



# 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.



*Zaandam wooden shoes - Natalie Schiavone*

*"Spring is when you feel like whistling even with a shoe full of slush." ~ Doug Larson*

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## Note from Our President

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Hello All,

I would like to thank everyone that participated in the AVCC Photo Ops day - from those that organized, brought props, set up and cleaned up, and had fun creating amazing images!

Hopefully the polar vortex that has had a grip on the area for most of this new year is starting to break enabling us to get some great outside shots without having to fight the extreme cold and its effects on our equipment and selves. And hopefully, the colors of spring this year are something other than white (from snow and ice), which leads me into the March Program: The Colors of Spring - New England's Other Foliage Season by Ed McGuirk.

Some members will be attending Hazel Meredith's workshop, Photo Editing - Basics and Beyond, on March 9th at the Senior Center. We look forward to seeing how members apply their new found skills!

Pudge



*Bison on Antelope Island - John Mauro*

*"Our job is to record, each in his own way, this world of light and shadow and time that will never come again exactly as it is today." — Edward Abbey*

## Note from the Editors

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### Note From the Editors

*"In the spring, at the end of the day, you should smell like dirt." ~ Margaret Atwood*

Ah, the scent of the wet earth as earthworms move about and early buds push through to catch the sun. That smell of dirt surely means spring! And the hodgepodge of weather in March also signals our New England spring. They say, "in like a lion out like a lamb," and we'll have a peek at the proverbial lion in the very first days. Sandwiched between near-50-degree days, we'll have days only reaching 30, with low wind chills. But we have rapidly increasing light, and we turn the clocks ahead on March 9<sup>th</sup>.

On March 13<sup>th</sup> -14 there will be a total lunar eclipse which will last about five hours. When the full moon travels through Earth's shadow it takes on a striking reddish hue; thus, it is called the Blood Moon. The entire event will be between midnight and 5 a.m., with totality about 2 a.m. If it's clear, there might be some crazy AVCC Night Hawks out shooting the moon. If you're interested in receiving Night Hawks notices, email Jim Williams via the website.

Our March 5<sup>th</sup> program, "The Colors of Spring - New England's Other Foliage Season," is supported by a grant from the Hudson Cultural Council. We are grateful.

Our next installment on the theme of light is all about Low Key Photography. Cathy notes, "Low key photographs tell a dramatic story through the subtle use of light." She has many suggestions and recommendations for how to achieve this.

See Pam's Happenings section for an interesting photo opportunity coming up in a couple months – a "Steampunk Festival." Terry Vachowski brought this to our attention, and Pam provides a fun write-up of what it's all about.

Our "Getting to Know You" section this month is about one of our newer members, Neil Swinton, who found AVCC online when he was looking around for camera clubs, and joined in 2024.

This month we asked for photos with your favorite quotes, as well as photos from Photo Ops on Feb 8<sup>th</sup>. Enjoy all the contributions. We certainly did.

Happy March! Enjoy the light, the dirt, the renewal of all nature.

*"Spring is when life's alive in everything." ~ Christina Rossetti*

## March 2025 Program

AVCC is pleased to present “The Colors of Spring - New England's Other Foliage Season” by Ed McGuirk on Wednesday, March 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).

### Ed McGuirk

Ed McGuirk is a Massachusetts based landscape and nature photographer whose work concentrates on New England. He belongs to the Sudbury Valley Nature Photographers and the Massachusetts Camera Naturalists. His work has earned numerous honors, including the Lynn Salon’s Videtta Award, NECCC Nature Image of the Year, Highly Commended in the USA Landscape Photographer of the Year, and NPN’s Nature Photographer of the Year. Ed’s work has been published in “*Outdoor Photographer*”, “*Nature Photographers.net*” and other publications. To see more of Ed’s work, visit his website at <http://www.edmcguirkphoto.com>.



