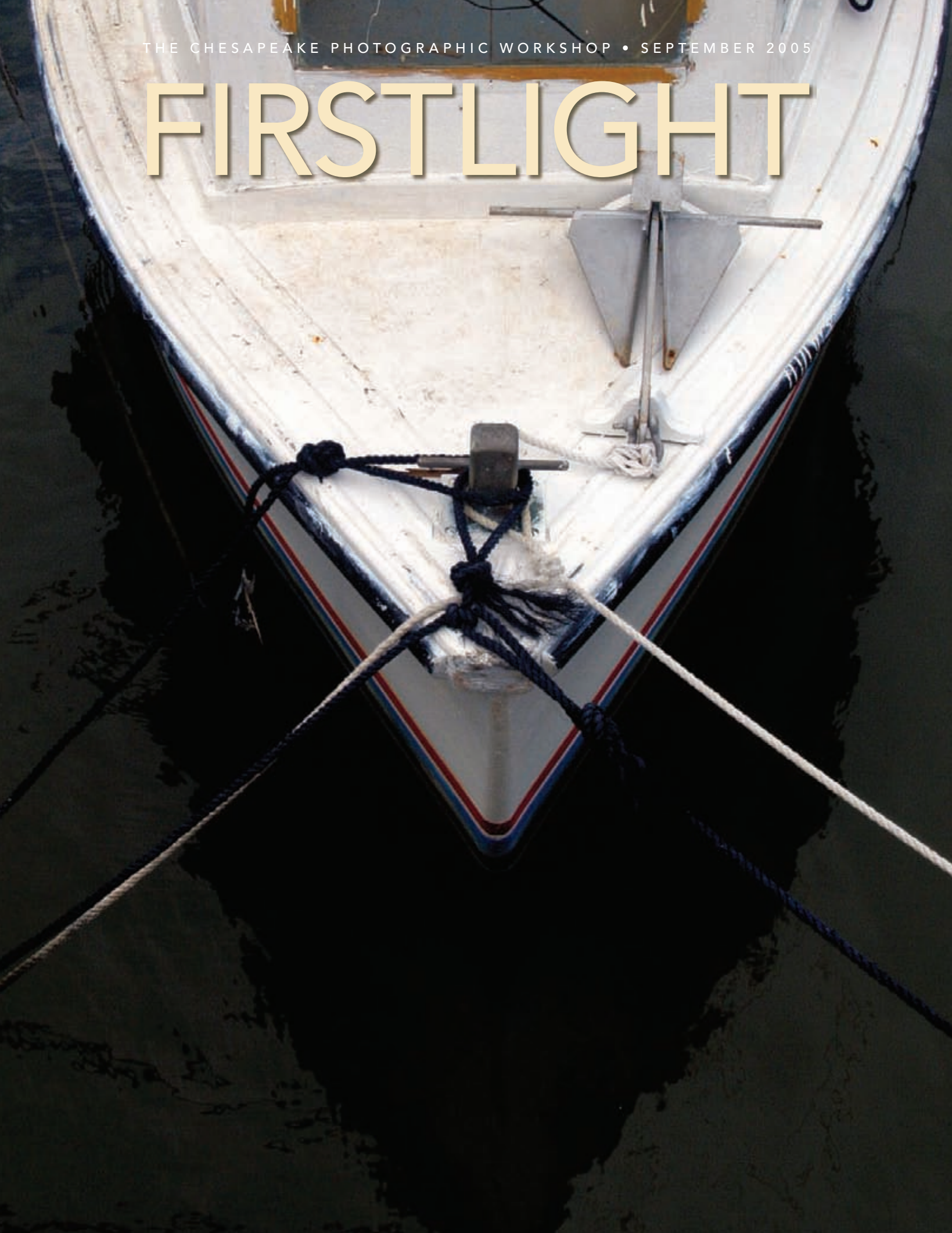


THE CHESAPEAKE PHOTOGRAPHIC WORKSHOP • SEPTEMBER 2005

FIRSTLIGHT



FIRSTLIGHT CHESA



COVER: The simple symmetry of the bow, anchor and lines on this wooden fishing boat moored on Upper Hooper Island caught the photographer's eye. "I must have taken three dozen frames, working to balance all the elements," says Walt Hubis.

