



FOCAL POINT

<http://assabetvalleycc.com> - The club meets on the first and third 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. Email us at avcc.digital@hotmail.com for more information or if you wish to attend as a guest.



Street Walker in Boston
- Pam Meoli

"Creativity is piercing the mundane to find the marvelous." – Bill Moyers

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Note from Our President

Hello All,

Welcome to the month of March and the promise of spring around the corner.

There is a lot happening in the club around the subject of field trips. Recently Jim Williams volunteered to head the Field Trip/Outings Committee and has created an excel sheet of suggested field trip locations, some local and some at a distance. This can be found on the website on a tab called “Field Trip Ideas”. Members can add ideas to the list by going to “Organization”, then “Send E-mail to Members”, then select the box that says “Field Trip Managers”.

The procedure for planned field trips is as follows:

A member can select a field trip from the “Field Trip Ideas” excel list or one that they have found for which they are willing to be a leader.

That person emails the Field Trip Managers with the location, date, and time.

The Field Trip Managers will then create the event on the Visual Pursuits Event page and will send an email to club members about the event with instructions to go to the events tab and select the event and register.

The leader of the trip will send an email to registered members to confirm with any needed details.

If a member has an impromptu meet-up idea for something happening within a short time frame they should simply email the club members through the Visual Pursuits Tab “Organization”, then select “Send E-mail to Members” then select “All Members” and share the details in the “Message” box and hit Send.

We hope you are inspired to suggest and lead a trip. As always if you need help with this procedure please let me or John Gill know.

John

“Don’t wait for inspiration. It comes while working.” – Henri Matisse



Hi-Jinx Image - John Mauro

Note from the Editors

March is such an iffy month, isn't it? On any given day it can be summer, spring or winter. Nonetheless we always plow through (hopefully no plowing this year). Is Nature challenging us to dig down deep, to be resilient, maybe even creative in the face of the unknown? Dr. Nick Udall, leadership guru and speaker says, "Creativity is the dance between the known and the unknown, the conscious and the unconscious, the visible and the invisible, the tangible and the intangible. Creativity is born of this dance and of this oscillation." <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/how-creativity-dance-between-known-unknown-nick-udall>. We love this point of view – it means creativity is a process, not something one has or doesn't. We are all creative in our own ways.

The competition category this month is "Creative - In or Out of Camera." Perfectly timed. Get out – or stay in – and play. See the "Snapshot" interview with one very creative lady, Jane Parker, who says she tries to think of what other people WON'T look at – then she focuses on that. We hope that perspective, plus the Tips & Tricks section on Creative Photography will inspire or enhance your own creativity. Have fun.

In anticipation of the solar eclipse on April 8th, we are presenting some information on preparations which will need to be done as soon as possible to make sure all your proper gear is set.

As for member submissions, a number of people shared their Still Life photos, many of them from Hi-Jinx past and present. Enjoy.

Ironically, we can pretty much quote the ending to last month's Note from the Editors: "ten of the next fourteen days are forecast to be partly cloudy or rainy." This month, let the creative juices flow to uplift the soul.

"Creativity is seeing what others see and thinking what no one else ever thought."

– Albert Einstein



Pemaquid Sunset 19 - Richard Tranfaglia

March Program

AVCC is pleased to present “A Murmur in the Trees” presented by Suzanne Revy on Wednesday, March 6, 2024 at 7:30 PM. The meeting is a hybrid format; in person at the the Hudson Senior Center, 29 Church St., Hudson (please arrive no later than 7:15), or remote on Zoom. 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. Non-members interested in attending as guests should email avcc.digital@hotmail.com.

A Murmur in the Trees

Suzanne Revy

Suzanne Révy is photographer, writer and educator who created visual photographic diaries of her sons’ lives, and is currently making photographs in the landscape. She earned a BFA from the Pratt Institute and an MFA from the New Hampshire Institute of Art, and previously worked as photography editor at *U.S. News & World Report* and *Yankee Magazine*.

She has exhibited her work at museums and galleries throughout New England and in New York. Révy is an adjunct professor of photography at Clark University in Worcester, the Associate Editor at the online magazine *What Will You Remember?* and serves on the board of the Photographic Resource Center in Cambridge, MA. She lives with her husband in suburban Boston.

