

# The Nikonian

## ANPAT Special Edition



eZine

54

[www.nikonians.org](http://www.nikonians.org)



# Contents

- 3 Editorial**
- 5 Membership**
- 6 ANPAT-12 Gallery of Images**
- 44 Behind the ANPAT experience - by Darrell Young (DigitalDarrell)**
- 48 Photo Ninja Review by Ernesto Santos (esantos)**
- 53 Photo Pro Shop Specials**
- 54 Calendar**

## ON OUR COVER:

Our cover page image was taken by Dennis Owens (DennisOwens) a few days after the 12th Annual Nikonians Photo Adventure Trip (ANPAT) concluded. Shown (left to right) are Steve Al-Naama (flyfishadict), Dennis Owens and Ruedi Staehli (ruedi). Dennis tells us the only light for the three faces in this image comes from the camera monitor screens. Full details on this shot can be found in our ANPAT Gallery of Images starting on page 6.

**This Page:** Ken Mueller (kenm99) saw interesting patterns in the sand during an early morning ANPAT-12 excursion and captured this image with his Nikon D800E and AF-S NIKKOR 24mm f/1.4G ED lens. His aperture setting was f/16 and shutter speed was 1/60th sec using an ISO of 100.

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**JRP**  
Administrator  
Charter Member  
Co-Founder  
32,092 posts

## ANPAT 12 "A solid success"

Our 2012 Annual Nikonians Photo Adventure Trip to New Mexico will live long in our memories as one of the most diverse in over a decade. If you were a history buff, you got plenty by exploring Route 66 attractions. If you were an avia-

tion enthusiast what better way to go airborne with a camera than with a few close friends in a cramped basket floating in the wind surrounded by hundreds of balloons. The champagne bottle in the basket was an extra special option.

If you wanted to re-live photographic history, you could not beat the opportunity to walk in the footsteps of Ansel Adams.

This ANPAT by its very nature as the 12th such outing brought a sense of "reunion" as much as meeting new friends. As each year passes, we are seeing good friends for the second, fourth and even tenth time in a familiar pattern that has for many become the highlight of each year.

Those of us who are long-time veterans of the ANPATs are very happy to see that "reunion" aspect but we are excited about the opportunities for meeting new members for the first time. Most importantly, our motto: Learn, Share, Inspire, was embodied by the participants once again, however with a much greater awareness, making the benefits of this unique format more abundant and obvious.

In this special edition of our eZine, we celebrate that balance of old hands and new blood. We are especially mindful that once we form these strong friendship

bonds we are also adopting a sense of family concern when we hear bad news. A good example is our good friend David Mathre (david\_mathre). David returned from the ANPAT to his New Jersey, USA home just in time for the super storm created by Hurricane Sandy. Even with the hardships of downed trees and power outages around him, David responded to our annual call for images letting us know he was hoping to get his photos together. The challenges in his area obviously took precedence and unfortunately he didn't make it in this issue. Our best wishes go out to all members of the Nikonians community who had to face the wrath of that storm and the recovery aftermath.



*Bo and me at the Very Large Array. D700 on MAGICA 3.3, selftimer, 14-24mm f/2.8G AF-S @ 24mm, f8, 1/800s, ISO 200.*

Our 12th ANPAT was greatly enhanced by the coordination and hosting efforts of Nikonians Academy Director Mike Hagen (Mike\_Hagen) and that was obvious from the many great comments we received from attending members. Mike's contribution to the success of this ANPAT is enormous and my dear friend and co-founding partner Bo Stahlbrandt (bgs) joins me in thanking him for his stellar performance. Moderator Eric Bowles and Nikonians Academy Instructor Efraín Padró also aided us with their previous scouting of the area. Thank you.

Now, some after action gear notes: When each ANPAT concludes we ask our attending members to give us their gear list to complete our field notes. This helps us track the trends in equipment preferences year to year.

Our trip to New Mexico shows a strong trend towards an all-Gitzo tripods usage, most transformed into MAGICA integrated camera support systems. The D4 and the latest D800 and D800E DSLRs together outnumbered the D3, D700 and D300 and D7000 backup bodies among participants.

As for lenses, the 24-70mm f/2.8G ED IF AF-S came up as the most used lens, with the 14-24mm f/2.8G ED IF AF-S as second, followed by the 70-200mm f/2.8G AF-S. Several 200-400mm f/4G AF-S were also present. More than half in attendance used Neutral Density Graduated filters.

With another successful ANPAT under our belts, the next step is planning for next year. In the meantime, from Bo and yours truly, we wish you a safe and Happy Holiday season.

J. Ramón Palacios (jrp)

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# Membership levels

Nikonians offers several levels of membership. Of course there is a free, basic membership good for a 25 day trial period, but we invite you to enjoy the fun and benefits of Silver, Gold and Platinum membership levels providing you with sell & buy opportunities, image upload, free shipping and more. Nikonians is a not-for-profit community. All capital generated through our operations (The Nikonians Community, The PhotoProShop and The Nikonians Academy) are reinvested to sustain our growth. Each membership counts and we take this opportunity to thank you for your support!

Bo Stahlbrandt and J. Ramón Palacios, Founders of Nikonians



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## ANPAT-12 Gallery Favorites

### The 12th Annual Nikonians Photo Adventure Trip

ANPAT took more than 30 members to New Mexico, USA for a visit to a photographer's paradise.

Nikonians Academy Director Mike Hagen (Mike\_Hagen) coordinated the adventure with the assistance of co-founders J. Ramón Palacios (jrp) and Bo Stahlbrandt (bgs).

Highlights of the October 13-20 trip included visits to Taos, Santa Fe, White Sands National Monument and the Albuquerque Balloon Fiesta.

This is just a sampling of images. If you want to see more, check out the [12th ANPAT Gallery](#) pages. They are divided into three categories: Nikonians Friends, Balloons & Landscapes and Wildlife Images.

Many of the following images can also be found in the Gallery, and in this special edition eZine we have the added impressions of our photographers. They have provided field notes on each shot, explaining their thoughts and impressions while shooting (as well as noting some technical details).



#### Albert Esschendal (alberte)

##### Field Notes:

Expect the unexpected.

Taking a pit stop for gas and coffee in town, we saw this roadrunner walking on the road looking for insects. Having my AF-S 200-400mm f/4 lens in my camera bag in the van and I made a one of few wildlife photographs of this ANPAT12 with my 24-70 mm lens thru the glass window of the coffee shop.

Nikon D4 Camera, AF-S 24-70mm f/4G lens, focal length 70mm, Aperture f/5.6, shutter time 1/400s, ISO 100, Exp.Comp. -0.3 EV, photographed handheld.

## ANPAT-12 Gallery Favorites



### Albert Esschendal (alberte)

#### Field Notes:

As part of the ground crew (during our visit to the Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta) we followed our balloon from take off to the in-between stop to exchange Nikonians members for their turn to get airborne. So after the balloon pilot explained the location where he wanted to land, we raced to be at that location before the landing. I stormed out of the van to setup my gear for the landing and here is the photograph of a very happy Dennis Owens (DennisOwens) who had the time of his life!

Nikon D4 Camera, AF-S 200-400mm f/4G lens, focal length 210mm, Aperture f/5.6, shutter time 1/160s, ISO 100, Exp.Comp. -0.3 EV mounted on Gitzo GT3541XLS with Markins M20 ballhead and Wimberley Sidekick.

### Dennis Owens (DennisOwens)

#### Field Notes:

After ANPAT12, three of us from Van 3 continued on to Moab Utah. Ruedi Staehli, Steve Al-Naama and I spent another four days shooting Moab, Arches and Canyon Lands National Park. Here we are at 05:00 in front of Balanced Rock. We are only lit by the small screens on our cameras. The Milky Way and Orion are clearly visible in this shot. The lights in the background are from the town of Moab.

EXIF: Camera: Nikon D3, Lens: 10.5mm, Aperture: f/2.8, Shutter speed: 30 Sec, ISO: 3200





## ANPAT-12 Gallery Favorites



### Dennis Owens (DennisOwens)

#### Field Notes:

This is the shot we were taking in the photo showing us aiming at the skies at Balanced Rock. Star trails are always fun to shoot. During this 30-minute exposure we were always worried about someone coming down the path with a flashlight, which would disrupt this shot. Calculated at ISO 800 at f/8.0 for 10 minutes as a test shot, I realized that if I wanted to have the star trails I would need at least 30 minutes. So to triple the time I brought the ISO down two stops and opened the Aperture up one stop. I am very happy with the results.

EXIF: Camera: Nikon D3s, Lens: 14-24mm at 14mm, Aperture: f/5.6, Shutter speed: 30 Minutes, ISO: 200



### Dennis Owens (DennisOwens)

#### Field Notes:

Here is a shot of the Van 3 "NikAliens." What a fun group of guys to hang out with for a week! This shot shows the size of these giant antennas at the (VLA) Very Large Array. This is one of some 27 antennas. At 25 meters across, you could fit two large houses in this antenna.

EXIF: Camera: Nikon D800, Lens: 24-70mm, at 38mm, Aperture: f/22, Shutter speed: 1/60 Sec, ISO: 50



## ANPAT-12 Gallery Favorites



### Dennis Owens (DennisOwens)

#### Field Notes:

ANPAT12 for me lasted 30 days. I had a great time at ANPAT12 in New Mexico and learned a great deal from so many of us in Van 3. My ANPAT started on the 29th of September with Dr. Patrick Buick as we traveled in my RV from California to New Mexico. After ANPAT 12 I continued my travels through Colorado, Utah, Nevada and California. This photo was shot just prior to ANPAT at the parking lot at the Grand Canyon. The Milky Way was creating a rainbow over the RV and I just had to capture it. The only man-made light here is from two Mac Book Pro Laptops with the intensity of the screens turned down to the lowest level. It may be hard to see in this small version of the original shot, but Doc and I are in the RV raising a glass to celebrate our "Bucket List" adventure.

