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Issue 5, July, 2007

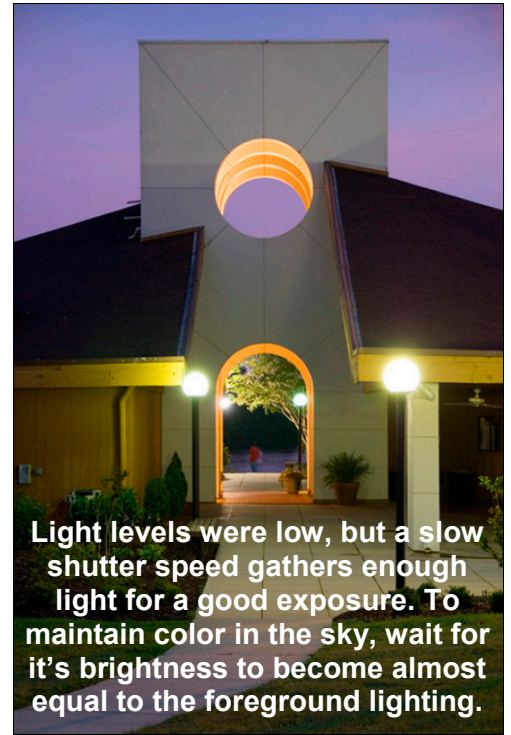
# Schuffert's Strides

**Newsletter** July, 2007

## *Huntsville @ Night!*

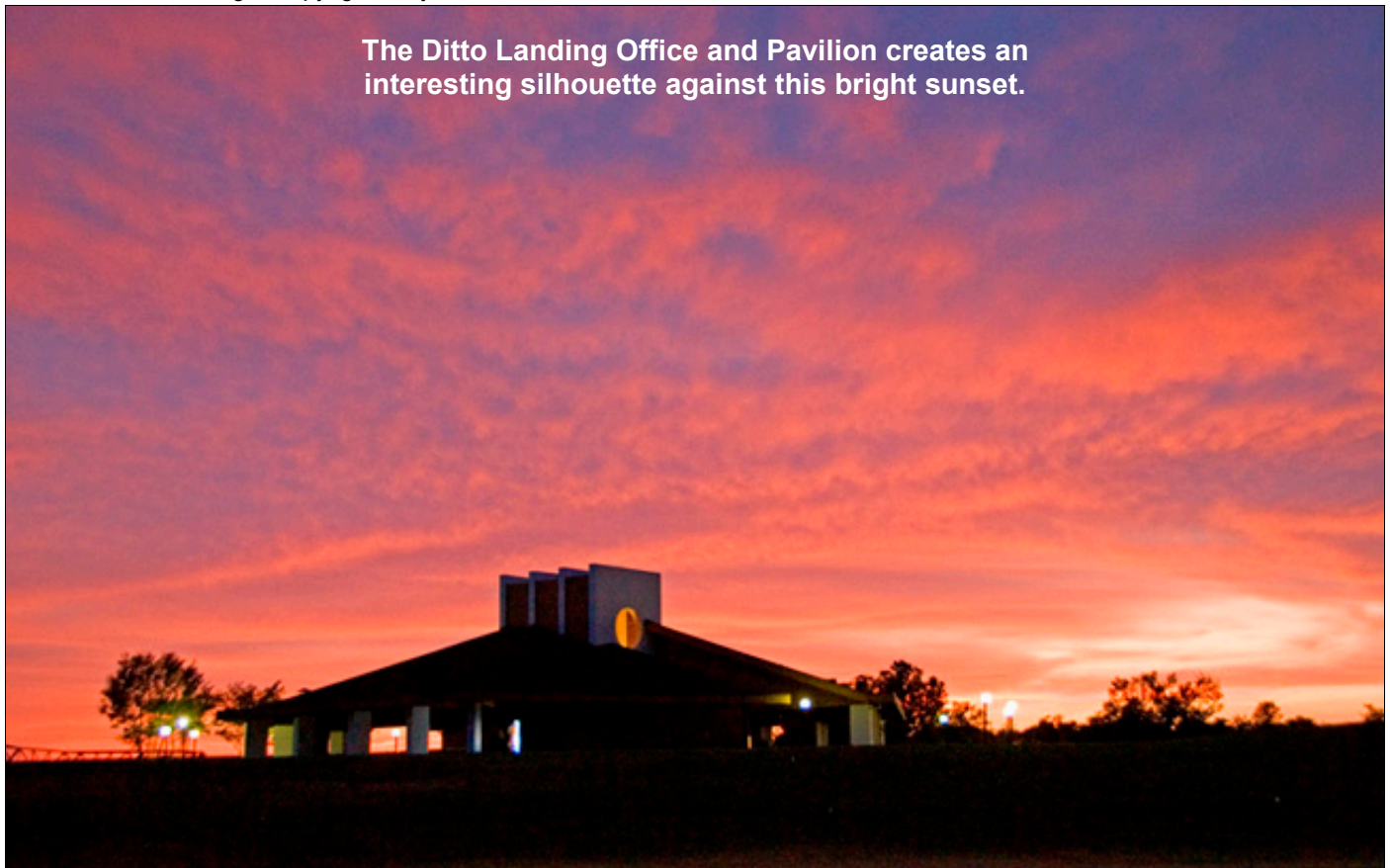
Follow along with Robert Schuffert on his  
recent photographic expeditions