*New England Spring - Image Courtesy of Ed McGuirk*

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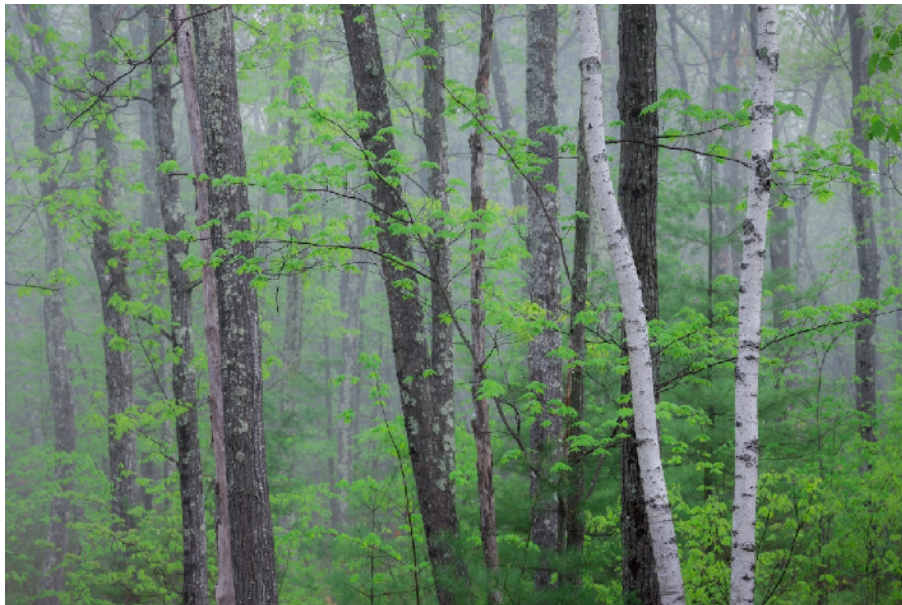


**Natures First Green is Gold**  
**The Colors of Spring – New England's Other Foliage Season**

Spring in New England is dynamic time of emergence and regrowth. It is a season of renewal that is full of interesting nature stories waiting to be told by photographers. This program showcases the ephemeral and subtle beauty of spring foliage colors in New England. Early spring tree buds and leaves display delicate hues of yellow, orange, and red, that are almost like a Second Autumn season.

This program will cover how to use the more visible structure of spring tree branches to produce compelling compositions. It will show you how to use "Spring Pointillism" to create abstract and painterly looking images. It will discuss the various stages of spring that allow you to take advantage of the full palette of Spring Foliage colors, from the Autumn like hues of early spring to the fresh lime green leaves of later spring. It will also show you how to post-process spring foliage colors, to get effective color separation of yellows and greens.

The program will also cover a wide range of tips on how to create more interesting and effective woodland photographs. It will discuss how to simplify the often complex and chaotic forest environment. It will teach you how to compose woodland scenes to add depth and structure to your images. It will also show you how to take advantage of light and weather conditions to overcome the problem of excessive contrast in forests on sunny days.



*Image Courtesy of Ed McGuirk*

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*Image Courtesy of Ed McGuirk*

This program is supported in part by a grant from the Hudson Cultural Council a local agency which is supported by the Mass Cultural Council, a state agency.



*Power of culture*



*Four Camargue Stallions - Blair Boudreau*

## Looking Ahead - AVCC 2024-2025 Program Schedule

Date	Program	Presentor
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...Neil Swinton

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Neil was born and grew up in Manhattan. He went to college in Michigan, where he studied computer science, and graduated in 1982. Neil had read *The Soul of a New Machine*, which came out in 1981. The book, written by Tracy Kidder, is nonfiction and chronicles the experiences of a computer engineering team racing to design a next-generation computer. The machine was built by Data General, a Massachusetts company, and was built at a blistering pace and under tremendous pressure. Neil thought this kind of career sounded really cool. At the time, the computer industry was centered in California and Massachusetts. Since he had a brother here in Clinton, he moved to Massachusetts and worked at Stratus, a young company at the time. He worked with Terry Vachowski's husband, as it turned out.

Neil did not grow up in an artistic family. In his 20's he owned a Canon camera and a couple lenses, but wasn't that much into photography. Once his own family came along, he spent time on other things. Then in 2019 he bought an RV and he and his wife left for a 4-month trip across the country. He brought a point-and-shoot camera with him and enjoyed the beautiful landscapes out west. By the time he and his wife were returning, Covid was exploding around the country and campgrounds were shutting down. Toward the end of the trip, they had to go Walmart to Walmart to rest overnight.



*Sunset at Gold Canyon, AZ - Neil Swinton*

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They left again in the fall of 2020 and spent one month in Kanab, Utah, famous for “The Wave” (<https://thewave.info/CoyoteButtesNorth/index.html>). While exploring that site, Neil was able to try someone else’s full-frame mirrorless camera, and that made him and his wife appreciate what they were missing. The campground they were staying in had a “dark sky” section, where campers had to keep lights low. There, they met an astrophotographer who had several Sony cameras and many lenses that she let them try. She helped them find a replacement for their old point-and-shoot. They picked out the Sony A7iii and had B&H ship it to Kanab.

