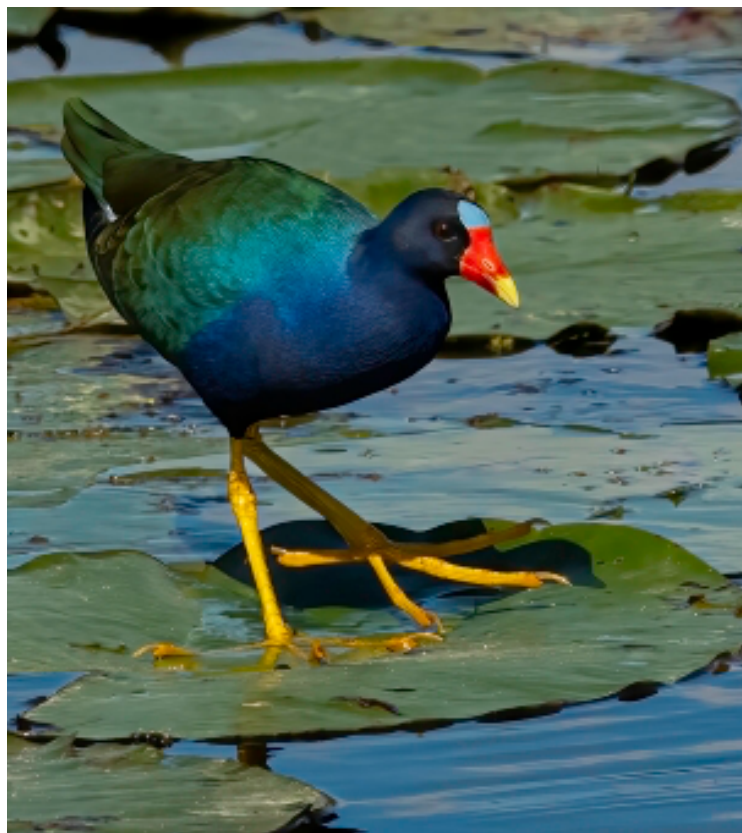




# FOCAL POINT

[Assabet Valley Camera Club](#) - The club meets on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of each month except July and August. Meetings are hybrid - in person at the Hudson Senior Center, 29 Church St., Hudson and on Zoom. Meetings begin at 7:00 PM with a 15 minute social time and at 7:15 a brief business meeting. Programs start at 7:30 PM. Are you interested in attending a meeting and/or seeing what the Assabet Valley Camera Club is all about? You are welcome to join as a guest member for 30 days. Just send us an [Email](#) with your name and preferred e-mail address and you will be added to the attendee list for the next 30 days.



*Purple Gallinule - Robyn Saur*

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*"In February, the smallest gestures of kindness can melt the coldest of hearts." - Susan Elizabeth Phillips*

## Note from Our President

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Hello All,

As we enter the depths of what is looking to be a typical New England winter with cold and potentially snowy conditions, it is sometimes a bit more difficult to get outside for photography. For those of us that prefer to stay warm and inside, there are plenty of opportunities to keep our photography motivation in motion! The easiest is the upcoming AVCC Photo Ops on Saturday, February 8th. There will be plenty of stations and props to keep us busy all day long! And for those of us that do not like to leave the house, this is a perfect time of year to practice and hone skills on our light painting, experimenting with water drop images, and macro photography. No matter what you decide to do, stay warm and be safe!

Pudge



*A Tabletop Lightbox Station at Photo Ops 2024 - John Mauro*

*"Though it was the end of February, the day was a lazy sort of cold. The sun slipped through the cloud in bursts, reminding the landscape that it was still there, prodding snow piles to relax into puddles and stirring sleeping seeds under the ground."*

*— Erika Robuck, [Call Me Zelda](#)*

## Note from the Editors

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### Note From the Editors

“February, the month of love, is a time to cherish the bonds that warm our hearts.”

*D.A. Blankinship*

Deep into the cold, and with brutal wind chills, we seek and embrace warmth in February. We think of it as the month of the heart. Representing love as well as courage, February is American Heart Month and Black History Month. It includes Valentine’s Day, Random Acts of Kindness Day, World Day of Social Justice, and National Freedom Day, celebrating the 13<sup>th</sup> amendment which abolished slavery. In celebration of love, we gathered member photos which we think will put a smile on your lips and warmth in your heart.

Pam Meoli, and possibly others, will have a “Lens Ball Photography” display at Café 641 for the month of March. If you don’t already have one – or two or three – you can buy them in various sizes & prices on Amazon. Here is a link to ideas for trying this fun challenge. <https://www.pinterest.com/jwphotographycr/lens-ball/>

Another technique you might want to try is High Key photography. You will find details of how to do this in Cathy’s Tips and Tricks. For those who learn by example, there’s a helpful video here <https://fstoppers.com/landscapes/how-shoot-and-edit-stunning-high-key-winter-landscapes-689753>. Combined with Cathy’s thorough research, we should all be quite competent at it immediately – just kidding. Seriously, though, you might want to use the opportunity of pale winter skies, milky light, and snow, to give it a try.

