

RANGEFINDER

The Missouri Photo Workshop | September 26, 2016 | Volume 68, Issue 2



CLIFF EDMO, WHO ALONG WITH HIS BELOVED WIFE VI CREATED MPW AND DIRECTED IT THROUGH THE FIRST 38.



Children pray at the beginning of the main service yesterday, before being led to their Sunday school class at the Cuba United Methodist Church.

PHOTO BY EMMA CHIANG

Go Naked on Route 66

by Duane Dailey

Cuba police blocked the street for photographers to mingle with community leaders. Photojournalists, reporter pads in hand, took names and numbers. What a strong start to Missouri Photo Workshop 68.

They blocked Historic Route 66 the original highway to the West. Lacking was theme music from the TV series “Route 66.” Millennials have never heard the tune playing in my head.

The mixer was step one in a story search – not necessarily finding a story but contacting people who know Cuba stories. Research comes in many forms.

When Route 66 was a busy link to an expanding America, there wasn't a ‘net. The web can give a glimmer of an idea. But real stories come from feet on the ground, notebook in hand and knocking on doors. That works.

The evening program in Recklein Auditorium rained a deluge of tips, more than any mind can hold.

Recall the story of an older lesbian couple in Macon, Mo.

The workshopper used the ‘net to capture a story spark. It took knocking on the front door to open a world for us to see.

That's research. That's making personal connections.

Alan Berner, Seattle Times, shared methods that take his eyes to amazing photos. A woman floats in a beautiful blue pool. Wow. Or, lead him to a combine demolition derby. That's what farmers do for fun?

Follow his tip. Start with the Cuba newspaper. Find ideas and names that lead to photo stories in this time and place. Now, it's your charge to open doors.

I used to urge people to walk the streets and talk to people. But, that's a hazard. When people are sitting on their front porch waiting for you to come entertain them, they might not be the dynamic subjects you need. One photo on the porch about

covers their week.

Your goal: Get inside an active, even vibrant, situation. Many folks in this town have stories, even astounding stories.

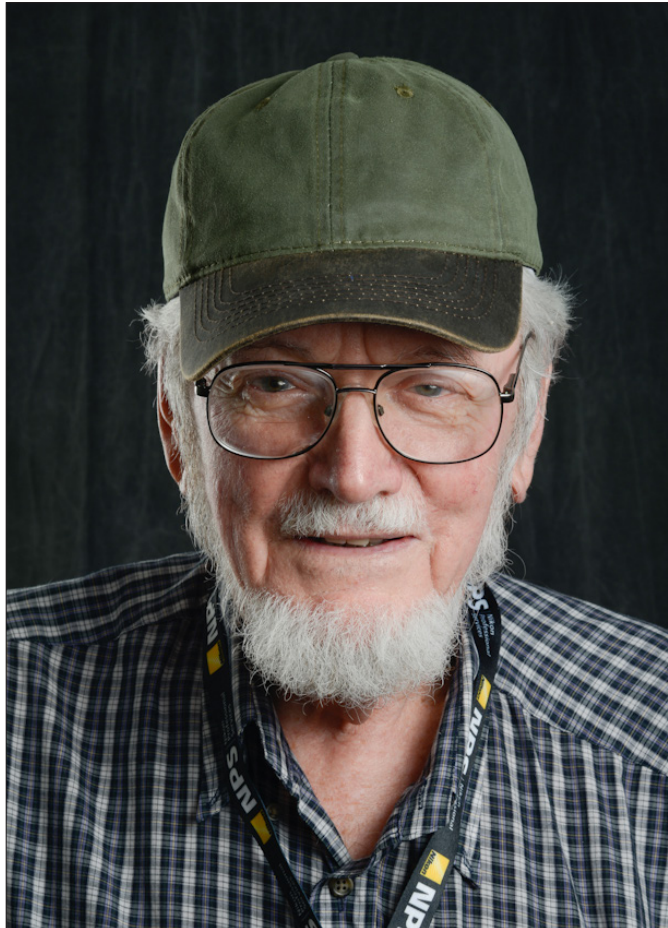
Impossible you say. But, the beauty of small-town America is that people open up to curious photographers. That's when people skills not photo skills make the difference.

You'll find it easier to enter homes below the poverty line than above. Seek a greater challenge. Find stories of leaders, bankers, owners, CEOs, the unseen top layer. They make Cuba what it will become.

