

Ron, left, and Su Mittag talk over cups of coffee Monday after putting up a display of Ron's photos at Rick's Place in Monmouth. The display, on the wall behind the couple, features photos printed on canvas and metal. The photos picture scenes from Oregon, Idaho and Arizona, places the Mittags have traveled over the years. The exhibit "Light and Shadow" will be at Rick's Place through November.

JOLENE GUZMAN/
Itemizer-Observer



Photographic Adventurer

By Jolene Guzman
The Itemizer-Observer

DALLAS — Ron and Su Mittag, now Dallas residents, visited Oregon a number of years ago, finding themselves sightseeing in Newport.

They decided to drive south on Highway 101 from there into California to see the famous redwoods.

The couple arrived days, not hours, later. They didn't have car trouble.

Ron had his camera with him — photography has become something of a second career for him — and the natural beauty of Oregon's South Coast was just too much for him to resist.

"It's not really a long drive, but it took us two and half days because we were stopping about every 10 or 15 minutes to take photos, and to look, and explore all the little towns on the coast," Ron said Monday.

Ron and Su moved to Dallas permanently since that marathon trip down the Oregon coast, following Ron's mother to the state.

In the years before moving here, the couple found their visits each year were getting longer and longer.

Eventually, they rented a place in Tigard and split time between there and Arizona where they lived previously. It wasn't long before they decided to make Oregon their full-time home.

"We cut through Dallas on our way to the coast and just came in and were looking around," Ron explained. "We just really like the community. It had a really nice feel to it, so we ended up buying a house."

Photo excursions

• "Light and Shadow" will be on display at Rick's Place Coffee, 123 E. Main St., Monmouth.
• To see more on Ron Mittag's work or to order photos, go to www.RonMittag.com. Custom orders are welcome. For more information, call Ron at 606-448-3636.

They have found themselves on a number of excursions since, exploring places they haven't seen before, always with Ron's cameras in tow.

"We like kind of going out and wandering around and catching things, taking shots," he said.

Monday the couple put up an exhibit featuring what Ron has captured on those and other adventures at Rick's Place Coffeehouse in Monmouth.

Called "Light and Shadow," the exhibit includes photos using the interplay of dark and light to create stunning images.

Many are natural landscapes like forest and ocean scenes, but Ron also shoots cars, wine bottles and other ordinary objects.

His method in choosing a subject is simple: whatever catches his eye.

That includes when he or Su are driving.

"I've been known to do a hard U-turn on a highway to get back to a shot," Ron said.

"Or a hard brake," Su added, smiling.

He said he often puts himself in precarious positions on the side of a highway in pursuit of a good photo.



JOLENE GUZMAN/Itemizer-Observer

Ron Mittag calls photography his "second career," though admittedly more relaxed than his first in city government. Ron and his wife, Su, moved to Dallas recently.

"You know, when you see something, you have to stop and try and get it," he explained.

Ron, with the help of Su, prints many of his photos on canvas and metal, rather than displaying them in traditional frames. The methods bring out different features in his photos.

Ron likes to work with reflections, and metal, which gives the photos a glossy look, captures that. One of his favorite subjects, cars, print well on metal. Canvas, on the other hand, lends a "softer" appearance to what he shoots.

"I love doing flowers on canvas. To me they have a little softer feel to it, a little warmer feel," Ron said.



JOLENE GUZMAN/Itemizer-Observer

Rick's Place has for 20 years offered space for local artists to display and sell their work.

Ron's "Light and Shadow" exhibit will be on display through November at Rick's Place, 123 E. Main St., Monmouth. Ron said they ran

into owner Rick Gydesen at Art in the Park in Dallas this summer and he invited the couple to show Ron's work.

"It's a place for local

artists to exhibit their work if they are not able to do that at a gallery or public show," Gydesen said. "We happen to have the space."

Ron said he's grateful for the support people like Gydesen have given his hobby-turned-retirement job.

His first career was in city government, where he worked 30 years. He found a creative outlet in photography after taking a black and white art photography class. While still working, he mostly just gave photos as gifts to friends and family.

Five years ago, after he retired, two friends invited him to display some of his photos in an art show. That is when his "second career" started.

"That was the first time we did an art show and we had really good success there, so we started doing some of the same art shows they did," Ron said.

He's taken a decidedly more relaxed approach to his work this time around. He's doing just a handful of shows each year while displaying his work at Rick's Place and other venues in the Willamette Valley.

"Some of my friends who are photographers are out almost every weekend. I'm not looking to have that hectic of a life anymore, so we try and pick three or four a year," Ron said. "Some (are) local and we'll do a couple where we are traveling to give us an excuse to go somewhere."

So does his camera.

"We like to like to go out and wander around, and the stuff we see that is interesting, we take photos of," Ron said. "Some things, you just stumble upon them."

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Friday, Saturday & Sunday Nov. 6 - 8

GOOSEBUMPS (2D) (PG)	(11:45 2:05 4:35)	7:10 9:30
PEANUTS MOVIE (Digital 2D) (G)	(11:25 12:00 12:30)	
PEANUTS MOVIE (Digital 2D) (G)	(2:50 4:40 5:10)	7:05
PEANUTS MOVIE (NEC DOLBY 3D) (G)	(2:20)	9:25
BURN! (Digital) (R)		7:25
PARANORMAL ACTIVITY:		
THE GHOST DIMENSION (Digital 2D) (R)		9:35
*SPECTRE (Digital) (PG13)	(11:40 1:30 2:50 4:45)	6:05 7:00
*SPECTRE (Digital) (PG13)		8:00 9:20
THE MARTIAN (Digital 2D) (PG13)	(12:25 3:25)	6:35
LAST WITCH HUNTER (Digital) (PG13)		9:30
BRIDGE OF SPIES (Digital) (PG13)	(12:20 3:25)	6:30 9:25
OUR BRAND IS CRISIS (Digital) (R)	(2:00 4:30)	
SCOUTS GUIDE TO THE ZOMBIE APOCALYPSE (Digital) (R)	(11:50)	10:00

Monday Nov. 9 - Thursday Nov. 12

GOOSEBUMPS (2D) (PG)	(2:05 4:35)	7:10 9:30
PEANUTS MOVIE (Digital 2D) (G)	(12:30 2:50 4:40 5:10)	7:05
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