EXIF: Camera: Nikon D800, Lens: 10.5mm, Aperture: f/2.8, Shutter speed: 30 Sec, ISO: 3200

### Dennis Owens (DennisOwens)

Field Notes: This was a great day at ANPAT12 as we shot the Albuquerque Balloon Fiesta. An impressive site as over 700 hot air balloons launched from this field. This is a shot of the Van 3 guys minus our beloved Doc Buick.

EXIF: Camera: GoPro HD2, Lens: 2.5mm, Aperture: f/2.8, Shutter speed: 1/1400 Sec, ISO: 100

#### Comments:

As a few guys have in their signature block in Nikonians... "Nikonians is the second best investment after my camera." This is true for me too. The community is the best photographic community in the world run by some very caring people. I have learned a great deal as I travel deeper into my passion of photography. It is always a lot of fun being with, sharing and learning with fellow Nikonians.

Suggestion for ANPAT 13 locations: Europe is on my list. If I can help set it up I will.



## ANPAT-12 Gallery Favorites



### Gary Poole (gpoole)

#### Field Notes:

Nikonians in the Other Balloon. Twenty eight of the 32 ANPAT participants took the optional balloon ride. We used two balloons with two hops each. The balloon in this picture was larger than the one I rode in. Our basket only had five or six passengers. This is other second hop group. Jim Davie (jay dee) is looking up at us; Steve Al-Naama (flyfishaddict) is at his left. Handheld matrix metered shot with no exposure correction. Extracted from the embedded JPG with PhotoMechanic. No post processing.

EXIF: Camera: D800e, Lens: AF VR Zoom 28-300mm f/3.5-5.6G IF-ED @ 300mm, Aperture: f/8, Shutter speed: 1/160, ISO: 100

### Gary Poole (gpoole)

#### Field Notes:

Steeple, San Felipe de Neri Church. San Felipe de Neri Church is a frequently photographed building in Old Town Albuquerque. I wanted a different view than most people would photograph. The dark blue sky makes it look like I used a polarizer, but I did not. "Sunny 16" calculations confirm this. This is a handheld matrix metered shot with no exposure correction. I extracted it from the embedded JPG with PhotoMechanic. Post processed with Capture NX2.

#### EXIF:

Camera: D800e, Lens: AF VR Zoom 28-300mm f/3.5-5.6G IF-ED @ 82mm, Aperture: f/8, Shutter speed: 1/500, ISO: 100





## ANPAT-12 Gallery Favorites



### Gary Poole (gpoole)

#### Field Notes:

Rio Grande River from White Rock Overlook. We saw the Rio Grande from several vantage points during ANPAT. This was one of the most expansive views. The early morning side light and the mist above the river make this an interesting shot. Processed in Capture NX2.

#### EXIF:

Camera: D800e, Lens: AF-S Zoom 80-200mm f/2.8D @ 105mm, Aperture: f/5.6, Shutter speed: 1/100, ISO: 100

### Gary Poole (gpoole)

#### Field Notes:

Heating Up the Balloon. The balloon ride was one of the highlights of ANPAT. This is the pilot Murray Conrad preparing our balloon for launch. First, the balloon is filled with air from a large electric fan. Then the pilot turns on the burners to heat the air and cause the balloon to rise. This is a handheld matrix metered shot with no exposure correction. I extracted it from the embedded JPG with PhotoMechanic. No post processing.

#### EXIF:

Camera: D800e, Lens: AF VR Zoom 28-300mm f/3.5-5.6G IF-ED @ 44mm, Aperture: f/8, Shutter speed: 1/320, ISO: 1600





## ANPAT-12 Gallery Favorites



### Gary Poole (gpoole)

#### Field Notes:

Adobe Building, Old Mesilla. Adobe (or fake Adobe) is the most common architecture in New Mexico. To me this building says this is really New Mexico. This was a block off the square in the center of old town. Handheld shot processed in Capture NX2.

EXIF: Camera: D800e, Lens: AF VR Zoom 28-300mm f/3.5-5.6G IF-ED @ 72mm, Aperture: f/8, Shutter speed: 1/200, ISO: 100

#### Comments:

I went on my first ANPAT (ANPAT 6 in the Smokies) primarily based on a comment from Pete Wilson saying that he would go on every ANPAT that he was physically able to attend. This was my 6th ANPAT and I feel the same way. I'll keep attending as long as I'm physically able. I'm now 70, so I think I still have a few years to go.

ANPAT 12 was interesting because it wasn't just scenic wonders. The Balloon Fiesta and the architectural opportunities in the "old town" areas provided a great mix.



## ANPAT-12 Gallery Favorites



### Jim Davie (jay dee)

#### Field Notes:

Comment: Sunrise on the Dunes. Early morning I was on the dunes at White Sands National Monument with Tom Wicks. The sun was just working its way above the mountains behind us. This great light lasted only a short time before the sun took cover behind the clouds.

#### EXIF:

Camera: D800, Lens: 70-200 f2.8 at 130mm, Aperture: f8, Shutter speed: 1/160, ISO: 400



### Jim Davie (jay dee)

#### Field Notes:

Comment: Tent Rocks. This is at Tent Rocks National Monument. I was hiking with Dr. Michael J. Hare (docmike3s) and asked him to hike slowly through this canyon entry. I liked the leading lines of the canyon walls and wanted to capture him where the lines came together. The shaded light was bouncing against the walls to create a very soft pleasing light.

#### EXIF:

Camera: D3s, Lens: 14-24 f2.8 at 14mm, Aperture: f8, Shutter speed: 1/80, ISO:500

## ANPAT-12 Gallery Favorites



### Jim Davie (jay dee)

#### Field Notes:

I call this Megatron. National Radio Astronomy Observatory (NRAO) Very Large Array (VLA) radio telescope. We shot here in late morning light. This facility is huge and amazing. This telescope reminds me of a 'Megatron' type creature. The monochrome conversion by Nik makes the environment appear even more out of this world to me.

#### EXIF:

Camera: D800, Lens: 14-24 f2.8 at 14mm, Aperture: f11, Shutter speed: 1/1000s, ISO: 320

### Jim Davie (jay dee)

#### Field Notes:

Old Town Albuquerque. Midday light. I liked the Santa Fe colours and texture of this café. Tried a number of different perspectives and liked the alignment of the door and the clouds of this one best.

#### EXIF:

Camera: D3s, Lens: 14-24 f2.8 at 20mm, Aperture: f13, Shutter speed: 1/160, ISO: 200





## ANPAT-12 Gallery Favorites



### Jim Davie (jay dee)

#### Field Notes:

Albuquerque Balloon Fiesta. Shooting with Tom Wicks, the balloon floated directly overhead. I thought the pin wheel on the balloon was cool from this perspective. Cropped square.

#### EXIF:

Camera: D3s, Lens: 24-70 f2.8 at 34mm, Aperture: f5.6, Shutter speed: 1/250s, ISO: 1000

#### Comments:

ANPAT 12 was my first Nikonian trip. Everything was first rate. Mike Hagen, Bo and Ramón did a super job organizing and leading us to the best locations in New Mexico. My highlight for sure was the White Sands National Monument; a place of incredible beauty! All the other Nikonians were friendly and helpful, my van mates Tom, Mike, Paul, Jim, John and both Garys especially so. Tom and Mike always had a good story to tell in our Van. A trip not soon forgotten, I look forward to attending a future ANPAT and highly recommend it to all other Nikonians.

Suggestion for ANPAT 13 locations: Cuba, Iceland, Yucatan, Hawaii

## ANPAT-12 Gallery Favorites



### James Gould (jgould2)

#### Field Notes:

The Balloon Fiesta in Albuquerque well after sunrise. I was trying to capture the large number of balloons that were in the air, I think they only allowed 750 balloons this year. We were lucky to have beautiful blue skies and little wind.

#### EXIF:

Camera: D3s, Lens: 24-120 f/4, Aperture: f/10, Shutter speed: 1/250, ISO: 400

### James Gould (jgould2)

#### Field Notes:

This photo was of the Dawn Patrol which goes up before the main flight to check weather conditions. Before they went up, they all lit up their balloons in unison. We arrived at the field in Albuquerque way before dawn and so had no trouble finding an excellent place to set up. I wanted to have a little bit of detail surrounding the balloons but the propane burners are so bright it was difficult. I had my ISO up high to minimize motion blur.

#### EXIF:

Camera: D3s, Lens: 70-300 f/4-5.6 VR, Aperture: f/4.5, Shutter speed: 1/60, ISO: 2000





## ANPAT-12 Gallery Favorites



### James Gould (jgould2)

#### Field Notes:

This picture was taken just after sunset at Nob Hill in Albuquerque. I was trying to capture the neon lighting and the ambiance of the converted gas station which still has signs for 'lubrication' and 'service'. This is along the historic Route 66.

#### EXIF:

Camera: D3s, Lens: 24-120 f/4, Aperture: f/8, Shutter speed: 1/20, ISO: 2000

### James Gould (jgould2)

#### Field Notes:

This was a sunrise at White Sands National Monument, near Alamogordo. The ranger let us in a couple of hours early and we got to go to an area that is otherwise restricted. We had some pretty good colors that morning. The focal length was 38mm.

#### EXIF:

Camera: D3s, Lens: 24-120 f/4, Aperture: f/16, Shutter speed: 2sec, ISO: 200



## ANPAT-12 Gallery Favorites



### James Gould (jgould2)

Field Notes: This was taken in Winslow, AZ on my drive to ANPAT12 from Los Angeles, CA. The Eagles' song about "standing on a corner in Winslow, Arizona" seems to be Winslow's main claim to fame. I really liked the huge Route 66 sign in the middle of the intersection although I didn't see any "flatbed Fords." Winslow appears to be one of those towns that got left behind when the interstate replaced Route 66. This shot was taken at 16mm.

EXIF: Camera: D700, Lens: Sigma 12-24 f/4.5-5.6, Aperture: f/16, Shutter Speed: 1/160, ISO: 200

Comments: This was my third ANPAT and as always, a great time was had by all. I was less interested than most in the urban photography aspect of this one but I treated it as one more thing to learn about. I really enjoyed that we saw so much of New Mexico.

