



THE IMAGE

November 2023
Fall Issue

View From the Boardroom

By Maryann Flick

Digital since 2007. Over 88,000 images in about 16.5 years. What to do with all of them?

Fortunately I use an organizer. I like Adobe Lightroom but surely there must be others available without a subscription. You can get Adobe Bridge at no charge but you do have to create an Adobe account that, I believe, is also free. I do think an organizer is a must, especially where you can apply keywords to images. As the years progressed I became more careful about using keywords. But I still have trouble finding some images in cases where I didn't imagine the need for particular key words. Many of my oldest images have almost no keywords. But back to my topic of revisiting old images. There are a few things I've been doing to bring the oldies out of the archives. Some depend on searching by keywords, some don't. But it is super helpful to be able to see a screen full of the thumbnails in order to pick the ones you want to work with, hence using some type of organizer.

First on the list is reexamining them and reprocessing/reediting. Editing and processing programs are WAY better than they used to be. And over the years I've learned more techniques as well. You may have a gem that has been waiting for better de-noise, sharpening, masking treatment or whatever. It's been interesting and rewarding to go back to old images. And I've made some poor images look much, much better. Sometimes I know what images I want to revisit, sometimes I just randomly pick an old folder. This has been an opportunity to add missing keywords too.

Second on my list has been to examine my style by finding and grouping similar images from past to present. Not only have I discovered some commonality but I see how I've improved over time in some areas and stagnated in others. Are you a landscape shooter? A nature shooter? Architecture? Look at your compositions and subject choices to see if you have a style that stands out. It's also a way to discover 'personal projects' that you can expand upon in the future. I'm a big fan of color so a future project (and book, see next suggestion) will probably be a review of my images color by color; my favorite red images, favorite blue etc.

Third, I create books. Yes there are many ways to view and share our images digitally but there is a certain satisfaction that comes from seeing the printed format. It's been especially fun to choose a selection of my best shots and put them in a book. I recently went back to all my photos made in NYC over the past 15 years and choose a selection of about 100 for a book. Another book was the result of comparing compositional styles for a variety of different subjects over many years (see the second suggestion above). I discovered I had a way of looking at and capturing things that does not depend entirely on the subject: There were similarities in how I used colors and shapes in the compositions. Other books were made using images from trips and personal projects. The hard part was curating; choosing just the best and most representative images for each theme.

Fourth on my list is just finding the bloopers and trashing them. Do I need 20 shots of X when half of them are not in good focus? I don't think so. I'm talking about the truly bad ones that can't be fixed and didn't get deleted at the time, especially if they're redundant. Plus, I'm much more discerning now! Images that are poor but unique—I keep 'em as record shots. Who knows what will happen to the thousands of images I've made. For the time being I'm having fun with them and learning a few things along the way.

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“The negative is the equivalent of the composer’s score and the print is the performance.”... Ansel Adams.

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2023-2024 MEETING SCHEDULE

- November 15, 2023—Mark Janke Program: Travel Photography & Unexpected Situations
- December 6, 2023—Pot Luck Holiday Party
- January 3, 2024—Winter & Spring NECCC Interclub Competition Image Selection
- January 17, 2024—Hazel Meredith Program: Textures and Overlays
- February 7, 2024—Bert Sirkin Program: How AI is Changing Photography
- February 21, 2024— Critique meeting (send digital images by 2/2)
- March 6, 2024—HiJinx Hands-on Workshop
- March 20, 2024—Print Critique
- April 3, 2024—NECCC 30 Slide Review
- April 17, 2024—Club Competition
- May 1, 2024—Spring Show Opening
- May 15, 2024—Review of Annual Club Project
- June 5, 2024— Annual Business meeting and Pot Luck Social

2023-2024 DEADLINES

- December 5, 2023—Images Submission for NECCC Winter & Spring NECCC Competition
- January 6, 2024—12pm-2pm; Hang date for Hospice Show
- January 24, 2024—Send images for NECCC Commentary
- February 15, 2024— Digital Images sent for Critique Meeting
- April 11, 2024—Send images for Club Competition
- April 29, 2024—Hang date for Senior Center Spring Show
- May 9, 2024—Send images for Annual Club Project (4 Seasons)

