

FOCUS

ZOOMING INTO THE NEW SEASON



Who could have imagined that, once our season got cut short we would still be coping with COVID-19 and the pandemic? Well, it's still here...but so are we!

Your Board has been meeting throughout the spring and summer, trying to work through our options. We created "SPS Summer School" to hopefully keep your creative juices flowing and maintain camaraderie with fellow members. It has been marginally successful. Not as much participation as hoped, but good back-and-forth dialogue of those who took the plunge and went to Summer School for perhaps the first time in their lives! (Me!) See more on page 15.

Now the new season is upon us, and it is pretty

much mandatory that we go virtual. Competitions will be digital only, along with our usual "Event Nights" (only virtual). It will be different, but we hope you will participate: share your images, participate in the Chat and continue to support The Schenectady Photographic Society.

This newsletter contains the new schedule, a message from the president, information on Zoom, and more. SPS is still here. We are still a vibrant, active club. It is our wish that our collective love of photography will see us through the pandemic and beyond.

Welcome to the 89th season of the Schenectady Photographic Society!

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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Rich Schreiberstein

DC/AC, not AC/DC's Highway to Hell, although there are similarities

Our 155-year-old Victorian has a wrap-around front porch. Ellen and I sit out there every day and talk about our grandchildren and solve the world's problems. I always have my camera with me, and in the last six months have taken 11,457 photos from that porch...that's a conservative estimate. There are just so many photos you can take from your porch. I'm past the limit.

If I were to make a new calendar, I'd label this 1 DC (During Covid), and I have no idea when we'll be moving to AC. I'm stultifyingly bored, a feeling many of you may share. We yearn to return to our normal when we can go out to eat, meet in person, go to a movie, the Altamont Fair, or most important to me, when I can get back to street-shooting where unmasked people go about their normal activities. Masked people don't have expressions. I want to photograph expressions. My unmasked expression photos consist of dogs.

Landscape, flower, architecture, still-life, and macro shooters don't share this pain. Nobody cares if you breathe on scenery, flowers, or buildings. The brave amongst us have ventured out. I've seen your postings on our Facebook page, and I applaud your undaunted pursuit of our craft, but I'm a coward when it comes to this stuff. I never thought about comorbidity before, in fact it wasn't part of my vocabulary. It's not a hopeful word, and it scares the bejesus out of me.

I want to go out to lunch with my fellow SPS exhibit-team members. We have a great time at our install and takedown lunches; we try out different cuisines, have a drink, Bert spills his soda in our laps, we bust each other's chops, and laugh a lot. But we don't do installs and takedowns anymore. I haven't laughed much in the last six months. My life was always filled with laughter. Now, the most I can muster is an occasional snicker. I rarely get to wisecrack. Wisecracks are my raison d'être, and I'm not even French.

I've been experimenting with Topaz textures and looks, my Lensbaby collection with all their quirkiness, and my selection of vintage lenses. I've also honed my uncanny skills at losing and breaking

lenses. Last month, I set one on my neighbor's car while I switched lenses to get a photo of some Harleys parked in his driveway. I took some shots and went back in the house. About two minutes later, I realized I had forgotten my lens. Two minutes was more than enough time for my neighbor to come outside and drive away with my lens sitting on his Jeep's hood, resulting in the ignominious end of my Fujinon 35mm f/2. But out of every disaster springs opportunity; I added a 52-year-old Nikkor 35mm f/2 to my increasing arsenal of legacy glass.

I can't wait for the September 16 launch of our 89th Schenectady Photographic Society season. I look forward to the competition, and I promise not to enter any porch photography. I hope you are all as eager as I am to rejoin the fray.



Unmasked dog. Lensbaby Edge 50
© Rich Schreiberstein

Rich

VIRTUAL DIGITAL COMPETITIONS 2020-2021 SEASON by Sean Sullivan

Hello fellow SPSers.

As the new season quickly approaches there will be some changes in the way we handle the Digital Image competition this year. For starters, since we are not meeting in person and going fully virtual for this season there is no Print competition. In order to maintain our typical structure of having two monthly competitions we are replacing the Print night, typically held the second Wednesday of each month, with a second Digital image competition.

The first Wednesday of each month (October thru April) will be General and Monochrome Open Digital Image competition night. The second Wednesday will be our Assigned Topics Digital Image Competitions. The only exception, due to scheduling issues, will be December, 2020, when Assigned will be the second week, and General/ Monochrome the third.

What does this mean?

When you go to the usual submission page on the SPS website (<https://spsphoto.org/programs/digital-image/upload-projected/>) you will notice that there are now four categories:

General
Monochrome
Assigned Topic 1
Assigned Topic 2

Assigned Topic 1 is the usual Digital Image assignment given out back in May. Assigned Topic 2 is the former Print night assigned topic. So, instead of printing out an image for print night's General, Monochrome and Assigned topic you will upload a digital image instead.

Another change is that instead of being limited to three images per competition you can now enter four (but no more than two per category). This means you can enter two images in General, two

in Monochrome and two in each of the Assigned Topics. Assigned Topics can be found at <https://spsphoto.org/programs/assigned-topics/>.

All other digital image rules will still apply. The important ones to remember:

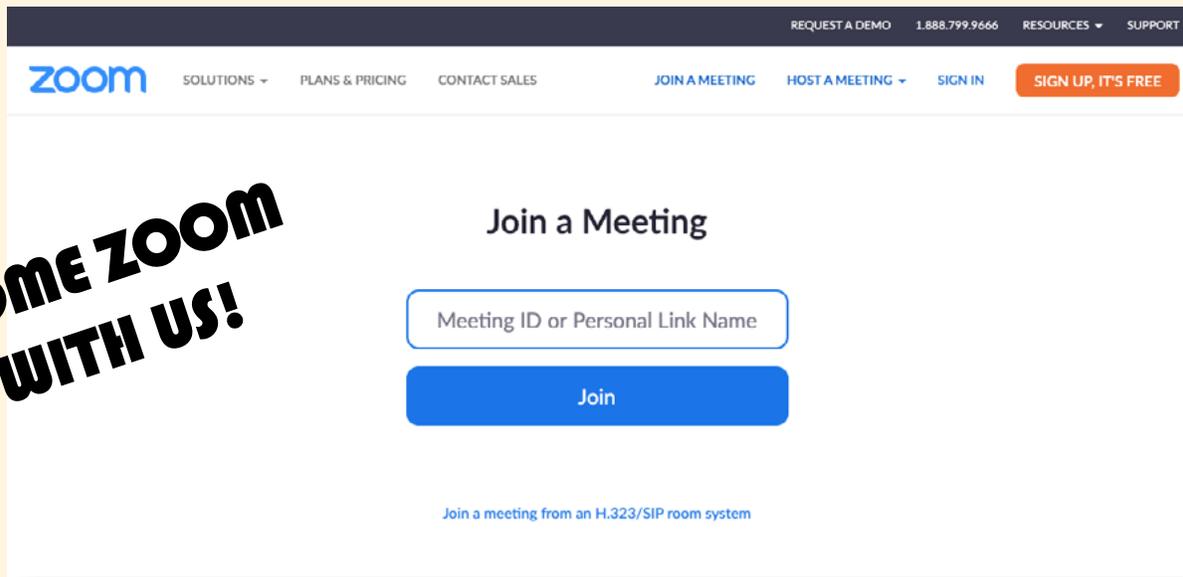
- No image that has previously placed or received HM may be re-entered in any future competitions.
- No image may be entered in more than ONE category in a single competition month.
- No image may be entered more than twice in a single season.
- Assigned topic images must have been taken AFTER May 1st, 2020 (with the exception of October's competition since it is a carry over of the April 2020 topics...they can be taken as far back as May 1, 2019).