This month’s Member Snapshot was written by Mary Coombs. It features long-time member Linda Gilberti, who has traveled to 100 countries! Read about her adventures, marvel at her experiences, and enjoy her images. And don’t miss Pam’s list of Happenings, which highlights several workshops, photo contests, and the upcoming orchid exhibit at New England Botanical Garden at Tower Hill.

Happy Valentine’s Day to all – and stay warm.

© Lynn Kerner

## January 2025 Program

AVCC is pleased to present “Layers and Masking Demystified” by Hazel Meredith on Wednesday, February 5, 2025 at 7:30 PM.

The meeting is a hybrid format; in person at the the Hudson Senior Center, 29 Church St., Hudson, or remote on Zoom (please arrive no later than 7:15).

The Zoom meeting room opens at 7:00 with a 15 minute social time followed by AVCC business at 7:15. The program begins at 7:30 PM. Nonmembers interested in attending as guests should email [avcc.digital@hotmail.com](mailto:avcc.digital@hotmail.com).



### Hazel Meredith, APSA, HonNEC Meredith Images

Hazel Meredith is an award-winning photographer and a sought-after teacher, speaker, and competition judge. She began teaching in 2007, and now does seminars at camera clubs and conferences across the U.S. – both in-person and virtual. She offers her own workshops and webinars, and has done webinars for several software companies.

She has written two eBooks on working with textures, and released two creative courses. She and her husband, Dave, produce the “Virtual Creative Photography Conference” with attendees from around the world. Hazel loves the creative aspect of photography and post- processing, especially the use of textures and software to create unique images.

She is actively involved with the photographic community, and has held leadership roles and received honorary distinctions from several organizations. In the Fall of 2020 she was the recipient of the *Ashbrook Award for Digital Imaging Instruction* from the Photographic Society of America.



*Image Courtesy of  
Hazel Meredith*

[www.MeredithImages.com](http://www.MeredithImages.com)  
[www.MeredithImages.wordpress.com](http://www.MeredithImages.wordpress.com)  
[www.Facebook.com/MeredithImages](https://www.Facebook.com/MeredithImages)

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## Layers & Masking Demystified

By Hazel Meredith, APSA, HonNEC

Learn why layers are important – and useful – when working in Photoshop.

I'll review the various types of layers and how they can make your workflow easier. I will also show you how to apply masking to a layer – a task many feel intimidated by. It's easier than you think!



*Thurmon Barn - Hazel Meredith*



*Bird on a Wire - Hazel Meredith*

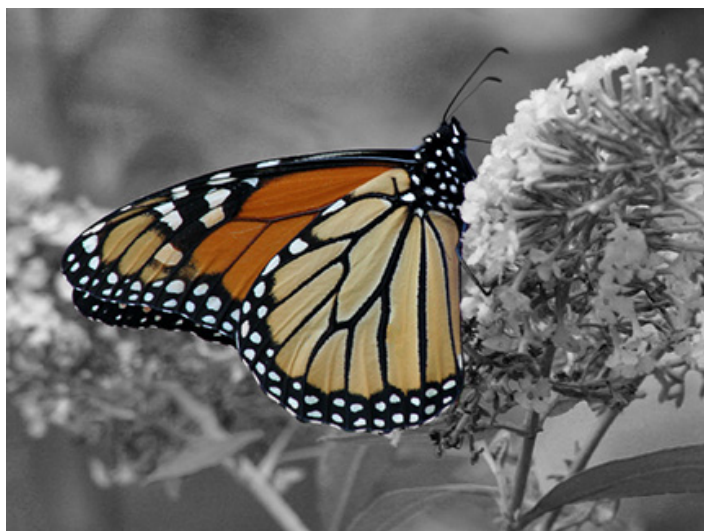
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*Babb's Mill - Hazel Meredith*



*Leaf Silhouette - Hazel Meredith*



*Monarch - B&W+Color - Hazel Meredith*





*Shepherd keeping watch - Eric Frere*

## Looking Ahead - AVCC 2024-2025 Program Schedule

Date	Program	Presenter
9/4/24	“What I did this Summer” Member Slideshows	AVCC Members
10/2/24	Composition	Mike Roman
11/6/24	Spain and Portugal	Robyn Saur
12/4/24	Landscape Photography	Meredith Fontana
1/8/25	Bird and Wildlife Photography	Shawn Carey
2/5/25	Masks and Layers	Hazel Meredith
3/5/24	Colors of Spring	Ed McGuirk
4/2/24	Creative Photography	Joe Pellicone
5/7/24	B&W Photography	Nancy Ori
6/4/24	Image of the Year Awards	Charlie Burke

Link to the club website calendar for all deadline, program, and competition dates: [AVCC Calendar](#)

Or find it on the AVCC website by clicking on “Organization” at the top of the page, then “Club Calendar” in the dropdown list.