PHOTOGRAPH BY WALT HUBIS

Perhaps a waterman lived here once. Now vacant, the white frame house below the mainland bridge on Upper Hooper Island glows in the first light of a September dawn. • PHOTOGRAPH BY KEVIN VANDIVIER

PEAKE

DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHIC WORKSHOP



To the Native Americans, the enormous estuary was Chesepiooc or "The Great Shellfish Bay." Once bounteous beyond belief, Chesapeake Bay seafood production has been hammered by pesticides, fertilizer-tainted runoff and overharvesting. Waterman Steve Simmons hoists a catch out of his pound trap and onto the boat.

PHOTOGRAPH BY WALT HUBIS







As the sun rose, Jim Starr worked the photograph of an old skipjack, dissatisfied with his results. An egret caught his attention and he followed the bird, only to return to the boat a few minutes later. Still nothing. He walked to town, but the possibilities in the boat pulled him back. Finally, the sun caught the hull and threw its reflection into the water and Starr got his picture. "As the instructors hammered into us persistence pays!" Starr says. • PHOTOGRAPH BY JIM STARR







From his perch in his grandfather's arms, Colton Holliday smiles at David R. Marshall Jr. (right) Are grown men always this silly? Colton's granddad, Andy Holliday, and Marshall are morning regulars at the Lewis General Store in Cambridge. • PHOTOGRAPH BY BARB BENT





Any photographer who has worked along the verdant shores of the Chesapeake Bay knows that the first light and the last light are the best light of the day, the only light, really, worth shooting in. For the 15 photographers who converged on the Eastern Shore in September 2005, FirstLight Chesapeake was more than the name of their workshop. It was their mandate.

Just as the watermen have done for generations, the FirstLight photographers rose before dawn to traverse the long peninsular roads to nowhere and sail the great, gray waters of the bay. They returned, as the watermen do, with spectacularly rich and memorable catches – truly a feast for the eyes.

ABOVE: Local artist Linda Terre sketches on her canvas at the Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge about 12 miles south of Cambridge.

PHOTOGRAPH BY BARB BENT

RIGHT: “The water was perfectly still, just like a mirror,” says Humberto Guglielmina, of this lake on Maryland’s Eastern Shore. Then (instructor) John (Isaac) said, ‘Wait. Frame the picture you want and when you are ready, tell me. I will throw a rock into the water. At first I was skeptical. I didn’t want to disturb the perfect stillness of the water . . . but I let the master work. When I saw the end result, I understood why.’ • **PHOTOGRAPH BY HUMBERTO GUGLIELMINA**





The FirstLight workshops are known for their emphasis upon teaching photographers to capture the essence of a place, whether it is Auvillar, France, Oban, Scotland, or Cambridge, Md. “We try to get people to make their work transcend a snapshot to become a photograph,” says Jay Dickman, a Pulitzer Prize-winning photographer and founder of FirstLight. “And you do that by getting them to spend time with people, to talk, to get to know a place.”

So what makes Maryland’s Eastern Shore the “Eastern Shore?”

When Marylanders talk of the “Eastern Shore,” they mean their piece of the bulging peninsula (shared by Delaware) that buffers the Chesapeake Bay and the mainland from the Atlantic Ocean’s full assault. It is flat, tidal land shot through with creeks and tributaries, a place so unto itself that for those who have ever been there, the mere mention of its name instantly conjures a *mélange* of sights, smells and sounds. Skipjacks and working watermen. Cracked crabs on butcher paper. Clanking halyards and tackle against masts. Salty breezes. Screeching gulls. White-washed towns. Golden marsh grasses at sunset. The shush of a sailboat cutting through the waves under a full moon.

“Working here is like anthropology and sociology and photography all rolled into one,” says Dave Harp, an Eastern Shore photographer who shared his 35 years of experience on the bay with workshop participants. “You’re trying to tell a story.”



ABOVE: Capt. Bo Nelson is skipper, oyster-dredger and chief storyteller aboard the skipjack Nathan of Dorchester.

PHOTOGRAPH BY RAY JOHNSON

RIGHT: When Guglielmina opened his car door to get a better shot of this blue heron, the bird took flight, squawking in protest. His 300 mm Olympus lens, however, enabled him to get the perfect shot.

PHOTOGRAPH BY HUMBERTO GUGLIELMINA







ABOVE: The image of a small overturned boat under a tree resonated with John Harvey. “That sight is familiar on both sides of the bay since everyone goes crabbing at one time or another,” says Harvey, who owned a small boat when he lived on the shore.