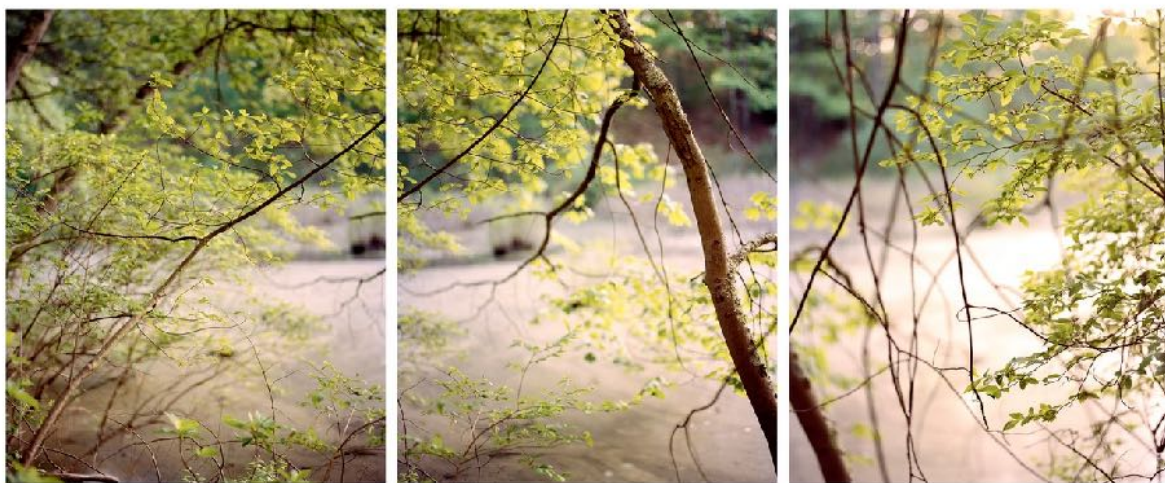


Image Courtesy of Suzanne Revy

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March Program - A Murmur in the Trees - continued from page 4

A Murmur in the Trees is a fine-arts photographic presentation featuring multi-panel images which strive to create dialogues between space and form, implying the passages of time and creating arresting visual stutters. Suzanne finds herself looking for figurative gestures in the trees or streams and in the man-made imprints left upon the land. She wishes to impart a tenor of solitude that conveys a reverence for the fragile and enduring ecosystems that surround us, and to draw parallels between the cycles of nature and the arc of human history.



Vernal Pool - October Farm - Image Courtesy of Suzanne Revy



Pine Tree - Newbury Field - Image Courtesy of Suzanne Levy

Continued on next page

March Program - A Murmur in the Trees - continued from page 5

Suzanne was chosen as a Featured Photographer for *Analog Forever Magazine* and was interviewed by Michael Kirchoff. A link to the article is below. Founded in 2018 as a passion project by four friends, *Analog Forever Magazine* has become the world's premier journal of contemporary film and analog photography. "We aim to provide a global audience to established and emerging photographers who use analog processes and techniques for their photographic work by giving them a voice via a biannual print photography journal, online features and interviews, book reviews, and online exhibitions."
- Analog Forever

[Featured Photographer: Suzanne Révy - "A Murmur in the Trees" | Analog Forever Magazine](#)

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.



*"Trees are the Earth's endless effort to speak to the listening heaven."
- Rabindranath Tagore*



White Stupa, Mongolia - Eric Frere

Looking Ahead - AVCC 2023-2024 Program Schedule

Date	Program	Presentor
9/6/23	"What I did this Summer" Member Slideshows	AVCC Members
10/4/23	"Architecture Abstracts"	Angie McGonagle
10/25/23	*Special Program in Honor of Elliot Mednick	Essdras Suarez
11/1/23	"ICM - More than just Pretty"	Silvana Della Camera
12/6/23	Photographing Trees and Forests	Paul Nguyễn
1/3/24	"What were they Thinking?" How images are judged	Todd and Maureen Mathieson
2/7/24	"Flower and Garden Photography"	Irene Sacilotto
3/6/24	"A Murmur in the Trees"	Suzanne Revy
4/3/24	"The Natural Look" HDR Imaging	Hazel Meredith
5/1/24	"How I got that Image" Member Presentations	AVCC Members
6/5/24	Image of the Year Awards	

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 2023-2024

Monthly Competitions:

The club holds monthly image competitions including three categories: print, digital and open. The 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	Print (Details TBD)	Digital	Open	Digital and Open Submission Date
September		Monochrome	Open	9/13/2023
October	Tools	Nature	Open	10/11/2023
November	N/A	Architectural Detail	Open	11/8/2023
December	Still Life	Nature	Open	12/13/2023
January	Open	In the Woods	Open	1/10/2024
February	Entryways	Nature	Open	2/14/2024
March	Nature	Creative (In or out of camera)	Open	3/13/2024
April	Open	Nature	Open	4/10/2024
May	Open	Things that Fly or are Airborne (in honor of Elliot)	Open	5/8/2024

PSA and NECCC

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.

NECCC has moved to have individual print competitions rather than interclub print competitions at this time. The NECCC Individual Print Competition will be hosted at the Greater Lynn Photographic Association (GLPA). The categories are B&W (mono) and Color. Competitions will be held on Nov. 4, 2023 and April 6, 2024. More details can be found here: <https://greaterlynnphoto.org/NECCC>.

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.

Member Snapshot

Jane Parker

Jane grew up in Hudson, the youngest of seven children, in a family where just about everybody is creative in some way, from painting and drawing, to knitting, crocheting, woodworking, pottery, photography and cooking. And that's not an exhaustive list!