We will be having a judge review and score the images offline prior to the competition nights' Zoom meetings. In order to ensure that the judge has adequate time to do this, I **have changed the cut off date/time for ALL competitions to midnight on the Saturday prior to the competition** (aka Sunday morning). This cutoff is 100% FIRM and no exceptions will be made for late entries. On Sunday I will be compiling the entries and sending them to the Judge so that we can have the results back by Tuesday night. On the meeting night, the judge will join us remotely to give us their critique and announce the winners via Zoom.

I know this all is a bit of a change from our usual routine, but what isn't these days. I look forward to seeing what everyone has come up with during the last eventful few months. If anyone has any questions, please feel free to email me at digital-chair@spsphoto.org.

See you in October.

Sean



If you're not computer literate, now is the time to start! If anything has come out of this pandemic, it is that we need to be computer savvy...Facetiming with family, Zooming with friends. Thankfully we have these options. Imagine what it was like in 1918!

The 2020-2021 season of SPS will be virtual. That is, meetings will be held on Zoom. Competitions will be digital only. Event night will be on Zoom as well. If we're lucky, we will have a banquet in June. A real banquet, that is!

In the meantime, to participate members have to be "Zoom-savvy." It's really simple. You can download the software at zoom.us. Click on the banner at the top right: "Sign Up, It's Free." Once you have the Zoom app on your computer, laptop, iPad, SmartPhone, etc., you will be able to access the SPS meetings.

A notice will be sent to all members with a link for log-in. Just click it and follow the instructions on the screen (prompt to open Zoom). Meetings are Wednesdays at 7 pm, as always.

You can chat with fellow members by clicking the little Chat symbol at the bottom of the screen. If the option is there, be sure to select "All presenters and attendees" so everyone can see and respond.

Here are some helpful video links to help you familiarize yourself with the Zoom platform:

How to get started with Zoom (2:23 minutes)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q-sy2Ph6kSf8&list=PLKpRxBfeD1kEM_I1Id3N_XI77fKDzSXE&index=2&t=0s

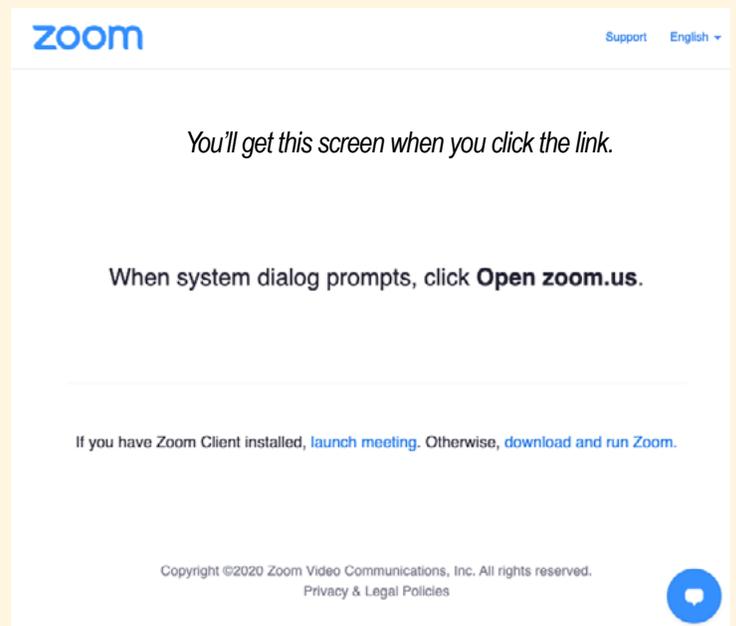
Join a meeting (1:09 minutes)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hIkCmbvAHQQ&list=PLKpRxBfeD1kEM_I1Id3N_XI77fKDzSXE&index=3&t=0s

Joining & configuring your audio/video (1:42 min.)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-s76QHshQnY&list=PLKpRxBfeD1kEM_I1Id3N_XI77fKDzSXE&index=5&t=0s

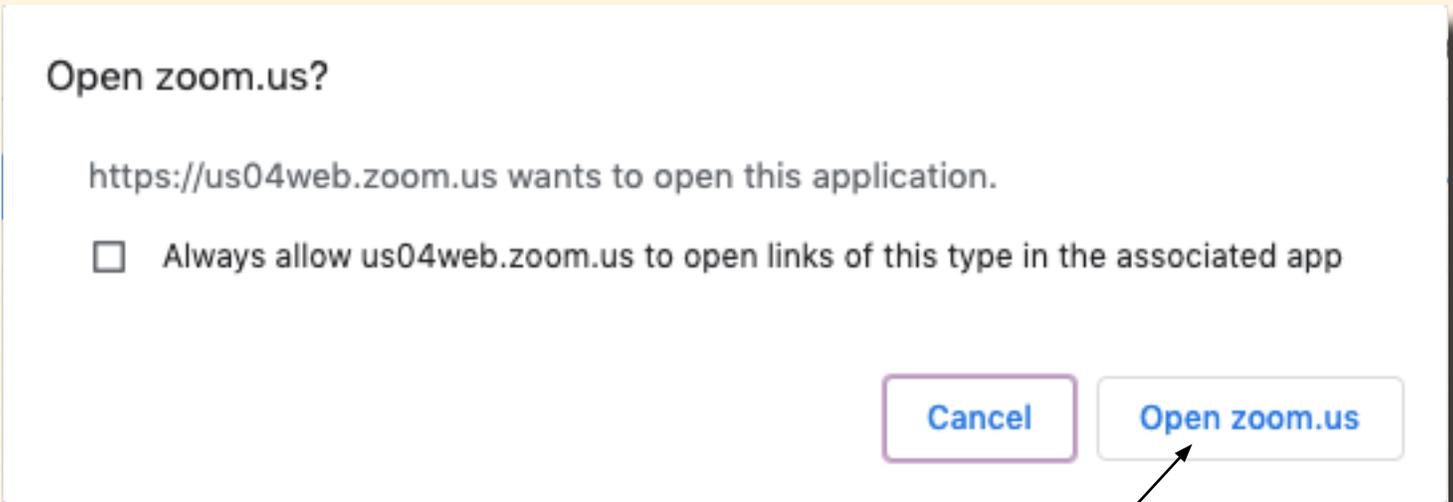
Here are some visuals to get you started:



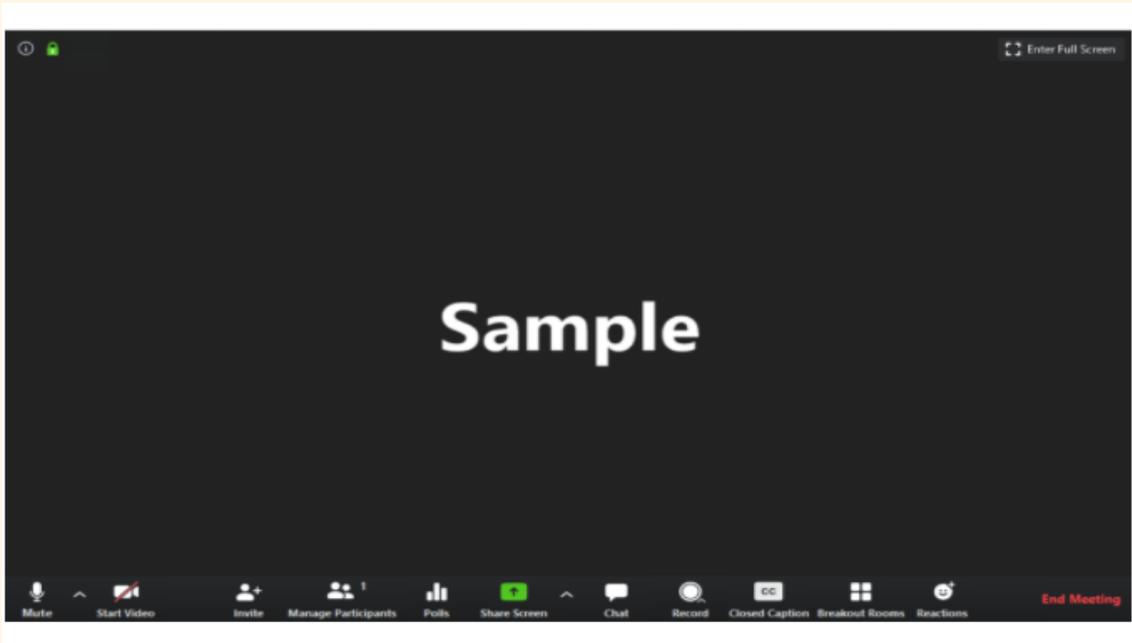
Continued...

Come Zoom With Us

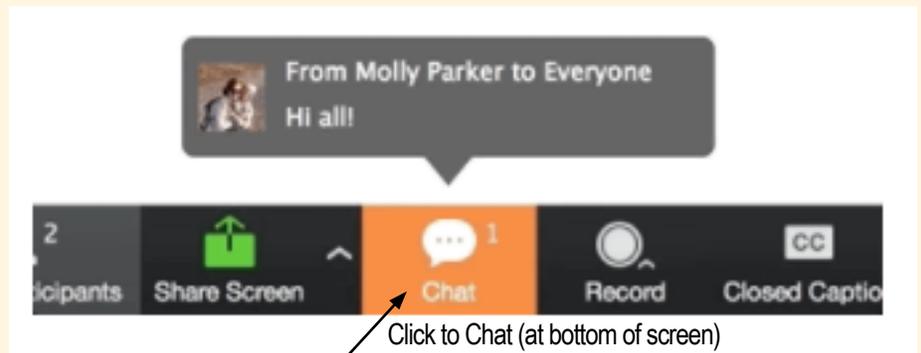
(Continued from page 3)



Click to Open Zoom



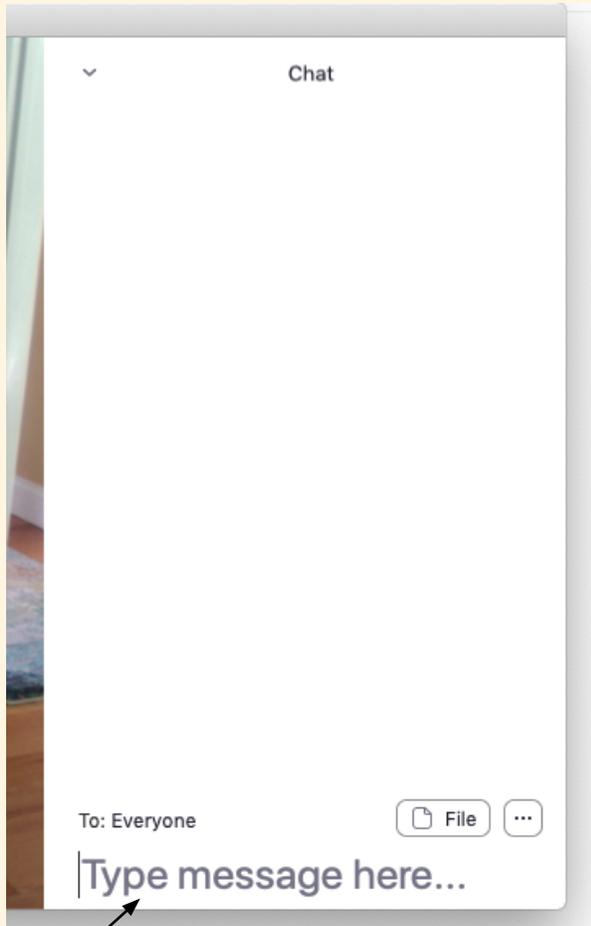
Sample Zoom Screen



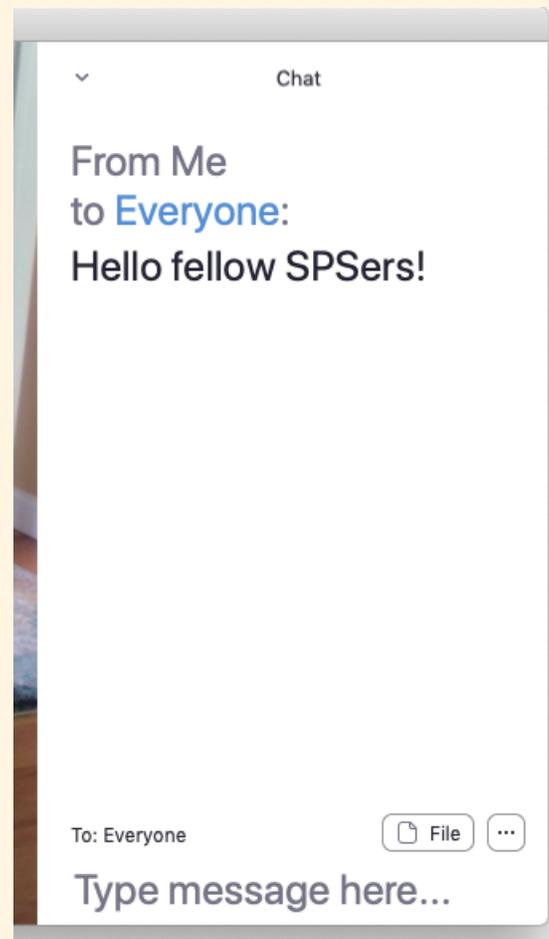
Click to Chat (at bottom of screen)

Come Zoom With Us

(Continued from page 4)



→ Type Chat Message Here



Due to the large number of participants (hopefully), computer video and audio will not be available. (Everyone will be muted.) You can communicate with fellow participants via the Chat - where you can also pose questions and Raise your Hand..

