



# 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. Doors open at 6:30 PM with a 45 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.



*Under the Pier - Terry Vachowski*

*"He who marvels at the beauty of the world in summer will find equal cause for wonder and admiration in winter." — John Burroughs*

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## Note from Our President

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Hello All,

Welcome 2026!

I hope everyone had a nice holiday season! The hustle and bustle of the season which started around Thanksgiving is quickly winding down. If you miss the fast pace of the season, worry not, the AVCC has a an agenda that will keep you busy this month!

In addition to the program and competition meetings this month, the AVCC Photo Ops day is scheduled for Saturday, January 17th (with an alternate date of Saturday, January 24th). We are also working around committee members' schedules to hold an Executive Committee meeting this month. In an attempt to give members more lead time this year, we are hoping to select the 2026-2027 season digital competition subjects during the January Executive Committee meeting (instead of the May meeting, which is dictated in the club by-laws). I sent out an email with the list prior to New Year's Day, so if you have not done so already, please select up to three competition subjects from the list that you would like to have considered for the upcoming season, and email them to me prior to the end of the day on Friday, January 9th. Once we firm up the Executive Committee meeting date I will send out an announcement. The Executive Committee meetings are open to all members.

The old saying "time flies when you're having fun" has certainly applied to my term as president of the AVCC. At the end of this season, I will have served 3-1/2 years as president and will be stepping down. Club tradition has been that the president serves no more than four years, which I feel is a appropriate length of time. A leadership change brings in new and fresh ideas which often reinvigorates an organization. Elections for the offices of President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer occur at our annual meeting in June, however, it is not too early to consider running for office. The office of President is not difficult or too time consuming, and I would be more than willing to speak with anyone interested in running for the position.

May the new year bring clarity to your goals, strength to your spirit, and joy to your everyday life.

John

*"Snow was falling, so much like stars filling the dark trees that one could easily imagine its reason for being was nothing more than prettiness." – Mary Oliver*

### Note from the Editors January 2026

*"And now we welcome the new year. Full of things that have never been." - Rainer Maria Rilke*

You have to love the excitement that comes with January 1. A blanket of powdered-sugar snow, like a fresh page in a September notebook, invites us to write our part in the story of 2026. For some, this means new commitments or recommitments, resolutions to do something to make a positive year. Even to be our best selves in the face of challenges. For some it is the beginning of the rest of the dark. For others, it is the hope of the light reflecting on the snow.

In this issue we bring you 30 (!) or so images from 18 members' abstract, creative and representational interpretations of "Cold." They will definitely show you both the "brrr" and, ironically, also a "warmer" side of "cold."

Congratulations to Darlene Holman and Peter Stultz for their acceptance to the juried exhibit, Small Stones Festival of the Arts. See details further on.

Cathy's Tips section focuses on how to enter photography contests and salons. She starts with a number of reasons to do so, and moves on to the "how."

Pam's Happenings section recommends a number of botanical gardens for interesting indoor photography, and if you want to get creative, she gives us notes on using a lens ball. She has done a lot of experimenting with this creative expression, so give it a look-see.

Thanks to Doris Monteiro for forwarding an invitation from the Greater Lynn Photographic Association for a presentation on Jan 12th - "Black & White Photography with Nikon Canada" presented by Daniel Germinario. Also note that our annual "Photo Ops" Day is January 17th at the Senior Center. For more info on what this is, go to <https://www.assabetvalleycameraclub.com/club/clubschedules.aspx>

Phew. As you can tell, our new year is already presenting lots of opportunities for fun, learning and socializing around photography. Your newsletter team is meeting in January to plan the next 5 months' worth of challenges we're going to pitch to you. Happy New Year. Stay tuned.

## Save the Date!

### Photo Ops

Saturday, January 17, 2026 - 9:00AM - 3:00 PM at the Hudson Senior Center

(Set-up 8:00 - 9:00AM; Clean-up 3:00 - 4:00PM)

Come play with the many stations available to try out various indoor photography set-ups!

