



North Central Camera Club Council

N4C December 2023 News Bulletin

Volume 60 No. 58 www.N4C.us

President Paul's Notes:



The Holiday Season is upon us. We are into the last month of the year, and we have a lot to reflect on. We had the resurgence of Spring Mini Convention, an amazing convention in Dubuque and our annual competitions are in full swing. With all of celebrations and joyful triumphs, we also need to stop and think about those who are no longer with us this year, be it a family member, friend, camera club member, neighbor or just an acquaintance. At some point this person touches the lives of many other people. So please take a quick moment of silence to remember them.

Well, we all know I can stay silent for long, so I will tell you about our recent loss.

The Fargo Moorhead Camera club recently lost our past president Steve Rodvold. Now I can't say I personally knew Steve well, but I had tremendous respect for him as he stood up at our spring meeting and tossed his name into the hat to run for Club president. He was an accomplished photographer who loved being outside with his camera and took some wonderful images. He will be missed by our club, his friends, and his family. So, as you go about your Holiday's remembered to think about that person you lost. We also Lost a long time N4C member George Bebout, very recently.

But as we Gather around the dinner table albeit for Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanza, Boxing Day, Santa Lucia, Las Posadas, Feast of the Immaculate Conception just remember to be thanked full for all that you have and if you have a bit extra, don't be afraid to help someone less fortunate. A few pennies will go a long way to someone who has none.

Don't forget to get your lodging for next year's fall convention reserved as it is a state park that will fill up fast. I made my reservations back in November. Also don't forget to all chip in and buy the N4C president a New Canon R6 Markii. I know he would appreciate it.

Paul Hagen
President N4C





N4C November (2023-10) Contest Results

Altered Reality Prints

- 1st Where is Jaclyn? - Kevin McTague, Dubuque
 - 2nd Old Gas Station - Ryno W Olson, Great River
 - 3rd Raspberry plunge - Gordon Rath, Dubuque
- 15 entries from 7 clubs. Judging Club: Duluth Superior Camera Club. Chair: Deb Carroll. Judges: Robert Lahti, Kathleen Wolleat, Paul Zahorosky. Comments: 15 total entries..

B & W Pictorial Prints

- 1st Egret #1 - Ryno W Olson, Great River
 - 2nd Drama in Monument Valley - Stephonie Schmitz, Dubuque
 - 3rd Water Paths of Oregon in B&W - Henry Matthiessen II, Dubuque
 - HM Fresh Combed Bison Portrait - Dwight Tomes, Des Moines
 - HM Prairie Storms - Tim Zeltinger, Minot
 - HM Pears and Mums - Peggy Boike, Saint Paul
- 26 entries from 8 clubs. Judging Club: Southwest Iowa Shutterbugs. Chair: Kim Walter. Judges: Debbie Bates, Linda Buxton, Sybil Schwochow.

Digital Altered Reality

- 1st It Was All Just A Dream - Stephonie Schmitz, Dubuque
 - 2nd Hiding From My Predator - Melissa Anderson, Western Wisconsin
 - 3rd The Rapture - Markus Erk, Black Hills
 - HM Dimension - Diana Borash, Iowa City
 - HM Hands - Andrew Turner, Sioux Falls
 - HM Home Home on the Range - Mike Barker, Omaha
- 60 entries from 16 clubs. Judging Club: Minnesota Valley Photography Club. Chair: Daniel Vande Vusse . Judges: Eugene Weigel, Bob Tourdout, Rick Graves. Comments: Enjoyed judging the wide variety of creativity! .

Digital B&W

- 1st Hummingbird - Keith Anderson, Sioux Falls
- 2nd Lakota Chief - First Crazy Dog - Markus Erk, Black Hills
- 3rd Earth_Wind_and_Fire - Doug Conrad, Sioux City
- HM Morning in the Rockies - Deb Shoning, Des Moines
- HM Churches of the prairie - Tim Zeltinger, Minot
- HM Dare to Dream - Crystal Johnson, Minot

- HM Miss Mitchell - Ken Cheung, Minnesota Valley
- HM Prairie Chicken Scuffle - Allen Kurth, Omaha
- HM At the Watering Hole - Sandy Jorgenson, Sioux Falls
- HM Snow on Grate - Paul Rogne, Saint Paul

116 entries from 19 clubs. Judging Club: Wichita Area Camera Club. Chair: Dwight Corrin. Judges: Edgar Evans, Randy Ficken, Ken Morgan.

Digital Journalism

- 1st The hands of Hospice - Bruce Danuser, Fargo-Moorhead
- 2nd Christmas Window, Gaze of a Child - Casey Klein, Dubuque
- 3rd No Time - He Missed the Horn - Allen Kurth, Omaha
- HM Homeless - Doug Conrad, Sioux City
- HM Memorial To His Wife - Larry Syverud, Saint Paul
- HM Thunderbirds Photo Pass - Don Thun, Topeka
- HM Tornado Warned Super Cell Over Newell, SD - Markus Erk, Black Hills
- HM Early Morning Cattle Drive-Ethiopia - David Clardy, Fargo-Moorhead
- HM The Surfer's - Mary Johnson, Western Wisconsin

72 entries from 18 clubs. Judging Club: Sioux Falls Camera Club. Chair: Keith Anderson. Judges: Marty DeWitt, Sandy Jorgenson, Kent Staubus.

