

Through My Electronic Viewfinder

In Focus, November 2006 Issue

Westchester Photographic Society Newsletter

It's the day after our annual WPS dinner and I find myself running up against our Newsletter Editor's absolute deadline for writing this column. Fortunately for me, he seems as exhausted as I am having just survived the preparations required for our annual dinner. It's still too early for a post mortem on the success of the dinner. But so far, I haven't been inundated with the usual complaints of bad food, cold food, too crowded, slow service, not enough parking or it lasted too long.

What struck me most about this dinner was the great spirit of cooperation that we got from our members who worked on and worked out various aspects of the dinner. It's normally very difficult to get people to volunteer for any task particularly recurring tasks.

I've sat on many different WPS Boards over the past twenty five years and listened to the Board members pleading for volunteers to help with vital club tasks. Usually the President calls for volunteers at the next regular meeting, gets no firm commitment from anyone and at the next Board meeting the Directors decide it's less of a hassle to just do the job themselves. Invariably this leads to rapid burnout of our Board members and in the long run, an alienation of the Board from the rest of our members.

So it was gratifying to see how well we all worked together to make this dinner happen. It all starts with the competition committee members tallying the scores from the nine regular competitions to determine the High Point of the Year Winners and the winners of the End of Year competitions. Using the winners' lists, Lois ordered all of the plaques, ribbons, and medals for the awards. In the meantime, Jerry, Harvey and Lois wrote letters, sent emails and called vendors asking for donations for our door and raffle prizes. The Board reviewed our previous dinners and began looking for a new restaurant. Joe and Marty checked out several choices before Joe convinced the Board that Sam's was the best choice. He then handled all contacts with Sam's including the layout of the room, the menu choices and the timing of the evening. Jerry and Anastasia inventoried all the goodies they had been storing at their homes as well as the new donations that came in from our vendors and from our members (Marty, Deborah, Elinor and Lois) and along with Harvey, Mano and Elinor) schlepped everything to Sam's.

The awards were delivered to Robert's home where he and Ruth sorted all of the awards into the proper categories and then brought them to Sam's. Jane once again prepared all of the centerpieces for the tables. Charlie computed the winner of the Most Improved Photographer award and very patiently collected and dispersed all money for the dinner. Harry and Charlie volunteered to check in our members at the dinner and make sure everyone received their door prize tickets. Lois sold the raffle tickets. And big personal thanks to Walter and Rose Ann who very gracelessly volunteered to hand out all of the awards at the dinner. Even though the dinner is over, the work isn't done. Thank you notes still have to be written to all of our donors and then we can all start our planning for next year's Annual Dinner.

Dick