This is a great opportunity to use equipment and apparatus for such things as table top still life with flowers and other objects, water drops imaging, flat lay photography, macro photography, light painting, black light, back light, and light box photography, and more! And it's also fun to share ideas and learn from fellow members.

If you have ideas or materials for a station please bring them along. We typically order pizza for lunch.

Look for more information on the AVCC website - link available on the Note from the Editors page.

Some images from Photo Ops past:



*By John Mauro*



*By Mary Coombs*



*By John Mauro*



*By John Mauro*



*By Nick Andruzzi*



*By John Mauro*



## January Program

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AVCC is pleased to present “**Lost in a Fog - Photographing the Foggy Landscape**” by Ed McGuirk on Wednesday, January 7, 2026 at 7:30 PM. The meeting is a hybrid format; in person at the Hudson Senior Center, 29 Church St., Hudson, or remote on Zoom (please arrive no later than 7:15).

The Senior Center will open at 6:30 PM for social time. The Zoom meeting room opens at 7:00 PM and the AVCC business meeting starts at 7:15 PM. 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 landscape 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 NECCC Nature Image of the Year, Highly Commended in the USA Landscape Photographer of the Year, and NPN’s Nature Photographer of the Year in 2021. Ed’s work has been published in “Outdoor Photographer”, and other publications. To see more of Ed’s work visit his website at <http://www.edmcguirkphoto.com>



*Image Courtesy of Ed McGuirk*

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## **"Lost in a Fog - Photographing the Foggy Landscape"**

Fog is often referred to as the "Photographers Best Friend", and it is a wonderful element to include in landscape images. Fog has many moods that can add drama and emotion to your images. Fog can be soft, delicate, and ethereal looking. Or it can create very moody and mysterious looking images.

This program will cover the technical, creative and post-processing aspects of photographing foggy landscapes, including the following topics :

- What is fog, what causes it to occur, and what are the different types of fog.
- How to evaluate weather conditions to predict when fog is likely to occur.
- Using fog to simplify compositions and backgrounds.
- Using fog to create a sense of depth in your compositions.
- Using fog to create different moods and emotions in your images.
- Using fog to emphasize light such as sunbeams and backlit fog.
- In-field shooting strategies, getting a good exposure is important.
- Post-processing fog images using Lightroom, including how to use De-haze.



*Image Courtesy of Ed McGuirk*

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*Image Courtesy of Ed McGuirk*



*Image Courtesy of Ed McGuirk*



*Florida Pier at Sunrise - Todd Mathieson*

Date	Program	Presentor
9/3/25	“What I did this Summer” Member Slideshows	AVCC Members
10/1/25	Portraits with Simple Lighting Techniques	Jim DeLuco
11/5/25	Process of Focus Stacking	George Fellner
12/3/25	Creative expression through Coastal Imagery	Steve Koppel
1/7/26	Lost in a Fog	Ed McGuirck
2/4/26	Penguin Adventure - Falkland Islands	Shawn Carey
3/4/26	Intro to Basic Astrophotography	Temu Nana
4/1/26	Refresh your Basic Editing Skills in Photoshop	Hazel Meredith
5/6/26	Infrared Photography	Frank Jansen
6/3/26	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.



## Competitions 2025-2026

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### 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](#)

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

Month	Digital Theme	Open	Digital Theme and Open Submission Date
September	Monochrome	Open	9/10/2025
October	Nature	Open	10/8/2025
November	Mailbox(es)	Open	11/12/2025
December	Nature	Open	12/10/2025
January	Leaf/Leaves	Open	1/14/2026
February	Nature	Open	2/11/2026
March	Landscapes	Open	3/11/2026
April	Nature	Open	4/8/2026
May	Portrait(s)	Open	5/13/2026

### 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 Photo Journalism 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.