In traveling Missouri, visiting farmers, I found them willing to share. Many want their stories told.

People know you've arrived. They have stories, but they will never call you. They will say, oh not me. Modesty ranks high here. If you don't follow up and get their story, they'll be disappointed.

Photo by Michael Cali



“Where is my photographer?” Those calls come to the co-directors midweek.

Your faculty can help you refine a fuzzy story idea. Or, better, they'll convince you to drop a dull one. “What else do you have?”

Best tip of the night. Write down your story idea in a short word picture. The faculty doesn't need the tale of your struggles. They need the results -- your story hypothesis.

When a friend heard I was going to Cuba Mo, she said: “How boring.” The only Cuba she knew was the chaotic I-44 exit. A mile south of New Cuba is an Old Town.

Bring us photos of that complex culture. There's conflict new and old. It awaits you.

Remember: Go naked. Leave most of your photo baggage behind.

Faculty give advice on pitching stories

Compiled by Kelsey Walling and Nadav Soroker, Photos by Michael Cali



Dennis Dimick

National Geographic Environment Editor, Retired

"Can you actually take pictures of what you're proposing, and is anything happening?"



Melissa Farlow

Freelance Photographer

"They should have clarity, sincerity, confidence, and then - passion and compassion."



Mona Reeder

Photographer at The Dallas Morning News

"Tell me why I should be interested, and why it matters."



Lynn Johnson

Freelance Photographer

"The most important thing is to have done research, and to make sure you offer stories to the right person in the organization."



MaryAnne Golon

Director of Photography at The Washington Post

"Don't just go for the fringes, look for the vibrance of life."



Lois Raimondo

Professor at West Virginia University

"Be concise and precise - organize thoughts before presenting your idea."

Jim Richardson

Freelance Photographer

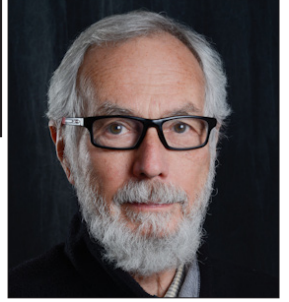
"Tell us what the story is, not how you found it."



Alan Berner

Photographer at The Seattle Times

"Be concise, do your research, be articulate. That's it."



Bill Marr

Consultant (Formerly National Geographic)

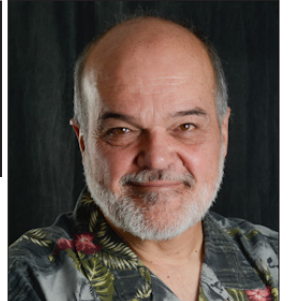
"It takes more than just having an idea, you need to know your subject."



Kim Komenich

Assistant Professor at San Francisco State

"It really is about an honest assesment of whats going to be happening this week."



Randy Olson

Freelance Photographer

"Be able to tell your story in one declarative sentence."



Eric Seals

Visual Journalist at Detroit Free Press

"Make sure as a potential reader that I'm going to learn and be inspired by your story."

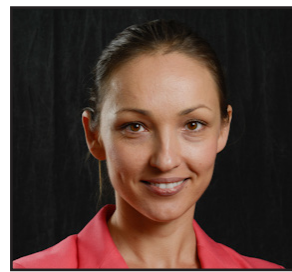


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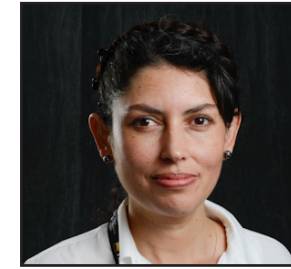
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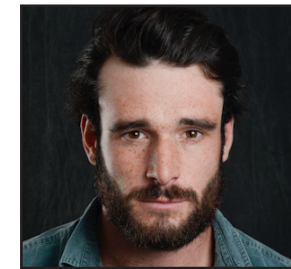
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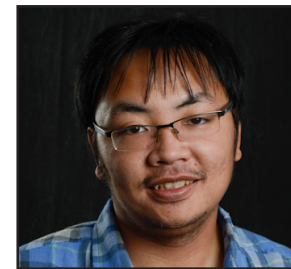
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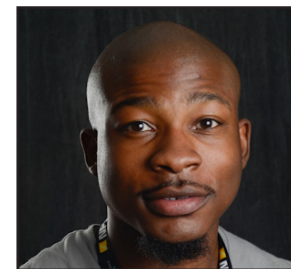
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MPW.68

Cuba, MO
September
25-
October 1,
2016

Today, 46
photographers
from around
the world
begin their
documentation
of residents of
the Mural City.