### Monthly Competitions:

The club holds monthly image competitions including two categories: digital theme and open. AVCC Print competitions have been suspended. The digital images are judged by a panel of three judges using a scale of 3.0-10. The final score for an image is the total of the three scores. See the [AVCC webpage](#) for more information about the rules and procedures for monthly competitions as well as the PSA and NECCC competitions. Pay particular attention to the PSA definitions for [“Nature”](#), [Monochrome](#), and [Travel](#) submissions.

### Schedule of Monthly Competition Category Topics & Submission Dates

Month	Digital Theme	Open	Digital Theme and Open Submission Date
September	Balloons	Open	9/11/2024
October	Nature	Open	10/9/2024
November	Action	Open	11/13/2024
December	Nature	Open	12/11/2024
January	The Color Red	Open	1/15/2025
February	Nature	Open	2/12/2025
March	Abstract	Open	3/12/2025
April	Nature	Open	4/19/2025
May	By or On the water	Open	5/14/2025

#### PSA and NECCC Digital Interclub Competitions

Image selections to the PSA & NECCC Interclub Competitions are made by the representatives to each organization. Individual entries can also be made to PSA competitions if you are a member. Our PSA representative is Todd Mathieson; our NECCC representative is Robyn Saur.

FYI: PSA Guidelines for Borders: Not recommended for Nature but if any border is added to a Nature, Travel or PJ image it must be a small border of a neutral color (gray tones). There are no border restrictions in the PID Color or Monochrome Division.

#### 2024-2025 NECCC Individual Print Competition

The NECCC Individual Print Competition will be held twice a year hosted at the Greater Lynn Photographic Association (GLPA). This year's competition dates will be Saturday, October 19, 2024 and Saturday, March 29, 2025. For more information go to: [NECCC Print Competition](#)

### GETTING TO KNOW YOU: a conversation with...Linda Gilberti

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Linda Gilberti has been a member of AVCC since 2005. She loves to travel and at 82 years old recently visited her 100th country, Laos. Her excitement about travel is palpable as she talks - her love for people and their cultures obvious in the stories and photos she shares.

Linda has lived in Stow for many years but as a child she lived in Boxborough, MA, a town with a population of approximately 350 people at that time. Her father managed a chicken farm there, and later worked at the United Co-op store in Maynard. Initially the family lived in a 1700's farmhouse where her mother ran an in-home nursery school. Her younger sister was born when she was 5. Linda felt that she was quite independent as a child. Some of her earliest memories include going to school in the Boxborough one-room schoolhouse complete with an outhouse. When she was in the third grade a new school, Blanchard Memorial, was opened. It had three classrooms, with two grades per room. Linda was thrilled with the indoor plumbing and a downstairs cafeteria. It was here that the first spark of interest in other parts of the world was fostered. Linda remembers learning about Lake Titicaca in Peru in geography class. Something about its being the highest navigable lake in the world and its floating islands (Uros) resonated with her and she thought she'd like to see it for herself.

Travel during Linda's school age years consisted of family car trips to visit relatives and she loved seeing the changing terrain and how people lived along the way. Her opportunity to begin her life-long travel to foreign countries began the summer before her senior year in high school. Linda's father was a square dance caller and coached a junior high team from Acton Boxborough. The group was invited to perform at the 1958 World's Fair in Belgium. When one of the principal dancers was unable to go Linda was invited as the substitute. Imagine her excitement! There was a flurry of fundraising in the area to support the team. They left in August on a prop plane out of Boston that took them to Brussels. The team had a great time performing at the American Pavilion at the World's Fair and following that, they extended their travel to Amsterdam and Paris. Linda loved the Eiffel Tower and being able to practice a little French - she was especially proud of being able to say, "where is the bathroom" in three languages! This was the beginning of a life filled with travel.



*Linda in Laos  
Image Courtesy of Jennifer Royce*

Continued on next page



## Member Snapshot - Linda Gilberti - continued from page 9

Following graduation from Acton Boxborough High School Linda attended UMass Amherst for a short time and then enrolled in the Katherine Gibbs School, commuting from Boxborough into Boston. During these years Linda worked at, you guessed it, a travel agency. She planned trips for herself and friends during school vacations to continue her passion for travel. After graduating Linda worked in the personnel department of a research firm. By then she was married to her first husband who was a school teacher in Leominster, MA. Desiring the same schedule he had which allowed ample time for travel, she was determined to become a school librarian and enrolled at Northeastern University with a major in sociology and anthropology and a minor in library science. She did indeed become a school librarian for the town of Maynard where she worked for 32 years. And of course Linda arranged many overseas trips for the Maynard High School students through EF Go Ahead Tours. She laughingly recalled being in a gondola in Venice with a girl who exclaimed, "I can't believe this - they built all these buildings and now they are sinking!"