Jane says her mother always encouraged her artistic activities. She had free reign in the kitchen at an early age. She had a Fisher Price potter's wheel even though her mom was not thrilled with Jane's love of all things goopy - ponds, puddles, and mud. As a child and into middle school years, she used her parents' Kodak Instamatic camera, once experimenting with putting Vaseline on the lens for a soft-focus effect. Jane says, "It worked, but I didn't understand that the viewfinder was offset from the lens. My pictures all came back with a close-up of half of a lovely, soft-focused, flower."

When Jane's sister, Mary, became interested in photography, she let Jane use her 35mm camera. She showed her the basic functions as well as how to process B&W photos in the home darkroom. That's where Jane's interest in photography really took off. Jane got her first "very own" SLR camera from her parents for graduation from Assabet Valley Regional High School where she had studied Commercial Art & Design.

After graduating, Jane took a one-year intensive course at the Hallmark Institute of Photography, then went to night school at Dean College for a Small Business Management Degree. At the Hallmark Institute her studies included dark room processing, marketing, and public speaking. Jane says she couldn't master the artificial lighting in commercial photography, but she did wedding and portrait photography for ten years.

In her early 30s Jane and her husband, Brandon, moved to Hawaii for his job. While there, she took up pottery as a social outlet. She joined a ceramics club at a local community college, where she had access to all the pottery-related equipment in the studio - wheels, glazes, and kilns. All the students had a hand in loading kilns and mixing glazes. When they moved back to Hudson in 1999, Jane bought her own wheel. She and her sister Mary bought and shared a used kiln. Jane pursued her pottery as much as she was able while raising her son, Finn - now age 25 and living in Cambridge - and her daughter, Amelia, currently a student and artist at U. Maine, Orono.

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Member Snapshot - Jane Parker - continued from page 9

In early 2018 Jane and two of her sisters formed “Three Birds Artisans,” and attended arts shows together to sell Mary’s and Jane’s pottery, and Anne’s etched glassware. They opened an Etsy shop that ran for about a year, until they agreed that it made more sense to each have their own shop.

In January, 2020, Jane put in an order for her own brand-new kiln, an expensive piece of equipment. It was delivered in late February 2020 and Jane finally had all the equipment she needed to make her products without having to cart her pottery to Mary’s house for kiln firing, except that ... Covid hit and everything shut down in March, leaving her with no place to sell. Jane realized that the only way to try and sell her pottery to pay for her investment, was to rely on her Etsy shop, which was just barely off the ground.

Jane says she worked at her pottery “all the time” during the Covid shut-down, relying on Instagram and YouTube for learning new things. She and Mary would give themselves “challenges” to make things they'd never made before, and share their results with each other. When society opened up they went to every show possible, eventually whittling it down to shows that were profitable. Jane currently sells online, at shows, and at various shops in Framingham, Hudson, Hadley and on the Cape.

When asked what she likes making, Jane chuckles, “Fortunately, what I really enjoy making is something that also sells well!” Currently that “something” is whimsical holders for air plants and gnome-homes. She got the idea for the air plant holders when her daughter asked her to make them. She likes the hand-building and the sculpturing aspects. She is also doing sgraffito, which is putting colored, liquid clay over a form, and carving a design.

In terms of her current photography, Jane favors still life and B&W. She gets a lot of her shots with her cell phone. When she does get out to shoot – which she says is “in fits and starts” - she pays a lot of attention to light. Light is something she really became aware of not only from photography school itself, but also from observing how light hit the trees on her way to and from school in western MA. For photography inspiration she likes to ask herself the question, “What is everyone NOT looking at?” When not using her cell, she uses an Olympus Mark3 camera. When asked “what are things you want to learn in photography?” she laughs and says, “aside from understanding Adobe Photoshop and layers???” Yes. Besides that nearly-universal wish, Jane says she would like to master macro photography and stacking.



Image Courtesy of Jane Parker

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Member Snapshot - Jane Parker - continued from page 10

Jane has many past and present interests and hobbies. Calligraphy was a serious hobby for many years. But not just calligraphy - she made cards merging calligraphy and hand colored, B&W photos. She loves to cook & bake. She raises chickens, and used to raise bees until she lost two colonies in a row due to mites and disease. She has vegetable gardens and pollinator gardens. She is developing a native plant meadow. She loves to ski and hike.

Clearly Jane is multi-talented and driven to explore, whether it's mud puddles or new adventures in pottery and other arts. She is appreciative of the earth and its wonders, whether it's a garden full of bees and butterflies, or the accomplishment of summiting Mt. Washington with 90mph winds at the top. Jane's natural curiosity and vision are sure to result in many more interesting accomplishments.

