

# You'd Better Read Me News

February 2016 Pre-Bulletin

It's only the third week of January. Are we going to get more rain in southern California? Will we really get a lot more snow in Sierra's in order to build up our reservoirs? Will we ever learn how to use strobes in our almost daily photography? We can't definitely answer the first two questions, yet we can help with the third one! Kevin Kubota invented and FJ Westcott built the LunaGrip for flash/strobe photography. Yes! **Kevin Kubota** will be our presenter for February and will show us some **cool Photography tips, Photoshop/Lightroom techniques, and show his new invention!!**

Lynette and I were in Italy with Kevin and Clare Kubota. Kevin wanted to show us his newest invention with the **Luna Grip**. As soon as I saw it, I realized that here was an invention that took a lot of the mystery about using a soft box and creating stunning portraits without dragging excess poundage with you to a remote location. Here we were in Umbria, Italy, sun shining quite brightly and Kevin wanted to show us how to create a portrait that would blow our minds. We were outside near an olive tree. The sun was dappled through the trees, making a nice portrait seem almost impossible. Kevin had Lynette and I sit down and posed us. I could see that the sun was peeking through the leaves of the olive tree on both of us. In the years that I have known Kevin, I have learned to trust his judgement and have experienced his expertise with portrait photography. He then brought out this new device, the likes of which I had not quite seen before. It had a diffuser light reflector that I knew was like the **Westcott 50" 5-in-1 Sunlight reflector**. Only this one was slightly smaller and it had a handle so it could be held by hand, even by the photographer, if required. Additionally, at the back of this strange looking item was a normal looking flash unit. As I looked at this device further, I realized I was looking at the future of portrait photography. Now came the acid test. Could Kevin take an image of Lynette and me in these difficult lighting conditions and not make it look like an overpowered strobe to knock out the dappled sunlight on his subjects? *The easy answer was YES! Definitely!* The images looked as though Kevin had not even used a strobe, or had brought along a huge light box and reflector with a studio strobe and created a studio right under this olive tree. He had powered the strobe down to about 25% power, positioned the diffuser to "wrap" the light around us and these images had the look of an indoor studio right in this hotel backyard in Italy! When you see how Kevin and his lovely assistant, Clare, use this LunaGrip, you will be amazed.

For years we have been using very large Scrimms to cut down on really bright sunlight for outdoor portraits and have tried using various other diffusers to drop the light down one or two stops so the light is not blinding on the models. Then we have to figure out the f stops or the strobe power so we don't have the look of "you

used strobes" to take that image. Even using a two stop diffuser left you with having to chase the light, especially if you had clouds that would drift by and cause the light to vary intensely. That is when you would use strobes or large studio lights to keep the light steady. This LunaGrip actually handles this situation quite easily. You will see that for yourself as we take the images, process them quickly and display them on the 10 foot screen in the room. We will have a couple of these kits at the meeting. All you will need is your own strobe or flash attachment with either a remote or a long cord from your camera. We choose to use **Phottix Mitros** with their **Odin Receivers**. These are amazingly affordable radio controlled strobes with a long range and able to easily control the intensity of the flash right from the hot shoe of your camera. During Kevin's lecture he will talk about more than just using the LunaGrip. As usual I will recommend you take copious notes as Kevin will not be talking strictly about the Luna Grip.

You might also bring your Adobe Creative Cloud notebook with your Adobe pen to take notes. A lot of you got them as raffle prizes in December.

Will we be offering a LunaGrip as a raffle prize? No, because not everyone is interested in flash photography. However we will have a **main raffle prize that literally everyone will be interested in:** A one year subscription to the **Adobe Creative Cloud!** Here is where you have access to almost every Adobe application. The normal cost is \$49.99 per month for 12 months. The fun starts immediately as you will find that anytime Adobe has an update to one of your chosen programs, you can download the newest update and use it.

We have a second raffle prize: How about a rechargeable battery conditioner / charger? This **MH-C801D** Unit from Powerex not only charges rechargeable batteries, it reconditions them. We own one of these and they are incredibly useful.

We will send out another bulletin on February 13, the day before Valentine's Day. However this notice is to give you time to **plan to be at the February 20, meeting** where you will learn about **Photoshop tips, Photography tricks, Lighting, and more from Kevin Kubota.**

We meet on Saturday, February 20, 2016 at the **Burns Community Center** in Lakewood. Map is in the lower left quadrant. Doors will open 8:45 AM **and the coffee will be ready.**

See you then  
Regards and God bless.  
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