### 2025-2026 NECCC Individual Print Competition

The NECCC Individual Print Competition will be held on October 18, 2025 and March 28, 2026 hosted at the Greater Lynn Photographic Association (GLPA). For information about the print competitions go to the NECCC website and go to competitions in the pull down menu. [NECCC](#)

## Members' Lens



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

**Zooming In** - Reflections, Musings, or Experiences (travel, how I got that great shot, my favorite photo or place to shoot for example) shared by members

**Tips and Tricks** - Curated Suggestions for the Monthly Theme

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

## Zooming Out

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### On the Wall at Cafe 641

The January exhibit at Cafe 641 features the work of Linda Gilberti. A Meet and Greet will be held on Saturday, January 10, from noon to 1:30 PM.

If you are interested in displaying your work at Cafe 641 contact Jim Williams through the AVCC website.



*Rick at Cafe 641 - Jim Williams*



*Quite a crowd at Rick's Meet and Greet in December!  
- Photo by Jim Williams*

*"People don't notice whether it's winter or summer when they're happy." – Anton Chekhov*

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Zooming Out - continued from page 10

### **From our Members:**

#### **Congratulations to Darlene Holman and Peter Stultz**

Darlene and Peter each have 2 photos that were accepted for exhibition and printing in the catalog of the Small Stones Festival of the Arts by jury.

From Darlene: Accepted entries will be on exhibit at the Brigham Hill Community Barn, in North Grafton from January 24th through February 1st. They will be printed in the hardcover catalog and also flagged in the Web Gallery of all entries submitted. The Awards Ceremony announcing jurors' selections for First, Second and Third Prizes will take place Saturday, January 24, 2026 at 2 PM.

From Peter: Darlene's photos are gorgeous as usual. This is a juried exhibit and this year's judges include a former director of the Worcester Art Museum and the current curator of Prints, Drawings and Photography so I feel honored just to have my works accepted.

Web Gallery URL is <https://smallstones2026.artcall.org/pages/web-gallery>

Darlene's accepted images:



*Grizzly Bear Takes the Plunge*  
- Darlene Holman



*Great Blue Herons Mating Rituals*  
- Darlene Holman

*"It all ultimately comes down to showing respect to nature and understanding the species you want to photograph." – Riddhi Mukherjee*

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Zooming Out - continued from page 11

Peter's accepted images:



*Endless Stairway - Peter Stultz*



*Ming Dynasty Wall - Peter Stultz*

The photo of the spiral staircase is the entryway to the Vatican Library and was selected by Charlie Burke (RIP Charlie) as photo of the year for Class B my first year with the club. The other photo is of a wall around the city of Xi'an, the ancient capital of China. The wall was built by the Ming Dynasty somewhere around the year 1600. I was fortunate enough to go on a business trip there and took an extra day to explore the city and ride a bike around the top of the wall. Of course I chose the sepia tone to emphasize the age of the wall. - Peter

### **From Lynn Kerner:**

Matt Kloskowski is offering an experience he calls "A Month with Matt." The enrollment period is happening soon. I'm going to sign up when registration opens, but thought it could be useful to others.

The little intro video is 7 min.

Here is what Matt says about this:

Hi all. I want to try something a little different to start 2026.

It's Not a course.

It's Not a long-term membership.

And it's definitely Not more stuff.

Just a short, guided reset.

I've [prepared a quick intro video to get you ready](#) and excited for what's to come.

Sign ups will be limited and registration will close.

Continued on next page



Zooming Out - continued from page 12

**From Ann DeCristofaro:**

Announcing a 3-day convention - open to all who are photographers (full time, part-time and aspiring); hands-on and guest speakers (including Joel Grimes). I've been going for the last several years - and I really think there is a lot for AVCC members.

