



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 p.m. with a 45 minute social time and at 7:15 a brief business meeting. Programs start at 7:30 p.m. 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.



Julia Butterfly sipping nectar - Sue Abrahamsen

"September! I never tire of turning it over in my mind. It has warmth, depth, and color. It glows like old amber." ~ Patience Strong

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Note from Our President

As summer draws to a close, we sit at the doorstep of our 42nd AVCC season – and my first as Club president.

To begin, I thank you for this leadership opportunity. Since we moved to Hudson, MA after nearly 50 years in Upstate NY, we have found a vibrant and welcoming community here and the Club, especially, has helped me find my bearings – socially and creatively.

We are a spirited and friendly group, clearly dedicated to excellence in the art and craft of photography.

I look forward to a great year of programs and competitions, and I firmly believe that each of us has a role in the club's success. There are many ways to become involved, most of which don't require a major time commitment. These efforts help the club run smoothly, so please don't be bashful.

Our September 2 program will be a member-driven recap of summer activities.

I would be remiss if I didn't express sincere appreciation to John (Pudge) Mauro for his time as president during the past few years. He has been a mentor and a role model for me, and we have all benefited from his wisdom and guidance.

Finally, one of my first official acts is the choice of "Bones" as my AVCC nickname.

See y'all soon!

Lou Snitkoff
"Bones"



Thacher Park Overlook - Lou Snitkoff

Note from the Editors

Note from the Editors

September, 2026

Welcome back to a new inspiring, educational, and fun year. We seem to always carry that old school-days memory of a fresh new page in a fresh new notebook. What memories will you come away with from this coming club year? A new technique to try? A new way of looking at things? Camaraderie from the Meet 'n' Greets? Many of our non-photography friends and family are not particularly interested in talk of lenses, focal length on a certain shot, dragging oneself out at midnight in the cold for a *possible* shot of the Aurora, chasing the perfect light on a scene, etc. That's where the social aspect of the club is so important. It brings even more joy to our common passion.

In this newsletter we have included a very brief bio of our new president. As a way of welcoming him, let's make Lou's job easier by volunteering for something – even a small something. We have included the link to a list of committees, roles and responsibilities on our website: [AVCC Committees and Roles](#).

So far, the Executive Committee is aware of two needs specifically:

1). We need a *couple new members for the Program Committee*. Robyn Sauer has announced that she will be stepping down as Chair. The programs are pretty much set for this club year, so a new volunteer could learn what goes on without pressure. There are only a few meetings a year. Please speak to or email Robyn Sauer.

2). With Lou stepping up as president, we are short *one competition announcer*. The announcers take turns each meeting, so, again, the commitment is not a huge one. Please speak to or email John Gill.

Inside the newsletter you will find a list of programs for the coming year, monthly competition themes, and our regular columns from Cathy and Pam. Cathy is leaving the more technical aspects of shooting that she did the last couple years, and is moving on to the “softer” side of photography – creativity, inspiration, philosophy, etc. We hope the shift itself inspires you.

Pam, as always, has found competitions for us to submit to, including four contests with deadlines in September, so check out that piece soon. There are also a whole bunch of ideas and places to go for interesting shooting – fairs, festivals, gardens, etc. Ways to get inspired and try something new.

“Stay afraid, but do it anyway. What's important is the action.” — *Carrie Fisher*

Welcome to Lou!

Brief Bio on our new president, Lou Snitkoff

Lou has been photographing for more than 50 years, starting in 1972 while he was in college. He did B/W darkroom work in those “early” days, then shot almost exclusively transparencies (35mm and medium format), until he switched to digital about 20 years ago.

Lou’s images tend to be mostly in landscape/seascape, architectural details, botanicals, and abstracts, and predominantly in color. He dabbles in monochrome and infrared.

Lou is a past member of the Schenectady (NY) Photographic Society and believes there is always more to learn, especially about creative expression. He appreciates that looking at other people’s images is a great way to expand a photographer’s visual horizons, and belonging to a camera club is a great way to learn and meet others who share the photography passion.



