

David Nelson Bio

In the early 1970's, David Nelson, received a camera and some darkroom equipment from a friend. The first time he watched his prints develop in the "soup" of chemicals, he was hooked. He could now translate his vision imagined into prints. During the following years he took a few photojournalism courses at Cerritos College, where he received awards for journalistic and sports photography.

In the late 1960's he had taken his first computer programming classes and was ready for this new technology to take him into the future. By 1979, Dave also had a computer in his home. He enjoyed the computer work as much as his interest in photography.

Over the years Dave started shooting sports. He shot many bicycles races, with his work being featured in *Bicycling Magazine*, *Winning*, *Velo News* and many other publications. He shot the prestigious transcontinental bicycle race, Race Across America (RAAM) for 19 years. From 1996 until 1999 he also shot video of RAAM for shows that were aired by ESPN and The Discovery Channel. Dave also went on to shoot The Badwater UltraMarathon, a 135-mile footrace that takes place in Death Valley in July.

While shooting bicycling, he kept an eye open for other publications where he might submit his work. He came across a new start-up football publication, *ProFootball Weekly*. After showing his portfolio of sports photography to the editor, he was offered the job of shooting the LA Rams home games. Shortly after, his job was extended to shoot the LA Raiders and the San Diego Chargers, as well. His career had taken off. Weekdays, Dave continued with his day job of doing IT work with Pacific Bell, and weekends were spent shooting pro-football games and bicycle races.

He was about to give up his work with Pacific Bell when he realized something was "off" in his body. He began to notice that he had difficulty with running, and tripping and stumbling at football games. A trip to the doctor and neurologist confirmed his diagnosis. By 2000, the MS started to interfere with Dave's ability to keep up with running along the sidelines to cover the action in the football games, and he reluctantly gave up shooting football.

Dave was still able to cover some of the cycling and running events, but the MS symptoms continued their progression. By 2010 Dave changed the focus of his photography work. He took a seminar on "Fine Art Photography" from noted photographer, Bob Killian. Fine Art Photography allowed Dave to explore the creative side of photography. By now, technology had moved on, and Dave's twin passions of computers and photography had merged. He became a Photoshop Master. From having shot the RAAM, which entailed following an individual bicyclist racing along the rural byways of America, he was inspired to photograph some of the giant advertising structures he had encountered from that time. Letting his creative mind go, he came up

with the realization that our country is inhabited with a race of giants that live in a world parallel to ours. He began his quest to document and present this parallel world.

Many of his first shots of Giants were taken when he could still walk well enough to approach his subjects on foot. His latest diagnosis is secondary progressive MS, which means the disease will only get worse and limit his mobility. Over the past few years, Dave has travelled the country. He has shot not only his Giants, but four other series, as well. His work has appeared in gallery shows in his hometown of Buena Park, and at the Calumet Gallery in Tustin. For 2017 he was selected Artist in Residence for the Mojave National Preserve, with his show featured at the Desert/Light Gallery in November and December 2017.

Dave's diagnosis of Multiple Sclerosis may have derailed his sports photography career focus, but that doesn't stop him from living life to the fullest and pursuing his passion for photography, and becoming a master photographer.