In the early 1990s Linda met her second husband Don, a history teacher. Linda said she could never marry someone who didn't want to travel and fortunately Don was as enthusiastic as she was about seeing the world. Their first trip together was to China where they visited the Great Wall and the Terra-Cotta Warriors, a history teacher's dream come true. Inspired by International Travel News, a publication featuring articles from fellow travel enthusiasts and one that awarded certificates to people who had visited 50, 75, and 100 countries, Linda set a goal to visit 100 countries and all seven continents. Don expressed doubt but Linda was determined. She and Don did make it to Lake Titicaca. She described gasping for breath when disembarking from the plane in Bolivia due to the altitude. They took the Pan-American Highway - parts of which were dirt, into Peru. They toured the Uros floating islands by boat and then stayed on Taquile Island at a BnB run by a local family. They had a cabin with concrete pads and mattresses for beds and an outhouse (harkening back to her early school days!). Linda remembers the cold but more her thoughts about how fascinating it was that she was actually on an island in Lake Titicaca bringing her childhood imagination to reality.



*Life on a River in Cambodia - Linda Gilberti*

Continued on next page

## Member Snapshot - Linda Gilberti - continued from page 10

When traveling her days are filled with exploration and activity. Her favorite activity is any that allows her time with the local people and their culture. She especially enjoys visiting non-Western countries where the language, dress, and culture are very different from our own. Linda doesn't hesitate to engage with the people around her as she travels, often learning about the history and culture of a country from a personal perspective through conversations with her hosts and guides. As a child Linda used a Brownie camera to take pictures of "local stuff" and later graduated to a Sony Cyber-shot, a Nikon D 3400, and her Smartphone to take pictures during her travels. Her images are full of color, people (mostly children), markets, street scenes, food, doorways, laundry, ruins, and buildings of architectural interest and/or significance.

This article cannot possibly properly describe Linda's rich traveling life. She has a story (or several) for every country. She glows as she recalls experiences such as the "Good-bye Boys" at Machu Picchu, visiting the pyramids, and the Nile, and riding a camel in Jordan; going to the markets in Morocco, Vietnam, and Laos; seeing the degrading temples in Angkor Thom in Cambodia, the wildlife on the Galapagos, and the beautiful city of Hoi An in Vietnam; taking an expedition boat from Chile to the Antarctic, going on an overnight Indiana Jonesesque boat trek through a limestone cave in the Bay of Tonkin, site seeing from a pedicab in Hoi

An; seeing the beauty of Switzerland, the ultra modern skyscrapers of Dubai, and the dust on her camera while touring on a jeep in Africa. The list goes on. The travel experiences are not always filled with joy.

Visiting the "Hanoi Hilton" prison in Hanoi was particularly distressing as it was a stark reminder of our history with Vietnam. She has travelled long enough to witness environmental degradation such as once colorful coral reefs now bleached. For Linda the ability to travel so widely is an honor and a privilege. She says, "What is better than savoring the world through its people, cultures, color, food, with adventures along the way."



*At her Craft - Linda Gilberti*



*Temple Door - Linda Gilberti*

Continued on next page



## Member Snapshot - Linda Gilberti - continued from page 11



*Image Courtesy of Linda Gilberti*

After retiring Linda decided she would join a health club and a camera club. She learned about AVCC and joined in 2005. Within a year she was in charge of refreshments for the club meetings - which - prepandemic and before Zoom - were well attended by club members. She enjoyed setting tables and making sure there was a variety of food available for the evening. Of course with the onset of COVID that changed, but she and Linda Shelales continue to organize the refreshments for our club banquets and special events, calling themselves “The Banquetteers.” When not traveling, Linda is active in her fitness club and enjoys her time with hobbies and friends. She supports many local organizations with their fund raising by making small gingerbread houses at the holidays which are raffled off.

Sadly, Don passed away 8 years ago and did not see Linda reach her goal of 100 countries. Because International Travel News folded during the pandemic she was not issued a 100 Countries certificate, so we celebrate that achievement here. Now what? More travel of course. The next trip is to Botswana this summer. Next year she and a friend will take a Viking River

Cruise on the Rhine from Basel to Amsterdam. That trip will include side trips to Lake Como, the tulip fields in Holland, and Bruges, Belgium. Linda laughingly says, “Health and a sense of humor is everything, and I hope my body keeps up with me. My exit plan is to keep going!”

How many countries are there in the world?



*Image Courtesy of Linda Gilberti*

## Members' Lens



**Zooming Out** - Members and AVCC in the greater photographic community - member exhibits, competitions, meetups, field trip opportunities, workshops, etc.