PHOTOGRAPH BY JOHN HARVEY

RIGHT: Watermen Jeremy Shockley (left) and his father, Carl Shockley, work the bay throughout the year, taking fish, crabs and oysters in their proper seasons. The work has been in their family for generations, but with Jeremy it will end. The younger Shockley won’t permit his son to come aboard the fishing boat for fear the boy will fall in love with what father and son see as a dying way of life.

PHOTOGRAPH BY KEVIN VANDIVIER







TOP: The skipjack is the state boat of Maryland and the last working boat in the United States still operated under sail power. Up before the sun, watermen dump fish from a basket onto the deck. "Everyone wore masks, as the fish slime flew," says Hubis.

MIDDLE: Blue rubber work gloves still smelling of fish hang on a line to dry.

BOTTOM: A bright yellow and green buoy wound with rope lies on a dock in Fishing Creek on Upper Hooper Island. · PHOTOGRAPHS BY WALT HUBIS

RIGHT: Focused on the Hooper Strait Lighthouse in St. Michaels, John Robinson waited for a sailboat to pass. "I had to balance the timing of his passage with the increasing light of daybreak," Robinson says. The green running lights of the boat are visible between the posts that support the lighthouse.

PHOTOGRAPH BY JOHN ROBINSON









The FirstLight workshops are designed for people who are interested in publishing their work. “Being published can mean working for National Geographic or publishing your work as a slide show from the family trip to Disneyland,” Dickman says. “How do you create this visual narrative of 15 to 20 images that grab the viewer and make him want more?”

Of course, the photographer needs a trained eye, but the right tools also are essential. From its inception, FirstLight has focused on digital photography. Olympus, a major sponsor, loaned the workshop E1 and E500 cameras and lenses that ranged in size from the 7-14mm to the 300mm 2.8. Dino Thomas, an Olympus representative, also provided technical support at the workshop.

Participants were wowed by the crystalline images produced by the Olympus cameras and lenses. Humberto Guglielmina noted his surprise at being able to see actual raindrops in a photograph he shot of a heron taking flight on a drizzly morning. “(That’s) a testament to the incredible sharpness of that amazing Olympus 300mm lens!” Guglielmina wrote.

Hewlett-Packard, a new FirstLight sponsor, provided state-of-the-art, large format printers, the Photosmart 8750 and the Designjet 130, which are used by the Magnum photo agency, among others. HP also provided all the paper and ink cartridges needed to make stunning photographs. “We were blown away by the print quality,” says Dickman.

At the end of the week, Dickman and the photographers were happy with their efforts. But what would the locals think?

So many residents had given generously of their time and expertise on skipjacks, on farms, at the wildlife refuge, in shops, over cups of coffee. The last night of the workshop, as is FirstLight custom, the photographers hosted a gallery show and reception for their subjects.

“The responses were fantastic, so many people saying, ‘Oh, my God, you captured this community,’” says Dickman. “At the end of that day, that’s very satisfying. That’s what it’s all about.”

LEFT: Golden marsh grasses wave in the early morning breeze on a hillside along the south bank of the Choptank River. This picture was taken from a bridge over the Choptank.