ANNUAL PROJECT FOR 2023-2024

For the 2023-2024 season, the theme for the annual club project will be “Four Seasons”. Make 4 or 5 images in each season. They should clearly depict the season that they represent. The subject is up to you. You can pick a specific subject and photograph this same subject each season or it can be different subjects that represent the season. Have fun with this and we will review the photos next May. If you don’t want to do this project, you may do a personal project instead. See the sidebar on the right for details.

ACTIVITIES

No activities or field trips have been scheduled at this time.

OPEN BOARD POSITION

The board is looking for a club member who can take over the position of Digital Image Technology. This position involves collecting, organizing and submitting (when appropriate) images that have been sent by club members for digital critiques and competitions, the NECCC 30 slide review, and any programs where our members have submitted photos to be viewed at a meeting such as images for the annual club project. It also includes showing these digital images at our meetings and running the NECCC 30 slide review commentary at our meeting. Skills that include computer file management and slide show creation and presentation are needed. If you have some of these skills and are willing to take on this role, please contact Maryann or anyone on the board.

NEW ANNUAL PROJECT FOR 2023-2024

This year we will continue two annual project choices. The “Members Choice” project is offered to members as an alternative to the annual project theme chosen by the club membership. Members can pick an area to practice or explore throughout the year. This can be done on your own or with another member working as a team. A scheduled club meeting will be allocated to presentations of personal projects.

The second annual project choice is titled “Four Seasons.” Take several photos in each of the four seasons. They should clearly depict the season. You can choose a specific subject and photograph it in each season or it can be different subjects that represent the seasons in some way. Have fun and we will review the photos next May.

FLICKR

Our club has a Flickr web site. Whenever you have an image that you’d would like to share with the club, consider adding it to the Flickr site. If you are not familiar with our Flickr site, here is the link. <https://www.flickr.com/groups/coastalcameraclub/>

We look forward to seeing your images.

MEMBERSHIP DUES

Dues for the upcoming season will be collected at the first meeting on Wednesday, September 21. Dues for individual members are \$30 for the 2023-2024 season. A family membership will be \$45 and student membership (age 18 or younger) is \$5. It is important for us to collect dues early in the season so that we can pay for speakers and other upcoming activities. If you cannot attend our first meeting, you can send a check to our treasurer, Anne Mele.

RESOURCES AND UPCOMING EVENTS

Connecticut College Arboretum. The Arboretum is open to visitors this winter and provides ample photography opportunities. Go to <https://www.conncoll.edu/the-arboretum/> for more information.

Classes and Meetups: Milford Photo. Many classes and meetups scheduled throughout the winter offered at Milford Photo. For more information go to <https://www.milfordphoto.com/>

Workshops and Events, Hunts Photo. Many in-person and online classes and events scheduled throughout the winter offered at Hunts Photo. For more information go to <https://edu.huntsphoto.com>

TIDBIT #112: ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

By Archie Stone

Timing is everything. Peter started the ball rolling with his creative images at our first meeting. Next Sue asked me for a Tidbits for the newsletter. So, this tidbit will **start** to delve into AI. I have posted some quotes from various websites at the end of the article.

AI research started in 1956, which would be back in the day of huge main frame computers and piles and piles of key punch cards. For you youngsters, we used commands and data entered on a key punch card to load the data into the computer and run the program. The data or coding was hand written or machine generated, and then a key punch operator would punch the card. A simple command such as multiply hours worked times pay rate may take a number of cards. As an aside, I spent one summer working in the computer center of IBM's Lexington, KY plant. I can tell you from experience that when you spill a packet of 1,000 cards you have really screwed up big time. Luckily for me, each card is sequentially numbered and they had a mechanical sorter that put them back in order after over an hour of running them through the machine. Lesson learned.