**Zooming In** - A Reflection, Musing, or Experience (travel, how I got that great shot, my favorite photo or place to shoot for example) shared by a member

**Tips and Tricks** - Members' shared suggestions for the Monthly Theme

**The Bigger Picture** - Happenings in the World of Photography

Many thanks to the following members for their contributions to this month's Newsletter: Cathy Robotis, Lynn Kerner, Mary Coombs, Pam Meoli, Linda Gilberti, Jim Williams, John Mauro, Darlene Holman, Linda Shelales, Nick Andruzzi, Robyn Saur, Glenn Fund, John Gill, Doris Monteiro, Tony Monteiro.

### Zooming Out

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#### On the Wall at Cafe 641

Currently the work of Bob Cooke is on exhibit at Cafe 641, featuring many wildlife images from his travels.

March will feature an exhibit entitled "Lens Ball Photography" by Pam Meoli and other AVCC members. See page 14 to learn more about Lens Ball Photography and an invitation to join the exhibit.



*Tibetans - Bob Cooke*

*"In the sweetness of friendship let there be laughter,  
for in the dew of little things the heart finds its  
morning and is refreshed." — Khalil Gibran*

Continued on next page

## Zooming Out - continued from page 13

### From Pam Meoli:

Calling All Lens Ball Photographers

Have you heard of “Lens Ball Photography”? Or as I (Pam) like to call it – “Crystal Ball”

It’s a thing – check it out: <https://www.digitalphotomentor.com/lensball-photography/>

I know some of you have one! So get them out, dust them off and start shooting again. Lots of inspiration on Facebook and YouTube.

We are putting together a “Lens Ball Photography” display at Café 641 for the month of March. Something different!

Contact Pam Meoli if interested. Thanks!

Speaking of Lens Balls: for those on Facebook – I recently joined this great group. There are so many creative ideas. For those that have one maybe you need some new ideas and inspiration. Just search “lensball 4 All photographers” on Facebook.



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Do you have a favorite quote? Everyone has a favorite quote.

The March photo challenge is to pair your favorite quote with one of your photos that compliments the quote. If you don’t have a favorite quote feel free to use this one:

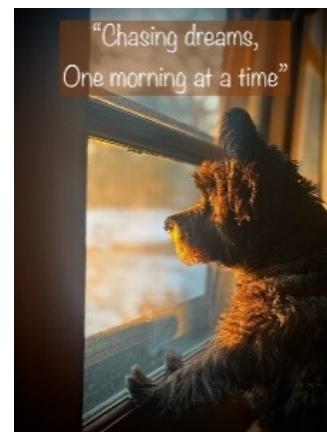
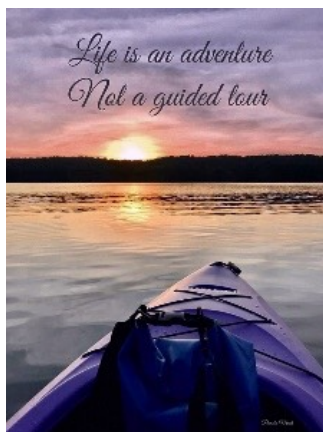
“Let us be grateful to the people who make us happy, they are the charming gardeners who make our souls blossom” ~ Marcel Proust

Here are a couple of examples:

(the one on the left is my most popular notecard for graduation time)

For the challenge you do not need to place your quote on the image.

Please send in your quotes/images to the Newsletter Team via the AVCC website, competition image size please, by February 22 for inclusion in the March newsletter. Thanks – Pam



Continued on next page



## Night Hawks

The Quadrantid Meteor Shower peaked on January 3rd-4th and some of our intrepid Night Hawk members sought to capture the event - Lynn and Jim met at 4am on Jan 3 at Ross Dam trailhead and though the meteors were not visible to the naked eye, both were able to see meteors in their photos. Jim, Rick, Neil and Jim's son, Matt, also went the night of January 4th but did not witness any meteors. Jim and Rick also sought to see the aurora on January 24 as the Kp value (an indicator of the potential for seeing the Aurora) looked promising. They did not see the Aurora but Jim said the winter night sky was beautiful! Several Night Hawk members keep a close eye on the night sky forecasts and let the group know when there is good potential to catch an event and locations that might be best for a meet up. As you can see there are no guarantees but the chase is fun and the camaraderie can't be beat.



*Meteors - Jan 3 am - Jim Williams*



*Meteor 1 - Jan 3 am - Lynn Kerner*

Some night sky events in February include the continuation of the planetary alignment (not really in a line!) including 4 planets brightly visible in a west to east trajectory. About 60 to 90 minutes after sunset look for Venus and Saturn in the west (accompanied by the crescent moon on February 1st), Jupiter overhead and Mars to the east. The full Snow Moon appears on February 12. On February 14 Venus will be at its greatest brilliancy! Beginning in late February you may see [Zodiacal Light](#). For more information about what to see in the night sky on any given night go to [EarthSky](#).

If you are interested in being included in the Night Hawks email group please contact Jim Williams.

*"The night is falling down around us. Meteors rain like fireworks, quick rips in the seam of the dark."  
- Jodi Picoult*

## Zooming Out - continued from page 15

### Get Ready for Photo Ops!

On Saturday, February 8th, between 9am -3pm, please join us for the annual Photo Ops day.