We plan to have a "dry run" prior to the start of the season. Keep your eyes open for email instructions.

Looking forward to seeing you all
on my computer
Wednesday, September 16th!

**THIS ARTICLE
IS WORTH
REPEATING!**

14 WAYS TO IMPROVE YOUR PHOTOGRAPHY DURING THE PANDEMIC

By Brenda Petrella

Article reprinted with permission from Outdoor Photography School

Tips & Techniques - March 19, 2020

It can be hard to stay creative during a crisis

Here are 14 ideas to help you keep working on your photography even when times are tough.

We all find ourselves in creative slumps from time to time for a variety of reasons. When I've considered putting together an article on ideas of how to keep improving one's photography skills even while in a rut, I never imagined that a potential reason for that rut would be a global pandemic.

But, that's where we find ourselves today.

We've all been touched by this pandemic in one way or another. Most of us are required to stay at home to isolate, to take care of family members, to work remotely, or perhaps we've even lost our jobs. Schools, events, and establishments have been canceled for weeks, which could turn into months.

Whatever your circumstances are, making photographs or improving your skills as a photographer may seem like a distant thought.

However, doing something creative or something that moves the needle forward in your skills as a photographer can greatly help to reduce stress and anxiety.

Here are 14 ideas for how you can keep working on your photography during this (or any) difficult time. If you think anyone else would benefit from these ideas, please share this with them!

1. Document Your Family's Experience of COVID-19

How has your family been impacted by COVID-19? How has your community been impacted? Are your kids home from school? Are you working remotely? Are you short on food or supplies?

Think of how you can capture your experiences and the emotions around all of the changes. What would you photograph? Who knows, per-

haps the images could become an exhibit someday. If you need some inspiration, check out this [photo series from Ashley Gilbertson](#) of the *New York Times*.

2. Can't Sleep? Try Night Sky Photography.

This is actually how I learned photography. I was working a high-stress job with ridiculous hours and the only time I had to learn photography was at night. I wasn't sleeping anyway, and I found that being under the stars was so calming and centering that getting a decent image was only part of the joy.

I don't recommend losing sleep if you don't have to, but if you are not sleeping anyway, this is a great way to spend the hours awake.

If you are new to night sky photography, then be sure to check out my video series on [How to Photograph the Milky Way. Part 1](#), and you can find the other two videos in the series on the [OPS Videos page](#). In the northern hemisphere, we are just entering into Milky Way season (mid-March), so it is a good time to start learning.

3. Build a Photography Website

If you have a growing library of images, then it may be time to showcase your work on a photography website. Go through your archive and select your favorite images for an online portfolio or gallery. The website can serve as a home for your images so you can share your art with others, or you can use it as a way of selling prints or acquiring clients.

Building a website has gotten quite simple these days with many platforms offering "drag and drop" user interfaces so that no coding is required.

Continued...

14 Ways to Improve Your Photography...

(Continued from page 6)

You've likely heard of many of these, such as Squarespace, Wix, and Weebly. There are photography specific platforms as well, such as SmugMug, Zenfolio, and Photoshelter.

If you do want to sell prints and would like to have the process streamlined, then I recommend building a site using **SmugMug**. That is the platform that I use for my **online portfolio**. What I like about SmugMug is that you can integrate your shop with a professional printer, who fulfills the orders for you.

Secondly, SmugMug integrates with Adobe Lightroom, and so you can upload your images directly from Lightroom to your portfolio on SmugMug. Lastly, your images are protected and every plan has unlimited storage.

Click here to start your free SmugMug 14-day trial today, and save 15% on a new account.

4. Backup Your Data

Do you have a solid plan for backing up your images? If not, then this is a great time to finally get one in place. The best way to make sure you don't lose your image files is to build redundancy into your system make sure that they exist in multiple locations.

A simple yet effective way to secure your images to use the **3-2-1 Backup Strategy**. To use this strategy you must have at least three copies of each image file. Two of these copies are kept locally but exist on two different platforms, and one copy exists offsite either with a cloud backup provider or a hard drive that you keep elsewhere (like at a friend's house).

Here's my version of the 3-2-1 Strategy: I have two external hard drives (from different manufacturers) connected to my editing computer. One is my "active" drive and the other is my "backup" drive. I use **Carbon Copy Cloner** (Mac only) to replicate my active drive to my backup drive once a week (or more frequently as needed). These are my two local copies. If I lose one hard drive, I have the other with the data.

For my third offsite copy, I use **Backblaze**, which is a cloud backup provider that backs up everything attached to my computer, including both my active drive and my backup drive. The backup runs continually in the background and doesn't slow down my system at all.

I highly recommend Backblaze as your cloud backup option, and you can sign up for a 15-day free trial to give it a whirl.

If you are confused by the differences between cloud sync, cloud backup, and cloud storage, then I encourage you to check out this **article by Backblaze** that breaks it all down.

5. Re-edit Images From a Year or Two Ago

Sometimes it's good to look back at older images because it reminds us of how far we've come in improving our skills as photographers. Sometimes, you can even breathe new life into those images!

Realize it or not, you've likely improved your post-processing techniques in the last year or two, and those drab images might be actually worth re-working. Maybe try switching to black and white or applying a preset. You never know what sort of treasure you may find!

6. Find the "Sweet Spot" of Your Lenses

You've likely heard that lenses have a sweet spot, which is the aperture that yields the best resolving power of a given lens. When possible, it's a good idea to use the sweet spot of your lens when the exposure requirements and depth of field allow for it. It's not always possible to shoot at the sweet spot aperture, and that's ok.

It's a good idea to know what your lens sweet spot is, however, so that you can make an educated decision when determining your camera settings.

You can actually find your lens' sweet spot yourself quite simply. It will take about an hour if you follow the steps below.

Continued...

14 Ways to Improve Your Photography...

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How to find your lens' sweet spot:

1. Find a subject with a contrasting pattern (like upholstery, carpet, or even a print).
2. Put your camera on a tripod.
3. Set your camera to aperture priority mode.
4. Start at the widest aperture of your lens, set the focus point on the pattern, focus, and take the shot.
5. Then select the next aperture and without changing the focus point, refocus, and take the shot.
6. Repeat this until you've taken images at every aperture of your lens.
7. Import the images to your photo editing software.
8. View the images at 1:1 and compare sharpness between the images to find the aperture with the best sharpness at the point you set the focus point.