*Albany Rural Cemetery - Lou Snitkoff
2025-2026 Image of the Year Award
Theme - Class B - First Place*

“Be willing to be a beginner every single morning.” — Meister Eckhart



A Fall View - Nick Andruzzi

September 2026 Program

From the Program Committee:

- Our first club meeting will be Wednesday, September 2nd. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. The business meeting will begin at 7:15 and the program will begin at 7:30. This will be a hybrid meeting - in person at the Hudson Senior Center, or via Zoom.
- The program topic will be “What I Did This Summer;” individual member presentations of images taken during the summer recess. Presenters should have notified Tony Monteiro by 7:00 p.m. on August 28 that they are planning to participate. Each member will be limited to 5 minutes (no longer) to give everyone a chance to present.
- If you are presenting please review the email sent by Tony Monteiro to club members on August 27 for information about how to submit your slide show.
- If you are planning on attending in person, please upload your images to a thumb drive and bring it to the meeting by 6:45 so the we can download it to the computer before the start of the meeting. If you have any questions, or need assistance, please reach out to Tony, John Gill, or John Mauro.

See the next page for the schedule of programs for the 2026-2027 club year.

“September the golden threshold between summer and winter” ~ Meeta Ahluwalia



Winter Mountain storm - Rick Beauchamp

Date	Program	Presentor
9/2/26	“What I did this Summer” Member Slideshows	AVCC Members
10/7/26	Salute to New England Photographers: The Sequel	Barbara Rozasky
11/4/26	Tanzania: A Photographer’s Journey	Shawn Carey
12/2/26	Creating Black and White images With Impact	Hazel Meredith
1/6/27	Earth Photography	Dan Barstow
2/3/27	Creating Landscape Images	Dave Long
3/3/27	Practical Travel Photography	Ron Wyatt
4/7/27	A Tribute to Ansel Adams	Skip Montello
5/5/27	Smartphone Photography: Unlocking the potential in your pocket	Melissa M. Needle
6/2/27	Image of the Year Awards	TBD

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 2026-2027

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.

Schedule of Monthly Competition Category Topics & Submission Dates

Month	Digital Theme	Open	Digital Theme and Open Submission Date
September	Monochrome	Open	9/9/2026
October	Nature	Open	10/14/2026
November	Things Made by Man	Open	11/11/2026
December	Nature	Open	12/9/2026
January	Townscape/Cityscape	Open	1/13/2027
February	Nature	Open	2/10/2027
March	Typically New England	Open	3/10/2027
April	Nature	Open	4/14/2027
May	After the Rain	Open	5/12/2027

PSA and NECCC Digital Interclub Competitions

Image selections to the PSA & NECCC Interclub Competitions are made by the AVCC 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.

Members need a signed waiver to enter images into the PSA competitions. If you haven't submitted a form to Todd here is the link to the form: [PSA Waiver](#)

FYI:

Pay particular attention to the PSA definitions for ["Nature"](#), [Monochrome](#), and [Travel](#) submissions. PSA Guidelines for Borders: Not recommended for Nature but if any border is added to a Nature, Travel, or PJ (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.

NECCC is holding two print competitions in 2026 - 2027 - see page 11 for more information.



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

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

On the Wall at Cafe 641

The September exhibit at Cafe 641 features the work of Glenn Fund. A Meet and Greet will be held on Saturday, September 5 from noon to 1:30 p.m.

Drop by Cafe 641 to enjoy the wonderful double exposure images Glenn has on display!



Tulips - Glenn Fund



Torres del Paine - Glenn Fund

Interested in displaying your work at Cafe 641 and Main Street Cafe in Marlborough? Contact Jim Williams through the AVCC website.