### 12th Annual

#### Nikonians Photo Adventure Trip Members:

1. John D. Roach (jdroach)
2. Gary T. Poole (gpoole)
3. Kenneth E. Mueller (kenm99)
4. Herb Brail (hbrail)
5. James Gould (jgould2)
6. David J. Mathre (david\_mathre)
7. Ruedi Staehli (ruedi)
8. John McGarry (jtmcg)
9. James Nichols (JungleJim)
10. James L. Knighten (emi\_fiend)
11. Larry Anderson (mnbuilder49)
12. James C. Eaton (f11)
13. Rajiv Khanna (RofSpark)
14. Robert Herald (teltek)
15. Albert J. Esschendal (alberte)
16. Hal H. Wyman (halwyman)
17. Steve A. Al-Naama (flyfishaddict)
18. Paul D. Ekman (pdekman)
19. Michael J. Hare (docmike3s)
20. Thomas Wicks (pyrpai)
21. Gary Chappel (gchappel)
22. Philip Boggs (Photo\_Phil)
23. Fred S. Morton IV (Fred Morton)
24. Peter F. Wilson (Pete Wilson)
25. Thomas D. Gavin (Rescuedude)
26. Aaron Pillai (apillai)
27. Dennis Owens (DennisOwens)
28. Patrick Buick (profpb)
29. James D. Davie (jay dee)
30. Bo Stahlbrandt (bgs)
31. J. Ramón Palacios (jrp)
32. Mike Hagen (Mike\_Hagen)



## ANPAT-12 Gallery Favorites



**John McGarry (jtmcg)**

Field Notes: Preparing for Flight - The Balloon Fiesta was an embarrassment of riches. It was hard to know where to point the camera with so much activity and color. I got many images from that day that I'm pleased with and I tried to select something that was a little different. I was shooting these balloons because I liked the blue and white balloon with the red, yellow, orange balloons on either side. Then this crew member ran in with his red hat and blue jacket and I thought he added significantly to the composition.

EXIF: Camera: D800, Lens: 24-70 f/2.8 @ 24mm, Aperture: f/5.6, Shutter speed: 1/30s, ISO: 800

**John McGarry (jtmcg)**

Field Notes:

Chimney Rock at Ghost Ranch – We arrived late with less than an hour of daylight. We started hiking the Chimney Rock Trail and I was shooting various compositions including Chimney Rock as I made my way up the trail. Mike Hare caught up with me and we hiked to where we could get a clear shot of Chimney Rock. This is a three frame HDR processed in SNS. Ghost Ranch is a beautiful area and I would love to return some day and explore more of it.

EXIF: Camera: D800, Lens: Nikon 24-70 f/2.8 @70mm, Aperture: f/11, Shutter speed: 1/125, 1/60, and 1/30, ISO: 400



## ANPAT-12 Gallery Favorites



### John McGarry (jtmcg)

#### Field Notes:

White Sands Sunrise - The cloud formations at sunrise were beautiful. I shot a few different compositions and this was my favorite. I wanted to use the 14 mm to capture those beautiful and extensive cloud formations and I saw these clumps of grass with a nice arrangement of foreground, mid ground and background clumps. This is a three frame HDR processed in SNS and further processed in CNX2.

#### EXIF:

Camera: D800, Lens: 14 – 24 f/2.8 @14 mm, Aperture: f/11, Shutter speed: 1/1500, 1/750 and 1/350, ISO: 100

### John McGarry (jtmcg)

#### Field Notes:

Antelope and Antenna – A couple of the vans saw this Pronghorn Antelope in the field next to the exit road from the VLA. I got out of the van and walked down the dirt road opposite the entrance to the VLA. I took a number of shots but liked this one that included one of the antennas. The antenna is a bit soft due to DOF and heat waves rising from the ground but I liked the composition with the diagonal placement of the two major elements.

#### EXIF:

Camera: D800, Lens: 70-200 f/2.8 @ 200mm, Aperture: f/5.6, Shutter speed: 1/2000s, ISO: 400





## ANPAT-12 Gallery Favorites



### John McGarry (jtmcg)

#### Field Notes:

Lone Photographer – On Thursday morning, the light shortly after sunrise was really attractive on the white sand. I wanted to take advantage of the side lighting to emphasize the texture of the sand. I'm not sure I even noticed the Nikonian photographer when I took the shot but when I saw him on the computer, I liked his placement in the bright area. I'm not sure who the photographer is but it looks like it might be Gary Poole.

#### EXIF:

Camera: D800, Lens: 24 – 70 f/2.8 @ 35 mm, Aperture: f/8, Shutter speed: 1/60s, ISO: 100

#### Comments:

This was my second ANPAT. Last year was my first. It's great to get together with fellow Nikonians for a week immersed in photography. It was a very busy week but was well planned and well organized. The camaraderie and photo opportunities make ANPAT a great experience for Nikonians. I hope to attend in the future.

#### Suggestion for ANPAT 13 locations:

Many of the current attendees didn't attend the earlier ANPATs. Maybe some of those should be considered for another ANPAT.

## ANPAT-12 Gallery Favorites



### John Roach (jdroach)

#### Field Notes:

We traveled to Taos Pueblo, New Mexico one morning and photographed where Ansel Adams created some of his iconic images. This image showing the long shadows, ladder and peppers exemplify the special feel of this American Indian Pueblo.

#### EXIF:

Camera: D700 , Lens: 28-75mm Tamron at 65mm, Aperture: f/32, Shutter speed: 1/160s, -1.3 EV, ISO: 400 handheld

### John Roach (jdroach)

#### Field Notes:

This church at Taos Pueblo, made so famous by Ansel Adams, is full of interesting lines. It was a challenge to photograph with so many people milling about, but this one offers an interesting perspective given all the varying lines and the wonderful light.

#### EXIF:

Camera: D700, Lens: 28-75mm Tamron at 52mm, Aperture: f/20, Shutter speed: 1/500s, -1.3 EV, ISO: 400 handheld





## ANPAT-12 Gallery Favorites



### John Roach (jdroach)

#### Field Notes:

Shot in aperture priority with tripod set low to capture the beautiful golden light of early morning at White Sands.

#### EXIF:

Camera: D700, Lens: 28-300mm at 145mm, Aperture: f/36, Shutter speed: 1/13s, ISO: 200

### John Roach (jdroach)

#### Field Notes:

This was the first Sunrise that I captured at White Sands. Indeed, one of the few sunrise images I have captured that I think works so well about how wonderful new light is after the dark of night.

#### EXIF:

Camera: D700, Lens: 28-300mm at 28mm, Aperture: f/4, Shutter speed: 3sec, -0.7 EV, ISO: 800



## ANPAT-12 Gallery Favorites



### John Roach (jdroach)

#### Field Notes:

Handheld image made of San Geronimo Church and converted to Black and White using Lightroom 4, CS5, and Nik Silver Efex.

#### EXIF:

Camera: D700, Lens: 28-75 Tamron at 55mm, Aperture: f/20, Shutter speed: 1/800s, ISO: 800

#### Comments:

Once again, a week of immersion in photography helps us grow and develop in our art and craft. This second ANPAT trip was for me even better than the first that I took last year. I learned from so many excellent photographers to try new things and lavish in listening, experimenting, discussing, sharing, and laughing together with my fellow Nikonians.

This trip further reinforced the soundness of my continued involvement in Nikonians. Thus, I tell everyone that owns Nikons to come visit our online community. It is the best investment after the camera and lenses!



## ANPAT-12 Gallery Favorites



**Ken Mueller (kenm99)**

Field Notes:

Nikonians getting to a spot at White Sands to shoot sunset

EXIF:

Camera: Camera: D800E, Lens: AF-S NIKKOR 16-35mm f/4G ED VR,  
Aperture: f/16, Shutter speed: 1/50, ISO: 100



**Ken Mueller (kenm99)**

Field Notes:

Waiting for the sunrise, some of us took some available light pictures using the vans interior lights.

EXIF: Camera: D800E, Lens: AF-S NIKKOR 24mm f/1.4G ED, Aperture: f/3.5, Shutter speed: 30 sec, ISO: 1600

## ANPAT-12 Gallery Favorites



### Ken Mueller (kenm99)

#### Field Notes:

At the Very Large Array (VLA), some detail of the High Plains Lifter (a special railroad engine used to move the giant antennas).

#### EXIF:

Camera: D800E, Lens: AF-S NIKKOR 16-35mm f/4G ED VR, Aperture: f/8, Shutter speed: 1/50, ISO: 200

### Ken Mueller (kenm99)

#### Field Notes:

Happy man on a balloon. That's J. Ramón Palacios (jrp) in his favorite hooded jacket.

#### EXIF:

D800E, Lens: AF-S NIKKOR 28-300mm f/3.5-5.6G ED VR, Aperture: f/9, Shutter speed: 1/160, ISO: 200





## ANPAT-12 Gallery Favorites



**Mike Hagen (Mike\_Hagen)**

**Field Notes:**

Glass blower. Old Town Albuquerque, NM. This man creates glass balloons for every balloon that flies at the Albuquerque Balloon Fiesta.

**EXIF:**

Camera: Nikon D800, Lens: Nikon 24-70mm f/2.8, Aperture: f/6.3, Shutter speed: 1/80, ISO: 400



**Mike Hagen (Mike\_Hagen)**

**Field Notes:**

Balloons at Sunrise. Albuquerque, NM. Our ANPAT 12 group photographed the farewell mass ascension at the Albuquerque Balloon Fiesta. There are so many balloons taking off at sunrise that it is impossible to photograph it all. I chose to pick a small vignette to show off this amazing spectacle.

**EXIF:**

Nikon D800, Lens: Nikon 70-200mm f/2.8, Aperture: f/4, Shutter speed: 1/125, ISO: 400

## ANPAT-12 Gallery Favorites



### Mike Hagen (Mike\_Hagen)

#### Field Notes:

Cowgirl and her man, Santa Fe, New Mexico. This couple was walking down the street and I asked them if I could take their shot. I asked if they were dressed up for an event and they answered that they always dress this way!