Digital Nature

- 1st Morning Merlin - Todd Johnson, Minot
- 2nd Spring Trio - Martha Farwell, Great River
- 3rd Burrowing Owl - Sharon Watson, Fargo-Moorhead
- HM Late Day Monarch - Paul Bellinger, Omaha
- HM Blue Eyes - Ken Epstein, Saint Paul
- HM Red-eyed Vireo - Deb Shoning, Des Moines
- HM Yellow Warbler Gathering Nesting Material - Allen Kurth, Omaha
- HM Yang & Yin - Ken Epstein, Saint Paul
- HM Dinner is hiding in the seaweed - Paul Zahorosky, Duluth-Superior
- HM Eye Spy - Marv Vikla, Saint Paul

100 entries from 18 clubs. Judging Club: Western Wisconsin Photo Club. Chair: Terry Butler. Judges: Melissa Anderson, Mariann Cyr, Diane Sisko. Comments: There was a wide variety of nature images. Judges had a difficult time because there were so many exceptional entries.

Digital Pictorial

- 1st Mirror Mirror - Sharon Watson, Fargo-Moorhead
- 2nd Free to Celebrate - Crystal Johnson, Minot
- 3rd 2591 Alone in the Crowd - David Perez, Minnesota Valley
- HM Belgian_Air_Force - Doug Conrad, Sioux City
- HM Woodduck Brood - Marge Springett, Western Wisconsin
- HM Eye of the Storm - Karen Mahoney, Black Hills
- HM Rolling Hills and Barn - Craig Peterson, Minnesota Valley
- HM Opening Soon - Dave Eckmann, Saint Paul
- HM Clearwing Hummingbird Moth - David Perez, Minnesota Valley

101 entries from 19 clubs. Judging Club: Omaha Camera Club. Chair: Nikki McDonald. Judges: Allen Kurth, Mike Barker, Donna Gray. Comments: There were many good images, but few stood out for all judges; top scores were lower than usual. Two judges esp. appreciated entries that, to paraphrase N4C category description, "emphasized the artistic quality . . . in subject, tonality, and composition". One said many entrants miss the possibilities; DP is for artists, not snapshots.

Digital Travel

- 1st Autumn at the Motor Mill (Elkader,IA) - Paul Grillo, Des Moines
- 2nd Warrior at the Reenactment of the Battle of the Little Big Horn Garry Owen MT.jpeg - Suzy Adams, Black Hills
- 3rd This is the life-FL - Mary Johnson, Western Wisconsin
- HM Gateway Arch National Park - St. Louis, MO - Markus Erk, Black Hills
- HM Clouds Over Half Dome, Yosemite National Park, CA - Ken Cheung, Minnesota Valley
- HM Opposing Traffic on the Walt Whitman-NJ - Elliott Lindgren, Saint Paul
- HM Matanuska Valley, Alaska - Martha Farwell, Great River
- HM Beach Sunset, CA - Marianne Diericks, Western Wisconsin
- HM Bow Lake, Banff Canada - Melissa Anderson, Western Wisconsin
- HM Off the Coast of California - Janie Lawson, Des Moines

90 entries from 17 clubs. Judging Club: Iowa City Camera Club. Chair: Randy Moyer. Judges: Mark Gromko, Diana Borash, Bob Rude.

Journalism Prints

- 1st Throwing Smoke - James Durrant, Dubuque
- 2nd Living the Real Top Gun - Ron Tigges, Dubuque
- 3rd St Paul Pigs Stiff Arm - Karen Leonard, Saint Paul
- HM Taking the Path Less Traveled - Stephonie Schmitz, Dubuque
- HM Chalk Artist - Carl Hardy, Sioux City

14 entries from 6 clubs. Judging Club: Minot Camera Club. Chair: Tim Zeltinger. Judges: David Abernathey, Adam Papin, Betty Nordstrom. Comments:

Prints that have a thin line border around the edge that are not allowed according to the rules of journalism. After this point any manipulation to that effect will be DQ while we judge journalism. As quoted by one judge who has been with a paper for years said "It is distracting, and not allowed to PJ contest for any newspaper nor allowed when submitting to a paper". This is his statement and we will stand by it. ***Any picture that does not meet the 8x10 size will be DQ from here on out.** Any PJ print that manipulates the image (including fake borders outlining the photo will be DQ. All prints coming to our club after the 15th will also be DQ.

As per editing privileges Carl Hardy ******(This change in Journalism size was voted on and approved by the N4C Board in 2022.