"Creativity is a wild mind and a disciplined eye." - Dorothy Parker

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Zooming Out - continued from page 8

Cafe 641

Three Meet and Greets at Cafe 641 happened over the course of the summer: John Mauro's in June, Todd and Maureen Mathieson's in July, and Paul Loiselle's in August. The Meet and Greets were a great way to connect with club members, admire the exhibit images, share conversation, and enjoy good food! Here are some shots of the fun: Photos Courtesy of Mary Coombs and Jim Williams



Neil, John, and Todd at Pudge's Meet and Greet



Ellen and Pudge Mauro at his Meet and Greet



Pam Clowning Around at Cafe 641



Jim and Sue at Pudge's Meet and Greet

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Zooming Out - Cafe 641 - continued from page 9



Todd and Maureen at their Cafe 641 Meet and Greet in July



Ronni, Neil, Paul, Mary, Jim, Sue, Darlene, and Lou at Paul's Cafe 641 Meet and Greet in August - Jim Williams

Main Street Cafe, Marlborough

A reminder that if you miss a member's exhibit at Cafe 641 you can catch it the following month on the wall at Main Street Cafe, 182 Main Street, Marlborough!

Other Summer News

The Hudson Cultural Council hosted a reception for all the recipients of their 2026 arts and culture grants at the Armory in Hudson on June 26. State Senator, Jamie Eldridge, spoke and congratulated the Hudson Cultural Council in concert with the Mass Cultural Council for their promotion and support of the arts and culture in Middlesex and Worcester Counties.

AVCC has received grants from the Hudson Cultural Council to support our program presentations for several years now and it was wonderful to meet the members of the council and thank them in person for their continued support of AVCC.

- Mary Coombs



*Senator Eldridge at The Armory
- Mary Coombs*

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Zooming Out - continued from page 10

From Our Members

From Peter Stultz

This might be of interest to some members, I've had photos displayed here the last 2 or 3 years and Darlene won a prize last year.

Small Stones Art Call opens Sept. 1st

Once again our Small Stones Festival of the Arts will be held starting in the end of January, but the art call begins soon!

- **Art Call Opens: September 1, 2026**
- **Art Call Closes: October 1, 2026**
- **Festival Begins: January 30, 2027**

We're accepting up to five entries per artist this year (submission fee is still \$10 per artwork), and all submitted entries will appear on our Web Gallery. The top 144 entries selected by our jurors (with a maximum of 2 per artist) will appear in our exhibition at the Brigham Hill Community Barn, North Grafton, MA and will also be published in our hardcover exhibition catalog.

<https://smallstonesfestival.org/year-2027/>

From Lou Snitkoff (a repeat of an email Lou sent to the membership)

Greetings to all!

Last week, I represented our Club at the NECCC "Keeping Clubs Active" Zoom Meeting. One of the "takeaways" is this virtual program, co-sponsored by Canon, Nikon, and NECCC. The modest cost for this three-part offering is \$15. I encourage AVCC members to support this program, which looks terrific. I'm planning to attend. Advance Registration is required. Please scroll down for details. Thanks for your consideration.

Best,

Lou

Date & Time: October 3, 2026, at 11:00 AM

ALL PHOTOGRAPHERS ARE WELCOME

New England Camera Club Council, Inc. is excited to offer a multi-session virtual conference, featuring three world renowned photographers and presenters, on **Saturday, October 3, 2026.**

Session 1

11:00 AM to 12:30 PM -**Art Wolfe**, Canon Legend presents 'Wild Lives'

Sponsored by Canon U.S.A., Inc.

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Zooming Out - continued from page 11

Session 2

1:00 PM to 2:30 PM -**Mike Mezeul II**, Nikon Ambassador presents “Earth, Wind, Fire, Water: Documenting Our Planet”

Sponsored by Nikon, Inc.

Session 3

3:00 PM to 4:30 PM -**Peter Baumgarten**, OM Systems Ambassador will present “Into the Landscape”
Sponsored by NECCC

The total cost for this three-part presentation is \$15. (This to cover a small portion of our costs) The payment is via PayPal where you can use your PayPal account or any major credit card.