<https://www.ppam.com/evolve>

**From Mary Coombs:**

See the Mass Audubon's Statewide 2025 Photo Contest Winners

[Mass Audubon 2025 Photo Contest Winners](#)

**From Doris Monteiro:**

Doris forwarded this invitation from the Greater Lynn Photographic Society to AVCC club members: The Photographic Guild of Nova Scotia is pleased to extend an invitation to join them on Monday, January 12 from 7:30 - 9:00 pm AST (which for Massachusetts would be 6:30pm EST) for the following program:

**"Black & White Photography with Nikon Canada"** webinar presented by Daniel Germinario.

Please see the information and registration link in the Eventbrite link below. This webinar is part of the PGNS's Fred & Edie Greene Speaker Series and is free courtesy of a generous bequest from the Greene family.

Eventbrite Link: [B&W Photography with Nikon Canada](#)

**From Pam Meoli:**

Mass Audubon has posted an article about snowy owls and guidelines for observing them - click the link to learn more.

[Snowy Owls](#)



*Great White with Reflection - Tony Monteiro*

## Zooming In

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Baby it's cold outside! Many members submitted images for the topic "Cold" - Brrrr!



*Old Stone Church with moon - John Mauro*



*Nemasket River dam frozen over  
- Terry Vachowski*



*Aqueduct in Winter - John Mauro*

*"Nature's way of creating a wintry masterpiece captivates us all." - Asma Khalid*

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*Frozen Bartlett Pond - John Mauro*



*Golden Ice\_Assabet Wildlife Refuge - Lynn Kerner*

The gold color is from the very low sun. I liked the blue nature of this image because it seemed to capture winter's cold. - Lynn



*Arctic Blast - Cathy Robotis*

This was taken early in the morning on 2/4/23, during what was probably the coldest 24 hours of my life. The power was out, and the pipes were all frozen. This was a view of the ocean shortly after the sun came up. - Cathy



*January 21, 2024 - Rick Beauchamp*

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*Image Courtesy of Pam Meoli*



*Frozen birdbath - Neil Swinton*



*Winter Scene - Bill Macmunn*

Snow covered Green Giant Trees are now ready for a long and cold winter! - Bill



*Snow on Garden Gate  
- Linda Shelaes*

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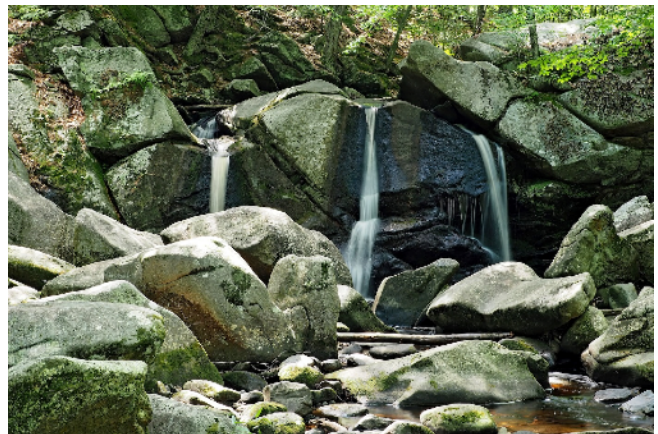


*Image Courtesy of Glenn Fund*

This is a panorama of a fallen 75 foot tree in our backyard, during a snow storm. Notice the fallen tree goes from all the way, from left to right in the frame. I needed to do a panorama to get it all in the picture. We were lucky it did not hit our house.