Use the links below to see more of Jane's pottery work:

[instagram.com/stratton_hill_pottery](https://www.instagram.com/stratton_hill_pottery)

[etsy.com/shop/strattonhillpottery](https://www.etsy.com/shop/strattonhillpottery)

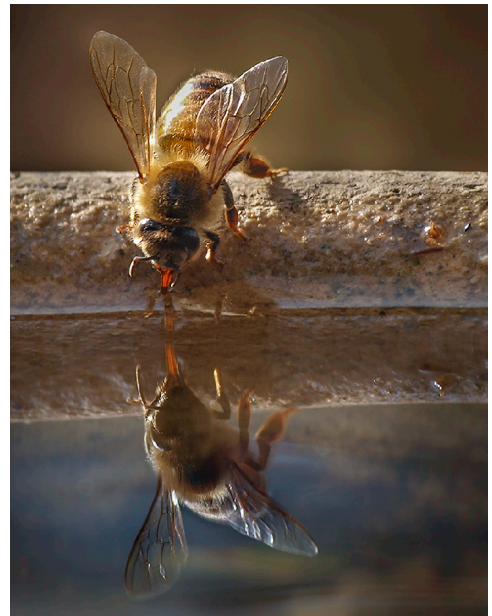
© Lynn Kerner



Doggie's Daydreaming - Jane Parker



Image Courtesy of Jane Parker



*Two Bees or Not Two Bees
- Jane Parker*

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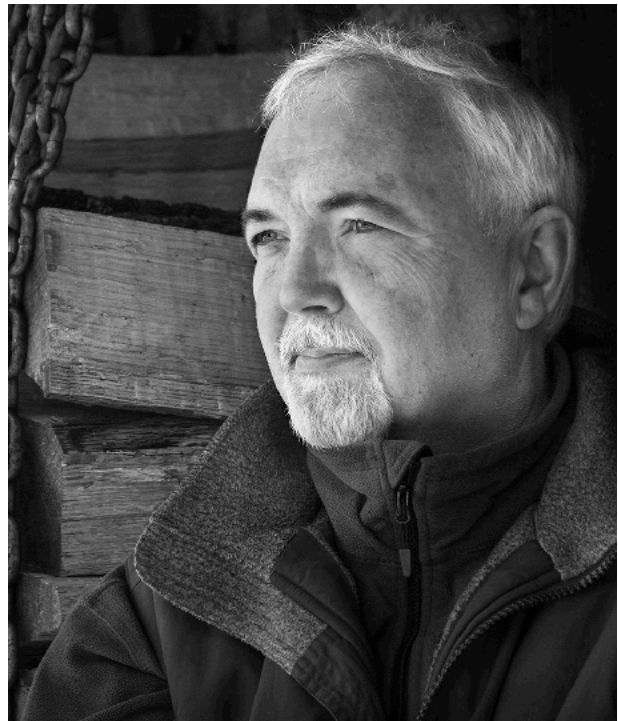
Member Snapshot - Jane Parker - continued from page 11



People - Breezy - Jane Parker



*Nails and Wood and Straw
- Jane Parker*



A Minute to Spare - Jane Parker



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, Doris Monteiro, Pam Meoli, John Mauro, Linda Shelales, Darlene Holman, Nick Andruzzi, Linda DeStefano Brown, Glenn Fund, Dave Morin, Sheri Craig, Terry Vachowski, Jane Parker, Bob Cooke, and Rick Beauchamp.

Zooming Out

On the Wall at Cafe 641

This month Cafe 641 will feature the work of Mary Coombs. A Meet and Greet will be held on Saturday, March 9 from 12:00 - 1:30 PM.

Upcoming in April will be the work of Dawn Law.



Gone By 3 - Mary Coombs



*Pink Dahlia Detail
- Mary Coombs*

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Zooming Out - continued from page 13

News and recommendations from our members:

Dave Morin:

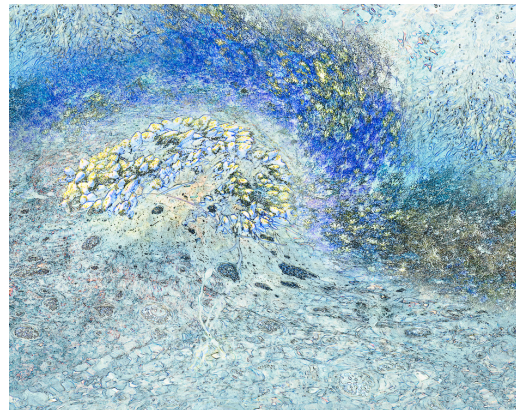
Dave has a photography exhibit on display at Milford Public Library through March.
80 Spruce Street, Milford, MA.

Linda DeStefano Brown:

I have two images in the exhibit "Abstractions" that is at the Plymouth Center for the Arts, February 21 - March 24. They are located at 11 North Street, Plymouth MA. Their hours are Wed-Sat 10 AM - 4 PM; Sun noon - 4 PM.