Full details about our presenters and their presentations are available vis our home page and associated links [CLICK HERE](#)

YOU MUST REGISTER IN ADVANCE - [CLICK HERE](#)

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

Please note: These sessions will not be recorded and will not be available for replay.

From Rhonda Cullens, HonNEC - NECCC (New England Camera Club Council) VP Club Services

Your club members are encouraged to join our mailing list to get NECCC updates on upcoming photographic events and opportunities sent directly to them by going to neccc.org and then the “Subscribe” tab and registering. They can also go to the “Competitions” tab for information about the “Individual Print Competition” they are also welcome to enter.

NECCC 2026-2027 Individual Print Competition - [NECCC Print Competition](#)

Another free Club Service NECCC offers is the “**Nature Subject Identification Service**”. Information about it is also found on the Club Services tab. Rick Cloran, HonFPSA, LPSA, GMPSA, HonNEC, our in-house expert on all things Nature, is ready to lend a hand and help with identifying what’s in that photo!



morning dew - Paul Loiselle

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Night Hawks News

This summer's nights presented a challenge to astrophotographers in the club. Many events were obscured by clouds but that didn't prevent some intrepid members from getting out there!

From Jim Williams: (Partial Lunar Eclipse - August 28, 2026)

It was forecast for the clouds would come in during the eclipse. Given the likelihood of clouds impacting the images I decided to limit the effort and set up across the street from my residence. Initially the images looked reasonable but soon the clouds started to obscure the detail. I continued to take images through to the maximum eclipse but the images from half way on were obscured to the point of eliminating all details on the surface. I saw a slight red, very slight. This image is one of the last few that had visible detail.

If you are interested in joining the Night Hawks group please email Jim Williams via the club website.



Image Courtesy of Jim Williams



Day Sklarks (sky photography for those not out there at night!)

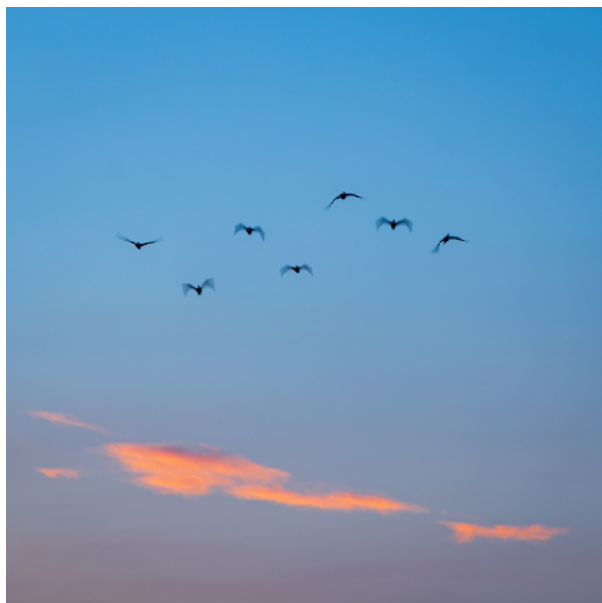
There was a total eclipse of the sun on August 12 that you could witness if you were lucky enough to be in Iceland or Spain. We had just a taste of it here in the Boston area. - Mary

Partial Eclipse - Mary Coombs

Zooming In

Saying goodbye to summer with some parting shots...

We asked members to share their favorite photo from the summer with a brief description of what it is about or why it is special. Members submitted images from far and wide as well as from the backyard. Some are of very special moments. Enjoy - we sure did!



