

# NEWSLETTER

September 2011



## Night Photography



The World At Night (TWAN) is a program to create and exhibit a collection of stunning photographs and time-lapse videos of the world's most beautiful and historic sites against a nighttime backdrop of stars, planets and celestial events. The site has numerous galleries of images taken around the world and has a host of information about night photography. Take a look at: <http://www.twanight.org>

## Visipic

If you get too many pictures on your hard drive, downloaded or photocopied, from several different sources, it may happen that you have many duplicates. In that case you need a quick and easy to use program that finds and deletes all your duplicates.

VisiPic does more than just look for identical files with a simple user interface. First, you select the root folder or folders to find and catalogue all of your pictures. It then

applies five image comparison filters in order to measure how close pairs of images on the hard drive are.

Visipic is a program that is considerably faster than any other commercial product and has an interface that let you do other things while Visipic automatically finds your duplicated images. It will detect two different resolution files of the same picture as a duplicate, or the same picture saved in different formats, or duplicates where only minor cosmetic changes have taken place.

All detected duplicates are shown side by side with pertinent information such as file name, type and size being displayed. Its auto-select mode let you choose if you want to keep the higher resolution picture, a space-saving file type, a smaller file size or all of the above. If you are insecure over what you really want to delete you can manually select the images you don't want to keep and delete them yourself. You can find all the details [here](#). I haven't tried the program myself but I have heard good reports from others.

## **Secret Guide to Computers and Tricky Living**

Although this doesn't have much to do with Photoshop Elements I have to bring this to your attention. Quite a few years ago I stumbled across a gentleman called Russ Walter who was writing a rather obscure column for a newspaper chain on the east coast. He had a very engaging style plus he seemed to be an absolute bottomless pit of knowledge about computers. Somehow I lost the link and not until 2004 did I find him again this time as publisher of the book "Secret Guide to Computers". This is a huge tome of nearly 800 pages and covers everything from software to how computers work. It is a most amazing book covering so many subjects and very readable. Additionally he offered free telephone consultation on any of the subjects covered (and many that aren't) just by calling him. He gives you his home telephone number and says call me any time I don't sleep very much! I have to say I did try him out and called him around 7 PM PST one evening and sure enough he answered the phone! His only proviso is that you limit your call to less than seven minutes! His wife is Chinese (I think she is the hand behind "Tricky Living") but they are a remarkable couple. The last version I bought was #29 and I hadn't heard from Russ for quite some time and probably had forgotten about the book. This week I received flyer in the mail advising me that version #31 was now available if I was interested. Needless to say I am and have ordered this latest for \$25 (including shipping). He is also offering any of the older books for just \$3 each

including shipping. Without going into great detail it would pay a new subscriber to purchase a couple of the older editions to make sure you have all the information available.

I will bring the new version to the next monthly meeting and show everyone. Believe me this guy is the original eccentric, he gives you his home address and invites you to drop in any time and use his vast library of computer books. Read a brief review about Russ at this [website](#).

If anyone is interested if we can get 4 or more people together the price drops to \$15 each including tax and shipping. Let me know if you are interested and if I get 4 or more affirmatives I'll do the ordering and you can pay me back when the books arrive.

## **PHOTOSYNTH**

People take photos of many things. Some photograph stunning landscapes. Many stick to snapshots of friends and family. A few dive into the artful side of photography. All are good reasons to pick up a camera.

Photography can be a way to share the world around you. Everyone likes to share pictures of a recent vacation. Maybe you photographed your new home to show it to family.

Unfortunately, a photograph can only show so much. It never matches the experience of being there. A new Microsoft technology may just change that.

The program is called Photosynth. It's a new way to think about and present photography. Making a synth requires taking a lot of photos; up to 300. They must be of a single area from many angles. Think of taking hundreds of photos of just your living room.

All the photos are uploaded to Photosynth. It will recreate an accurate 3D environment from those photos. Then it will weave all the photos together in the correct position. Through the photos, you can see the environment from any angle.

It's an amazing, immersive use of photography. You really have to see it to appreciate it. You can check out other people's synths on the Photosynth website. There are some very cool ones from National Geographic and NASA. To view these, you will need to install Microsoft's Silverlight player.

But making your own synth is going to be the fun part. Get that camera out and start snapping. Photosynth has a tutorial video to get you started. Once you've created a

synth, it's easy to share. It can be accessed on the Photosynth site. You can also embed it into your Web pages or social-networking profiles.

Check it out: <http://photosynth.net>

## WEBSITES

Thanks to Peg Powell for sending [www.photoshop.com](http://www.photoshop.com) under the heading "Learning" there is a "Tips and Tutorials" section with the direct link

<http://www.photoshop.com/tutorials>

<http://tv.adobe.com/show/learn-photoshop-elements-9/> or, from within Elements 9>Help>Video Tutorials.

Another site: <http://fadedandblurred.com/> has many tutorials worth trying out.

Thank you Peg!

## PHOTOSHOP LIGHTROOM 3

I recently bought a copy of this software after hearing good things about it from member Lynn Oakleaf. I also bought the book by Scott Kelby about the program which seems very good. I haven't actually done anything yet; I want to read up before I dive in! However to quote Adobe:

"Easily organize and manage your growing photo collection. Experiment *fearlessly* with nondestructive editing tools that help you create *incredible* images."

The emphasis is mine but it is nice to know Adobe is very enthusiastic. I will let you know later how it goes unless Lynn would like to give us the benefit of his knowledge with the program at the September SIG meeting. I think that would be a great idea!

Well that's all for this edition of our newsletter, sorry it is rather brief finding useful tips is not easy! Remember anything you can contribute would be welcomed.

Until next time, remember the words of Mark Twain "Don't sit there like an envelope without an address on it".

**Take care.**