Neil started doing astrophotography when he joined AVCC members at Silvana Della Camera’s workshop on shooting the Milky Way. He likes the look of night photos and enjoys everyone’s company at the night shoots with the AVCC Nighthawks. Astrophotography and landscape photography are his favorite subjects to shoot.



*The Wave at Vermillion Cliffs National Monument in Arizona - Neil Swinton*

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## Member Snapshot - Neil Swinton - continued from page 10

An area he is developing in is composition, by learning about the artistic elements in a scene. He's been doing Intentional Camera Movement with the goal of getting an impressionist look. He is inspired by his daughter-in-law, Bethany Noel's, art (<https://www.bethanynoelart.com>), for example, paintings of hers like [Sunstorm](#).

Neil and his wife, Anne, a potter, are planning their next trip. This one will center around taking a wood-fired "rocket kiln" to a pottery conference in Salt Lake City, UT. Neil intends to continue pursuing both landscape and night sky photography. Of course, the western states are the perfect place to find both. He'll bring a 50-400 lens for wildlife and moon shots, and a 24-105 for landscapes. AVCC can look forward to some wonderful images!

© Lynn Kerner



*Highland lighthouse in Truro - Neil Swinton*

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*Aoudads (the sheep-like animals) at Fort Davis State Park in Ft Davis, TX  
- Neil Swinton*



*Truro beach houses - Neil Swinton*



## 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, Jim Williams, John Mauro, Neil Swinton, Nick Andruzzi, Glenn Fund, John Gill, Doris Monteiro, Rick Beauchamp, Louis Snitkoff, Bridget Perch, Terry Vachowski.

### Zooming Out

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#### On the Wall at Cafe 641

The March exhibit at Cafe 641 features the work of Pam Meoli with an installation of images taken with a lens ball. A meet and greet will be held on Sunday, March 2, from 12:00 - 1:30. Come see this very interesting exhibit and spend some time with Pam and AVCC friends.

April will feature an exhibit by Glenn Fund.

*"It is an illusion that photos are made with the camera... they are made with the eye, heart and head." ~ Henri Cartier-Bresson*



Image Courtesy of Pam Meoli

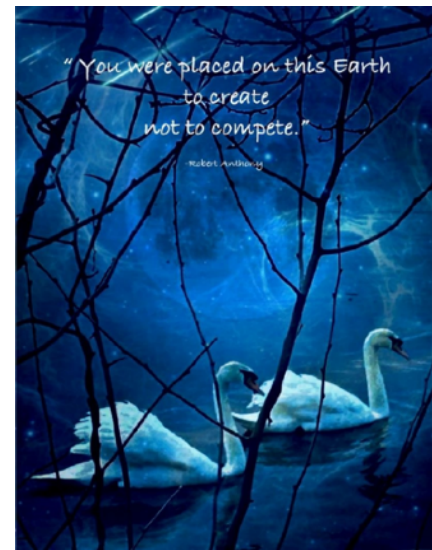
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*Club members enjoying each other's company (and the food!) at Bob Cooke's Meet and Greet at Cafe 641 on January 25. - Mary Coombs*

### Exhibition opportunities:

Club members have several upcoming opportunities to display their images. In addition to our monthly exhibit at Cafe 641, Jim Williams is working with Maynard Public Library to select dates for an exhibit there, either in the summer or next fall. Also, in honor of our 40th anniversary, he is working on the details for an exhibit at the Hudson Public Library for the months of April and May. Please consider selecting a month to display images at Cafe 641 (either framed or dry mounted - see Jim's email to members on February 26). And please consider entering a favorite image or two in the upcoming shows at the Hudson and Maynard libraries. More information will follow in emails from Jim.



*Submitted by Pam Meoli*

**Did you know...**the Rule of Odds? The **Rule of Odds** states that when you are including a small number of objects in an image, an odd number of them will be more visually appealing than an even number. This is because when presented with an even number of elements, the eye tends to gravitate towards the empty space between them, while odd groups are perceived as patterns rather than incomplete sets. So, for example, if you are photographing flowers, three flowers in the scene will be more appealing than two or four. What do you think?

[Composition Rules](#)

## Night Hawks

March's full **Blood Worm Moon** reaches peak illumination at **2:55 A.M. ET on Friday, March 14, 2025**. Note - there will also be a total lunar eclipse!