Note: the depth of field will change throughout the series of images, so it is important to compare sharpness at the same focal point.

7. Give Yourself a Photography Project

One way that I boost my own creativity is to give myself rules or restrictions to follow for a short period of time to see what I can create under those conditions. Another way of thinking about it is to pick a theme to follow for a week or two. Either way, the process gently forces you to look for compositions that you wouldn't likely see otherwise.

Here are 10 photo projects to try for a week or two:

1. Photograph only one subject (could be your cat, a tree, anything around your house, etc.)
2. Photograph only one color.
3. Pick your least used lens and only use that
4. Shoot black & white if you normally shoot in color (and vice versa)
5. Photograph reflections (puddles, mirrors, beverages, glass, lakes, ponds, etc.)

6. Stand in one location (could be a room in your house) for an hour and find 15 compositions
7. Only photograph using one type of light (front light, back light, side light, etc.) or at one time of day (perhaps when you normally would be commuting?)
8. Focus on finding textures or patterns
9. Pick a depth of field that you don't normally work with and only use that
10. Use long or short shutter speeds to blur or freeze motion, respectively

8. Study Other People's Work You Admire

Being stuck at home with access to the digital world is a great opportunity to study other people's work you admire and try to reverse-engineer why you admire it.

Here are some questions to ask yourself when trying to figure out what about the image appeals to you.

- Is it the subject matter? Such as the story, emotion or mood evoked in you – or the actual elements of the subject (mountains, moving water, the sky, etc.).
- Is it the composition? Did the photographer follow compositional "rules" or not? Think about how the subject was framed, the use of negative space, the viewpoint, etc.
- Is it the technique? What can you derive from the image about the exposure (over or under-exposed, HDR, etc.), the focal length, depth of field, how the image was post-processed, etc.
- Is it aesthetics? Use of color theory, black & white, tonal contrast, light, texture, patterns, etc.

Once you've identified a few things that you feel make the image "work", choose one aspect and try to apply it to your compositions.

Then, ask yourself – where are you falling short? How could it be improved? This exercise continues to be very helpful to me in improving my own photography.

Continued...

14 Ways to Improve Your Photography...

(Continued from page 8)

9. Try a Different Genre of Photography

As outdoor photographers, we may not spend a whole lot of time doing portraiture or macro photography, but if you now find yourself stuck at home with your family and pets, you'll have more opportunities to practice portraits and seeing and using light.

Don't worry if you don't have flash or a fancy studio lighting setup. Find ways to use natural light. Practicing portraits has helped me understand how light behaves better than some other forms of photography.

Macro photography is a perfect genre to practice because you can do it in the comfort of your home with pretty much anything you already have. If you don't have a lens that can do macro work, why not rent one? I plan to! I personally have been wanting to explore macro photography more.

Interested in renting photography equipment? I use **BorrowLenses** for my photography rentals and highly recommend them. They recently issued a statement that they are taking extra precautions and equipment cleaning measures in light of our current situation.



10. Learn how to clean your camera's sensor*

Do you know how to clean your camera's sensor? It's really not that difficult, although it is something that gives many photographers anxiety. Knowing how to do it is a good skill to have so that you don't have to send your camera in for professional cleaning and be without it.

Every time we change lenses, we introduce the possibility of dust getting into the camera body and sticking to the sensor. After a while, these dust spots can become apparent in our images and we have to spend time cloning them out, which can be a huge timesink and also can leave minor blemishes if not done properly.

If you want to learn how to clean your sensor, I recommend checking out **Nigel Danson's video** on YouTube. The process is similar to the one I use.

Here are the supplies you need to get started:

- **Rocket blower**
- **Sensor cleaning solution**
- **Sensor cleaning swabs** (pick the right size for your sensor)
- **Sensor cleaning brush**
- **Camera sensor magnifier** (optional – this is a cheap version but works fine)

**Editor's Note: Try this at your own risk!*

11. Take an Online Photography Course

Photography classes and workshops are either postponed or canceled at this point. Thankfully, we have access to platforms like YouTube that offers tons of free educational opportunities. If you are subscribed to the **Outdoor Photography School channel** – thank you!

Sometimes, however, it's valuable to invest a little more into our photo education and participate in an online course. While it's an investment of time and money, courses often elevate your learning experience more than searching for videos on YouTube.

I have enjoyed several courses at **CreativeLive** and highly recommend you check them out. They often run sales and promotions where you can get access to tons of content at a low cost. Learning a new post-processing technique or style of shooting is likely a better use of time than binge-watching favorite shows on Netflix.

Continued...

14 Ways to Improve Your Photography...

(Continued from page 9)

12. Do a Photo Project with Your Kids (or Elderly Relatives)

If the pandemic has forced you to stay home with your kids or elderly parents, then think of a photo project that you can do together.

For example, many schools have transitioned to online teaching for their students. How can you supplement your kids' learning experience with a photo project? Can you learn about birds, botany, space, seasonal changes, climate change, etc., through the lens of your camera? Your kids might love the extra time with you.

If you have elderly relatives that you need to care for, can you interview them? Record their stories, take images of them recalling memories, or of their hands, faces, favorite keepsakes, etc. It might be something you look back on fondly after they are gone.

13. Read Inspiration Books or Listen to Photography Podcasts

I know a lot of people who have a list of books or podcasts that they wished they had the time to read or catch up on. Now might be that time! No more commuting, no more after school activities, no more events or socializing.

As difficult as our current situation is, for some it is a great excuse to curl up with a good book or take a walk with your favorite podcast. If you need a little inspiration, check out my recommendations on the [OPS Resources page](#).

14. Stretch, Train, Prepare Your Body

Last but not least! If you are fortunate enough to be healthy during this pandemic, then be sure to stay on top of your fitness and wellness.

As outdoor photographers, we often carry heavy bags of camera gear on the trail, in a canoe, or what-have-you, and we can do simple exercises to help keep our joints in shape and happy. Instead of treating this time as unforeseen downtime, use it as get-back-in-shape time.

As I get older, I definitely have come to appreciate that doing a little "preventative maintenance" each day can make a huge difference to my comfort in the field with my gear.

And no, you don't need a gym membership! If you haven't yet checked out my recent article on [Hiking With Camera Gear](#), it lists a bunch of different exercises that you can do from the comfort of your home.

Check out [Outdoor Photography School](#).

Access this article [Here](#).

See more of Brenda's work at [brendapetrella.com](#)

About Brenda Petrella...

