

NorthStarNerd.Org

Dedicated to open access sharing of knowledge - Your host: [Rich Hoeg](#)

April 30, 2014

Ducks and US Coast Guard rescue freighter stuck in the Lake Superior pack ice!

It was quite the morning on the North Shore of Lake Superior. A convoy of seven ships was stuck in the pack ice near Duluth, Minnesota. Fortunately these ducks phoned in a 911 call, and the US Coast Guard came to the rescue with an icebreaker.

[Link to my photography project site](#) for a video of people surfing on Lake Superior this morning!



Posted at 02:05 PM in Northern Life | [Permalink](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#)

April 25, 2014

Amity: A Winter Wonderland Photographic Tour

My first book, Amity, will be published and available via Amazon in approximately seven days. However, I am giving away a pdf version of my book via NorthStarNerd.Org (this web site). Here is the book's description:

- The Lake Superior wilderness of northern Minnesota is rustically beautiful. Amity invites you to explore this region's winter wonderland through the eyes of landscape and nature photographer Rich Hoeg. The word "Amity" comes from a small stream that roars down the hill to Lake Superior near Duluth, Minnesota.

Working (and playing) at photography over the past twelve months since retiring from Honeywell has been rewarding. Albeit doing photoshoots outdoors this winter in weather that often was -30F and colder had its drawbacks. I was flattered to see organizations such as Fox News and the Weather Channel pick up and use my ice cave photographs in national news articles on the [Apostle Islands Sea Caves](#). In addition, being one of the few finalists in the Lake Superior Magazine annual photo contest was an honor.

I hope you enjoy Amity.

- [Download a free pdf version of "Amity" via this link](#)
- [View my photos via Flickr](#) (available with attribution via Creative Commons)

Here is just one photo from Amity. This photo of Split Rock Lighthouse was taken shortly before dawn on April 18, 2014. Winter is finally starting to give up here and on the

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before dawn on April 10, 2014. Winter is finally starting to give up here grip on the Northland.

(click to view photo at full resolution)



Rich Hoeg (LakeSuperiorWaves.Com)

Posted at 04:51 PM in Northern Life | Permalink | Comments (0)

April 13, 2014

Wireless Internet Access on the Go

Recently I spent some extended time down in Florida assisting my Dad. He does not have internet access at his home, and is not interested in having a service hooked up to his house. Needing and wanting 24x7 internet access meant I started research for a service which would solve my access issue. Enter [DayPass Wireless](#), which provided an easy, cost effective solution.

At this point I should comment that I paid for my service through [DayPass Wireless](#), and I have no relationship with anyone, or even know anyone with this company. I found them via a Google keyword search. DayPass Wireless has not paid me for this blog post. I just found their service useful and wanted to let other folks know via my blog.

Their service could not have been easier. I entered the address of my Father's Florida home, and they determined what connection (i.e. what carrier) would be optimum for my location. Day Pass Wireless then shipped a mifi mobile hotspot to my Dad's home. It was waiting for me when I arrived down in Florida from Duluth, Minnesota and worked perfectly over the next 11 days. I was charged \$7.79 per day plus \$9.90 for shipping. The cost seemed reasonable. When I returned north last Friday, I just put the mifi in a prepaid shipping US Postal Service shipping envelope and popped it into my Dad's mailbox. Could not have been easier. My data allowance was 335 mb per day, which was fine for normal web browsing and activities. However, my wife and I instituted a "no video" rule to insure we would not go over our data limit. Missing YouTube videos of cat herding for eleven days was not a hardship.

I hope to test DayPass Wireless later this Spring up in the northern Minnesota wilderness. If this service works for my remote cabin that would be sweet!



Posted at 07:54 AM in Economy 2.0 | Permalink | Comments (0)

April 12, 2014

[Bookending the North Woods Night](#)

[The Benefits of a 365 Day Photography Project](#)

[From Glaciers to the Sea Bike Tour](#)

[Giving Away your Skills!](#)

[NorthStar Nerd Photography](#)

[Northern Lights shine for the NorthStar Nerd!](#)

Kayaking the Deeps

I watched two very skilled, and brave young men kayak down "The Deeps" waterfall this afternoon. The power of this waterfall during the winter snow melt runoff is amazing. If you would like to watch similar kayaking up in the northland, please keep an eye on the [Lester River Kayak Facebook Page](#). Tentatively, subject to river flow and ice conditions, the race is scheduled for next Easter weekend.

If the two men who were in the kayaks send me an email, I will be happy to arrange free delivery of the high resolution copies of these pictures. I've also included a photo of The Deeps which I took yesterday. This photo will give you a better appreciation of the waterfall they kayaked down.

- Video link from last year, 2013: [Descending "The Deeps" by Kayak](#)
- My latest photography project: [365 Days of Birds](#)

Kayaker #1



Kayaker #2



The Deeps (photo taken one day prior)



Tell a Story with your Photos

Back in January I started a 365 day / year long photography project ([365 Days of Birds](#)). The goal with this effort, as well as any learning opportunity is to obviously improve one's skills. The idea of taking a photograph every day for a year forces oneself to think long and hard about the end result, creating a photograph that people want to view.

Even before this project, I was working hard towards becoming a better photographer. Here are some tips I've learned from my recent efforts both with respect to bird photography, and often photography in general:

1. Tell a story with your photograph
2. With animals and birds, the "eyes" make all the difference. Your subject should appear to be looking directly out of the photograph at you, or if the view is directed elsewhere ... a story should be told with that point of view.
3. Even when you think birds and animals are motionless, they are moving albeit perhaps very slowly. When you are zooming in your subject, which is almost always in nature photography, the result of any motion is greatly magnified in your photo.
4. My rule of thumb for bird photography exposures is:
 - o 1/800 of a second maximum exposure for larger slow moving birds
 - o 1/1000 of a second maximum exposure for smaller fast moving birds
5. The golden hour is truly golden for bring out details in nature photography (the hour directly after sunrise, and directly before sunset). In addition, birds tend to feed right after sunrise. The same may not be true by sunset as birds will have fed enough already for the day.
6. Aperture priority is a waste of time ... use if for landscape photos w/o motion
7. If you find an interesting bird or animal ... wait! Patience is a virtue. While feeding it is amazing how territorial squabbles will arise with other animals and birds you don't even see are near by. Thus keep your eyes and ears open. Sudden conflict may appear which will create great photo opportunities.

Here are a few examples which demonstrate my methods. I hope you like these photos. If so, please link to my [365 Days of Birds Project](#) or my [Flickr Feed](#) to see more examples of my work. I license my work under Creative Commons w/o charge given appropriate attributions and link backs.

1: Crow in Sight! 2: Attack! (click either image to view at full size)



3: A New Cop in Town! 4: Where?





5: It's Cold Outside! 6: Leif Ericson, the Explorer



- Photos 1 & 2: Heathrow Florida - A red-shouldered hawk spies and attacks a crow
- Photo 3: A great gray owl shortly after sunset north of Duluth, Minnesota
- Photo 4: A sandhill crane baby investigates the photographer
- Photo 5: A cold early January morning at Canal Park in Duluth, Minnesota.
- Photo 6: Leif Ericson looks out over a frozen landscape in Duluth, Minnesota

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