*Image Courtesy of Glenn Fund*



*Image Courtesy of Glenn Fund*

I just took a trip out to the triple Trapp Falls in Ashby, MA. Expecting to see the water flowing against a snowy backdrop, I found the falls frozen solid. If you see that, you know that it has been cold outside. By comparison, I am also attaching the same falls, but taken in the warmer July. Quite a difference, don't you say. - Glenn

*"The earth is art, the photographer is only a witness." – Yann Arthus-Bertrand*

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*A Snowy Break - Blair Boudreau*



*Santa Cow - Mary Coombs*



*Coyote Trail - Mary Coombs*



*Snuggling Together - Blair Boudreau*

*"Adopt the pace of nature: her secret is patience."  
– Ralph Waldo Emerson*

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*Streaming Winter - Linda DeStefano Brown*



*Crossover - Linda DeStefano Brown*

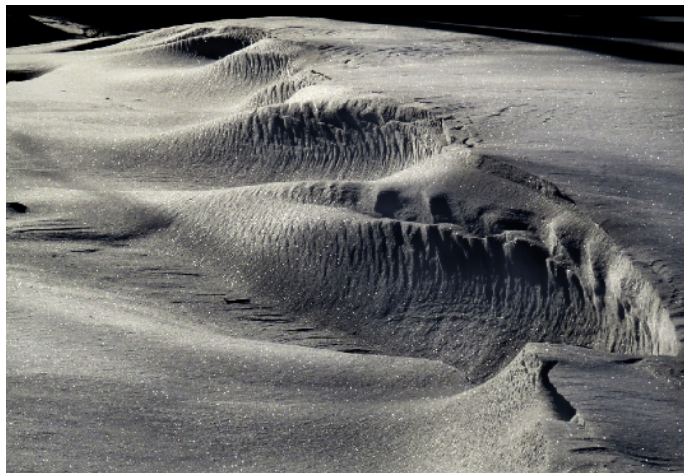


*Play Time - Linda DeStefano Brown*

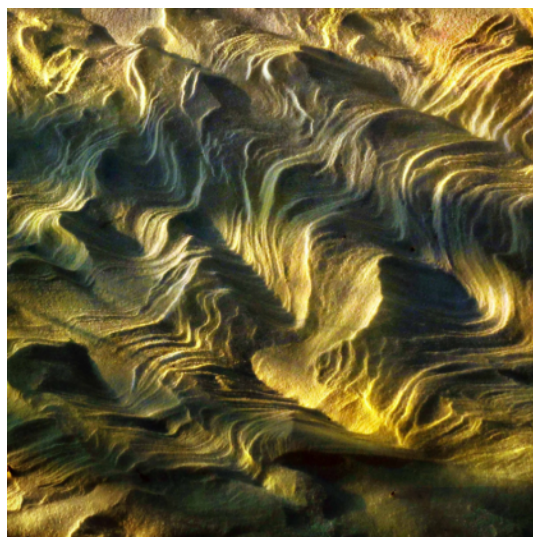
*"Though winter is a brittle beast; she snows pure soul in flakes so deep". - Angie Weiland Crosby*

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*Snow wave - Peter Stultz*



*Snow swirls at Sunset - Peter Stultz*

For the Snow Waves photo I had to take a long, arduous journey to an exotic place - my backyard. I've always loved the way the wind sculpts the snow into flowing, rhythmic shapes. This photo is from a photo essay I'm compiling, purely for my own benefit, of abstract shapes from nature formed by flowing water and wind. I have a natural inclination towards Taoism and I also was inspired towards the essay by the Photography and Mindfulness course that Pam had recommended a couple of months ago. Thanks Pam.

Lynn had suggested that more abstract works might be appropriate as winter photos examples. Here's another one from my photo essay that I had mentioned earlier. This one, again, is from my yard. Although I did reformat and process this, the swirls themselves were not edited. The design itself was actually created by wind blown snow. - Peter

I spent a lot of time at the grizzly center in Yellowstone observing the wolves! They are fascinating animals! - Robyn

*"In the wild, wolves remind us to be fearless and strong." – anonymous*



*Yellowstone Wolf - Robyn Saur*

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*"Winter is the restful soul, at peace  
with silence while alone." – Angie  
Weiland Crosby*



*Image Courtesy of Lou Snitkoff*



*Image Courtesy of Lou Snitkoff*



*Snow on Edmands Road - Blair Boudreau*



This is a shot of a puddle that was  
frozen over on a trail in The Assabet  
NWLS. - Nick