Dance with the Flowers
- Linda DeStefano Brown



The Wave - Linda DeStefano Brown

Terry Vachowski:

Terry received an email from Newtonville Camera announcing that they have closed. Hunt's Photo will soon open in the same location. For more information: [Newtonville Camera](#)

Pam Meoli:

I'm certain most of you know the sweet little shop in Hudson - Serendipity. I'm honored to say I was contacted by the owner who wants to carry my little book! I think of Elliot when I think of this book. His encouragement - that meant a lot to me.

This has been an extremely interesting and unexpected journey. From the conception and reason for the book to publishing and sales literally around the world - Canada, England, Scotland, Australia, etc. And now it seems to be oozing into communities including schools and libraries. I couldn't be more pleased and grateful.



Image Courtesy of
Pam Meoli

Zooming Out - continued from page 14

Robyn Saur - NECCC News:

Twelve images were submitted to the NECCC February interclub competitions in Monochrome, Color, and Nature. Congratulations to John Gill who scored 13 points and received an Honor Award for his image *Hydrangea Bloom # 2* in the Color category.

AVCC standings:

18th place out of 39 clubs in Monochrome

7th place out of 27 clubs in Color

5th place out of 21 clubs in Nature



Hydrangea Bloom #2 - John Gill

Remembering David Reynard - Erratum: We regret that in the February issue of Focal Point a line was inadvertently omitted from Linda Shelales's beautiful poem commemorating Dave Reynard, a founding member of AVCC who passed away on January 2, 2024. Here is the full rendition:

Big Dave

Too short, his time with us!
A life overflowing
With goodness.
Ever kind, always helpful,
Ever present, always involved,
Known for his deep devotion
To friends and to family.
Ever caring, always respectful
Dave will e're be remembered
And deeply admired
for his discipline of walking daily
For his reliable punctuality.
Admired for his talent and skill,
For his memorable,
And beautiful photography,
Ever willing, always able.

Oh so deliberate and tender
As he oh so reverently,
Placed our pictures on the table!
As one of the Founders
originally,
AVCC will always be
Dave's proud, enduring legacy.
Our Loyal Gentle Giant
All Heart and quiet Courage,
Incredibly Brave to the end,
he follows the Light
Far Beyond Suffering,
Thankfully!
Our beloved Big Dave
will e're be remembered
oh so Gratefully.

By Linda Applegren-Shelales 1-26-24

Zooming In

Hi-Jinx

The club returned to its annual Hi-Jinx day on Saturday, February 3 after a pause of three years! Members set up many photo-op stations in the Hudson Senior Center and from 9:30 till 3:30 attendees were able to experiment with water drop photography, still life of fresh and dried flowers, fruit, and various objects, flat lay, black light, macro, light tents, lighting, back lighting, effervescence on flowers, and more. We had great fun, great pizza for lunch, and great cookies to celebrate John Gill's birthday. Many thanks to Todd and Maureen Mathieson, John Gill, and Sue Abrahamsen for their institutional knowledge, supplies, and setting up many of the stations, and to the set up crew: Jim Williams, Jane Parker, Dave Morin, Glenn Fund, Lynn Kerner, and Mary Coombs.

Below are submissions by members of the set-ups and some of the resulting images.



Sue setting up floral still life - John Mauro



Maureen, Jim, and Todd setting up the water drop station - John Mauro



John bringing in supplies - Mary Coombs

"You can be cautious or you can be creative, but there's no such thing as a cautious creative." – George Lois

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John and Dave during set up - John Mauro



Sheri, Darlene, and Sue and the rose - Mary Coombs



Jane setting up a still life in a quiet corner - Mary Coombs



Natalie and effervescent flower - Mary Coombs



Rick getting a macro shot - Mary Coombs

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

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Member Hi-Jinx and Still Life Images



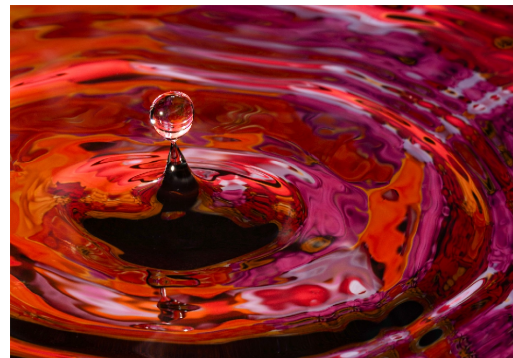
Submitted by John Mauro



Fruitful Abundance - Linda Shelales



Submitted by John Mauro



Vibrant to the last Drop - Sheri Craig



Submitted by Mary Coombs



Submitted by Nick Andruzzi

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Submitted by Nick Andruzzi



*Dried Grasses
- Mary Coombs*



Submitted by John Mauro



*Black light perfume bottle -
Lynn Kerner*



Jeweled Flyer - Sheri Craig



Happy Birthday John - Mary Coombs

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Old microscope - Rick Beauchamp