#### EXIF:

Camera: Nikon D800, Lens: Nikon 24-70mm f2.8, Aperture: f/4, Shutter speed: 1/100, ISO: 100



### Mike Hagen (Mike\_Hagen)

#### Field Notes:

San Francisco de Asis Church, Ranchos de Taos. Ansel Adams took a very famous photograph of this church that everyone recognizes. I wanted to photograph the church from a different angle and put my own twist on a famous subject.

#### EXIF:

Camera: Nikon D800, Lens: Nikon 14-24mm f/2.8, Aperture: f/9, Shutter speed: 1/200, ISO: 200



# ANPAT-12 Gallery Favorites

## Mike Hagen (Mike\_Hagen)

### Field Notes:

High Plains Lifter. Very Large Array. This machine is designed to lift the giant radio telescopes and transport them to their anchors at the VLA. The crane is bright red, but I thought the image worked better in black and white.

### EXIF:

Camera: Nikon D800, Lens: Nikon 14-24mm f/2.8, Aperture: f/7.1, Shutter speed: Bracketed, ISO: 100

Comments: Photographing in New Mexico was an incredible experience. I loved the adventure and really enjoyed the camaraderie of shooting with 31 other like-minded photographers. The experience was amazing and I can't wait to do it again next year.



## Patrick "Doc" Buick (ProfPB)

### Field Notes and EXIF data:

Sometimes an old guy needs to rest, so I stayed at the van and was alone with my thoughts. I saw the sky, the dune, the tracks, and my shadow.

I captured the scene to share the solitude of this beautiful place in New Mexico. It was only for 1/2000sec at f/6.3 ISO 200 with my 28-300 at 28mm. My GP-1 said 32 degrees 49' 24.72"N and 16 degrees 16' 6.18"W. I'll be back to this spot.

## ANPAT-12 Gallery Favorites



### Patrick "Doc" Buick (ProfPB)

Field Notes and EXIF data:

Albuquerque's Balloon Fiesta had many shaped balloons and this one needed to be captured to be believed. Used f/8, ISO 400, 1/640sec with my 28-300 at 90mm to fill the 36MP frame of my beloved D800E.



### Patrick "Doc" Buick (ProfPB)

Field Notes and EXIF data:

The sun was setting, and the Sandhill Cranes and White Pelicans filled the Bitter Lake Reservoir causing my van mates to focus their long lenses steadied by tripods.

I focused on these photographers enthralled with another ANPAT. As for me, I'm up closer to my subjects with my D800E using f/5.6, ISO 1600, 1/800sec at 98mm



## ANPAT-12 Gallery Favorites



### Patrick "Doc" Buick (ProfPB)

Field Notes and EXIF data: Balloon on the ground from a different perspective. Nikon D800E, f/3.8, shutter speed: 1/80 sec, program: Aperture priority

Comments: ANPAT 12 was just like all of the other ANPATs I've attended. Not to be missed. I'm already anticipating ANPAT13. The friends, the learning, the sharing, and the sights are what define pleasure, excitement and satisfaction. I know there is another thing that does that too, but on a more serious note: I now am confident that my enthusiasm for ANPATs includes the next one.

Suggestion for ANPAT 13 locations: May I suggest Florida? Twice as many National Parks as New Mexico-- Two. Many State Parks. Features such as the Everglades, Big Cypress, Dry Tortugas, Cape Canaveral, St. Augustine, Key West, Orlando. Beaches everywhere. Birds and wildlife galore. I would be pleased and honored to assist in planning a Florida ANPAT.

### Patrick "Doc" Buick (ProfPB)

Field Notes and EXIF data:

Keeping it simple with no distractions. It's the 2012 Fiesta, October 13th in Albuquerque, NM captured with my D800E, f/5.6 ISO 3200 1/4000sec with my 28-300mm at 300mm.



## ANPAT-12 Gallery Favorites



### Paul Ekman (pdekman)

Field Notes and EXIF data:

This image was taken on the first morning of ANPAT 12 at the Albuquerque Balloon Fiesta. The Fiesta draws a great number of visitors, so we made sure to arrive well before any traffic could cause us problems. Visitors are allowed to wander the grounds and get as close to the balloons as desired, watching teams as they inflate and launch the balloons. This shot is taken with a Nikon D7000 and Tokina 12-24mm f/4 lens. I was at 12mm, f/4, ISO 400 and 1/4 sec shooting from a tripod.

I set up on one end of the balloons, looking down the line, and waited for the moment when all of the balloons were lighted at once. Capturing the bright colors against the predawn sky makes "Dawn Patrol" a favorite event.

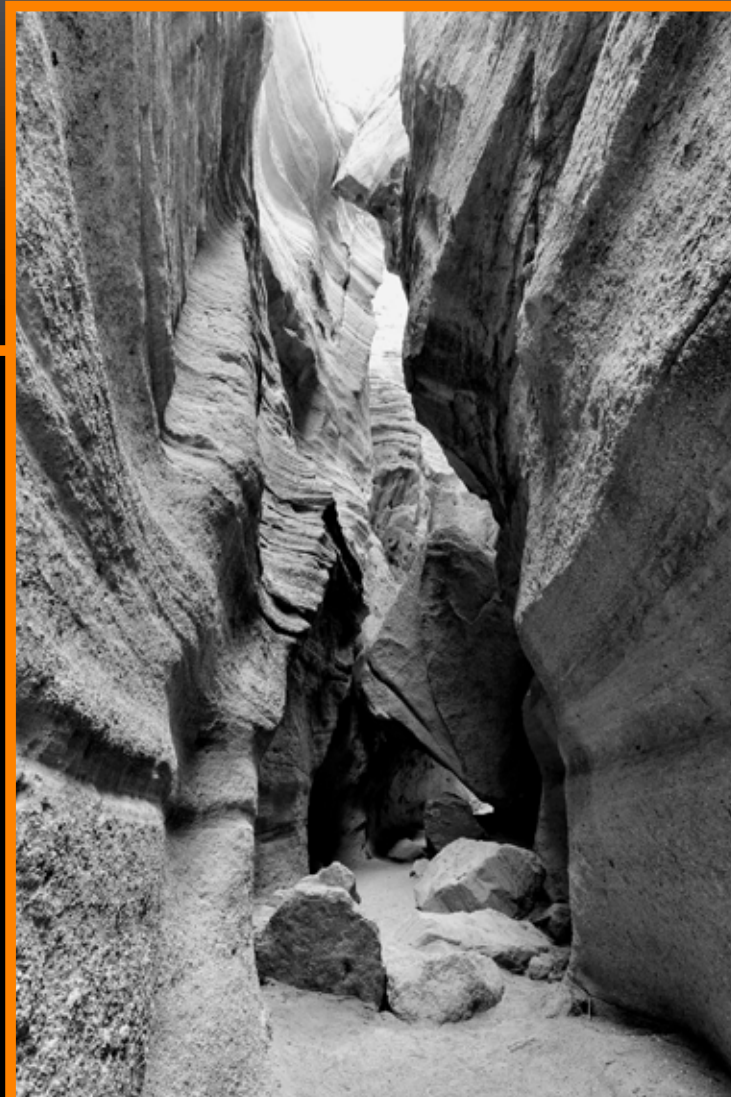
### Paul Ekman (pdekman)

Field Notes and EXIF data:

Our hike into the Kasha-Katuwe Tent Rocks National Monument includes some narrow passages through the canyon. The lighting towards the end of the day provided mostly shaded conditions with not a lot of color on the walls. I converted this image to black and white to highlight the texture and forms of the rock walls.

Can you find the veiled face?

Image was taken with Nikon D7000 and Tokina 12-24mm f/4 lens. ISO100, 12mm, f8, 1/2.5 sec on tripod.





## ANPAT-12 Gallery Favorites



### Paul Ekman (pdekman)

Field Notes and EXIF data:

Upon arriving in Alamogordo late in the afternoon, our van noticed a nice build-up of wispy clouds on the horizon and hoped for a colorful sunset. We set out to find a good view of the surrounding hills, but came upon an abandoned factory site that captured our interest.

As the light began to change, the decaying buildings offered many interesting views and shadows. By sunset, the sky was radiant with color and form.

This structure – a beehive burner – offered an interesting silhouette against the setting sun. This is a seven exposure HDR sequence shot with a Nikon D7000 and Nikon 24-70mm f/2.8 lens, ISO100, 35mm, f/8.0. I processed the image in Nik Software

### Paul Ekman (pdekman)

Field Notes and EXIF data:

One of the great things about this particular ANPAT was the wide variety of scenery it offered. We travelled the state from north to south and photographed nature and urban scenes.

Here's a shot from a quick stop that van 1 made on the way to Taos. This property was full of antiques – gas pumps, cars, signs, and a thousand other items. I liked the look of this rusty beast against the fall colors and rocky background of northern New Mexico. This is a three exposure HDR image taken with Nikon D7000, 24-70mm f/2.8 @ 29mm, ISO100, f/5.6.



## ANPAT-12 Gallery Favorites



### Paul Ekman (pdekman)

#### Field Notes and EXIF data:

Our first morning into White Sands National Monument, and thanks to Nikonians and the National Park Service, we were allowed in at 5 a.m. to view the sunrise from the dunes. What a great opportunity! Here's an often used silhouette, but I couldn't help but have a photographer's form set against the colorful sky.

Thanks to Gary Chappel (gchappel) for accommodating.

This is a four exposure HDR image taken with a Nikon D7000 with Nikon 24-70mm f/2.8 lens. Images were shot at ISO100, 70mm, f/8.0 on a tripod, and processed with Nik Software HDR EFEX Pro 2.

#### Comments:

Another great trip! Thank you for all the coordination and thanks to Mike Hagen for keeping everyone informed, inspired and safe.

### Ruedi Staehli (ruedi)

#### Field Notes:

Downtown Albuquerque. We all swarmed out to capture the feel of Route 66.

Crossing a street, standing in the middle of the road, I noticed this reflection in a window high above my head that put the American flag right beside the iconic sign of Route 66. What better way to express the essence of "Main Street of America?"

