

Message from the President

December 2017

As I sit down to prepare this December's message, I am looking back at what filled this space one year ago. Much of it resonates as still valid today. In fact, I would even suggest that you re-open that issue of Close-Up or access it from the website's News page. That may provide further insight as to whether we are moving forward or in reverse on items of particular interest to you. I welcome your input now and throughout the year to assist your Board in shaping our ongoing programs.

One year later, the sun dips towards the winter solstice, just as it did last year. Scheduled events on the club's calendar taper off, particularly at Norway House. Tradition lives on, with our seasonal social gathering early in the month. At the same time, various opportunities remain to pursue photography with fellow members.

Last month, I made references to the Bryan Peterson presentation and workshop, which were then very fresh in my mind. One particular item kept coming back to the top, off-camera flash. That prompted me to purchase a flash with a built-in radio-frequency receiver coupled with an on-camera transmitter. No, I didn't spend the fortune required for dedicated system components, but, rather, opted for a third-party manual setup at a very reasonable price. Now comes the challenge of learning how to use it.

Sometimes a new piece of equipment may languish in the box for a time, as one continues along familiar paths, thinking, "I'll get to that new toy one of these days." Sometimes one is spurred into action by unfolding events and circumstances. In this case, I was provided with a most welcome example at the November meeting of the Nature SIG. Our most recently minted life member, Gordon Simpson, had begun experimentation with a flash system which he had purchased a couple of years before. Not only that, but he was targeting hummingbirds in flight and dippers in a dimly lit Goldstream Park. How could I then justify any further delay? My hope, now, is that I will have something to show as the New Year rolls around.

As last year, my best wishes go out to you and yours, whatever your particular form of worship or celebration during these weeks surrounding the winter solstice. A familiar "Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year" to all. To those who enrich our community from diverse faiths and cultures, I'd be pleased if you would interpret those sentiments in terms more directly meaningful and personal.

Garry Schaefer, President