- I'm a new mom to a happy baby girl
- I'm a wife to a very supportive partner
- I love animals (we have two rescue cows and a goofy golden retriever)
- I'd rather be outside than at my computer
- I love working with my hands and doing projects around the house
- I enjoy problem solving and finding solutions
- I've had surgeries in both of my knees, but I still love to hike
- I have a PhD in molecular biology and ran a research laboratory for a while studying molecular mechanisms of kidney cancer
- I recently left my science career to pursue a more balanced lifestyle where I spend more time doing the things I love

My Path to Photography:

- I am a self-taught photographer with an insatiable desire to learn everything I can about my craft
- I pursued my passion for photography later in life after receiving my first DSLR as a gift for my 40th birthday
- I use photography as a way to connect with nature and share my experiences with the world
- My first big photography trip was to shoot the Aurora Borealis in Yukon, Canada in -30°F temperatures, and I loved every minute of it
- I am the co-founder of the Human Geography Project along with Stephen Gorman where we teach students around the globe about the connection between nature and humanity as part of the Microsoft Educator Program
- I have held several solo photography exhibits around VT and NH
- My portfolio can be viewed at [brendapetrella.com](#) where prints can be purchased
- I love helping others learn photography, especially when I can help them break through difficult concepts and achieve results!

MARCH AT SPS - Who knew this was to be our final meeting of the season...



ASSIGNED TOPICS 2020-2021 SEASON

Important Note: All competitions for the 2020-2021 season are DIGITAL.

With the exception of October, all images must have been taken on or after May 1, 2020.

October Assigned Topics must have been taken on or after May 1, 2019.

A total of four (4) images may be entered, no more than two (2) in any one category.

Submission deadline is midnight on Saturday before the competition date—no exceptions!

Month	Assignment #1
October	Fairs and Festivals <i>Show us a shot from a fair, festival or similar event.</i>
November	Turn Ordinary Into Art <i>Photograph kitchen objects</i>
December	Hands <i>Create an image with hands as the primary subject.</i>
January	Bubbles/Splashes/Drops <i>Try your hand at one of these types of shots.</i>
February	Things Broken <i>Things in a state of disrepair.</i>
March	Back to Basics <i>Illustrate the Rule of Odds in your composition.</i>
April	Time of Year <i>Show us a time of year that is special to you.</i>

ASSIGNED TOPICS 2020-2021 SEASON

Month	Assignment #2
October	<p>Curves</p> <p><i>Don't go the straight and narrow, show us the curves.</i></p>
November	<p>What's That Outside My Window?</p> <p><i>Exactly what can you see out there?</i></p>
December	<p>It's Just TeePee</p> <p><i>Photograph toilet paper (if you can get any) being used in ways other than its intended use.</i></p>
January	<p>We All Stayed Home</p> <p><i>Lockdown is (hopefully WAS) a drag so show us how you coped.</i></p>
February	<p>Juxtaposition</p> <p><i>Photograph two things that contrast in some manner (color, shape, meaning, etc).</i></p>
March	<p>It's Not Always What It Seems</p> <p><i>Create an IN-CAMERA optical illusion (Do not use Photoshop).</i></p>
April	<p>Food Deep Dive</p> <p><i>Create a macro image using only food.</i></p>

SPS FEATURED IN 518 PROFILES MAGAZINE



Our good friend, Lawrence White, researched and wrote this article for *518 Profiles Magazine*.

If you haven't read it, here's the link:

https://issuu.com/ininkny/docs/2020_august_518_profiles_magazine/24?fbclid=IwAR21bxqrEtJ5NhK6Ep9zk2rijeatESGASN83KPCOfMt2e9RyB7ikSy6HSGc

LIVE AND LEARN (Germ free in the solitude of your own home.)

During the pandemic, I have been OD-ing on photography webinars and tutorials. As a result, I have come across a number of talented photographers of all genres, who are ready, willing and able to share their knowledge and love of the craft. Here are some links you might enjoy exploring:

MATT KLOSKOWSKI is my go-to guy for all things Lightroom and Photoshop. He has a pleasant voice, easy style and shows you everything step-by-step. Check out his website: mattk.com. There are also a number of short, free tutorials on this site: <https://mattk.com/stuck-inside/>



IAN PLANT is the host of Shuttermonkeys TV on YouTube. I have been enjoying his photo critiques, but when I saw his program (with Ian Budinger) in Out of Chicago, I came to believe that he is probably one of the most talented photographers on the planet. There's a lot of free interviews, critiques and more on Ian's Shuttermonkeys channel at: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCBY0bNW4MHsJuz-6nCceTLw>. And, check out Ian's website to be amazed: <https://www.ianplant.com/index>.



I signed up for the **Nature Photographers Network** to hear John Barclay's presentation, "Dream - Believe - Create" (which I had already seen twice!). As a result I have discovered so many new talented photographers who are willing to share their knowledge and expertise. Among them: Sarah Marino, David Kingham, Jennifer Renwick and Cole Thompson...some of whom will be presenting for SPS.

Colin Smith of **Photoshop Cafe** knows everything about Photoshop. His short, free YouTube tutorials (<https://www.youtube.com/photoshopcafe>) are easy to follow and will definitely improve your PS skills.



For a nominal fee **Hunt's Photo Education** has an ever-changing selection of tutorials by Hunt's gurus on photography, post processing and more. I've watched classes on creating and adding textures, using a Wacom tablet and more. Check it out!

The bottom line: There is sooooo much information out there. Now that we're still in "lockdown," this is a great time to explore the Internet. Interested in bird photography...landscape...macro...just Google it. You'll find a plethora of resources to inspire you, and help you hone your skills.

Continued...

Live and Learn

(Cont'd. from page 14)



Maryland
Photography Alliance

2020 "Odyssey of Light" Webinar

Saturday, October 17, 2020 and Sunday, October 18, 2020

9:00 AM — 12:00 PM EST Each Day

4 Great Speakers — 4 Great Topics — 1 Great Price

SATURDAY

Saturday, October 17—9:00 AM EST



Eileen Rafferty's presentation, *"Seeing in Black & White"*, explores the world of B&W images with an emphasis on visualizing a scene through greyscale eyes. Eileen will demonstrate tools to creating more intriguing B&W photographs. Eileen is an artist and educator who travels the country teaching Creativity and Photographic History. She is also a freelance video editor, an Adjunct Professor, and owns a Creative Consulting business. Her artwork combines a lifelong study of Photography to create mixed media, video, drawings and photographs.

Saturday, October 17—10:30 AM EST



Stephen Johnson's presentation is, *Capturing the Beauty of the "Real" World*, with a particular emphasis on modern environmental photography styles folded into Photoshop's perceived ability to enhance reality. Stephen is a 14-year "Canon Explorer of Light" who has been photographing since 1973. He is internationally recognized as a digital photography pioneer through his landscape photography, writing, designing, and teaching. Stephen is well known for his passionate lectures and deep love for the traditions of photography.