#### EXIF:

Camera Model NIKON D800, Exposure Time 1/400, Lens Info 80.0-400.0 mm f/4.5-5.6, Focal Length 310 mm, F-Number f/18, Exposure Bias -1/3 EV, Metering Mode= Pattern, ISO 1600





## ANPAT-12 Gallery Favorites



### Ruedi Staehli (ruedi)

#### Field Notes:

After having witnessed about 500 balloons taking off a couple of days before, I was familiar with the moves the crew were going through until the vessel was airborne. So on the day of our own balloon flight I wanted to take a picture from inside the balloon as it was being filled with cold air from a big ventilator.

I asked one of the crew if it was okay for me to peer inside through a flap in the top of the balloon and they agreed. I liked the black silhouette of the figure inside that put a nice perspective to the huge hull being filled and stands as a counterpoint to the black stars.

EXIF: Camera Model NIKON D800, Exposure Time 1/60, Lens Info 24.0-70.0 mm f/2.8 Focal Length 24 mm, F-Number f/8, Exposure Bias=0 EV, Metering Mode= Pattern, ISO 2000

## ANPAT-12 Gallery Favorites



### Ruedi Staehli (ruedi)

#### Field Notes:

Albuquerque Balloon Fiesta. We were up very early (as on almost all ANPAT days -- it took a while to lose those dark rings under my eyes) and watched the pilots fill their balloons in the early twilight. This is one of my favorite pictures of the whole trip. I took about ten frames but in only one did all the elements come together as I had hoped. The photo shows the intense concentration of the pilot at a critical point in the whole exercise of getting those huge balloons up and flying. He has to aim the flame exactly right, so it does not burn the fabric around the opening in the balloon.

EXIF: Camera Model NIKON, Exposure Time 1/500, Lens Info 80.0-400.0 mm f/4.5-5.6, Focal Length 150 mm, F-Number f/6.3, Exposure Bias -1 2/3 EV, Metering Mode=Pattern, ISO 3200

### Ruedi Staehli (ruedi)

#### Field Notes:

Kasha-Katuwe Tent Rocks National Monument was for most of us an unknown treasure to be explored. The abundance of eroded rock forms and the narrow slot canyon were offering a plethora of motives that was almost overwhelming. In such cases I have found it easier to concentrate on photographing details than trying to capture "the whole landscape".

I used a wide angle to put the flower in the context of its surrounding.

EXIF: Camera Model NIKON D800, Exposure Time 1/250, Lens Info 14.0-24.0 mm f/2.8, Focal Length 15 mm, F-Number f/11, Exposure





## ANPAT-12 Gallery Favorites



### Ruedi Staehli (ruedi)

#### Field Notes:

The reward for getting up early and waiting in the freezing darkness paid off much earlier than expected: almost an hour before sunrise the clouds in the Eastern sky showed an awesome display of color from a deep purple to a bright orange. The (white) sand dunes that had appeared bluish until then suddenly took on the color of the sky.

#### EXIF:

Camera Model NIKON D800, Exposure Time 13 min, Lens Info 14.0-24.0 mm f/2.8, Focal Length 14 mm, F-Number f/14, Exposure Bias -1/3 EV, Metering Mode= Pattern, ISO 800

Comment: ANPAT and Nikonians: What else could drive you to leave your warm and comfy bed in the middle of the night, drive to some godforsaken place out in the wilderness, freeze your "beep" off --- and then get to enjoy an amazing sunrise ... all together with strangers that have become friends in the matter of a few days! This shows the power of sharing your passion with other people.

## ANPAT-12 Gallery Favorites



### Thomas Wicks (pyrpal)

#### Field Notes and EXIF info:

First morning of ANPAT-12 and I was quite excited to be shooting at the Balloon Fiesta; an event that I had wanted to attend for many years. I was a bit out of my element since I shoot landscapes predominately with manual settings and this day I was shooting with AF-C and 9-point AF on advice of several group members.

One scene among many that caught my eye was this silhouette of the balloon, Darth Vader, taken around 6:30 AM.

This was metered off the sky and shot on a tripod with a D800E and a 24 mm f/1.4 lens with settings of f/4 @ 1/2000 sec and ISO 100.

### Thomas Wicks (pyrpal)

#### Field Notes and EXIF info:

It was the second day of ANPAT-12, I was already exhausted and lagging behind the group so I decided to remain around the Bandelier Park entrance and do some closeup photography. I had been there many times and had a number of images of the interior of the park so I could concentrate on other subjects this time.

This shot was taken of a *Townsendia incana* around 10:00 a.m. It stood out amongst the nature of the park where I was located.

Taken on a tripod with a D3s and 85 mm PC-E with settings of f/8 @ 1/30 sec and ISO 200. I tried a few tilt settings based on the tripod's position as well as different closeup positions but decided against these in the end.





## ANPAT-12 Gallery Favorites



### Thomas Wicks (pyrpal)

#### Field Notes and EXIF info:

There are many museums in New Mexico that showcase Americana and we had already been to a few of these such as Gasoline Alley in Embudo. I decided to finally take an image at one of these locations and chose a metal shop near Carrizozo after being inspired by one of our van mates, Dr. Michael Hare, who takes mainly HDR images. This was taken hand held around 3:00 PM with a D3s and 85 mm PC-E at f/8 with a 3 bracketed sequence of 1/125 sec, 1/250 sec, and 1/500 sec at ISO 200. The image was then post-processed with Photomatix Pro 4.2.4.

### Thomas Wicks (pyrpal)

#### Field Notes and EXIF info:

In preparation for the afternoon shooting at White Sands NM, several of us, namely P. Ekman, J. Davie, and myself, were in the gift shop at the center admiring and discussing a set of photographic cards that were shot at White Sands. We then went into the West entrance of the monument to seek out some suitable scenes and test out some ideas. This was taken around 4:45 PM with a D800E and 24 mm f/1.4 metered off the sky on a tripod with settings of f/8 @ 1/250 sec and ISO 100.



## ANPAT-12 Gallery Favorites



### Thomas Wicks (pyrpal)

#### Field Notes and EXIF info:

This was the last day at ANPAT-12 as I had to leave early. My photo partner for the day was Jim Davie who shoots ski racing in Canada. He is quite familiar with framing images under different light conditions, and taught me quite a bit about composition.

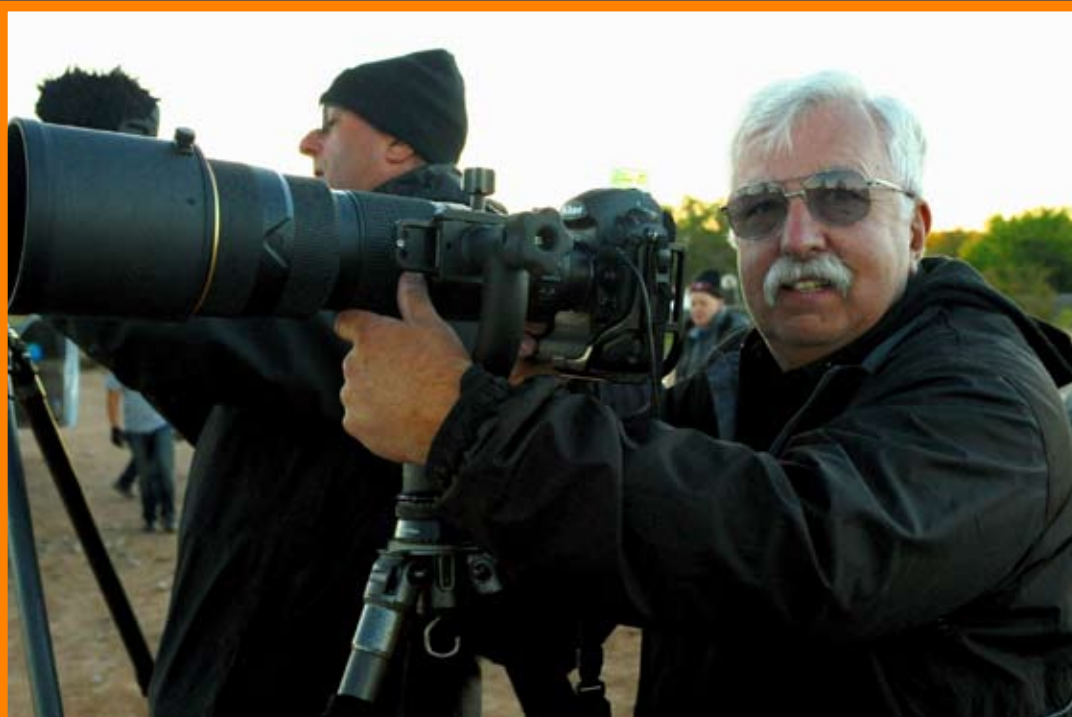
We hiked a couple of kilometers into the North entrance of White Sands to take this image around 6:30 AM with the light changing by the minute. When I began to take this image, the shadows were more illustrative but the sky still had the colors that are so fascinating to me. Taken on a tripod and metered off the mountains with a D3s and 85 mm PC-E with settings of f/8 @ 1/30 sec and ISO 200.

#### Comments:

Another great trip! Thank you for all the coordination and thanks to Mike Hagen for keeping everyone informed, inspired and safe.



## ANPAT-12 Gallery Favorites



**J. Ramón Palacios (jrp)**

Field Notes and EXIF info:

Nikonians help inflate a balloon to take off at dawn.

Phil Boggs (Photo\_Phil ) and Jim Eaton (f11).

Nikon D700 handheld, 28-70mm f/2.8D ED IF AF-S Nikkor @ 70mm f/4, 1/60, ISO 3200

**J. Ramón Palacios (jrp)**

Field Notes and EXIF info:

Larry Anderson (mnbuilder49) and Albert Esschendal (alberte) prepare their big guns to photograph other Nikonians as they take off in a balloon flight at dawn.