I chose this image for its serendipity. I was on the beach early one morning in Rockport, MA, making long exposures of the water. Shore birds take flight at sunrise and I saw this group of 7 overhead. I didn't have time to change my shutter speed so I "just pressed the button." I like the unexpected result showing the motion of the wings. - Lou

Image Courtesy of Lou Snitkoff



Blue Heron over the Assabet 2 - Bill Macmunn

Summer fun waiting for the Great Blue Heron to take off! - Bill

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King Bird Yacks - Blair Boudreau

Kingbirds regurgitate small, compact pellets made of insect shell material (chitin) and other hard indigestible insect parts, much like owls do. When I took this photo (combination of two) I didn't know kingbirds did this and I didn't know I'd captured it. It wasn't 'til I got home and downloaded my images that I saw what I'd got. For that reason this is my summer favorite photo. It's always exciting when a photo turns out to be a happy surprise. - Blair



*Bald Eagle White Island Pond DN
- John Mauro*

My favorite image of the summer came while enjoying a late afternoon pontoon boat ride on White Island Pond in Plymouth. From several hundred yards away, we spotted an American Bald Eagle perched high in a tree. The eagle allowed us to get close enough for me to capture this image using my 450 mm zoom lens. It is fitting as we were headed into the Independence Day/America's 250th weekend in a few short weeks. - Pudge

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Image Courtesy of Terry Vachowski

My favorite photos are not because of quality, but because they are attached to special memories. Any time we have visited Stockbridge in the past, I would dream about sitting on the porch of the Red Lion Inn with a good book. Greg surprised me in May with a two night reservation there. We were able to do just that. - Terry

Ok - this is NOT for competition and I'm certain many of you don't care about the color of my nail polish but this image is from my favorite weekend of the summer! A weekend with 4 of my dearest friends, all about the same age where there is no judgement, no competition, no make up and since it's the only place that tie-dye is accepted at this age - it's tie-dye all weekend. I mean ALL weekend. Taken at Pratt Pond, New Ipswich, NH. - Pam



Tye-dye - Pam Meoli

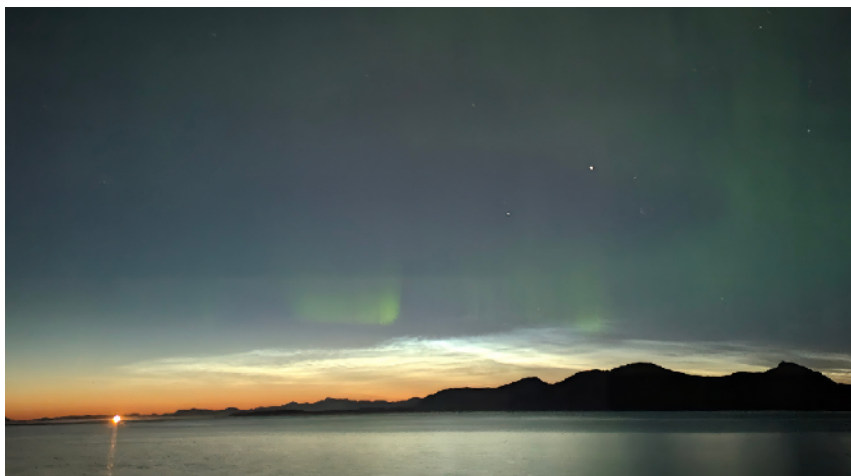
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Nymph Lake Rocky Mountain - Vishnu Thalanki

This picture was taken at Nymph Lake in Rocky Mountain National Park. After hiking all day as the sun was setting, I walked around the Nymph Lake trail to find the perfect point of view. I was completely mesmerized by the light when I stopped at a clearing along the trail

Capturing this sight required focus stacking of 24 images. - Vishnu



Purple & Green with sunset - Lynn Kerner

On the second night of our small-boat cruise in Alaska, the captain came over the loudspeaker at midnight, "There's an aurora borealis! Anyone interested in seeing it, head to the 4th-level deck." Although I'd been asleep, there was no way I was going to miss this! - Lynn