*Image Courtesy of Nick Andruzzi*

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*November Ice - Paul Loiselle*



*Gold and Blue Ice - Lynn Kerner*



*Ice Maiden - Mary Coombs*



*Ice on Leaf - Linda Shelaes*

Such a delight to find, in a bird bath dish, while feeding 'my bird babies'! The same beauty I recall discovering as a small tot, set out to play in the snow, discovering ice in a puddle in the driveway. It's my belief that winter brings out the childish wonder in all of us! - Linda



*December 27, 2022 - Rick  
Beauchamp*

*"Ice is only another form of  
terrestrial love." - John Muir*

**New Year's Resolutions:** We asked our members to share their New Year's Resolutions for Photography. Here they are, and we wish everyone success:

**John Mauro:** Make time to get out with my camera and capture more images than I did in 2025.

**Louis Snitkoff:**

1. Now that we're settled in Hudson, get my home studio organized so I can get back to shooting still life images.
2. Get out of my comfort zone, experiment more creatively, and don't be afraid to "fail."

**Cathy Robotis:** I have been amazed by the beautiful still life images created by my fellow AVCC members, and I am hoping to try to capture some creative still life images in 2026. I was also inspired by Steven Koppel's Cape Cod National Seashore photographs last month, and I would like to become more of a risk taker with longer shutter speeds. This will be a challenge for me because I am always trying so hard to get things in focus; purposefully softening images will be way out of my comfort zone, but I just loved that painterly feel of his images. Not sure you will see me standing in the waves with a tripod, but you never know.

**Mary Coombs:** Watch all those "how to" videos that I bought over the last year (and more)...AND use my tripod.

**Linda Shelales:** My New Years resolution is to improve my use of layers so I can understand which types do what & why. Also how to change and adjust LIGHTING using layers. - Learning all that could change everything.



*Studlagil Canyon - Glenn Fund*



### **Tips for Entering External Photography Contests**

So, here we are, and it's suddenly 2026! New year, new opportunities, new *YOU*. Have you ever considered entering an external photography competition? It would make a great New Year's resolution. You may recall that every June, on our awards night, Charlie Burke would present our *Images of the Year*. He would also always take the time to encourage us to branch out and submit our work to external competitions and international salons. He really believed it was a great way to grow as artists. There are many reasons to consider doing this. It's always a satisfying experience to tackle a new challenge. It's a great way to expose our work to new audiences. For those of us who may have a photographic presence on social media, it may help attract profile views and new followers. Some competitions offer cash prizes, but beyond the potential financial gains, recognition within the photographic community can also be a powerful lure. Every month, Pam puts together a carefully curated list of *Happenings* that also includes competitions that might interest you. Maybe this year, you will decide to take the plunge and enter one! We have put together some tips for you to consider should you give it a try, and if you do, give a smile and a nod in remembrance of dear Charlie as you click "submit." We wish you all the best in 2026!

#### **What competition would be best for you?**

- There are various websites, newsletters, and instagram accounts that publish lists of current competitions, which you can find by doing an internet search.
- It's important to know that your chances of winning are better in smaller, niche contests.
- Contests with local connections (local newspapers, coffee shops, libraries, calendars, exhibits) offer you a wonderful opportunity to engage with your community and meet others who share your artistic interests.
- Some galleries announce juried "Calls for Artists," which may lead to having your work displayed at an art show.

#### **Points to consider when choosing a photography competition**

- Many competitions charge an entrance fee. The rule of thumb is that if the entry fee is greater than \$40, you should think hard about whether it will be worth it to enter. If you plan to enter competitions throughout the year, it's a good idea to budget for them.
- When choosing a competition, you should be wary of potential scams. Look for organizations with real weight in the industry or competitions sponsored by trusted brands. Be careful with entities that exist solely to run competitions. Some of them have preordained winners; they make their money by having large numbers of fee-paying entrants, even though they may have already decided the winners before the submission deadline.
- Pay very close attention to the fine print when it comes to signing the release for various competitions. You may be asked to give up the rights to your photo.