Here is a copy of the email John Gill sent to the club on January 26:

For those of you who are unfamiliar with our "photo ops" event, it is a fun day where we play, create, and learn to create images with what we have available using tabletop set ups.

We have some standard set ups including a water drop station, and a station for photographing glassware etc. using blacklights.

We have backdrops for still life set ups, and more.

We have lighting, photo tents, lightboxes and more.

We also should have an enormous amount of photo props to play with. Art Vaughn is planning on coming, and Art and his sister Susan typically bring everything from animal bones, things found on the beach, currency, and more. All these items work well for still life and macro shots.

Those planning on coming, we ask you to bring whatever you want to photograph and to share with other members.

If you are looking for some ideas, Google "tabletop photography ideas" and you will see many setups that you may want to bring to photo ops.

#### NOTES:

If you are bringing in items/setups, please come early (doors will be open at 8am), we would like to have everything ready to go by 9am.

Bring your camera gear, macro lens if you have one, tripods, cable releases, lighting if you have it.

Props such as flower bouquets, fruit, vases, vintage items, all work very well.

We usually send out for pizza or something for lunch or bring your own.

Please bring a pair of shoes that you can wear during the day so we don't track in any sand, snow that may be outside. It'll make clean up easier and protect the center's new flooring.

We are also asking anyone who can to come early to help set up, there is a lot of work that needs to be done, so help is appreciated.

Attached to John's email on Jan 26 is a PowerPoint slide show prepared by Maureen Mathieson and Liz West that explains what a Photo Ops day is all about - check it out to see some of the stations we will have.

Please let John Gill know if you are planning to attend (if you don't know ahead of time that's ok - come anyway). If you have any questions, please let John Gill know.

*"Groundhog found fog. New snows and blue toes. Fine and dandy for Valentine candy.  
Snow spittin'; if you're not mitten-smitten, you'll be frostbitten! By jing-y feels spring-y."  
- The Old Farmer's Almanac*

## Zooming In - Love

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This month we asked our members to send in photos that speak to love. Enjoy the beautiful images we received! They will warm your heart.



*Donkeys - Pam Meoli*



*Olivia and Cheese - Pam Meoli*



*John and Alison by Dave Reynard  
Submitted by Linda Shelales*

Here is a photo Dave Reynard did for my son John's wedding years ago. Dave was such a beloved man, such a wonderful photographer & as a club member & at the wedding, left such beautiful memories behind him for us to treasure always. Here's to our old friend Dave, who did SO much good, who endeared himself to all who knew him, whose loving kindness & generosity knew no bounds.  
-Linda Shelales

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*To Love & to Cherish - Lynn Kerner*

*"Let us be grateful to the people who make us happy; they are the charming gardeners who make our souls blossom." — Marcel Proust*

Continued on next page



*Swans Heart - Darlene Holman*



*Sisters - 1995 - Mary Coombs*

Continued on next page





*Daddy Invited to Snack Time - Linda Shelaes*



*Image Courtesy of Robyn Saur*



*Image Courtesy of Robyn Saur*

*"In the coldest February, as in every other month in every other year, the best thing to hold on to in this world is each other." – Linda Ellerbee*

Continued on next page

Zooming in - Love - continued from page 20



*After a long day at the beach - Nick Andruzzi*

*"The best thing to hold onto in life is each other." Audrey Hepburn*



*Red is the Rose - Catherine Robotis*

Continued on next page





*Ariane and Jason at Paradise Ridge Winery's Love Sculpture, Santa Rosa, California - Glenn Fund*



*Niner Wine Estate's Heart Hill Vineyard, Paso Robles, California - Glenn Fund*

Continued on next page





*Image Courtesy of John Mauro*



*Summer Yum - Lynn Kerner*



*Tipsy - Linda Shelales*

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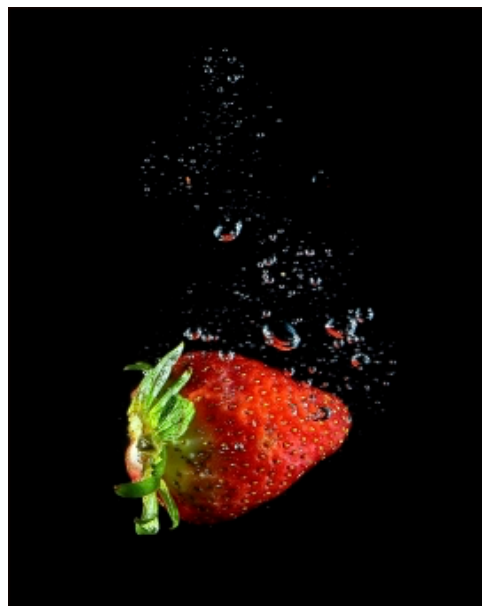


