Larkspur CA, a computer graphic company, put on a well received workshop that offered a hands-on opportunity for the participants.

Major Goal

The scientific program was very solid this year, with the emphasis on bringing in related and new disciplines. The keynote speaker was Alan Paller, president of AUI Datographics of Arlington VA, whose message was that the future is exciting for us in the visual production business, and should be looked upon with great anticipation. We can expect that the computer will be asked to provide more functions than ever anticipated in the slide making business, and that more and more of us will be users.

Additional speakers included Emeret Leith, considered by many to be the father of holography; Dick Massey with “Photographing the Mexican Osprey,” and Curtis Manning of Grand Valley State, who demonstrated the use of a PC to do animation. It was fascinating to watch as graphics were asked to move and communicate on the big auditorium screen.

Another interesting aspect of the program was the presentation of papers by three major providers of educational opportunities for scientific or, I should say, future scientific photographers. These papers by Bill DuBis of Rochester Institute of Technology, Warren Criss of Bellvue Community College and James Bectot of The Brooks Institute provided future employers a glance at the programs that are preparing future employees.

Commercial Exhibit

The commercial exhibit was very solid, with over 20 vendors showing their wares. Some comments expressed were that, as a whole, the members of BPA are well educated users. They know what they need, how to make it work and how much they can afford. The show was comprised of such respected manufacturers as Kodak, Ilford, Olympus and Kreonite and many other concerns too numerous to mention here. If repeat performance is any indicator of satisfaction, all have agreed to participate at next year's meeting in Rochester, New York.

One of the showcases of the meeting is the professional photo salon, which always draws a lot of attention. This year's show of 125 prints, slides and videotapes judged...
to be accepted for display and/or award was presented in a beautiful lobby.

The general illustrative category seemed to stand out this year. With more emphasis by institutions to market their services, our membership is being asked to create imagery that is helpful in communicating such concepts as Patient Friendly, Concerned, and Doctor. The Medical News Award — the print that is deemed strongest entry — went to Alan Arellano and Kent Spiry for an illustrative photograph of a surgical instrument in motion.

Every year the association bestows the Louis Schmidt Award to the person deemed by committee to have served the association the most through goodwill and service. This year the honor went to Martin Scott, FPBA of Eastman Kodak Company. Martin has contributed so much and been such a friend to so many FPBA members that it would be impossible to even begin to touch base with all that he has done for the association.

Officers for the 1987-88 year were sworn in as well: Dan Patton, RBP, FPBA; president; David Gray, RBP, FPBA; vice-president; Phil Foster, secretary-treasurer; Board of Governors — Gale Spring, Lola Parr, Bob Turner, RBP; Board of Registry — Patricia Barber, RBP, Paul Greenwood, RBP; James Henderson, RBP; Ken Michaels is past president.

Another function at each yearly meeting is the conferring of new RBP, a board certification by examination administered by FPBA. This year's recipients were Scott Dobhal, Jordan Denner, Charles Hodgecock, E. Alexander McDonald, Robert Reidlander, Dale Roddick, Warren Schmidt, Brenda Velanda.

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