PHOTOGRAPH BY RUSS BARTMES

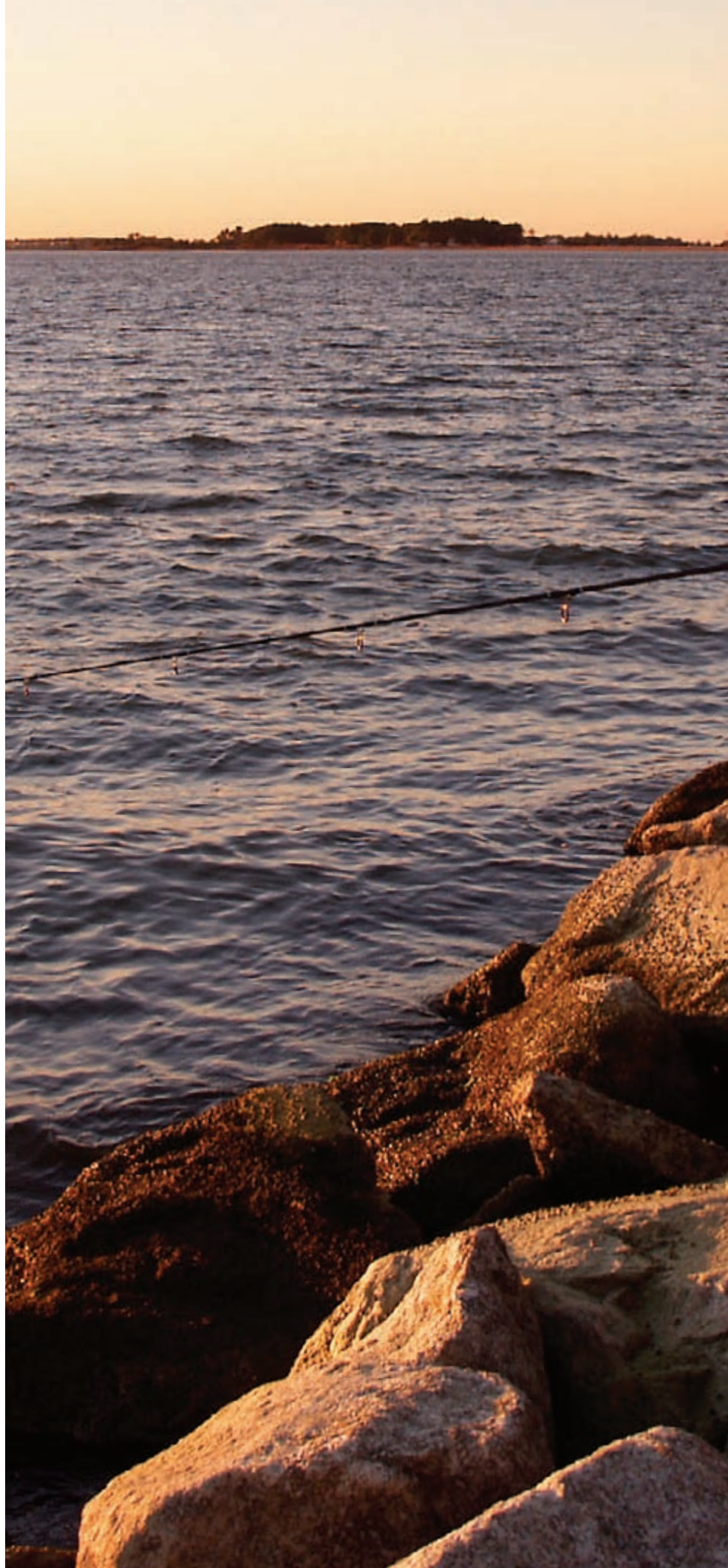


TOP: An unlucky crab tries in vain to escape from a bucket filled with his brethren.
PHOTOGRAPH BY FRED ZUILL



ABOVE: Locals come regularly to a bridge over the Choptank River to fish and go crabbing. For many, it's a family affair.
PHOTOGRAPH BY RUSS BARTMES

RIGHT: "This was a lesson on the use of the 'golden hour' light, as well as in keeping the depth of field shallow enough to keep the eye trained on our subject," says Brad Gilliam of his photograph of a man fishing at sunset.
PHOTOGRAPH BY BRAD GILLIAM









ABOVE: The beauty is in the details. The soft heads of marsh grass seem ethereal against a backdrop of green blades.

PHOTOGRAPH BY DAVID HAYDEN

LEFT: The Eastern Shore is a stopover for birds on the Atlantic Flyway and a haven for wildlife of all sorts. Traveling at sunrise, Humberto Guglielmina, came upon a marsh where a solitary heron stood silhouetted in golden light. "This was not my first picture of that day," Guglielmina says, "but I think, the most dramatic."

PHOTOGRAPH BY HUMBERTO GUGLIELMINA

RIGHT: At Bob's Barber Shop in Cambridge, owner Bob Parks gives a customer a trim. PHOTOGRAPH BY CHUCK RAFKIN



RIGHT: Perhaps sparkling shop windows such as these caught the eye of James Michener during his stay in Cambridge, the setting for his book Chesapeake. PHOTOGRAPH BY PARK TERRELL



BELOW: A Labrador Retriever checks out a stray from the day's catch. PHOTOGRAPH BY WALT HUBIS



LEFT: Women at the Russell Hall Seafood Company in Hoopersville on Upper Hooper Island pick crabs taken from the bay only hours earlier. PHOTOGRAPH BY KEVIN VANDIVIER





TOP: "At first I thought that this photograph was crooked beyond salvation," says John Robinson of this image of the Waterfowling Building at the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum, "but then I realized that it was just taken from a duck's perspective!"
PHOTOGRAPH BY JOHN ROBINSON