SUNDAY

Sunday, October 18—9:00 AM EST



Kristi Odom's presentation, *Photographing Wildlife with Passion*, takes you on a journey to see beauty in wildlife both near and far from home. She will give tips and tricks on how to get more emotion in your wildlife photography, creating a more impactful image. Kristi is an internationally acclaimed photographer and a "Nikon Ambassador." Wildlife is her biggest passion. Kristi's work focuses on connecting people emotionally to animals and celebrating the connection to the natural world. Her work has been exhibited at the Smithsonian Museum of Natural History and featured by the Washington Post, Microsoft, Forbes, Nikon, and Rollingstone.com.

Sunday, October 18—10:30 AM EST



Ian Plant's presentation, *Creative Photography Techniques - Making Ordinary Extraordinary*, will teach you that photography is more than finding beautiful things to photograph. Ian is a world-renowned professional photographer who travels the globe seeking out amazing places to photograph. Ian has reached hundreds of thousands of people around the world in his mission to inspire and educate others in the art of photography. Ian is a frequent contributor to many leading photo magazines and the author of numerous books and instructional videos.

\$49

Price Includes

a \$30 Nations Photo Lab Gift Card

Tickets are going fast, so register today.

Click here for
info or to register



www.mdphotoalliance.org/odyssey

SPS SUMMER SCHOOL



Did you go to
**SPS
Summer
School?**
If not...
why not?

With the season cut short so abruptly and SPSers cut off from each other, we created "SPS Summer School" to keep in touch with the membership while giving them a platform to share images and receive constructive feedback. For those who have participated, I think it has been a rewarding experience. Our mutual love of photography is contagious and, even during a pandemic, we are still there to inspire each other.

Joe Cotroneo
August 22 at 12:41 PM · 🌐

I'm still experimenting with abstract photography / digital art. What started out as a macro of a flower turned into a triptych of "Medusa Standoff". Which do you prefer, B&W, color or blended layers, or do you like all three side by side. Thanks for all your input on this and my previous digital art. I know it's a bit different from our normal, but what's normal anymore these days?

7 19 Comments Seen by 27

Elena Keesee
Yesterday at 8:35 AM · 🌐

Went back, removed the power lines... People who are left in the dark are not very happy with me now. Is the powerless version better?

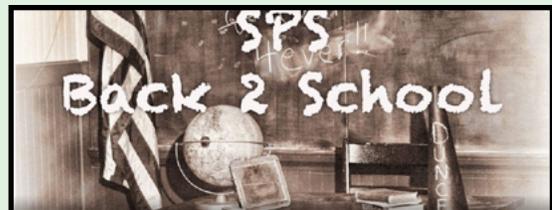
9 17 Comments Seen by 23

Alan Wiggins
August 24 at 10:55 AM · 🌐

What do you think of this fake IR conversion done in LR?

8 10 Comments Seen by 28

Now that summer is over, check out the
SPS Back to School Facebook page!



<https://www.facebook.com/groups/sps.back.to.school>

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Socialize with us for the latest events and specials.

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For Camera Club Specials...
Ask for Alan Samiljan, at (781) 462-2383.
His hours are usually 8:30-5:00pm,
Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, & Friday.

Leave a message or send an email
(asamiljan@huntsphoto.com),
and he'll get right back to you.



New Camera's Alert!
Canon 90D, Sony A7R4, and just
announced to be released, Nikon D6!

HUNT'S SEPTEMBER SPECIALS

Dear Photo Friends,

Here in New England the smell of Fall is already in the air! Here are my specials for the month of September. They all begin 9/1 and most end on 9/27. If there is anything you're interested in that you don't see here, please contact me for a quote!

If you have ever considered switching to Olympus or upgrading your current Olympus body, now's the time! Now through Oct. 4, **Olympus is running a TRADE IN, TRADE UP promotion.** Trade in any working DSLR or Mirrorless camera and Olympus will add \$200-\$400 to the trade in amount. The best news is that I can get you the \$200-\$400 Trade Bonus without having an actual trade item from you!

Here's your cost after all discounts:

Olympus E-M1X body, on special for \$2,399.99 less \$400 Trade In Bonus = **\$1,999.99**
Olympus E-M1 III body, on special for \$1,699.99 less \$200 Trade In Bonus = **\$1,499.99**

This is AMAZING pricing!

Since the Trade In, Trade Up will definitely end on 10/4, I want to make you an additional offer:

Purchase any of the following Olympus PRO lenses from me through 10/4 and receive an additional \$50 off Olympus' sale price:

8mm f/1.8 Fisheye PRO \$849.99
7-14mm f/2.8 PRO \$1,199.99
12-100mm f/4 PRO \$1,149.99
17mm f/1.2 PRO \$1,099.99
25mm f/1.2 PRO \$1,099.99
40-150mm f/2.8 PRO \$1,299.99
45mm f/1.2 PRO \$1,099.99
300mm f/4 PRO \$2,699.99

Nikon is offering a great price on these two items in September: **Nikon Z7 body \$2,499.95** and I will include a FREE Promaster spare battery and FREE carry bag! **FTZ lens adapter \$49.95 when purchased with Z7 body.** **AF-S NIKKOR 70-200mm f/2.8E FL ED VR \$1,999.95**

Our friends at **Tamron** are also running some great discounts in September - all with \$100 Instant Rebate!
Tamron SP 15-30mm f/2.8 Di VC USD G2/#A041/\$1,199
Tamron SP 24-70mm f/2.8 Di VC USD G2/#A032/\$1,099
Tamron SP 70-200mm f/2.8 Di VC USD G2/#A025/\$1,199

Benro makes some of the finest neutral density, circular polarizing and UV filters out there. Through September 27, I will take **20% off** any individual screw-in or slide-in filters from Benro! I also have special pricing on Benro filter kits with holders. Please call me for a quote!

If you are interested in ordering any of these newly released and expected cameras or lenses, call me at 781-462-2383:

Canon R5 body and kits
Canon R6 body and Kits
Canon RF 100-500mm f/4.5-7.1L IS USM
Canon RF 800mm f/11 IS STM
NIKKOR Z 70-200mm f/2.8 VR S
Olympus M.Zuiko Digital ED 100-400mm f/5-6.3 IS

In order to take advantage of these specials, or if you'd like a quote on anything else, please call me, Alan Samiljan, at 781-462-2383 to place your order and reference this email. As always, UPS Ground shipping is FREE in the Lower 48. My regular hours are 8:30-5:00pm eastern, Monday, Tuesday, Thursday & Friday.

Photographically yours, Alan

Don't Forget to Check out Hunt's Photo Walks, Workshops and Adventures:
<https://edu.huntsphoto.com/>

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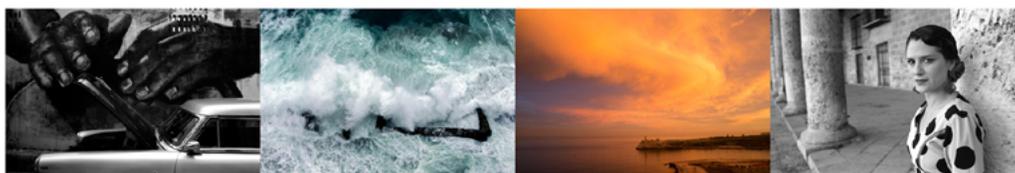
917.992.1453

- Bruce Byers - a professional photographer. A guide with a wealth of photographic knowledge, stories and humor – all at your daily disposal.
- My overall experience as member of the travel/photography workshop was above par. Having a guide with Bruce's skills and background makes for an excellent experience and adventure!