Small Town Storytelling

by Davis Winborne

Jim Richardson sees a lot of parallels between Cuba, KS and Cuba, MO. Asked what made Cuba, MO different he said “it’s 400 miles east.”

“The opportunities are very much the same and the impediments are very much the same,” he said. This means that Richardson’s *Reflections from a Wide Spot in the Road* is a valuable resource for photographers in Cuba, MO.

Richardson said that small towns like

the Cubas are special from a storytelling standpoint because of the “microcosm effect.”

“Things that are taken as self-perpetuating trends in cities come down to individual personalities in a small town,” he said.

Photographers, then, should pay special attention to these small-town “movers and shakers,” as Richardson calls them. Richardson said that there are three characteristics photographers should look to find in small town subjects: “interesting, active and accessible.”

It’s important to note that while Richardson has had nearly 40 years to find those people in Cuba, KS, he still thinks it’s possible to find them in a week in Cuba, MO.

Richardson also had some advice as to a mindset photographers can seek to cultivate when entering a small town.

“Don’t assume that it’s slower. Don’t assume that it’s simple. Really don’t assume you know what the hell is going on,” he said. “Very often the bias is, ‘I don’t see what I recognize, therefore this is a simpler place,’ and that’s simply not true.”

It’s obvious watching “Wide Spot in the Road: Cuba, Kansas” that Richardson looks more deeply into a community than what might appear on the surface. A small town, thanks to its seemingly uninteresting landscape, can force its people to carve an interesting lifestyle.

“Ultimately, what ‘Wide Spot’ ends up being about is the ways that people find meaning in landscapes that are essentially a blank slate. How they project onto those spaces their wishes and desires and needs, and evolve a culture and find a way to make meaning out of their lives. And that’s essentially what you’re looking for in a story.”

WIDE SPOT 2.0

MPW Co-Director David Rees, multimedia team leader Derek Poore, and audio, video and systems engineer Hany Hawasly assisted Richardson in modernizing the “Wide Spot” presentation and creating the video shown on Sunday night.

Originally, the presentation was shown on a three-carousel projector and Richardson would read the script live while music and songs were manually transitioned. Richardson wanted to “future-proof” it and preserve his story for future generations.

While working with Richardson, Rees, Poore and Hawasly gained some insights into his character and motivations.

“Working with Jim is very interesting,” Hawasly said. “When he talks about a project like this, you can hear it in his voice, you can sense how much of his soul has been put into this. He teared up every time he talked about the doctor dying.”

Richardson admits to being close to this story.

“It certainly, to me, is one of the most important places on earth. It’s always a place that I can go home to, because I wasn’t an objective observer. I became convinced after awhile that certain stories were not accessible if you didn’t become involved, so that you could feel these things subjectively.”

Translating that kind of emotion from a live presentation to a video wasn’t an easy task. Poore said that he and Hawasly spent an entire day recording Richardson’s narration over and over, until it was perfect.

“It was what you call a labor of love,” Rees said.

The team, along with several archive assistants from the Missouri School of Journalism’s Angus and Betty McDougall Center for Photojournalism Studies, created high quality 5K scans of several hundred of Richardson’s images for use in the video. The process took more than three years, Rees said.

Richardson calls the new video “Wide Spot 2.0.”

Poore said he admires Richardson’s commitment to keeping up with modern technology.

“He’s a gear head – he loves talking about new technologies. He loves Instagram, he’s got like a bazillion followers. He has not lost his

desire to learn, and that should be emulated,” Poore said.

All three took something away from their time with Richardson.

“He really cares about what he does,” Rees said. All three noted Richardson’s careful, painstaking attention to detail, but also his sense of humor and personable nature.

“He has 30 National Geographic stories, but he is still a very approachable person,” Hawasly said.



Photo by Jim Richardson

Wes Klima is one of Jim Richardson’s photo subjects in the *Wide Spot in the Road* story. Klima rode in the Harvest Festival parade in Cuba, Kansas as the Honored Citizen.