ABOVE: A former Navy man, Matthew Falls turns fine woods into fine furniture in his Cambridge shop.
PHOTOGRAPH BY CHUCK RAFKIN

RIGHT: After Guglielmina and John Isaac explained their mission, the residents of this Cambridge neighborhood "turned out to be some of the nicest people ever," Guglielmina says. The boys on the bicycles "called out our names to let us know they were coming so we could be ready to take their photos."
PHOTOGRAPH BY HUMBERTO GUGLIELMINA





ABOVE: Riding a bicycle is only one of the many ways to see the world of the Chesapeake. • PHOTOGRAPH BY KEVIN VANDIVIER



LEFT: Cody Wilson, 7, gathers an armload of summer corn, still warm from the field. • PHOTOGRAPH BY KEVIN VANDIVIER

BELOW: The owner of this horse was eager to pass along his suggestions for interesting photographs elsewhere, unaware of the attractions in his own backyard. • PHOTOGRAPH BY DAVID HAYDEN

RIGHT: A “golden waterfall” of grain pours into the waiting truck on a farm near the Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge. • PHOTOGRAPH BY HUMBERTO GUGLIELMINA.









Ray Johnson knew he wanted to photograph this small cemetery on Hooper Island at sunset. But how to get the right angle? Johnson got down on his belly. "It was exciting to look up at the small mound and see the tombstone in perfect light." • PHOTOGRAPH BY RAY JOHNSON



Pictured, left to right, onboard the skipjack Nathan of Dorchester are Jim Star, Bert Fox, Jo Mattoon, John Isaac (in cowboy hat) and Walt Hubis, John Robinson (seated in a white T-shirt), Ray Johnson (in white hat) and David Hayden (seated in a blue jacket.) Continuing from center are Jay Kinghorn, Park Terrell (white shirt and ball cap), Russ Bartmes (seated in plaid shirt), Fred Zuill (in dark glasses), Brad Gilliam, Becky Dickman and John Harvey, Leslie Vandivier (kneeling), Dino Thomas, Kevin Vandivier, Chuck Rafkind, (in dark glasses and a tan ball cap) Barb Bent and Jay Dickman (kneeling).

TEXT BY DEBBIE PRICE

2005 Chesapeake FirstLight Workshop Faculty



Jay Dickman - Olympus Visionary

Jay Dickman, Olympus Visionary and Lexar Elite Photographer, is founder of Firstlight Workshops. A Pulitzer Prize-winning photographer and regular contributor to National Geographic, Jay's work has won numerous awards in the World Press International Competition. Jay recently co-authored *Perfect Digital Photography* with Jay Kinghorn, published by McGraw Hill.



Bert Fox - National Geographic Photo Editor

Bert Fox joined National Geographic Magazine in August 1996 as a Picture Editor. He has edited over 100 stories for the magazine, including a 70-page cover story celebrating 50 years of mountaineering on Mt. Everest. His honors include being named "Magazine Picture Editor of the Year" five times by the University of Missouri, in its annual Pictures of the Year (POY) competition.



John Isaac - Olympic Visionary

John Isaac has had a distinguished photography career, including twenty years – from 1978 to 1998 – with the United Nations in the Department of Public Information. During that time, John traveled to more than 100 countries, photographing the struggles and triumphs of our changing world. Throughout his career, John has received numerous national and international awards for his work, including 13 Nikon awards.




Jay Kinghorn - RGB Imaging

An Adobe Photoshop Certified Expert, Jay Kinghorn draws upon his background as an assignment and fine-art photographer to develop training programs that fulfill the essential needs of photographers. His approachable, comfortable and efficient training style makes Jay one of the most sought-after digital imaging specialists. In 2003, Jay created a landmark digital imaging survey with ASMP Colorado to assess the adoption of digital photography.



David Harp - Photographer

A lifelong Marylander, Dave Harp operates a corporate and editorial photography business from Cambridge, MD. His magazine credits include *The New York Times Magazine*, *Smithsonian*, *Audubon*, *Natural History*, *Islands and Travel Holiday*. Dave recently published *The Great Marsh: An Intimate Journey into a Chesapeake Wetland*, by The Johns Hopkins University Press, and is a past president of the American Society of Media Photographers.



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2005 Chesapeake FirstLight Workshop Notes



BACK COVER: A pair of bald eagles
makes its home in the Blackwater
National Wildlife Refuge.
PHOTOGRAPH BY KEVIN VANDIVIER