*Feather in Jaw
- Rick Beauchamp*



Old Projector - Rick Beauchamp



Postcards from the Edge - Cathy Robotis

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Drooping Tulips - Pam Meoli



Queen of Hearts Roses - Mary Coombs



Sunflowers Still Life - Darlene Holman



Stamp collecting - Cathy Robotis

Tips and Tricks - March's Theme: Creative Photography/Eclipse Prep

Tips for Creative Photography

The Photographic Society of America (PSA) defines Creative Photography as *Altered Reality*. "The image may be of any subject matter and must obviously display a change in natural color, form, shape, or any combination of these three." This opens a vast realm of possibilities for competition-worthy creative images. To assist you as you explore these possibilities and get your creative juices flowing, we have put together a few ideas you may want to look further into or try. Please remember to check our AVCC website for additional particulars regarding meeting the requirements for the category.

Creative Photo Ideas

- Capture motion blur or light trails. Make sure you use a tripod and work with a slow shutter speed. This works very well with night photos of moving objects such as cars.
- You can work with mixed lighting conditions by applying colored gel to a flash. This will add splashes of color to your image.
- Consider working with double exposures. To do this, you should upload 2 images as separate layers into post-processing. Place one over the other and increase the transparency until you have achieved the desired effect.
- You can spray water drops onto your lens to create exciting bokeh in your images. Make sure your camera is weather resistant, and you may want to use a protective lens filter if you choose to try this. A wider aperture will result in bigger bokeh. You should ensure that there is no dirt on your lens beforehand because you might scratch it when wiping away the water.
- Try shooting through a medium, such as a prism, glass, liquids, gels, or filters. Crystal ball photography may produce exciting and distorted images. Shooting through textured glass will add an interesting dynamic. You can obtain a prism reflection by holding a 6 inch glass prism in front of your camera. Holding an unmounted double convex lens (essentially a magnifying glass without a handle) horizontally in front of your camera at night may create an explosion of bokeh.
- You can create colorful water drops by placing glass over a colorful scene and then spraying water drops on the glass. Take your photos by focusing on the water drops, and you will have an interesting abstract image.



Sunset in a Crystal Ball - Pam Meoli

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

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Tips for Creative Photography - continued from page 22

- Consider Refraction Photography: Light refracts when it travel through water, so your image will appear deformed when your subject is placed behind a water vessel.
- If you manually zoom in or out while the shutter is firing, you may capture a unique blur and give the sense of movement.
- Consider taking a photo out of focus. Intentional Camera Motion (ICM) produces stunning images, as we learned from our ICM presentation with Silvana Della Camera in November 2023.
- Create a scene with unfocused bokeh: Find a place with a lot of lights and colors (such as a city scene at night). You will want to have your camera on manual focus. You will want to shoot in aperture mode, and use the widest aperture. Manually turn the focus ring until everything is blurred, and take your shots. Experiment with different settings. The bigger your light source(s), the bigger the bokeh.
- You may want to experiment with infrared photography.
- You can create optical illusions with forced perspective. An example of this would be photos where it looks like a person is holding up the moon.
- Have someone blow bubbles into a scene you are photographing. It will create interesting distortions.
- Consider trying Levitation Photography. To do this, take a photo of your subject standing on a stool or steady surface. Then, take a photo of the same scene (using the same settings) without your subject. You can then merge the photos in post-processing and remove the stool. It will look like your subject is floating.
- You can create spiral light photography images by using light or glow sticks and a slow shutter speed.
- Consider making a photo montage image. Take several photos of the same subject in different poses. You can then layer them together in post-processing to produce a single creative image.
- Create surreal portrait photos by manipulating the facial features of your subject in post-processing. You may even consider removing them altogether so you have a faceless portrait, which may be very thought-provoking.
- Consider trying the Droste Effect, a technique where you use post-processing to create a picture containing a picture of itself, which contains another picture of itself (and so on).

Sources: creativelive.com, expertphotography.com, photography course.net, slrlounge.com, shuttertalk.com, fotographee.com, digital-photography-school.com, Five Tips for Creative Photography Effects (YouTube, B&H Photo Video).

"You use a glass mirror to see your face. You use works of art to see your soul." – George Bernard Shaw

Tips for Eclipse Photography

"We're all one. We're all connected. And if you keep viewing the world as a 'pale blue dot,' as Carl Sagan would say, it humbles you — and we all could use an ego check. And take care of each other" [he said](#). Jon Carmichael, photographer <https://joncarmichael.com/>

Tips for preparing for the eclipse and eclipse photography:

Jon Carmichael produced the most iconic image of the total solar eclipse of 2017 while on a Southwest Airlines flight from Portland, Oregon to St. Louis, Missouri. His preparation story is fascinating and the resulting image speaks for itself. Be sure to click on the links in the above quote to see the image and the story behind it.