Nikon D700 handheld, 28-70mm f/2.8D ED IF AF-S Nikkor @ 38mm, f/8, 1/250, ISO 3200



## ANPAT-12 Gallery Favorites



### J. Ramón Palacios (jrp)

Field Notes and EXIF info:

Jim Gould (jgould2) sets his camera ready to capture sunset at White Sands. Nikon D700 on MAGICA-M 3.3, 28-70mm f/2.8D ED IF AF-S @ 45mm, f/16, 2 seconds, ISO 400

### J. Ramón Palacios (jrp)

Field Notes and EXIF info:

First light with Nikonians at White Sands.  
Nikon D700 on MAGICA-M 3.3, 80-400mm f/4.5-5.6 AF  
VR Nikkor @ 95mm, f/8, 1/100, ISO 6400





## ANPAT-12 Gallery Favorites



### J. Ramón Palacios (jrp)

Nikonians pose for the group picture after the 12th ANPAT Farewell Dinner in the (by then deserted) streets of Alamogordo, NM  
Nikon D700 on MAGICA-M 3.3, 14-24mm f/2.8G ED IF AF-S Nikkor @ 22mm, f/2.8, 1/20, ISO 3200

### J. Ramón Palacios (jrp)

Field Notes and EXIF info: A smart Nikonian looks for a scene with the golden light in his back at White Sands  
Nikon D700 on MAGICA-M 3.3, 80-400mm f/4.5-5.6 AF VR Nikkor @ 400mm, f/40, 1/1.3s, ISO 200.



# Annual Nikonians Photo Adventure Trip

by Darrell Young (DigitalDarrell)

**More than photography. More than our gear.  
It's the premier event of our community.**



*Darrell Young served as the host and leader for the Nikonians 6th ANPAT to Smoky Mountains National Park in South Tennessee and North Carolina. The first ANPAT was held in the same region in 2001. His white-gloved mug shot for this article was taken during that trip by Rick Paul (rickpaul). Fast-forward by six years and Rick is now partnered with Rick Hulbert (rhulbert), also one of the 6th ANPAT attendees, as the [Nikonians Photo Professors](#) podcast team. Meanwhile, Darrell went on to become the author of the NikoniansPress/Rocky Nook [Mastering the Nikon DSLR series](#) of books. The series includes the new *Mastering the Nikon D800*, along with previous *Mastering* books on the D7000, D300/D300S, D700 (co-authored with James Johnson), D90, D5000, D3000. The books are available as both print and ebooks (in multiple formats) from fine vendors such as Amazon.com, Barnes & Noble,*

[O'Reilly Media](#), and other book retailers.

What could be better than going to a beautiful place specifically for nature photography with your favorite Nikon equipment and coming back home with world class images? What could be better? Doing it with friends!

The *Annual Nikon Photo Adventure Trip*, or ANPAT for short, just completed its 12th adventure in New Mexico, USA. With photographic sojourns to places as diverse as Yosemite, Great Smoky Mountains, The Grand Tetons, Rocky Mountains, Zion, Bryce, and Alaska, each trip is truly an adventure of a lifetime.

Some of the excellent benefits of a Nikonians ANPAT are being with people of like mind, improving in photography skills by learning from others, and going to places you might not ever go otherwise. Many of us post regularly in the forums at Nikonians, but it's even more fun to meet some of the people you only knew in forum threads. Listen to a couple of experiences from fellow Nikonians who have attended ANPATs.

Nikonian Jim Nichols (JungleJim), recalls: "Having been on many ANPATs over many years it breaks down to making new friends, seeing old friends, going to new locations, low stress travel with all inclusive pricing, being guided by knowledgeable individuals,



*Figure 1 – A few members from ANPAT 6 in Great Smoky Mountains. Can you tell these guys are photographers?*

sharing gear ideas and even using others equipment to trial, getting a loaner piece of gear if something gets lost/broken."

Or, as Nikonian Jim Gould (jgould2) adds: "I can certainly echo what Jim said. I love going on ANPATs. Having all the locations scouted in advance is of incredible usefulness. Interacting with other Nikonians always teaches me a bunch, getting to check out their gear and techniques and tips makes me a better photographer. Not to mention the sheer fun of shooting with a group of fellow Nikonians. It is also a delight to be able to offer whatever experience I have."

Some may not have noticed, but there is a forum on Nikonians devoted to the annual gathering. It is called, not surprisingly, [Annual Nikonians Photo Adventure Trip](#). In addition, the galleries at Nikonians are [full of images](#) from each year.



# Annual Nikonians Photo Adventure Trip

## People of Like Mind

It truly is more enjoyable to experience something when your friends are there too. Going to a beautiful place and taking pictures is quite enjoyable, even when alone. However, having others accompany you, enjoy your company, examine your camera equipment, and strive to take great pictures makes the experience even more vivid.

You'll get to make new friends, see old friends, learn new skills, and examine Nikon lenses, tripods, camera bodies, and accessories. For the hopelessly Nikon camera - addicted among us—those with Nikon Acquisition Syndrome (NAS)—a Nikonians ANPAT is better than a trade show. Not only do you get to see and use other people's Nikon equipment, in-



Figure 2 – People of like mind and equipment

variably including the latest thing out, to the oldest Nikons available, you come away with the reward of marvelous images, many warm memories, and new friends to boot.

After an ANPAT, your understanding of the principles our founders, JRP and Bo, have heralded increases exponentially. You will, maybe for the first time, understand why Nikonians.org exists, why the Nikonians community is unique, and what makes our worldwide community of friends go way beyond just discussing camera equipment. Nikonians knows no borders, has no class distinctions, and unites people worldwide of like mind in an enjoyable endeavor.

## Learning New Skills

ANPAT attendees are well known for their willingness to help others learn. On each trip, there is a solid mixture of expert photographers, professionals, relatively new photographers, and old timers with a wealth of experience. At the image examination sessions in the evenings, techniques are discussed, beautiful images are admired by all, and opportunities to simply absorb better techniques abound.

Each adventure trip is designed to take you to a location that will guarantee superior images to any photographer with good Nikon equipment and reasonable technique.

While in the field shooting, each has an opportunity to create excellent images. If problems occur, a buddy is usually a few feet away to ask a question or lend you a lens. As Nikonian Patrick "Doc" Buick (profpb) stated: "Nothing in 70 years of photography is more enlightening than this learning and sharing experience. Equipment and techniques are shared and learning is best accomplished in the field with more experienced and caring partners. But it was just plain FUN. Is it too early to sign up for [the next ANPAT]?"

But what about a photographer who enjoys shooting alone? How would an ANPAT benefit that person? Nikonian Jim Knighten (emi\_fiend) describes it this way:

"Photography is by nature a solitary pursuit: photographer, idea, camera, and scene. I find the ANPAT experience allows you to pursue this solitary pursuit, but in a setting where others are nearby doing the same or similar things, I learn by seeing what others in my group are doing and talking to them about the what, why, and with what gear. It really is an intensive photographic educational experience that I have not seen matched anywhere else. Being an amateur photographer, I shoot pictures all year, but sporadically.

The ANPAT gives me an organized setting for intensive shooting, giving me the structure to be out before dawn and shooting at sunset and at locations that are preselected. I'm not so good at doing that on my own."

# Annual Nikonians Photo Adventure Trip

## Travel, Lodging, and Food

If you decide to go to a remote place for a photo adventure on your own, you will have to deal with not only the travel aspect, but also the acquiring of lodging, meals, and transportation. However, when on an ANPAT, all you have to do is arrive at the initial contact point and all transportation, lodging, and meals are provided.



*Figure 3 – Each ANPAT has a mix of photographer skill levels*

## World Class Pictures

Of course, this is a “photo” adventure trip, so the images you will bring home may well be some of the best you have ever taken. Bring plenty of memory cards (or film) because you will take many more pictures than you thought you would. Bring extra batteries and a good solid tripod too. You will come home a week later with images you can use and enjoy for years to come.

If you are a stock photographer, trying to make some money with your images. An ANPAT will give you an opportunity to build your library quickly. If you are into fine art shooting, your gallery will benefit from the exotic places you will shoot. If you just want to hang some beautiful images on your wall at home or office, or have an album full of superior pictures, this trip will give you the opportunity to bring home what you want.

Your only concern will be to enjoy yourself, take pictures, play with Nikon equipment, talk about photography, eat good food, take more pictures, sleep comfortably, and get up early for the sunrise session. For seven days, you will live photography in a way that is rarely possible elsewhere. You will immerse yourself in taking pictures and celebrate being a Nikon photographer for a full week of activities. The necessities are taken care of, leaving you free to shoot like never before!

## ANPATs Make Strong Nikonians

If you want to fully experience and understand what it means to be a Nikonian, you must attend an ANPAT. It is worth saving for and could even be considered an investment. You will learn so much that your knowledge of photography will increase exponentially.

Years later as you compose an image or tackle a shooting challenge small nuggets of solid advice you absorbed during the ANPAT will come to your assistance.

When you look around you and see friends all using equipment like yours and some having items you desire, you realize that you are where you need to be. ANPATs are celebrations of Nikonian camaraderie and Nikon equipment.

However, the equipment is not in some static case under glass. It's being actively used by your companions. What better way to enjoy the Nikon experience than to immerse yourself into a pure Nikon-based adventure. If you like Nikons, you'll love ANPATs!

From the Nikonians you meet on your adventure, you will make friends that will last a lifetime; fellow photographers who enjoy the same things you do. When you log into Nikonians forums and create a post, some of your new friends will be there, and you will appreciate their input even more than before you met them.

Besides the forums, the educational aspects of [Nikonians Academy](#), and the Nikonians Press [resources](#)—the *Annual Nikonians Photo Adventure Trip* is a “life adventure” and reinforces a powerful reason to be a Nikonian.



*Figure 4 - Come home with world class pictures*



# Annual Nikonians Photo Adventure Trip



*Figure 5 - Celebrate world-class Nikon equipment at an ANPAT*

During the ANPAT, you will get to meet and associate with our founders, J. Ramón Palacios (jrp) and Bo Stahlbrandt (bgs) and get to experience the interesting mixture of personalities that impelled them to create our community. That alone is worth attending.

The next ANPAT will be around soon, are you getting ready?