We have been using AI in cameras starting with auto focus and auto exposure. Now most of what you can do with things such as eye recognition, focus stacking, etc., are AI driven. AI is also used in editing programs to remove noise and sharpen images among other things.

The most interesting thing I've learned is that for AI to work, it has to have a large data base (data set) on which to start and then build on. AI software, without this large data base, is not going to do anything. It will only improve if it has a starting point. This was obvious in the original auto focus and auto exposure systems in the speed at which a high end camera could obtain focus and exposure over that of a low end (think inexpensive) camera. The difference was in the amount of data the high end camera had available to compare to over the low end camera.

So, what do the major camera club organizations allow? The Photographic Society of America, a nation-wide umbrella organization says on its website "In all sections of the exhibition, images must originate as photographs made by the entrant. They may not incorporate identifiable images produced by anyone else (for example: clip art, replacement skies, or stock images). Images created in whole or in part by image creation software (frequently called 'AI' images) are not allowed. Editing or alteration of images is permitted within the limits specified in the relevant section definitions that are available here <https://psa-photo.org/page/division-definition>.

So, this brings up a dilemma. In looking at what Peter properly called "images" and not photographs, we all thought they were Peter's normally beautiful photographs. The issue is ethics! If you can not tell an AI generated image from a photograph, it then becomes the responsibility of the maker to not use AI and enter it into a club competition or critique. There is no way, at this time, for a judge or juror to tell one from the other. Both PSA and NECCC (New England Camera Club Council, of which our club is a member) forbid the use of AI in whole or in part.

So, what is a camera club to do? We already have a Creative category where the photograph is altered using editing tools or combining photographs. Do we now allow AI generated images to be displayed in this category? Technically to alter photographs in Adobe Lightroom or Photoshop, or other editing software, in any manner, is already allowing AI modifications to photographs.

When you get right down to it, we have been modifying photographs from the day of the first camera, as we can choose the film type or sensor settings, different lenses, ISO, shutter speed and aperture. We also alter the photograph on where we place the camera before snapping the shutter. The big difference is, in a photograph we use a tool that had a lens, a light source, and a capture medium, whether film or sensor. In AI we are using the computer to make a complete image or alter our photograph. Another aside, altering photographs is not new. I have a photography book with a daguerreotype that was made up from five separate images printed on paper. How? With the cut and paste command. In those days cut was with a razor blade and paste was with good old glue. After the cut and paste the photographer used the blend tool to conceal the edges of the cut. Again, this was done with inks, swabs and what ever was available to hide the cut edges. Then the merged photographs were photographed for the final image. And we wonder where we get all of the tool titles in our editing software.

CREATING THE BOUNDARIES OF PHOTOGRAPHY

By Mark Janke

The recent rise of Artificial Intelligence (AI) to create images has raised some interesting questions for us in the camera club...for all camera clubs. In Photoshop, we can now generate images limited only by our imagination and the AI software within the Photoshop program. These images can be wildly evocative and beautiful. Some remind me of paintings that Salvadore Dali may have dreamed up. But the source is essentially a software program. The image has little or nothing to do with photography. The following is a definition I retrieved from Wikipedia illustrates what I mean.

“A **photograph** (also known as a **photo**, **image**, or **picture**) is an [image](#) created by [light](#) falling on a [photosensitive](#) surface, usually photographic film or an electronic [image sensor](#), such as a [CCD](#) or a [CMOS](#) chip. Most photographs are now created using a [smartphone](#) or [camera](#), which uses a [lens](#) to focus the scene's [visible wavelengths](#) of light into a reproduction of what the [human eye](#) would see. The process and practice of creating such images is called [photography](#).”

An AI image is generated in an entirely different manner.....as different as a painter with their canvas and brushes. An AI image's only connection to current day photography is Photoshop... As photographers, many of us use that program as our “digital darkroom”. For the AI artist, Photoshop is his source of canvas, brushes, paints, etc.,.....all through software.

So the question arises. Can we or should we incorporate AI images as a completely integral part of what we do as a club? My feeling is this. We are a CAMERA club. This implies that our images are photographs as defined above. They may be altered and enhanced using digital software, but they all originated from a “camera” of some type. Therefore I believe our emphasis should remain on the capturing of photographs with the use of a camera-like device.