*Field of Love - Catherine Robotis*

The Field of Love can be seen in Berlin, Ma on Route 62. It was planted and maintained by Doug Coldwell for his wife but for many years has served as a source of inspiration, solace, and joy for people in the community and beyond. For the story of this touching tribute to love click here: [Love Story](#)



*Snowy China Garden Bridge - Glenn Fund*



*Strawberry with Bubble  
Reflections - Tony Monteiro*



## Tips and Tricks - February's Theme: High Key Photography

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### Tips for High Key Photography

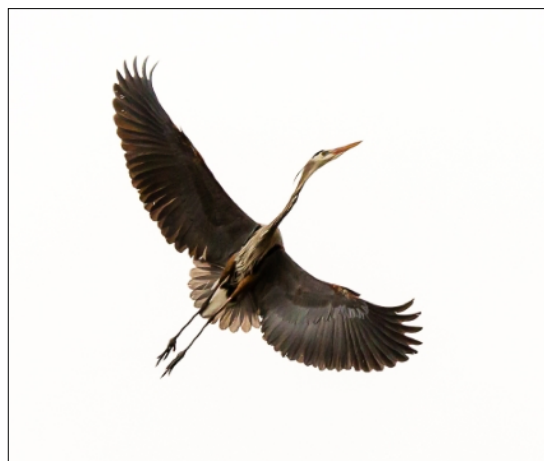
High key photography is a genre of photography that emphasizes light tones and minimal shadows. High key photographs are characterized by an abundance of light, and they are often ethereal, airy, and full of optimism. They convey a sense of calmness, peacefulness, and innocence. They generally have a clean, minimalist look, highlighting the subject without the distraction of a complex background or dark shadows. They embrace negative space. High key photography is ideal for portrait photography (especially newborns and brides) and product/food photography. In nature and landscape photography, the high key approach can be used to draw attention to the delicacy and serenity of the natural world. It's a great option for those snowy winter landscapes that blanket New England at this time of the year. We have put together some tips and tricks to help you further explore high key photography. The days are getting longer; it's a great time to embrace the light!

#### Setting the Scene

- If you are heading outdoors with your camera, misty mornings, fog, snowy landscapes, and bright beaches can provide a beautiful backdrop for your image. Picture the impact of a lone tree on a snowy landscape or a lone walker on an empty beach.
- Snow, water, and fog can reflect light and contribute to the high key look.
- Pale, even background tones are ideal. Tones should be continuous when possible, avoiding deep shadows or a wide tonal range. Look for non-distracting backgrounds.
- In terms of composition, less is more. You are striving for a minimalist look. Simplicity will allow you to emphasize your subject and make the scene serene. Typically, high key photos involve only one subject.
- Negative space can be used to isolate the subject and make it stand out.
- Pay attention to lines and shapes, and make sure that your subject has a well defined shape. You want the viewer's eye to hone right in on your subject.
- If you are working indoors, your ideal scene will have white walls, white curtains, and natural window light. Work with white or light tones and soft light to avoid harsh shadows.
- If you are doing portrait work, encourage your subject to wear light-colored (or white) clothing.



*High Key using light box at  
AVCC Photo Ops 2020  
- Mary Coombs*



*Oxford Rookery - David Morin*

Continued on next page

## Tips for High Key Photography - continued from page 25

### Camera Settings

- Your goal is to have a bright image with your subject correctly exposed. You want to avoid blown out highlights and chromatic aberrations.
- Always use the histogram in your camera, not your LCD screen, because the LCD screen may not accurately represent the exposure. Most of your data should be on the right side of the histogram.
- Shoot in Manual and RAW when possible. If you shoot in Auto Mode, the photo may end up underexposed (for what you are trying to accomplish). RAW will ensure that you have enough data to work with in post-processing.
- Keep your ISO as low as possible, ideally 100-200.
- In terms of Aperture, a wider aperture will let in more light and blur your background. If you want more of the image in focus, try f/8 as a starting point. If you want selective focus, try f/2.8 or as wide as your lens will allow.
- Using a slower shutter speed will bring in more light. If your subject is moving, use a faster shutter speed. Don't forget your tripod!
- You can try overexposing by 1 or 2 stops to see if you are satisfied with the results, but make sure you don't lose details in your subject and important areas of your image. This may be especially helpful if you are working in Aperture Mode.
- You may want to use spot metering, as opposed to matrix metering. Matrix metering tends to bring overcast clouds, snow, and fog closer to middle gray. If you use spot metering, make sure that your subject is big enough so the camera does not pick up on the background. Pay close attention to the color tint in the white areas of the photo to ensure it is accurate.
- If you are shooting with autofocus, you may find single servo AF more effective than continuous AF if your subject is stationary.