Of course, you don't have to wait until the middle of the night to see the Moon! Look for the spectacularly bright Moon as it rises above the horizon on Thursday evening. If your weather is poor on Thursday night, try again on Friday! If you have just a bit of rain on either of these nights, you may even get to spot a rare phenomenon called a moonbow. A moonbow is just like a solar rainbow but is created by moonlight (rather than sunlight) when it is refracted through water droplets in the air. Moonbows only happen when the full Moon is fairly low in the sky, so look for one in the hours after sunset when the sky is dark.

However, this is more than just another full Moon! There is also going to be a **Total Lunar Eclipse**, also known as a **Blood Moon**. During a lunar eclipse, the Sun, Moon, and Earth all align so that the Earth comes in between the Moon and Sun. This means that the Earth will cast a shadow over the Moon (also known as the umbra). When the Moon is in the umbra of the Earth, the Earth casts a reddish shadow, hence the name Blood Moon.

This lunar eclipse is visible from all of North America. The Moon will enter the penumbra at 11:56 P.M. EDT on March 13 and the umbra at 1:09 A.M. EDT on March 14. It will leave the umbra at 4:48 A.M. EDT on March 14 and the penumbra at 6:02 A.M. EDT. - Excerpt from [Almanac, Tuesday, February 25, 2025](#).

Thank you to Pam Meoli for the above information!

[Partial Solar Eclipse](#): For you early risers there will be a partial solar eclipse on March 29. The eclipse will start before sunrise and reach maximum just after sunrise (in the Worcester area this is 6:38 A.M.) and ends at 7:07 A.M. Because the sun will be so low on the horizon it is advised to view it from a hilltop or high point with a clear view of the Eastern horizon - or better yet - watch from an oceanside beach on the Outer Cape (maximum at 6:30 A.M.)! Remember to wear your eclipse glasses.

Resources and workshops for night photography:

Jürgen Lobert is hosting a one hour tutorial about how to shoot a lunar eclipse on Monday, March 3, at 7:00 P.M. Registration fee \$17. For more information and to register click here: [Lunar Eclipse Tutorial](#)

[Silvana della Camera](#) offers many workshops, photoadventures, tips and tricks, and resources including her book, *Night Shades*, for those interested in advancing their skills in astrophotography. Here is a link to her list of [2025 Celestial Happenings](#).

*Astronomers, like burglars and jazz musicians, operate best at night. - Miles Kington*



## Zooming In - Photo Ops

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This month we asked our members to share photos from the Photo Ops day. Enjoy seeing the many different tabletop set-ups there were to play with!

Images on this page Courtesy of John Mauro



*Setting up floral still life stations*



*Darlene and Mary with props*



*Maureen explaining the water drop apparatus to Sue and Natalie*



*"The past resembles the future more than one drop of water resembles another." ~ Ibn Khaldun*

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Zooming In - Photo Ops - continued from page 16

Images on this page courtesy of John Mauro



*"A drop of water, if it could write out its own history, would explain the universe to us."*  
~ Lucy Larcom



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## Zooming In - Photo Ops - continued from page 17

Images on this page courtesy of Nick Andruzzi



*"I'm always drawn to still life arrangements with flowers and fruit, which are always amazing." -Nick Andruzzi*

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Zooming in - Photo Ops - continued from page 18

Images on this page courtesy of Glenn Fund



*"In nature, light creates the color. In the picture, color creates the light." ~ Hans Hofmann*

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Zooming in - Photo Ops - continued from page 19



*Book of passages on white gloves - Rick Beauchamp*



*Old Projector - Rick Beauchamp*



*Beaded Lizard - Mary Coombs*



*Entertainment by Maureen and Bones*

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## More Zooming In - Quotes

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We also asked members to share a favorite quote with a corresponding photo. We received many beautiful and inspiring submissions!