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On 7/4/26, our son, Alekos married Maria Teresa in Athens, Greece. Family and friends gathered from around the world for this wonderful occasion. Standing behind the photographer after the ceremony offered some perks, and this photo was one of them. We came back home with a new member of the family, beautiful memories, and the realization that we can still dance until 3 a.m. - Cathy

Wedded Bliss - Catherine Robotis



This picture shows the Budapest Parliament Building, from the Danube River, during Blue Hour. - Glenn

Budapest Parliament Building - Glenn Fund

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Purple Passion Waterlily - Darlene Holman

Tower Hill had some beautiful Water Lilies this year. My favorite color was this one, which I believe is called a Purple Passion Waterlily. The number of lilies this one plant produced was amazing! - Darlene

Per usual, one of the things that makes summer grand for me is raising monarchs. Not all survived this year, but I am always happy with the ones that make it!! - Maureen



Healthy Monarch 2026 - Maureen Mathieson



*Night Blooming Cereus
- Mary Coombs*

My Night Blooming Cereus surprised me this summer with two blooms (even getting one is a rare occurrence!). The fun began when this flower was nearly fully opened at around 1:00 a.m. on August 4th and I began taking photos of its development. The night long odyssey continued until dawn when it completely folded and ended its display. Who knows when (and if!) I will get another! - Mary

Tips and Tricks - Inspiration in Photography

Finding inspiration in Photography

“Art cannot exist without originality, and originality relies on personal vision and on finding inspiration.” -Julia Anna Gospodarou

What inspires you when it comes to photography? Do you wake up in the morning wondering what you will find on the other side of your lens? Do you bring your camera with you everywhere just in case...? Do you run out the door when you see stormy skies or fog? Do you count the days until the spring blossoms brighten the landscape? Or the colors change to autumn hues? Are you inspired by color and brightness? Or maybe darkness or moody scenes? Do you love capturing the stories you come across on city streets? The interaction between humans? Do you prefer capturing wildlife or insects? Do you love to create a story through still life scenes? Are you inspired by the night sky? Cityscapes, architecture? Maybe all of the above. Maybe something different altogether. Whatever it is that makes you pick up your camera, know that through your personal vision, you are creating art that impacts those around you. You are documenting our time on this planet, sharing snippets of life that will be valued by future generations. You are inspiring careful observation and critical thinking at a time when social media and AI are challenging our ability to engage in cohesive, thoughtful discourse and diminishing our capacity to focus on anything significant for any length of time.

Writing skills are becoming obsolete thanks to ChatGPT, while originality is sacrificed at the behest of the latest TikTok trend. In other words, your vision, your inspiration, and your work are important, maybe even more than you realize. Every accomplished writer, musician, or visual artist will tell you that there are ebbs and flows in creativity. Sometimes, our vision is crystal clear, with perfect compositional scenes forming in our minds and in front of our lenses, while at other times, it feels like we are up against a textureless gray wall. When that happens, there are steps you can take to help find that inspiration and reopen the window to creativity. As we begin the 2026-2027 AVCC season, here are a few ideas to help ‘break on through to the other side’ when you are looking for inspiration or if you find yourself at a creative low point.

Be mindful

Sometimes, you really just need to step back and take a break. Focus on something else for a little while. Give your mind a rest. When you are ready to go back out there, try to be present in the moment. Look at the colors of the flowers, feel the breeze, smell the grass, listen to the birds. Be one with the environment. There is a rhythm to the natural world; let yourself fall in step with it. Ask yourself what it is that you love about photography, and try to feel that love again.

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Surround yourself with others who share your interest

When reviewing tips for finding inspiration in photography, everyone seems to agree that engaging with others who share your interest or joining a camera club are some of the best ways to become inspired. Is anyone surprised by that? We are all learning from each other. We shouldn't underestimate the impact of gathering and sharing ideas with one another. It's a win-win for all of us. So.... Try to take advantage of everything the AVCC has to offer. If there is a field trip, try to make it. Pay close attention to Pam's *Happenings* every month, and try to attend one or two with a fellow camera buff.