*Keep on capturing time...*

**Darrell Young**



## PictureCode takes RAW converting to the next level



**Ernesto Santos  
(esantos)**

Moderator  
Team Member  
Nikonians Masters  
Society Member  
10,291 posts

Since the advent of the raw file for digital photography we have been faced with the task of optimizing the demosaicing process.

It may sound like a strange new term for many photographers; however, in the most common-denominator definition it is merely a sophisticated set of mathematical number-crunching functions used to turn the digital raw data from

your camera into a perfect full-color image.

When we demosaic a raw file we convert the rudimentary numerical sensor data from our camera's sensor into an image file. Seems like a relatively straight forward and simple process, right? Yet with the ability to manipulate this information to an infinite degree it all begins to get quite complicated. Even at the very basic level there is white balance, contrast, tone, color correction that must all be addressed.

Over hours and hours manipulating the slider adjustments of our favorite raw converter we have come to learn the power that resides in the raw file. It has in many ways revolutionized photography. Most of us who take our photography seriously know this and shoot in raw regularly. And, as is to be expected, software developers have noticed this trend. The result is that today we have a lot of options available to us to address the raw conversion process (one of which is the subject of this review).

PictureCode is a software development company based out of Austin, Texas better known for their Noise Ninja noise reduction software. In September 2012 PictureCode announced the release of their newest product, Photo Ninja. Photo Ninja is a complete raw file conversion solution. For those who use Noise Ninja fear not, it is incorporated into Photo Ninja and past registered users of Noise Ninja are eligible for special upgrade pricing until December 31, 2012.

Photo Ninja is a totally new product featuring a full array of raw processing filters including: color correction, exposure adjustment, color enhancement, black and white conversion, noise reduction, sharpening, chromatic aberration correction, vignetting control, distortion and geometry adjustment, cropping, and demosaic of the raw file. In essence, it is a complete raw and image processor within a stand-alone program with a clean interface incorporating an image browser for file search and selection.

According to the Photo Ninja website the following camera raw files are supported:

**Canon:** D2000, D30, D60, D6000, 7D, 10D, 20D, 30D, 40D, 50D, 60D, 300D, 350D, 400D, 450D, 500D, 550D, 600D, 1000D, 1100D, 1D Mark I/II/III/IV, 1Ds Mark I/II/III, 1D X, 5D Mark I/II/III, PowerShot G1X, PowerShot G6. [Note: sRAW mode for Canon SLRs not yet supported.]

**Nikon:** D1, D1H, D100, D2H, D2X, D200, D3, D3S, D3X, D300, D3000, D3100, D3200, D4, D40, D40X, D50, D5000, D5100, D60, D70, D700, D7000, D80, D800/D800E, D90, 1 J1, 1 V1, Coolpix P7000

**FujiFilm:** FinePix X100, X-S1

**Konica Minolta:** Dynax 7D, probably other DiMAGE and Dynax models

**Leica:** M9, M Monochrom, D-LUX 5, S2, probably other models

**Olympus:** E-M5, E-500, probably other E-, C-, and SP- models.

**Panasonic:** DMC-FZ35, DMC-GH2, DMC-G3, DMC-GX1, DMC-GF5, probably other DMC models.

**Pentax:** K-01, probably other K- and \*ist models.

**Samsung:** NX200, NX100, and probably other NX models

**Sony:** NEX-7, DSC-RX100, probably other DSC, DSLR, NEX, and SLT models.



# Photo Ninja Review

Additionally, Photo Ninja can process jpegs and tiffs. Processed raw files are output to jpeg and tiff formats. Photo Ninja can be used in conjunction with a variety of image processing tools including Photo Mechanic, Lightroom, and Aperture. A plug-in for Photoshop is due soon in version 1.1. While the integration is not totally seamless between these programs you can export processed files to Photo Ninja (as rendered tiffs) and in the case of Photo Mechanic it retains the tagging, color labeling, and ratings you have applied to the file.



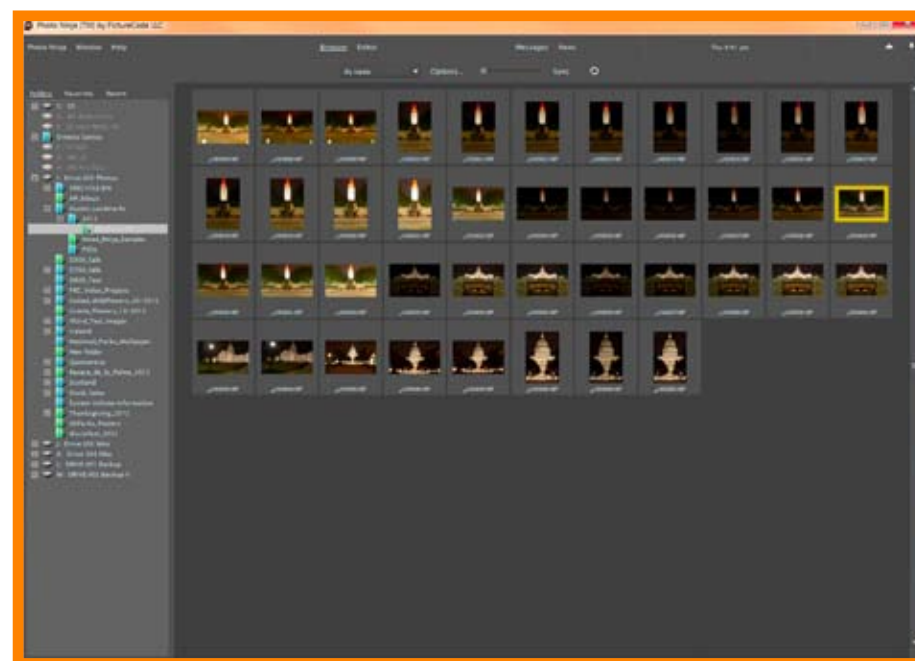
*Photo Ninja Interface*

## INTERFACE

As I mentioned previously Photo Ninja has a clean interface with the program window defaulting to a dark neutral color and small white fonts. You can change the appearance to a light grey and font sizes can be changed as well. Within the program window there is the program menu at the top, a control to toggle between the Browser and Editor Screen, buttons to access a message log and news from the PictureCode server, and the current

day and time. Below this is a second set of controls. There is a drop down which allows you to toggle between various open files sitting in the workspace. You have access to a fly out window which displays the file Metadata, and controls to zoom in and out, rotate the displayed image, show split panes, and close the active image. On the left a panel shows a histogram, the essential camera settings at the time of the capture, and a drop down for lens profiles. Below these items are the adjustment slider filters. At the bottom of the window is a directory tree with a strip of thumbnails of the images in the active directory.

While you can access your files using the thumbnail strip you can also use a browser displayed in the main workspace. Here is a screen shot of what this view looks like.



*Photo Ninja: Browser View*

The general Photo Ninja workflow is not much different from all the other raw converters out there except that it has a few methods that are a little different. For one, when working with a filter you must confirm your adjustments when making edits by clicking on the Apply button. Conversely, there is also a button to cancel your adjustments.

# Photo Ninja Review

Secondly, each adjustment such as color correction, sharpening, etc. is accessed one at a time. There is no scrolling through a long series of adjustment sliders. With Photo Ninja the sliders for each process are hidden under a nested system. This can get a little frustrating in the long run and certainly does not promote quick adjustments. While Photo Ninja is a very good raw converter/image processor it is not one built on speed. It is slow to render adjustments, and while there is the ability to copy and paste settings over one or more files there is no true automatic synchronized batch processing for those who are working on a series of shots under the same lighting conditions. Bear in mind that Photo Ninja is in version 1 and some issues concerning performance and efficiency are to be expected. Hopefully these will be addressed in later updates.

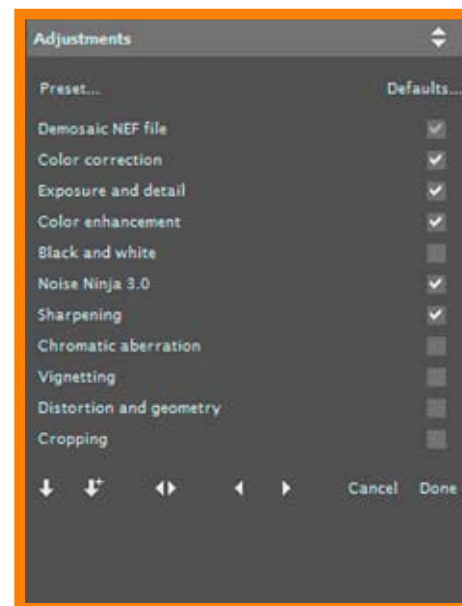
## PERFORMANCE

I'll be the first to say that Photo Ninja is an excellent raw processor when it comes to output. Once you get over the sluggish behavior of the interface and rendering process you immediately gain appreciation for the beautiful, almost jewel like appearance of your raw images.

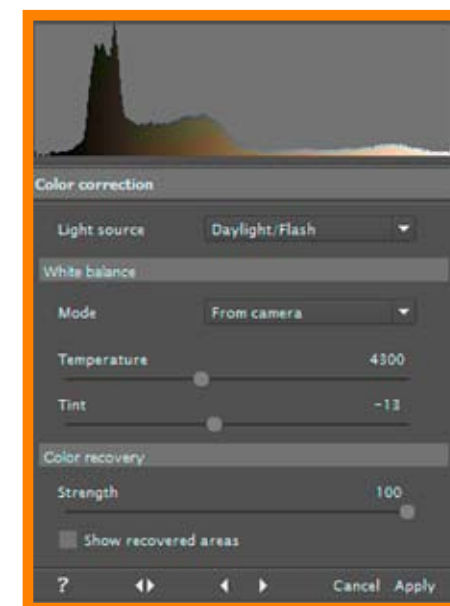
Color is well rendered and accurate, exposure control is precise – with outstanding highlight recovery and shadow enhancement. Details pop off the screen and gradations are very natural. I really like the distortion correction filters as well. You can correct for vertical and horizontal perspective, there is a fisheye correction tool, removal of pincushion and barrel distortion, and there is even a mustache distortion tool. These all work effectively. Of course, the noise control filter in the form of Noise Ninja 3.0 is outstanding.