We will have an opportunity to see a near total or total eclipse (if you travel a bit) on April 8, 2024 beginning at approximately 2:14 PM in Hudson, MA. Here is a link to a simulation of the partial eclipse as it will appear in Hudson. [Hudson eclipse](#)

The tips below are geared toward novice eclipse photographers. Those of you who already shoot astrophotography may find it a good review.

Preparing to view and photograph the eclipse safely is paramount to the health of your vision and gear:

- Decide **where** you will go to view the eclipse and plan accordingly - if you are hoping to go to an area of totality and stay overnight make reservations now!
- Purchase certified **eclipse glasses** and wear them at all times while viewing the partial eclipse. There are many sites to order eclipse glasses. Here is one: [Eclipse glasses](#)
- If you are in an area that experiences totality you can remove the glasses and camera filter for the period of totality but then need to put them right back on as the sun reemerges from behind the shadow of the moon.
- Use a **sturdy tripod**. Add weight with a sandbag attached to the center column or the feet to improve stability.
- Use some sort of **sun finder** to get your camera aligned with the sun. There is a very inexpensive way to make one from a downspout clip sold at Home Depot. [Nebula Photos](#) shows you how.
- Use **filters** to photograph the eclipse. These can be as simple and inexpensive as DIY filters made with **mylar sheets** or as advanced as dedicated filters (such as **ND 100,000 solar filters** that darken the light by at least 16 stops) and lenses. Do your research to see what fits your camera and budget!
- Do not point your camera or phone directly at the sun without a **filter over the lens**. The light can damage/burn your shutter and sensor. There are filters for smart phones. See the [eclipse store](#).
- Do not look into the optical view finder of your camera - the light is bounced off the mirror and prisms in your camera and can damage your eyes. (Not true for Mirrorless cameras or live view.)
- Use a **remote shutter release**. An **internal or external intervalometer** will be useful to take a series of shots without having to touch the shutter - allowing you to enjoy totality without worry about taking shots!

Continued on next page

Tips for Eclipse Photography - continued from page 24

- The sun will be in motion during the eclipse and you will have to adjust your camera position frequently to follow the path - a **geared or fluid video head** on your tripod is suggested. Or better yet, use an electronic **solar tracker**.
- Use manual focus and shoot in RAW. Keep the same white balance throughout the shooting in order to stack or combine photos in post processing.
- Above all - get your gear, wear your eclipse glasses, put your filter on your camera and **PRACTICE** finding the sun and determining settings for you shots before the actual event.

Helpful Links:

Tips for shooting a solar eclipse - Youtube - [Jon Carmichael](#)

All the information you might need! [MrEclipse.com](#)

Comprehensive list of vendors of safe solar viewers and filters: [American Astronomical Society](#)

List of Eclipse websites vetted by the American Astronomical Society: [Eclipse websites](#)

A note of advice from club member Bob Cooke:

- First, try to find out where to go to get the best views of "totality," the brief time the eclipse is fully visible, and where to go to see it. Timing (and being ready) are vital.
- Too, for anyone who wants to go, they should prepare especially carefully to avoid eye-damage from too avid sun-watching. Safety is vitally important (safety goggles or similar are advised). Of course, everything is "iffy," including timing, duration of totality, weather, and where's best to go watch it. THERE ARE NO GUARANTEES, but if you don't try, you don't see.
- There are probably some in-person tours being offered, or you can arrange your own - taking QUALITY safety equipment of your own along to protect your own eyes.
- Astronomers in the Boston area are probably sources of good information. Some years ago, AVCC members Sue Abrahamsen and I took such a trip (out to Idaho where "totality" was expected to be visible and last longest - (of course, bad weather can ruin everything, but didn't). Better yet, "totality" was expected to be best in mountainous areas of north Idaho, and we got clear weather, good accommodations and MUCH scenic territory to satisfy anyone.
- Your camera should also be protected from too-strong solar images visible during "totality." Now, I can't predict whether Sue is willing to offer a preview based on our experience, but I've kept the old eclipse pictures I came home with and am willing to brag about the results - illustrated.
- I'll be glad to add any hints, warnings and advice needed. Plus whom to call and where to get exciting and timely coverage of a glorious total eclipse...

At the time the eclipse, I was science editor at Newsday, on Long Island, NY. I have had a science-writing career for almost 50 years, deeply interested in astronomy and astro-physics - via coverage of astronomy, astro-physics, etc. at the AP in Los Angeles, the Caltech news office in Pasadena, CA, the Boston Globe, the Atlanta Constitution, and Newsday, on Long Island, NY. Most of my writing about the space sciences was aimed at the research angles, not often the manned missions. It was mostly research space missions -unmanned - which I covered, not the glory of manned adventures. - Bob

The Bigger Picture

Upcoming Photography Workshops and Programs

Silvana Della Camera Photography

- Photographing a Solar Eclipse - Zoom workshop.
- Saturday, March 2nd, 2024, 9:00 AM – 11:00 AM
- Free - Registration required. [Register](#).