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Light levels were low, but a slow shutter speed gathers enough light for a good exposure. To maintain color in the sky, wait for it's brightness to become almost equal to the foreground lighting.

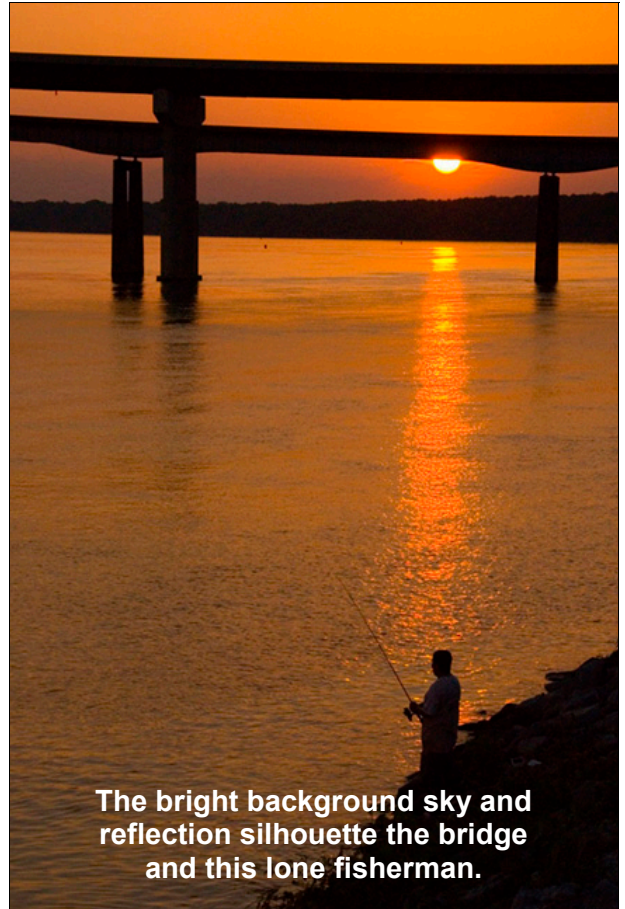
The Ditto Landing Office and Pavilion creates an interesting silhouette against this bright sunset.