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## Tips for Entering Photography Contests - continued from page 24

- Make sure you read the entry rules carefully. There may be requirements that photos submitted were taken during a specific time frame. There may be restrictions on processing (including cropping). There will likely be requirements for formatting and sizing (ideally 4K or better). Many competitions do not allow watermarks. You don't want to go through the process of submitting photos and paying fees only to have your work disqualified.
- Once you have chosen your competition, study previous winning images to get an idea of what has won in the past. If they list the names of the judges, try to review their work, to see what types of images they might gravitate towards. If allowed, ask the judges for feedback when you submit your images because this can be very helpful for your skills development.
- If you enter competitions, make sure you keep a record to track your entries.

### **Some prestigious photography competitions include (but are not limited to):**

- Sony World Photography Awards
- World Press Photo Contest
- iPhone Photography Awards
- Taylor Wessing Photographic Portrait Prize

### **Preparing your images for competition**

- Each competition will likely have a *brief*, which describes what they are looking for and the requirements. Pay close attention to this.
- Make sure your image has a clear message. Remember that the judges will likely have many images to review in quick succession. You want your image to stand out and not be overlooked.
- Pay close attention to technical competence when preparing your image. Make sure your processing follows their guidelines and looks natural. Avoid over-editing.
- Submit photos that show creativity and originality, ideally taken in flattering light.
- Make sure your metadata is included with the image.
- If you are allowed to give a description of your photograph, you can use this opportunity to tell a dramatic story about the image or how you captured it, which may add to the impact of your entry.
- For **Landscape** competitions, choose images with natural layers (foreground, midground, background) that create depth and visual interest. Look for photos with leading lines and anchors to hold the viewer's attention. Consider submitting B&W landscape images.
- For **Wildlife** competitions, your image should tell a powerful story. Sometimes, close-ups work, but it may also be impactful to zoom out and show context and the surrounding environment. Look for decisive moments.
- For **Portrait** competitions, you usually have the benefit of planning an impactful image using light and composition. Focus on emotion, and create connections.
- For **Macro** competitions, focus will be very important. Avoid busy backgrounds. Highlight textures. Look critically at the elements in your image to determine if they add to or detract from the story.

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## Tips for Entering Photography Contests - continued from page 25

For more information on entering competitions, here is an interesting article: <https://themframes.com/features/photography-competitions-spend-your-money-wisely>

### Sources

smallscenes.com; jakspedding.co.uk; streetphotographymagazine.com; tamron-americas.com; photocontestinsider.com; digitalphotomemorial.com; ryansmithfineart.com; oliviabosserteducation.com; themframes.com; ikelite.com; all-about-photo.com.

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Errata:

Last month's Tips and Tricks theme (December 2025) was about creating a photo memoir. The section "Creating a Photo Memoir" on page 24 was inadvertently cut short. The entire section is included below. Apologies to Cathy Robotis!

### Tips for Creating a Photo Memoir

#### Creating a Photo Memoir

- If you want your memoir to be centered around photos instead of a written narrative, you should start by going through your images. It will likely be difficult to choose from the many that you have, but your chosen theme will guide you.
- A typical memoir contains 20-30 photos, but the range may be from 10 to 40, or more. It can be whatever you want it to be, but take care not to overwhelm your audience. Patti Smith's "A Book of Days" has 365 photos, one for each day of the year with a short story to go along with each image.
- When going through your photos, look for images that contain unique people or facial expressions. Look for photos that show how people lived at the time of the photo. Candid or action shots are often more engaging. Avoid busy photos.
- Watch out for photos that are too dark or light or photos without enough contrast; details will be hard to see, especially in B&W.
- Put your photos in chronological order; this helps with the flow of the story. Start by examining one photo and really thinking about it. If you are using a photo from your youth, pay attention to all the details, as they may evoke special memories. For example, a holiday photo may include a favorite pie made by a beloved aunt. You could tell that story and maybe even include the pie recipe.
- When you have decided on all of your images, make sure they are edited and ready to use, and then place them together in a file for easy access.