*"There is a crack in everything. That's how the light gets in." - Leonard Cohen*

*Submitted by Louis Snitkoff*



*Submitted by Pam Meoli*



*"Home is the place where, when you have to go there, they have to take you in."*

*Submitted by Theresa Vachowski*

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*Submitted by Catherine Robotis*



*Submitted by Mary Coombs*



*"A hand extended to nature is a promise to protect, and nurture the world we share." author unknown*

*Submitted by Rick Beauchamp*

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*"My little dog—a heartbeat at my feet." - Edith Wharton*  
*Rascal de Gama - Submitted by Blair Boudreau*



*"Just like a lighthouse, be a beacon of hope and guidance for others in the stormy seas of life."*  
*Submitted by Bridget Perch*



## Tips and Tricks - March's Theme: Low Key Photography

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### Tips for Low Key Photography

Low key photography is a genre of photography associated with dark, moody, mysterious, impactful images. Low key photographs tell a dramatic story through the subtle use of light. The photographer paints with light, and the light is then used to shape the darkness. Low key photography traces its distant roots back to the Renaissance period, when painters began experimenting with chiaroscuro techniques. It works well with portrait photography, still life photography, food/product photography, and studio photography. There is an emphasis on texture, depth, and contrast. As we make our way through the final dark days of winter, we still have time to turn down the lights and create some powerful low key images. Here are some tips and tricks for low key photography to help you embrace the remaining darkness.

#### Setting the Scene

- Your goal is to shoot a dark scene where only the subject is illuminated. You can achieve this by dimming the key light.
- Your ideal image will have deep shadows and dark tones. Your midtones should be on the darker side of the spectrum.
- Your subject should be well exposed, but with an emphasis also on shadows, darkness, and depth in the background.
- You will be likely working with a single light source, and you will need to decide where you want the light to shine. If you are working in a studio, use directional lighting to ensure that the light falls only where you want it. Side-lighting works well. Consider Rembrandt lighting ([Rembrandt lighting](#)) or Split lighting techniques ([Split lighting](#)) for portraits. If you are using the split lighting technique, make sure your light source is perpendicular to your subject so that light does not spill over to the other side. If you decide to add a fill light, keep an 8:1 light ratio so that the image remains dark. You can use fairy lights or small table lamps as light sources in your scene. A person looking at a smartphone in a dark room would create an impactful low key image.
- If you are working indoors, consider using a black backdrop, and keep your subject more forward. If you are doing a low key portrait, have your subject wear black. If you are working with color, try to use dark colors in your scene (dark blues and greens and muted reds).
- Textured subjects are ideal for low key photography. For example, low key portraits of people with lined, wrinkled skin that tell a life story and images with rough, textured fabrics may be very impactful.
- If you are trying to do low key landscape work, areas of shade or with dappled light are ideal.
- Dusk and dawn offer great outdoor opportunities to work with decreased light and light that comes from the side.

*"Creativity is inventing, experimenting, growing, taking risks, breaking rules, making mistakes, and having fun." – Mary Lou Cook*

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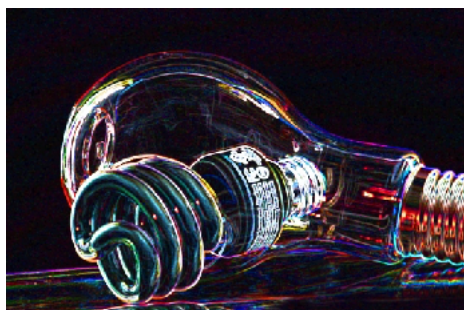
## Tips for Low Key Photography - continued from page 24

### Camera Settings

- Shoot in manual mode when possible, as well as RAW.
- In terms of your histogram, try to shoot to the left to bring out the blacks and shadows. Your image data should largely be on the left side of the histogram.
- Keep your ISO as low as possible. A higher ISO will result in digital noise which will be visible in darker areas and may be distracting.
- Ideally, your subject should be completely sharp against the dark background. Start with the lowest f/stop that will achieve that, and adjust as needed. You may find that f/8-f/11 works well.
- Use a fast shutter speed to keep the image dark. This allows you to underexpose the image. Even in bright light, 1/4000 will result in a darkened image. An ND filter can be used, and with an ND filter, you don't need to have such a fast shutter speed.
- If you are working indoors, try 1/250 to start (especially if you want to sync with a flash).
- If you are working outdoors, use a low ISO, a more narrow aperture, and a fast shutter speed ( $>1/250$ ).

### Helpful Equipment

- Single light source  
(could be a table lamp, for example).
- Black backdrop.
- Reflector.
- Speedlight.
- Soft box.
- ND filter.
- A honeycomb grid, snoot, or flag can be used to control the light spill.
- Cucoloris (also known as a cookie): This is a shaped cutout that is used to form light patterns and shapes on your subject when light flows through it. For example, you can use the shape of a keyhole to light a subject's eye, or a Venetian blind can be used to cast lines on your subject. If you want a well defined shadow with hard edges, hold your cookie close to the subject and far from the light source. (For more information: <https://www.nfi.edu/cucoloris/>).