~ *Huntsville @ Night* ~  
**Late afternoon & evening photography  
around Huntsville, Alabama.**

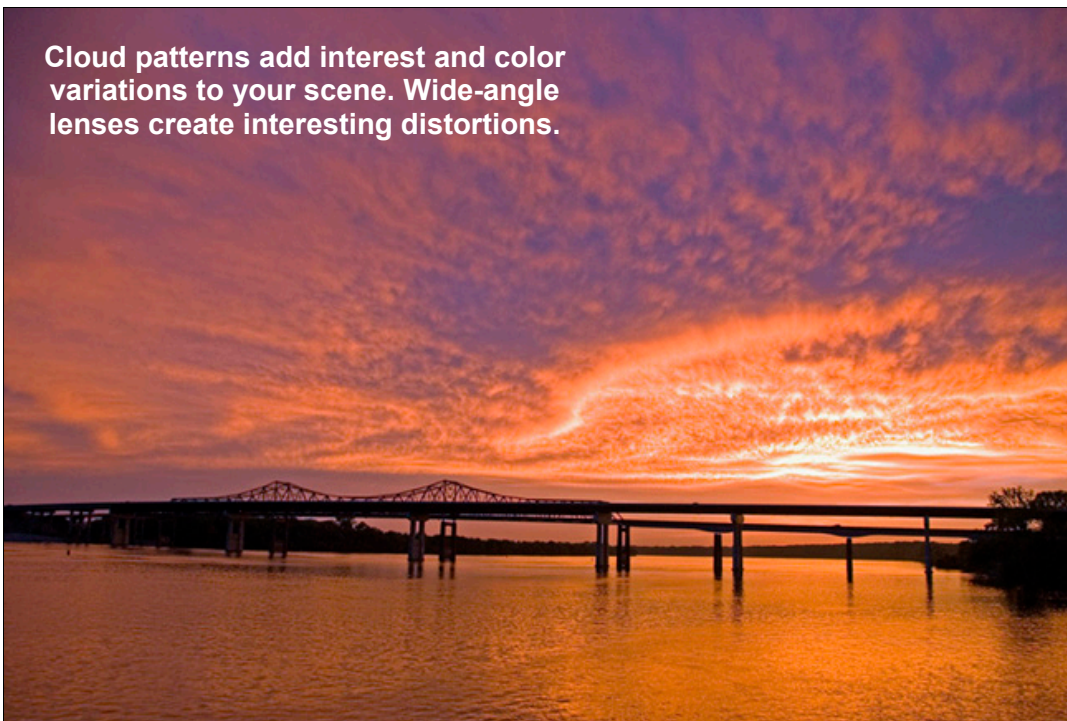
Photography at night? But it's too dark and very little light to photograph, you say? Interestingly, you may get some of your best images at night! With a little extra equipment, patience and a keen eye astute to how light at night reflects, illuminates and highlights scenes, you might be pleasantly surprised with your results. Besides, it's been much too hot and arid during the daytime hours this spring and summer to go hiking through deep forests with the bugs and snakes, only to find all the waterfalls dry! Also, I had to try out my old photography techniques with my new digital camera. Having no special hikes planned for the month, I decided to try the new camera on nearby night scenes.

Firstly, to photograph in low light environments at night, you'll need to use a tripod to hold the camera steady for the longer shutter speeds necessary to gather more light. Secondly, since the camera shouldn't move at all, even when pressing the shutter button, use a release cable or the camera's self-timer. With just these two extra items, you're ready for nighttime photography and a whole new world of images! Make sure your flash is turned off; you don't want to spoil the mood of your scene by adding this artificial light. Most flash units are useless beyond about 25 feet, and if it is turned on, the camera cannot use the slower shutter speeds necessary to gather more light, resulting in very dark images. Depending on your selected film type (or white balance setting on digital cameras), you may notice color tone shifts in your images, sometimes maybe a yellow cast, sometimes maybe green or red. This is caused by the color temperature of the light sources, whether it be incandescent, florescent, or possibly mercury vapor or other type. With a little experimentation, selecting the proper film type or white balance setting for the light source will correct this color imbalance issue. Digital cameras make this selection process much easier, since