As time passes, AI imaging may become more and more popular. There is certainly always room for another art form. If we have many more members interested in pursuing AI images, we may want to expand our exhibits to include some of them, but they should always remain totally separate from photography when judging and competition is involved. How could anyone judge the relative quality of an Ansel Adams photograph with a Claude Monet landscape?

Our exhibits provide a means for members to compete with one another in a laid back fashion. In the end I believe these friendly competitions have led to the quality of everyone's images improving dramatically. But there is another reason which we have for hanging exhibits, namely it provides us a means of showing our work to the public and, just as important, it is a source of pleasure for the public to see our work.

There is no reason why AI images could not become a part of our exhibits for the public to enjoy. For instance, our Hospice exhibit is not a competition. So including AI images is an easy decision to make. The “artist” and the public both win. I think the question of how to address AI images will continue to evolve as the “magic” software continues to improve. It's something to look forward to.....like maybe next month!

REQUESTS

Products: If you have made a photography related purchase in the past year or two, please consider submitting a brief review of the product. This includes gear and software. Some things you might want to include: why did you purchase this product, does it replace something you already own, is it user friendly? Send the review to Sue Frechette at wfrprs@att.net and she'll publish it in the newsletter.

Photo Workshops and Tours: Have you recently participated in a photography workshop or tour? Please consider writing a brief review of your experience. Please comment on the leader/instructor, the location, the photo opportunities, the learning experience in general would you recommend it to others, and anything else you'd like our members to know. Send it to Sue Frechette at wfrprs@att.net. She'll publish it in the newsletter.

SENIOR CENTER FALL SHOW FIRST PLACE WINNERS

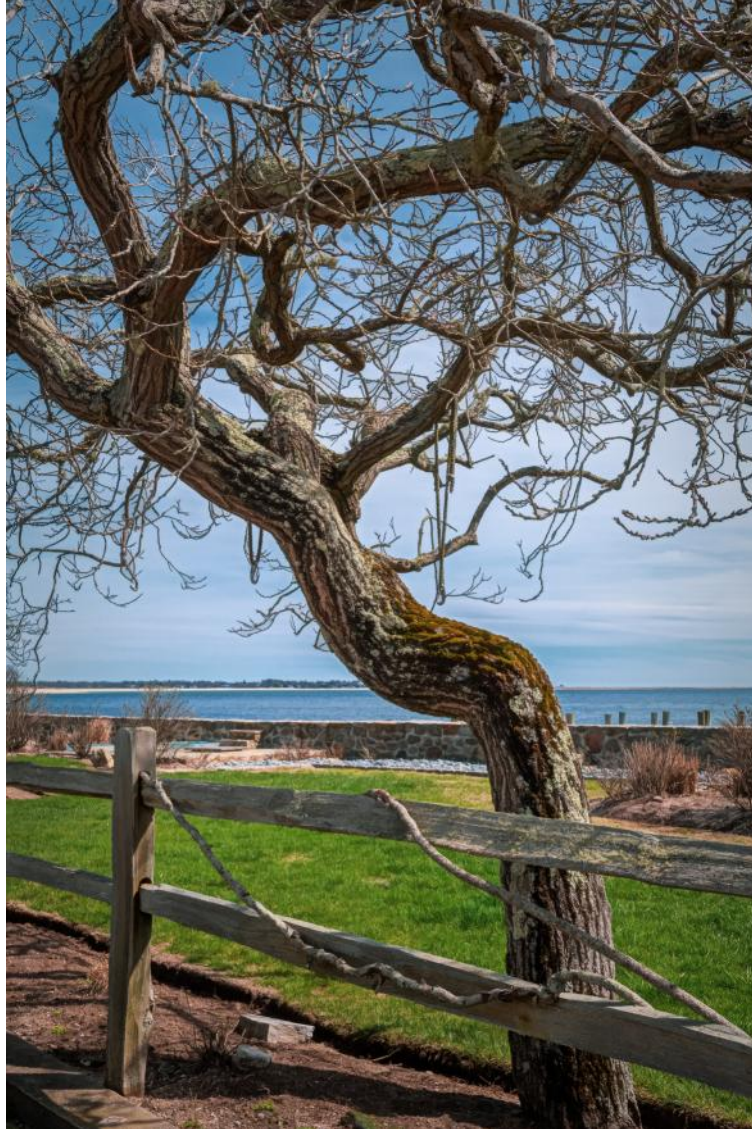
On October 4th we held the opening of our Fall Show at the Madison Senior Center. Eleven members participated by submitting 43 images in seven categories; Nature touched by Man, People, Landscape/Seascape, Nature, Architecture, Creative and General. These are the first place winners in each category. One photo is missing from these pages. Carol Lowbeer's first place Creative category winner titled 'Sunday Sailboat Racing'. Watch the club website for her image.