Since PictureCode is one of the pioneers in the field of noise reduction software it is no surprise that this latest version is one of the best on the market. The sharpening filter in Photo Ninja is excellent at bringing out detail without introducing halos. You can crank it up quite a bit if you like very crisp and fine detail. A really nice feature is that the sharpening filter is tied to Noise Ninja. If you enable Luminance Noise Reduction in the Noise Ninja filter the Sharpening filter will work in tandem with it by applying sharpening to the edges while intelligently avoiding smooth areas where noise can be the most problematic. The integration of these two filters works very well.

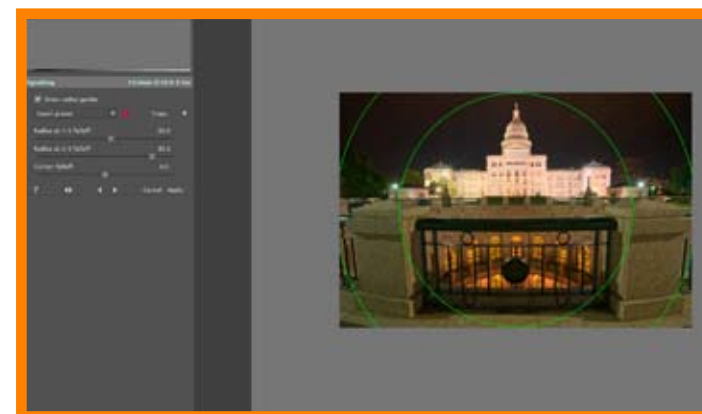
One of the filters that I think is designed the “right” way is the Vignetting control. You can achieve a very fine level of control with this filter by adjusting two rings (shown as the green circles in the screen shot above) to control the width of the light fall-off



*Filters Menu*



*Inside the Color Correction*



*Using the Vignetting Filter*



# Photo Ninja Review

and its gradient. The outer ring is called Radius at 2/3 falloff and the inner ring Radius at 1/3 falloff. If you set both rings to the same numerical value you essentially convene the two circles into one single falloff control. In turn, the wider apart you set them the more gradual the gradient of falloff. There is a third control called the Corner falloff which sets the intensity of the vignette. This filter is very well designed and with these three controls working together you can set a vignette to an infinite level of intensity and coverage.

Photo Ninja is able to use camera (sensor) profiles provided you use an X-Rite Color Checker patch set to take a series of shots. These are then analyzed in the profile builder. There is also the ability to make your own lens profiles. While I did not delve into these features of the program it is good to know that they are available.



*Ballycastle Harbor - Unretouched Raw image / Processed in Photo Ninja and rendered as a TIFF file*

Here are a couple of examples what you can expect from Photo Ninja. The first one of Ballycastle Harbor in Northern Ireland gives you a good idea of how well Photo Ninja can pull detail out of the shadows. I took this image as part of a series of incremental exposures for HDR. I picked one in the series that was exposed for the sky but left the foreground in deep shadow. It is easy to see how well the program preserves the highlights while being able to really extend the quarter tones to a level of a believable scene at dusk.

In this second image of a sculpture of the legend of the "Children of Lir" in same the harbor I purposely selected an image where the sky was nearly blown out. As you can see by reducing the highlights and preserving the mid tones Photo Ninja easily produced a well balanced image.



*"Children of Lir" Sculpture - Unretouched / Processed in Photo Ninja and rendered as a TIFF file*

# Photo Ninja Review

## SUMMARY

PictureCode Photo Ninja is a serious contender in the raw converter/processor arena. With little effort you can easily produce excellent images with great color, detail, and separation of tones. Even badly exposed raw files can benefit from Photo Ninja. Usually when trying to resurrect a bad raw exposure the results can suffer from a loss of contrast, color shifting, artifacting, and excessive noise. Detail can get lost and you end up with a mushy, uninspiring image. It seems obvious to me that the engineers at PictureCode set out to not only develop an excellent raw converter but one that can handle even the most challenging tasks.

While Photo Ninja is quite a capable raw processor it is not without its shortcomings. Since this is version 1 I am hopeful that PictureCode will address some of the performance issues I encountered during my tests. While certainly bearable in short sessions, the program does need to be improved in relation to the overall speed. While editing the animated processing icon seems to never terminate. It just keeps going, and going. The adjustment sliders suffer from a slight case of the "rubber band" effect where pulling or pushing a slider gives you a delayed response and then snaps back - behavior similar to that of pulling on a rubber band. I would also like to see a more robust batch processing and sync'ing feature. Finally, nested filters should be revisited since this just slows down the workflow with little to no benefit. Maybe an option could be added to the customization settings where you could choose between a scrolling window and nesting.

On the plus side I'm anxious to see the Photoshop plug-in that is scheduled in release 1.1. Hopefully in the near future we will see additional plug-ins for Lightroom, Aperture, etc. How about support for exporting to the Adobe PSD format? I really like the built-in camera sensor profiling feature although I did not have an opportunity to try it. It seems straight forward enough but time limitations did not allow for the testing of this feature.

Finally, the interface allows for enough customization to help you get comfortable using the program. I particularly like that you can

customize the sequence of the adjustment filters to suit your particular workflow preferences. I have tried a number of raw converters over the years and I am still hanging tough with my preferred tool, Adobe ACR. I think Photo Ninja is about to change this. I'm going to start incorporating it into my regular workflow. If PictureCode continues to improve on version 1 and addresses some of the rough spots in the current release they will have a real winner on their hands.

## CONCLUSION:

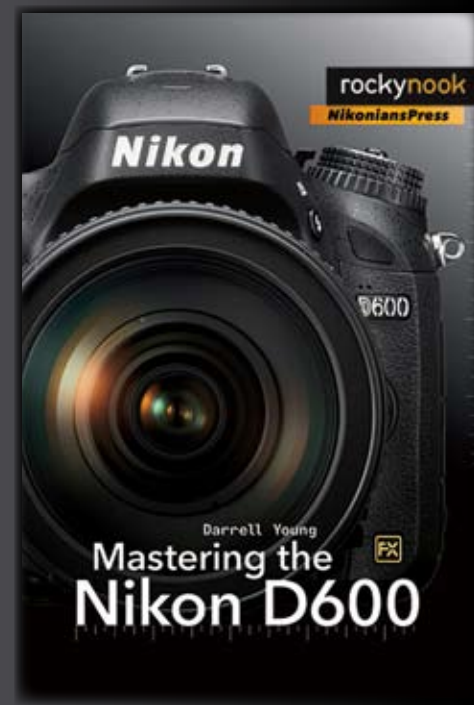
RECOMMENDED - try the free two week trial and see how it performs on your system before you buy.

## Amazon taking pre-orders on Mastering the Nikon D600

The newest book  
in the NikoniansPress/Rocky Nook  
Mastering series is now available for pre-order.

**Mastering the Nikon D600**  
by Darrell Young (DigitalDarrell)  
will be about 500 pages and will cover every  
aspect of the Nikon D600 camera in great detail. It  
will be available in March 2013 in printed form and  
the eBook formats will follow about two weeks  
later. The pre-order price at Amazon is \$25.32  
(USD) saving you \$14.63 off the list price (\$39.95).

The book also includes a special  
**Nikonians 50% off voucher discount**  
for a one year Gold Membership  
in the Nikonians community.  
This will save 37.50 €/50 Gold Membership.  
**See all NikoniansPress Books.**





### Photo Pro Shop Holidays Specials Continue



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# Calendar

## Coming Soon from the Nikonians Academy Staff

Efrain Padro leads our **Puerto Rico Photography Adventure** - February 16-23, 2013

Michael A. Mariant leads our **Yosemite in Winter: A Season of Contrast** workshop in February 2013, **Big Sur: From the Coast to the Canyons** trip in April, 2013 and **Giant Redwoods of Northern California** workshop in June 2013.

Mike Hagen leads the - **Iceland Photo and Bird Adventure** - Summer 2013 and the **African Photo Safari, Tanzania** - November 2013

## Photo Marketing Association at Consumer Electronics Show Las Vegas, Nevada January 6-11, 2013

**PMA@CES** is the place for the most-concentrated exhibits of photo/imaging products and services. From capture to output, PMA@CES at The LVH (formerly the Las Vegas Hilton) is the place to be to learn about profitable products and services, reconnect with industry friends and establish vital new business connections.

The PMA@CES experience includes exhibitors from around the world who will converge in Las Vegas to introduce their hottest imaging products, technologies, and innovations – all designed to help you attract more customers and reap greater profits.

## Now Showing

### Faking It - Manipulated Photography Before Photoshop

**October 11, 2012–January 27, 2013**  
**The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City**

The urge to modify camera images is as old as photography itself — only the methods have changed. Nearly every type of manipulation we now associate with digital photography was also part of the medium's pre-digital repertoire: smoothing away wrinkles, slimming waistlines, adding people to a scene (or removing them) — even fabricating events that never took place. This international loan exhibition traces the history of manipulated photography from the 1840s through the early 1990s, when the computer replaced manual techniques as the dominant means of doctoring photographs.

Most of the [two hundred pictures on view](#) were altered after the negative was exposed — through photomontage, combination printing, overpainting, retouching, or, as is often the case, a blend of several processes. In every instance, the final image differs significantly from what stood before the camera at any given moment.

## Wedding Photographers International gather in March 2013

**March 7-14, 2013**

### WPPI Conference+Expo

is the premiere industry event for photographers and image-makers specializing in the creative and business aspects of wedding and portrait photography. Each year, nearly 16,000 professional and aspiring photographers attend WPPI to learn new techniques from industry leaders, build new relationships to grow their business, experience new products and solutions from major manufacturers to improve their productivity, and enjoy the many attractions in Las Vegas.

WPPI is a week-long event combining educational seminars with a major industry trade show and networking events, all designed around learning the latest techniques, building new relationships and growing a businesses in a friendly, fun environment – all at one time, in one place.

The WPPI 2013 Conference + Expo, will take place at the MGM Grand in Las Vegas. Registration opens soon.