Join us on one of our exciting worldwide **photographic adventures.**

Cuba Starts Dec 2020

Nepal and Bhutan April 2021



SPS members can get 10% off all their orders with Frame Destination!

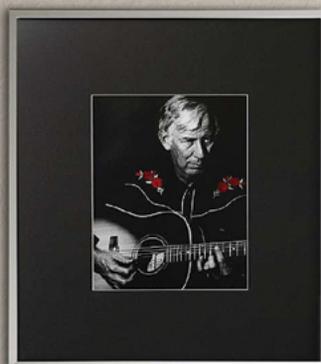
You must be a registered user of the Frame Destination website as a SPS member. (Note: The discount is not valid with other discounts, and will not work for non-members.)

To become a registered SPS member on our website follow these steps:

1. Click "Login" in the upper right of section of our site - <https://www.framedestination.com>
2. Click "Create an Account" in the middle of the page.
3. Chat or send an email to info@framedestination.com saying you are a registered user and need your account set for SPS membership.

To see how easy it is to order custom frames on our website you can check out the video "How to Order a Custom Picture Frame..." in our video gallery: [framedestination.com/video-gallery](https://www.framedestination.com/video-gallery). To learn more about us you can check out our About Us Video here: <https://www.framedestination.com/about-us>

**FRAME
DESTINATION**



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IMPORTANT NOTICE:

CURRENT SPS MEMBER DUES EXTENDED FOR THE 2020-2021 SEASON

If you were a member of SPS at the end of the 2019-2020 season, your membership has been extended for another year at no cost.

New members may join for \$20/person or \$30/family (same household).

Click **here** to register.

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ABOUT THE SCHENECTADY PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY



For more than 89 years, the Schenectady Photographic Society has been the meeting place of photographers of all levels—from beginners to serious amateurs to professionals—with the goal of exploring and sharing their love of photography. Members throughout the Capital Region meet primarily on Wednesday nights to engage in various competitions (print, projected, photo essay and more), enjoy member round-table discussions, guest speaker presentations and hands-on mentoring to further their knowledge, creativity and inspiration. Occasional field trips* give us the opportunity to expand our photographic vision; and frequent exhibits* in the local area allow us to share that vision.

In addition to our monthly print* and projected competitions, we are challenged with an assigned topic—encouraging participants to venture out of their comfort zones. Members participating in competitions receive specific commentary and suggestions to take their images to the next level. Don't wish to compete? That's OK too. Observing competitions is always an inspirational and learning experience.

The Schenectady Photographic Society is an enthusiastic and energetic group. Our camaraderie is infectious. Check out our calendar on the last page (season runs from late September to mid-May) and join us! Visitors are always welcomed...especially those who have a passion for photography.

*It's not about being better than everyone else...
it's about being better than you were.*

*Postponed for the 2020-2021 season due to Covid-19.

SPS BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2020-2021

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president@spsphoto.org

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travelingexhibit@spsphoto.org

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Connect with the Schenectady Photographic Society:

Website: **www.spsphoto.org**

Facebook Group: **https://www.facebook.com/groups/schenectadyphotographicsociety/**

Facebook Page: **https://www.facebook.com/schenectadyphotographicsociety/**

Instagram: @schenectadyphotographic

THE FOCUS NEEDS YOU! For articles, suggestions, and member profiles (bios/photos).

Contact Linda at **newsletter@spsphoto.org**.

SCHENECTADY PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY VIRTUAL 2020-2021 SEASON CALENDAR

Meetings start at 7pm via Zoom. Members will receive appropriate link to sign in.

This schedule is always work in progress and is subject to change!

Note: All competitions are DIGITAL. For Assigned topics, with the exception of October, images must have been taken on or after May 1, 2020. October Assigned Topics must have been taken on or after May 1, 2019.

Images which previously placed (in print or digital) may NOT be resubmitted.

Members may enter a total of four (4) images, no more than two (2) in any one category.

Deadline for submission of digital images is midnight on Saturday before the competition date—no exceptions!

September, 2020

9/16/20.....2019-2020
Digital Image of the Year Competition

9/23/20.....2019-2020
Digital Photo Essay Competition

October, 2020

10/7/20..... *Assigned Digital Competition*
Topic #1: Fairs and Festivals
Topic #2: Show Us Your Curves

10/14/20..... *General/Monochrome Digital Competition*

10/21/20..... *Event Night*
Dow Smith, "Photo Essay Inspiration"
and Jeana Caywood, "Photo Stacking"

November, 2020

11/4/20..... *Assigned Digital Competition*
Topic #1: Turn the Ordinary into Art
Topic #2: What's That Outside my Window?

11/11/20..... *General/Monochrome Digital Competition*

11/18/20..... *Event Night*
Cole Thompson, "Finding your Vision in Black & White Photography"

December, 2020

12/2/20..... *Assigned Digital Competition*
Topic #1: Hands
Topic #2: It's Just Tee Pee

12/9/20..... *Event Night*
"Mirrorless Cameras" presented by Hunt's Photo & vendors TBA

12/16/20..... *General/Monochrome Digital Competition*

January, 2021

1/6/21..... *Assigned Digital Competition*
Topic #1: Bubbles, Splashes and Drops
Topic #2: We All Stayed at Home

January 2021 - Continued

1/13/21..... *General/Monochrome Digital Competition*

1/20/21..... *Event Night*
Mark Bowie: "Envision: The Art of Seeing Creatively"

February, 2021

2/3/21..... *Assigned Digital Competition*
Topic #1: Things Broken
Topic #2: Juxtaposition

2/10/21..... *General/Monochrome Digital Competition*

2/17/21..... *Event Night*
Sarah Marino: "Creative Approaches to Photographing Plants and Flowers"

March, 2021

3/3/21..... *Assigned Digital Competition*
Topic #1: Back to Basics
Topic #2: It's not Always What it Seems

3/10/21..... *General/Monochrome Digital Competition*

3/17/21..... *Photo Essay Competition*
Hosted by Dow Smith

April, 2021

4/7/21..... *Assigned Digital Competition*
Topic #1: Time of Year
Topic #2: Food Deep Dive

4/14/21..... *General/Monochrome Digital Competition*

4/21/21..... *Event Night*
Joe Cotroneo: "Macro Photography"

May, 2021

5/5/21..... *Assigned Digital of the Year*

5/12/21..... *General/Monochrome Digital Image of the Year*

June 9, 2021..... *Awards Banquet*