American Graphics Institute, Boston, MA

- They offer courses on studio lighting, lighting and composition, beginner/intermediate photography, Photoshop Lightroom, real estate photography, and SmartPhone/iPhone photography.
- For more information: agitraining.com.



Orion nebula - Natalie Schiavoni

Hunt's Photo, Melrose, MA

- They offer photo walks, photo adventures, and classes.
- Upcoming opportunities include: Online courses on autofocus, mastering manual mode, photographing wild birds, macro photography, and adding texture. They have Photo Walks planned for Mystic Seaport and the MFA in Boston. **They have an online course for photographing the solar eclipse on 3/19/24.**
- For more information: www.edu.huntsphoto.com.

Boston Photography Workshops

- They offer online and in-person classes on a variety of topics, including: Digital Cameras I & II, Better Composition/Photowalk, Organizing Photos, Night Photography, Food Photography, Portraiture, and Lightroom Classic.
- For further information: bostonphotographyworkshops.com.

Worcester State University

- They offer many interesting courses, such as: Discover Digital Photography, Mastering your Digital SLR or Mirrorless Camera, Secrets of Better Photography, Photographing Nature with your Digital Camera, Photographing People with your Digital Camera, Intro to Lightroom Classic CC, and Photoshop Elements for the Digital Photographer.
- Classes are typically 24 course hours over 6 weeks, and prices range from \$115-\$335.
- Further information: ed2go.com.

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The Bigger Picture - continued from page 26

Assabet After Dark

- Spring photography courses include Cape Cod Lighthouse Photography, Digital Photography I, Digital Photography II, Macro/Close-up Photography, SmartPhone Photography, and Wildlife Photography.
- Classes are taught by Steve McGrath
- For more information: assabetace.org (look for their Spring 2024 Course Catalog).

Middlesex Community College

- They offer a Digital Photography Certificate Program which includes courses such as Digital Photography I, Digital Photography II, The Business of Photography, and Adobe Photoshop Creative Cloud.
- Contact: middlesex.mass.edu

National Park Photography Expeditions

- They have upcoming Master Classes in Photography at Olympic National Park, Roosevelt National Park, and Badlands National Park.
- Contact: nppemasterclass.com.

Photography Exhibits

Griffin Museum in Winchester, MA

In the room where it happened: A survey of Presidential Photographers, 1/12/24-3/31/24.
Jeffrey Aaronson: The President and the Press, 1/11/24-3/31/24.

Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, MA

The Howard Greenberg Collection (ongoing).

Leica Gallery in Boston, MA

Jamie Johnson & John Day: The Travellers and The Troubles, 2/2/24-4/20/24.

Gallery Kayafas in Boston, MA

Yorgos Efthymiadis: The Lighthouse Keeper, 2/16/24-3/23/24.

Panopticon Gallery in Boston, MA

First Look 2024: Annual Juried Showcase, 2/15/24-4/30/24.

VanDernoot Gallery in Cambridge, MA

Home Sweet Home, 2/4/24-3/15/24.



Fight for the Dust Bath - Lynn Kerner

Continued on next page

Photography Competitions

2024 National Wildlife Photo Competition

- Submissions accepted 1/17/24-3/31/24.
- Categories: Birds, Mammals, Baby animals, Other wildlife, Landscape and Plants, People in Nature, Mobile, Portfolio, Young Nature Photographers.
- Cash prizes
- Contact: www.nwf.org

The iPhone Photography Awards

- Deadline: 3/31/24.
- Entry fee: \$5.50/1, \$12.50/3, \$18.50/5 and upwards.
- Images have to have been shot with an iPhone.
- Prizes include title of IPPA Photographer of the Year, gold bars, and platinum bars.
- Contact: www.ippawards.com

Vienna International Photo Awards 2024

- Deadline: 6/15/24.
- Prizes include an exhibition at VIE Photo in September 2024 in Vienna. Winners also receive the VIEPA photo book.
- Contact: www.viepa.org

National Landscape Photography Awards

- Deadline: 7/31/24.
- Category: Landscape Nature.
- Cash prizes.
- Contact: nationallandscapeawards.com

NECCC Individual Print Competition

- Deadline for online entry form: 3/30/24
- Categories: B&W and Color
- For information and rules see: NECCC



*Focused on Fishing
- Theresa Vachowski*



Grizzly Bear and Salmon Feeding on Salmon

"The creative process is a process of surrender, not control." – Bruce Lee



AVCC is a member of the following organizations:

NECCC



PSA



AVCC website:

<https://www.assabetvalleycc.com>

2023-2024 Executive Board Members:

- President: John Mauro
- Vice President: Mary Coombs
- Secretary: Pam Meoli
- Treasurer: Glenn Fund



Hi-Jinx Image - John Mauro

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 2023-2024 Member packet. Consider volunteering!