Learn from the Masters

If you are looking for inspiration, try going to a museum or a photography exhibit. Study the works of visual artists and learn about the artists themselves. Treat yourself to a photography book, and take the time to study the compositions and techniques. You always want your work to be original, but you can learn from photographers you admire. Consider taking a course in Photography, or even Art History. Learn about Design (for example, Bauhaus) and other aspects of Art. Try listening to new music; it may open collateral channels in your mind.

Keep clicking

Sometimes, you just have to push through a period of creative block. Consider bringing your camera with you wherever you go, and look for scenes that might be interesting, without pressuring yourself. The more you survey your environment, the more likely you are to spot something different that captures your eye. If your creative vision is faltering, try focusing on your technique, or try learning a new one. Sometimes, the sense of accomplishment in mastering a challenging or new skill will generate excitement and inspiration. If you are not feeling motivated to pick up your camera at all, try revisiting your back catalog of photos. You may find some meaningful images that were previously overlooked. Try casting a critical eye on some older photos and re-edit them. This may help awaken your creative vision.



An Unusual Flower from my Bouquet - Jane Parker

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Challenge yourself

Sometimes, when it's hard to feel inspired, it's easier to focus on a particular, directed task. For example, you could challenge yourself to take one photo every day for a month (or a year even). You might choose a theme and then spend a week taking photos that fit the theme. You could choose a color theme, like red. You might try just using one prime lens, which will force you to adjust your perspective. All of these challenges will force you to 'see' things you might normally have missed, and this may help light the path to inspiration.

Create a body of work revolving around one subject

Find a subject that interests you, and try to create a series of images of that one subject from different viewpoints, at different times of the day, or even over the course of a year. The differences noted from the various angles, lighting, and/or seasonal influences will help broaden your perspective.

Focus on the Light

Great lighting creates great scenes; that's probably not news to any of us. Try carrying your camera with you, and instead of looking for the perfect scene, pay attention only to the light. If you see great light (you will know it when you see it), stop and look for something to capture in that light. Maybe you will see rays of sunshine beaming down through storm clouds or interesting shadows. Let the light guide your vision.

You may find one or two tips above that speak to you, or maybe you might want to try all of them. They are all good practices for all of us, regardless of how inspired we may feel at any given time.

We are very happy to be back with you all after a beautiful summer, and we wish everyone great success in the upcoming year.

Sources

juliaannagospodarou.com; fstoppers.com; digital-photography-school.com; mrleica.com; bhphotovideo.com; rangefinderonline.com; nomadict.com; amateurphotographer.com; lenscraft.co.uk; photographytalk.com.

"Old ways don't open new doors." - Unknown

The Bigger Picture

Happenings:

Check out **New England Botanic Garden's** website — some great photo ops, especially “Glass in Flight” and “Fairy Hollow — a magical miniature world in bloom.” Beautiful nighttime shots for sure!

<https://nebg.org/exhibitions/>

Old Frog Pond Farm's 20th Annual Outdoor Sculpture Exhibit.

“The Art of Noticing: Around the Pond and Through the Woods”

A sculpture and poetry exhibit that invites contemplation and slowing down. Whether standing out boldly against the natural scenery or hidden deep among the leaves, fifty sculptures are installed to interact with and be supported by the natural landscape.

Runs through Oct. 12, Wednesday–Sunday 11-4. Admission fee \$10, \$8 for Seniors, \$5 for children

Check out their website for more details:

<http://www.oldfrogpondfarm.com/>

Sterling Fair — Sterling, MA

Sept. 11–13

Classic country fair with tractor pulls, livestock, midway, food, crafts, and fireworks.

<https://sterlingfair.org/>

September 2026 Fairs & Festivals in MA

Everything you need to know is in the link below.

<https://festivalsandfairsma.com/month/september/>

Muster Day at Old Sturbridge Village

Sept. 5 – one day only

Historical demonstrations and early-American atmosphere. Great for period-costume / New England heritage photography.