**The bright background sky and reflection silhouette the bridge and this lone fisherman.**

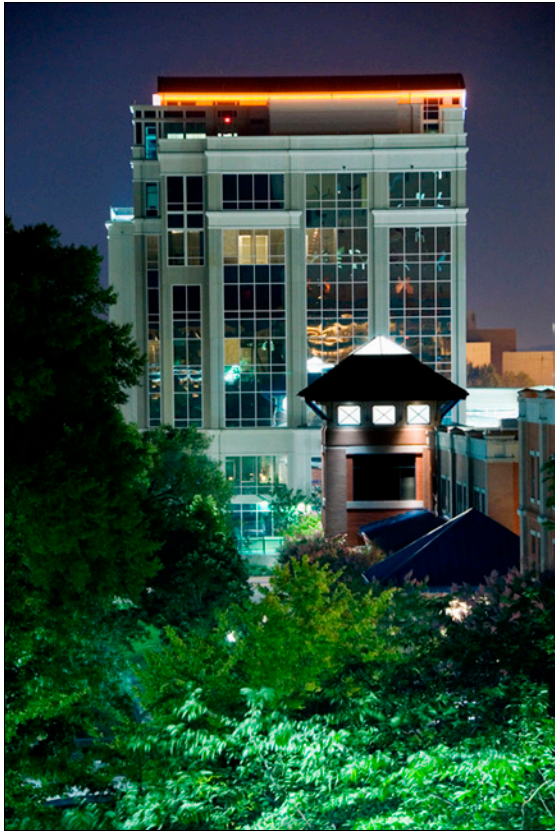
**Cloud patterns add interest and color variations to your scene. Wide-angle lenses create interesting distortions.**



you can just turn a dial, shoot again and immediately see the results on the screen.

With film cameras, you'll have to wait for the roll to be developed and then change the film type, if required.

Look for scenes evenly illuminated with light and zoom into just that area, eliminating as much of the dark areas as possible. Balance light over the major portions of your frame/composition. Water in ponds, lakes or rivers reflect light from the