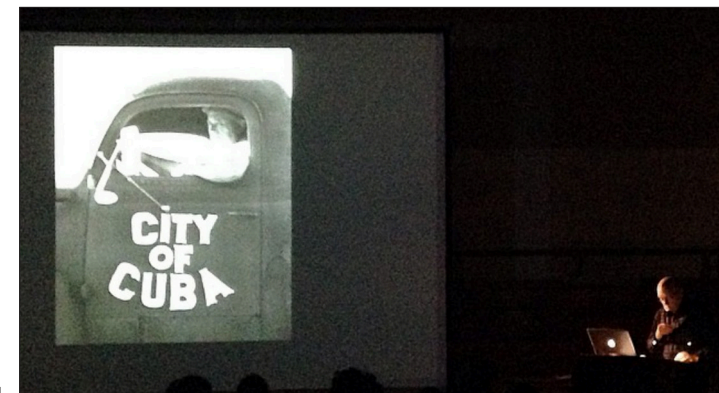


Photo by Brian Kratzer

Jim Richardson narrates *The Wide Spot in the Road* presentation from his notes during Platte City, MPW 66, before it was digitally remastered.

MPW archive photos grace the walls of Recklein Auditorium

The walls of the Recklein Auditorium have been transformed into a photo gallery curated by MPW co-director Jim Curley. The photos are from the workshop archives of the 7th and 60th MPW's held in Rolla and St. James, respectively. These towns are the closest in proximity MPW has been to Cuba, Mo. Curley selected these images based on aesthetic and the powerful storytelling. Here are the stories behind a few of the images. - Kelsey Walling, Rangefinder Staff

Mildred (left) and Earlene step outside of Mildred's trailer in search of the stray cats they feed. Since Earlene showed up in July, the two sisters have done virtually everything together.



Photo by Travis Dove



Photo by Lim Wui Liang

"Will goes just about everywhere with me," says Mickey. "Every day, I think about what would happen to him when I'm no longer around."

With all her chores done, Angie stands over the remaining grapes after a day of sales. "I sure would hate to cut them out," Angie said about her vineyard. "We're just too old. We don't know what we're going to do next year."



Photo by John Henry



Photo by Liz Baylen

Debbie supports her daughter who has struggled with addictions along with her sister. "Sooner or later someone is going to get tired and it's not going to be me. I see two women that have potential. I see the two little girls I loved and took care of. I see two very confused women here."

About the MPW Archive

Photographs from the first nine workshops and the last 17 workshops are available online to anyone who wants to view the stories photographers have created over the years. Many volunteers have been working to find more information on historical photographs, to upload more photos to the archive and make them more accessible. Archived photos can be found on mophotoworkshop.com under the "Year by Year" heading, and plans are to have photographs from every year on the site by the end of this week.

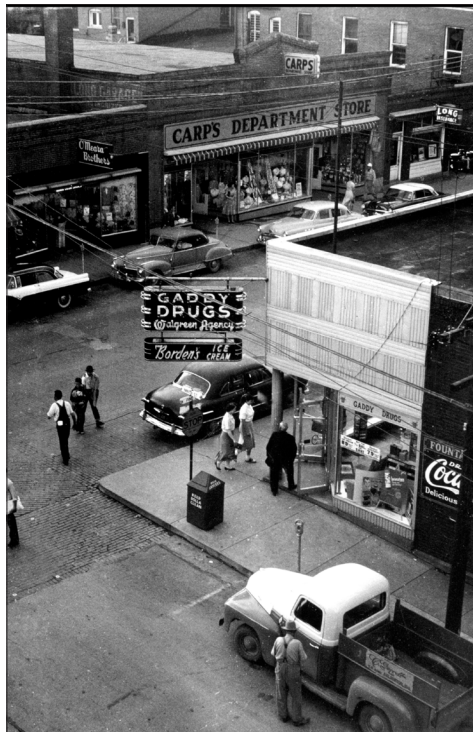



Photo by Steve Woit

This view of Pine and Main Streets in downtown Rolla in 1955 was featured in the Feb. 1989 issue of National Geographic on small-town America.


WEATHER FORECAST TOMORROW

 76° / 53°

WEDNESDAY

 69° / 48°

THURSDAY

 69° / 50°

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