<https://www.osv.org/event/muster-day/>

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The Bigger Picture - continued from page 23

Crocodile River Music - Worcester's Got African Talent

Sept. 12 — one day only

A live showcase celebrating African artists who live and create in Worcester. The festival highlights artists across disciplines — music, dance, visual art, fashion, videography, and more.

<https://www.crocodilervermusic.org/events/worcesters-got-african-talent-2026>

New England Flower Show

“Growing Together”

Sept. 18–20 — tickets required

The Garden at Elm Bank — 900 Washington St., Wellesley, MA

<https://www.masshort.org/fall-flower-show>

Photo Contests:

Pay attention to the deadlines below – some are coming up quickly so act now!

Snapshot America:

A portrait of America at 250: Where are we now?

Deadline: Sept 11

<https://www.rphotocenter.org/call-for-entry-snapshot-america-a-portrait-of-the-united-states-in-2026/>

A juried call for entries to capture, in photographs, America today. Looking for pictures of your community, your friends, your neighborhood, local events, landmarks, and everyday activities that represent your daily life in America. Looking to put together an exhibition to document the unique times we live in and take a snapshot of these United States.

From everyday activities to the grand celebrations and the tragedies that touch us all, we want to see what your America looks like. What image defines present-day America for you? What best represents the city or town you live in? What gets you going? What keeps you up at night? These are some of the ideas they are looking to explore as they put together this time capsule of the United States of America in 2026.

Application Fee - \$25.00

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The Bigger Picture - continued from page 24

Mass Audubon — Statewide Photo Contest

Deadline: Sept 30

This one is excellent for wildlife, nature, and landscape photographers. You can submit up to 10 photos taken in Massachusetts. Submissions are open through September 30.

<https://www.massaudubon.org/programs-events/photo-contest/enter-the-contest>

Dudley Pond Association

2026 DPA Annual Photo Contest

Deadline: October 1

Categories include: Scenery, Wildlife, People, Recreation, Sunrise/Sunset

<https://www.dudleypond.org/photocontest.html>

Down East Magazine Reader Photo Contest (Photos must be taken in Maine)

Deadline: Sept 16

Three categories: **Landscape, Lifestyle, and Wildlife**. The contest offers \$500 grand prizes and \$200 runner-up prizes, plus publication in *Down East*.

Fee: \$10/photo

<https://contests.downeast.com/reader-photo-contest>

Union Bank (Photos must represent scenes from Vermont or New Hampshire)

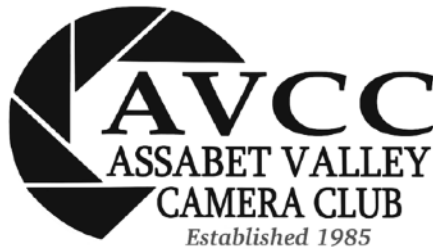
Deadline: Sept 13

Invites all photographers to submit up to three photos that best capture this year's theme: "***Fur babies, farm friends, forest creatures, and local legends.***"

Looking for photo submissions with artistic appeal, creativity, compelling use of light, and interesting compositional structure. 13 winning photos to be featured in their 2027 calendar. Photographers from all winning submissions will receive a cash prize!

<https://www.ublocal.com/photo-contest/>

"By all these lovely tokens / September days are here, / with summer's best of weather, / and autumn's best of cheer." —Helen Hunt Jackson



AVCC is a member of the following organizations:

NECCC



PSA



AVCC website:

<https://www.assabetvalleycameraclub.com>

2026 - 2027 Executive Board Members:

- President: Lou Snitkoff
- Vice President: Mary Coombs
- Secretary: Neil Swinton
- Treasurer: Jim Williams

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. Please consider volunteering!

Thank you to everyone who contributed to this month's newsletter!



Night Blooming Cereus after a Long Night - Mary Coombs