*Springtime Winter*  
- Linda DeStefano Brown



*Office Gossip - Jane Parker*

Continued on next page

## Tips for High Key Photography - continued from page 26

### Helpful Equipment

- Fast lenses with wide apertures are ideal (f/1.4-f/2.8).
- A reflector can be used on high contrast days. It will help bounce light into shadowy areas and reduce contrast.
- Diffusers can soften harsh light.
- A light meter can help accurately measure light in the scene and help in your decision-making with settings.
- A soft box can help reduce shadows on your subject, particularly with food/product photography.

### Post-processing

- In post-processing, you want to achieve detail in your subject but not in the background; you may need to lighten the background.
- Adjust the exposure to brighten your image, if needed.
- Adjust the contrast to make your subject stand out.
- You can use the dodge tool in specific areas to reduce shadows, and you can use the burn tool to darken areas and add depth and detail where you want them.
- In terms of saturation, the saturation is often reduced in high key photography. You can selectively enhance the saturation of less saturated colors that you may want to stand out against the bright background.
- Use your crop tool or object removal tool to remove distractions when needed (if possible).
- Consider converting your image to B&W (or shooting in B&W). High key images are often very impactful in B&W.

If you want to take advantage of the remaining weeks of winter to capture some stunning high key photos in the snow, Lynn found this very informative tutorial that you might find helpful:

[Guide to High Key](#)

### Sources

conservationvisuals.com; photographylife.com; photzy.com; shotkit.com; masterclass.com; shutterstoppers.com; [digital-photography-school.com](#).



*Jamestown Harbor in the fog - John Mauro*

**Did you know....** You can use pantyhose to create a soft focus filter! Take a pair of pantyhose or a nylon knee high stocking, and cut out the foot. You can then slide the nylon over the lens of your camera, creating a soft focus filter. This clever tip came from Pam. Why not give it a try? Let us know if it worked for you!

Continued on next page



## The Bigger Picture

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### **Photography Workshops and Classes**

[Daniel J Gregory](#) is offering a free one hour webinar on February 11, “How to Approach Critiquing Your Own Work”. Click on the link and scroll down on his web page for more information.

### **Local Happenings:**

Boston Photography Workshops (840 Summer Street; South Boston) offers an array of one day in person, walking and online workshops. Too many to list separately here. Check it out yourself – lots and lots to choose from:

<https://www.bostonphotographyworkshops.com/onedayworkshops>

[Digital Photo Academy - Boston](#) offers in person and online workshops - coming up on March 1 in Harvard Square are two back to back workshops that can be taken separately or combined for a reduced rate: Click the link above for information and registration.

1. Master Your Camera Controls
2. Composition in the Field

In Beverly (261 Cabot St ) - Eye-Catching Frames! Photo Workshop offered by BevCam (Beverly Community Access Media)

Frame scenes that engage, inspire, and leave a lasting impact —transform your photography and videography with composition techniques from rules to creative freedom. February 25, 6 - 7:30 pm - \$30 non-members, \$15 members

[Eye Catching Frames](#)

Offerings At New England Botanical Garden (Tower Hill):

Photographing Orchids: Up-Close & Personal

(offered: 2/11, 2/20, 2/25 from 6-8:30 pm)

Join us after hours for an exclusive photography session. This is a self-guided opportunity to get up-close and personal with the orchids and displays in our Pixels & Petals exhibition and practice your craft without the crowds.

<https://nebg.org/adult-education/> View the Calendar to register

Joe Reardon - Artist Talk - Urban Photography - Copley Society of Art, Boston

Saturday, February 22, 1-2 pm

Free - to reserve a spot go to [Eventbrite](#)



*Harmonizing Hatchlings  
- Doris Monteiro*

Continued on next page

**Photography Contests:**

National Wildlife Federation Photo Contest

Accepting submissions until May 1, 2025 in 9 categories

Small fee required to enter - Cash prizes

For more information and to enter click [NWF Photo Contest](#)

Farm Credit East

Imagery that illustrates the best of Northeast farming, horticulture, forestry and commercial fishing, as well as creative photos that celebrate country life in New England.

<https://www.farmcrediteast.com/en/resources/Calendar-Photo-Contest>



*red umbrella - Paul Loiselle*



*Rest - Eric Frere*

*"February is the shortest month, so if you're having a miserable month, try to schedule it for February." - Lemony Snicket*



AVCC is a member of the following organizations:

NECCC



PSA



AVCC website:

<https://www.assabetvalleycameraclub.com>

2023-2024 Executive Board Members:

- President: John Mauro
- Vice President: Mary Coombs
- Secretary: Jim Williams
- Treasurer: John Gill



*Sister Bertha - John  
McKinney*

Editors' Note:

Many(!) club members work behind the scenes in various capacities to make the club run smoothly, to engage with the greater community, to reach out to prospective members, to communicate about our organization through the Facebook page, the AVCC website, the Focal Point Newsletter, the Action Unlimited, and provide opportunities for competition, exhibitions, fun, learning, and camaraderie. To see (most) of the volunteer positions and members please refer to your Member packet.