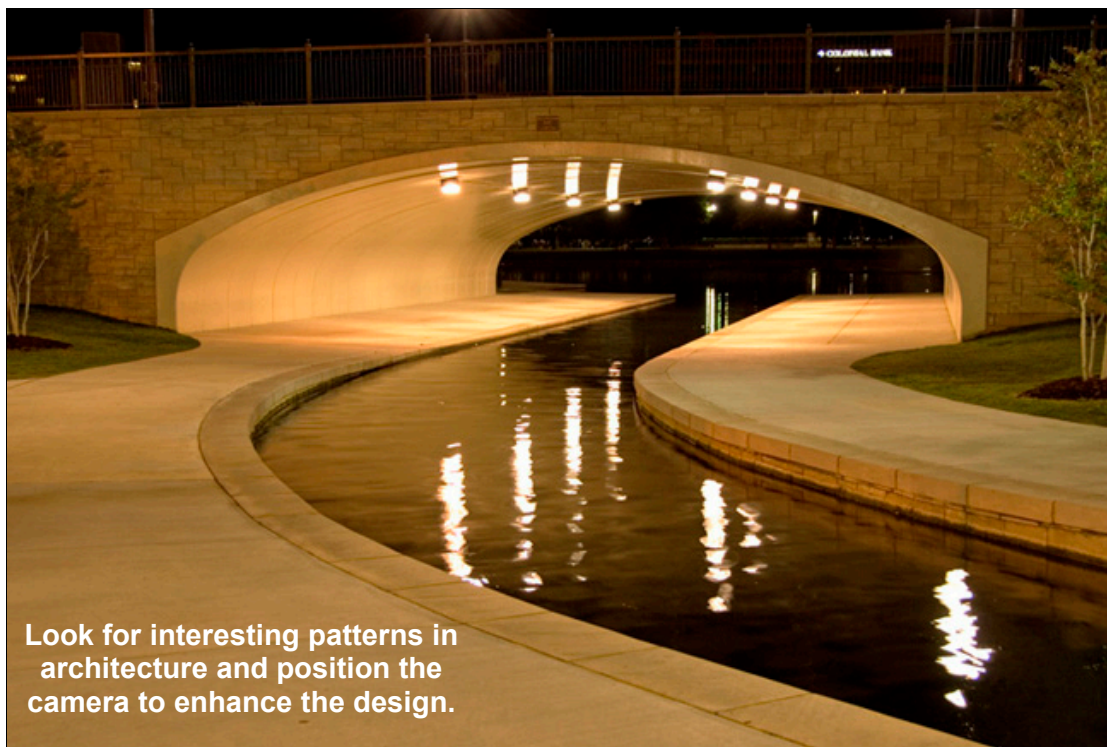


**Telephoto lenses capture the most important aspects of your scene.**

surface and can double the amount of light in your scene. When the water surface is rough, this reflection is scattered and stretched with the ripples. After rainstorms, wet streets and sidewalks create a



**Water produces charming reflections and almost doubles light in the frame.**



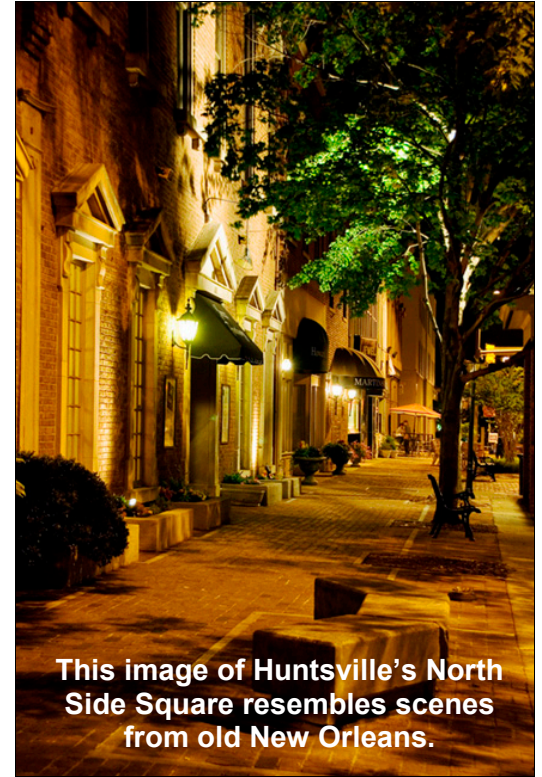
**Look for interesting patterns in architecture and position the camera to enhance the design.**

conglomerate of reflections, blending light into a myriad of colors. Using long shutter speeds, you might capture headlights and taillights as streaks across your image, and not even see the vehicles that made them. Filters can be placed in front of the lens to make starbursts around all bright light sources in the composition. Foggy evenings are great for nighttime shots; light illuminates the fog,



**Fog scatters light and outlines foreground subjects around Big Spring Lake.**

(Imaged on film)



**This image of Huntsville's North Side Square resembles scenes from old New Orleans.**

adding an eerie glow around silhouetted subjects. Nighttime is even the right time to capture images of lightning. Since it's dark outside, you can leave the shutter open an extremely long time, several minutes if necessary, waiting for a lightning bolt. Once the bolt over, close the shutter. This is easy to accomplish with a release cable, tripod and the camera in manual mode, with an open aperture and shutter speed on the "Bulb" or "B" setting.



**Taken from the bridge in front of Huntsville's new Embassy Suites Hotel, the camera's elevation captures the foreground landscape, but left a large area of dark sky above. A perfect place for a fireworks burst, which was merged here from another photograph to help balance the overall image.**

When the lightning flashes, for that fleeting moment, it is like daytime outside and should expose a good image.

Just be careful that you are protected under a cover of some sort. Don't pack up and leave that beautiful scene when the sun goes down; there's a lot of good images left to be taken!