

HORIZON NEWS #69

IMAGES, THOUGHTS AND NEWS FROM HORIZON PHOTOGRAPHY WORKSHOPS

People often want incompatible things. They want danger and excitement on the one hand, and safety and security on the other, and often simultaneously.

Theodore Dalrymple

The Five Dumbest Things I've Ever Done: Episode 4

Steve Gottlieb

Teaching My Kids An Important Lesson

"You stay here...I'm walkin' out on the jetty to take a picture of the lighthouse." "Dad, *DON'T!*" my two boys, then ages 11 and 14, pleaded in unison. "It's dangerous. Look at those big waves."

A perfect teaching moment presented itself. "If you want pictures that are different from other photographers, sometimes you need to take risks," I explained. "To make a picture of this lighthouse special, I need a wave in it." I didn't mention two significant ulterior motives: getting an adrenaline rush from the danger and impressing my boys with their dad's derring-do.

So I climbed out onto the rocks. Picked my spot...adjusted my exposure...switched to continuous release...composed the image...and waited for a big wave to crash. It came. Smashed me hard onto the rocks. Rather than using an arm to break my fall, I instinctively held up my camera to save it from total destruction. Surprisingly and thankfully, I didn't break any bones. My kids watched this happen with a terrified look, thinking I'd been seriously injured. Strange to say, their expression communicated the intensity of their feelings for me.

The picture I got was a pretty good take on a cliched subject, IMHO. But was it worth taking the risk? Not even close. This was a case—and there've been too many—when I didn't thoughtfully balance risk and reward.

What important lesson did I teach my kids? Sometimes their judgment is superior to their dad's.