*"I wish that all of nature's magnificence, the emotion of the land, the living energy of place could be photographed." – Annie Leibovitz*



## The Bigger Picture

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### **Happenings**

Stay warm this winter with the great opportunities for photography at these Indoor Conservatories & Greenhouses :

- New England Botanic Garden at Tower Hill
- Durfee Conservatory – Amherst
- Wellesley College Botanic Gardens - Wellesley
- The Botanic Garden of Smith College – Northampton
- Magic Wings Butterfly Conservatory and Gardens – South Deerfield

### **Upcoming / Early-2026 Photo Exhibits in MA- plan ahead!**

**Museum of Fine Arts, Boston** — Boston

Jan 31–May 31 Divine Color: Hindu Prints from Modern Bengal

**MassArt Art Museum (MAAM)** — Boston

Jan 22 - Press & Pull: Two Decades at the Robert Blackburn Printmaking Workshop

Jan 29 - Masako Miki: Midnight March

**Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum** Boston

Feb 19 - Persona: Photography and the ReImagined Self — photography from the early 20th century to the present, focusing on identity, self-portraiture, performance of self, re-imagining of identity.

**Worcester Art Museum (WAM)** — Worcester

Feb 7 - American-Art Galleries — showcasing works from colonial period to 19th century (paintings, prints, silver work, etc.)

Mar 28 - A Weather Eye: Art and Early Modern Meteorology showing 40+ works (mainly prints/drawings/photographs/works on paper) exploring historical views of weather and meteorology.



*Watching and Waiting - Lou Snitkoff*

Continued on next page

Happenings - continued from page 27

A **GREAT** thing to do in the winter is visit the:  
Mass Audubon Ipswich River Wildlife Sanctuary  
And feed the birds.

Bring your own seed.

This is the time of year where you will find the most birds. And don't forget to plan for lunch in the quaint town of Ipswich!

### **Why Winter Is Great for Lensball Photography**

Winter gives you:

- Strong contrast between bright snow and dark trees or skies
- Clean, minimal scenes that look striking inside the ball
- Frost and ice textures that add dreamlike qualities
- Golden-hour light that lasts longer



*Image Courtesy of Pam Meoli*



*Image Courtesy of Pam Meoli*

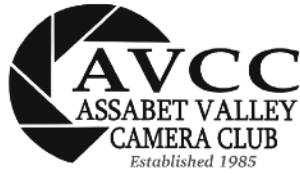


*Image Courtesy of Pam Meoli*

Give it a try – it puts a different spin on a snowy day!

### **Photo Contests**

Not much new going on this time of year for photo contests - feel free to refer to previous newsletters OR wait till I find new, open contests in future. The contests will start opening up beginning of the new year and into spring. - Pam



AVCC is a member of the following organizations:

NECCC



PSA



AVCC website:

<https://www.assabetvalleycameraclub.com>

2025-2026 Executive Board Members:

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



*Adirondack morning - Rick Beauchamp*

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.

Many thanks to the following members for their contributions to this month's Newsletter: Cathy Robotis, Lynn Kerner, Mary Coombs, Pam Meoli, Jim Williams, Darlene Holman, John Mauro, Ann DeCristofaro, Linda DeStefano Brown, Lou Snitkoff, Doris Monteiro, Tony Monteiro, Robyn Saur,, Glenn Fund, Terry Vachowski, Linda Shelales, Bill Macmunn, Blair Boudreau, Peter Stultz, Nick Andruzzi, Neil Swinton, Paul Loiselle, Rick Beauchamp, John Gill.