*Dual elements, cool elements -  
Maureen Mathieson*



*Hot Topics - John Mauro*



*Dreaming of Unicorns - Liz Krouse*

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

### Post-processing

- B&W works well for low key photography.
- Consider desaturating any bright colors to emphasize the dark feel.
- Try adding radial filters or using brushes to lighten areas of interest or to darken areas of shadow.
- Consider using luminosity masking to target a particular tonal range.
- Try lowering the contrast and saturation, particularly in the shadows.
- You may choose to add a dark vignette to bring the visual focus to the center.

### Finding your Highlights and Shadows in an Image

- To determine where your highlights are, change the exposure to make the image completely black. Slowly brighten the image. Stop when the light starts to appear. This shows you where the natural highlights are in the scene.
- Do the same thing with the shadows. Change your exposure to make the image completely white. Then, slowly darken the image until the first shadows appear.

For further research, here is a great tutorial that shows you how to take outdoor low key shots in daylight and how to take great indoor low key portraits: [Low Key Photography Tutorial](#)

### Sources

Photzy.com; iphotography.com; masterclass.com; shotkit.com.



*Fluffy Pink Peony - Jane Parker*



*Flowering Tree 2 - Lee Arnold*



## The Bigger Picture

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### Photography Workshops and Classes

1. Assabet After Dark – Lots of options offered this spring at Assabet After Dark-classes and workshops. Register here: [Assabet After Dark Spring Catalog and Registration](#)
  - Photography I
  - Photography II
  - Landscape Photography Workshop
  - Portrait/Pet Photography Workshop
  - Smartphone Photography Workshop
  - Lighthouse Photography Workshop
2. The annual Photoshop Creativity Virtual Summit 2025 is happening March 23 - 26. Here's a link to the information: [Photoshop Virtual Summit](#) - It includes many workshops that are free and available for 48 hours after they are presented - or you can buy a VIP pass for lifetime viewing.



*The Pollinator 2024 #2 - John Gill*

### Local Happenings:

Ever been to a “Steampunk Festival?”

There is one coming in May – at the Watch City Steampunk Festival in Waltham.

Do we even know what “Steampunk” is? I didn’t.

By definition, Steampunk is a subgenre of science fantasy or science fiction that uses aesthetic design and technology inspired by 19th-century steam-powered machinery. Steampunk began as a literary movement in the 1900s, but has now extended its mechanical wings to include fashion, art, design, music, and pop culture.

Steampunk usually makes use of a historical setting and visual storytelling. In order to grasp the idea behind it, just take a trip back to England in the Victorian Era, or America in the Wild West era.

Think Sherlock Holmes, steam-powered engines and ornate fashion. Now, continue using your vivid imagination. Pretend the technology and fashion from those eras are still in vogue. Plastic has not yet been invented. Steam has not been replaced by electricity. People still wear outfits consisting of brass pocket watches, waistcoats, and bowler hats. What would this world look like? What would this alternative history be? Voilà! You’ve been transported to the retro-future world of Steampunk.

Check this out – looks fun! [Watch City Steampunk Festival](#)

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## The Bigger Picture - Happenings - continued from page 27

This is cool! (would make for a great field trip)

Mass Audubon has strategically placed wildlife blinds that give you the discretion needed to get a closer look without disturbing animals in their natural setting. Go to - [Mass Audubon Blinds](#)

### **Photography Contests:**

**Central One Federal Credit Union** is looking for photos showing what winter in MA looks like – each winning photo gets \$200. [Central One Federal Credit Union Photo Contest](#)

**Farm Credit East** – looking for imagery that illustrates Northeast farming, horticulture, forestry and commercial fishing, as well as creative photos that celebrate country life in New England, New York or New Jersey. Your photo could be featured in their 2026 calendar and also a chance to win \$100 cash prize. [Farm Credit East Calendar Contest](#)

**National Wildlife Federation** – **open for submission until March 23, 2025.** Looking for images of wildlife and wild lands, from around the world and your own backyard. [NWF Photo Contest](#)



*Wachusett morning dew - Paul Loiselle*

*“There is an eternal love between the water drop and the leaf. When you look at them, you can see that they both shine out of happiness.” ~ Mehmet Murat Ildan*



AVCC is a member of the following organizations:

NECCC



PSA



AVCC website:

<https://www.assabetvalleycameraclub.com>

2024-2025 Executive Board Members:

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



*Sue Abrahamsen in Red #2  
- 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.