This image titled "Ready Aim Fire" was taken by Dave Rathbun. It won first place in the People category and also won Best of Show



Anne Mele took this image titled 'Sunset at Low Tide'. It took first place in the Landscape/Seascape Category.



This photo titled 'Tree Askew' won first place in the Nature touched by Man category and was taken by Janet Rathbun.



'White -Bellied Sea Eagle was taken by Mark Janke. It won first place in the Nature Category.



This is Carol Lowbeer's 'Sunday Sailboat Racing'. It won first place in the Creative Category.

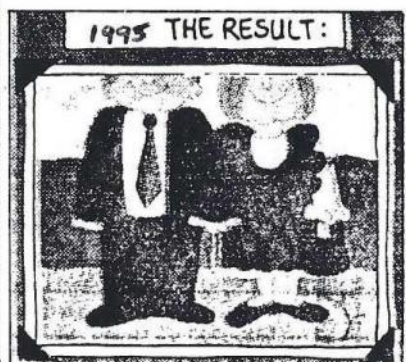
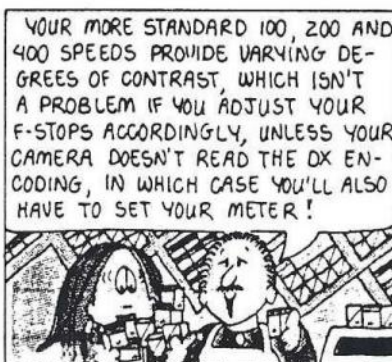
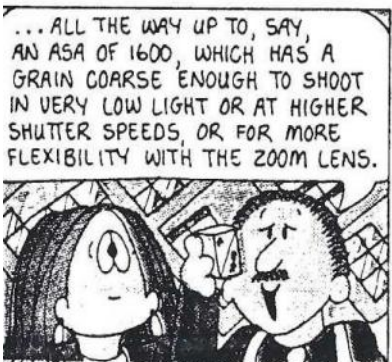
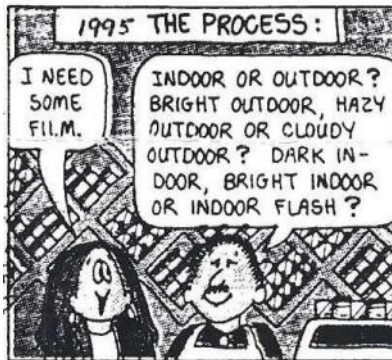
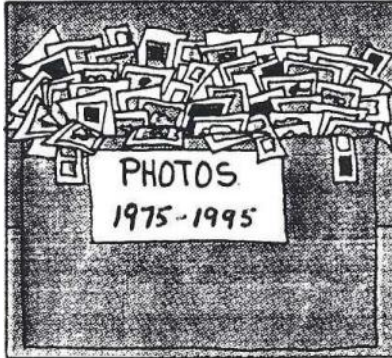


This is Anne Mele's 'Paris Underground Canal', which won first place in the Architecture Category



'Through the Looking Glass', also my Anne Mele, took first place in the General Category.

CATHY



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Submitted by Paula Chabot