1. ****Print Size**
2. ****a. Minimum print size is 8 x 10 inches for all categories.**
3. ****b. Maximum print size for Journalism is the same as all categories.**
4. ****c. Maximum print size for all competitions is constrained by what fits, unfolded, into either a 15 1/8 x 11 5/8-inch mailing envelope OR a 14 x 12 x 3-inch priority box, both of which are available for free at USPS.**
5. ****NO mats or backing is allowed for prints; all prints must be unmounted.**

Nature Prints

1st Bull Moose in Water - Stephonie Schmitz, Dubuque

2nd Preening After Dawn - Ken Epstein, Saint Paul

3rd Acorns in Red Oak - Peggy Boike, Saint Paul

HM Bear in the Air - Ronnie Hartman, Saint Paul

HM Spring Gem - Carol Crowdus, Minot

HM Nature's Color Palette - Henry Matthiessen II, Dubuque

28 entries from 8 clubs. Judging Club: Southwest Iowa Shutterbugs. Chair: Kim Walter. Judges: Debbie Bates, Linda Buxton, Sybil Schwochow.

Pictorial Prints (Color)

1st Wensday - Randy Moyer, Iowa City

2nd Standing strong - Ron Tigges, Dubuque

3rd Lenticular clouds (early morning) - Stephonie Schmitz, Dubuque

HM Jack Skellington - Gordon Rath, Dubuque

HM Yellow vase and corn - Peggy Boike, Saint Paul

HM Mushrooms - Ryno W. Olson, Great River

38 entries from 9 clubs. Judging Club: Duluth Superior Camera Club. Chair: Deb Carroll. Judges: Robert Lahti, Kathleen Wolleat, Paul Zahorosky.

Travel Prints

1st Bike Walk in Germany - Paul Rogne, Saint Paul

2nd Moody Oregon Coast - Henry Matthiessen II, Dubuque

3rd Daytime Stroll through White Pocket AZ - Stephonie Schmitz, Dubuque

HM Gold Justice - Gordon Rath, Dubuque

HM Red Sunset Hong Kong - Elliott Lindgren, Saint Paul

24 entries from 6 clubs. Judging Club: Minot Camera Club. Chair: Tim Zeltinger. Judges: David Abernathey, Adam Papin, Betty Nordstrom. Comments: Some very close ones. Those not placing think about resubmitting again. Maybe even change category.

Digital Altered Reality

1st It Was All Just A Dream - Stephonie Schmitz, Dubuque



Digital B&W

1st Hummingbird - Keith Anderson, Sioux Falls



Digital Journalism

1st The hands of Hospice - Bruce Danuser, Fargo-Moorhead



Digital Nature

1st Morning Merlin - Todd Johnson, Minot



Digital Pictorial

1st Mirror Mirror - Sharon Watson, Fargo-Moorhead



Digital Travel

1st Autumn at the Motor Mill (Elkader,IA) - Paul Grillo, Des Moines



Altered Reality Prints

1st Where is Jaclyn? - Kevin McTague, Dubuque



Journalism Prints

1st Throwing Smoke - James Durrant, Dubuque



B & W Pictorial Prints

1st Egret #1 - Ryno W Olson, Great River



Nature Prints

1st Bull Moose in Water - Stephonie Schmitz, Dubuque



Travel Prints

1st Bike Walk in Germany - Paul Rogne, Saint Paul



Pictorial (Color) Prints

1st Wensday - Randy Moyer, Iowa City



How Cropping Can Affect a Photo

By Randy Schoener Sioux City Camera Club

A lot of feedback on club photos seems to revolve around cropping distracting objects from photos so I decided to put this document together to help demonstrate how cropping can affect the composition of a photo in unintended ways.

This photo was never meant to be anything special. It was just a quick photo I took to use for future reference, so I didn't give much thought to composition at the time I took it.

But after I got home and looked at this picture on my computer, I wished I had taken more time with this photo as I really like the lighting provided by the streetlight and the backlight provided by the sunset turning to dusk. Despite my poor planning at the time, I feel like this photo still works well with some of the points I'm going to make in this presentation about how cropping can affect a photo.



Did you notice the garbage container in the bottom right corner of the photo?

If you were to ask for feedback on this photo, one of the first suggestions you would be likely to get would be to crop the right side of the photo to remove the offending garbage can.

But what commentators often fail to consider is how cropping the picture in this way affects the rest of the photo.





In this picture (above left) I cropped just the right side of the photo just enough to remove the garbage can. This now looks much better. But, if you were to ask again for feedback, this time you might be told that the light pole is distracting.



With this picture I cropped the right side further to remove the light pole as well as the garbage can. But cropping the picture in this manner throws the entire picture off balance because the church is now sitting too far off to the right side of the picture. This move also now brings a lot more attention to the trees on the left side of the photo.

The propane tanks are also distracting, but for purposes of this presentation I am focusing on how the entire space between the church and the left side of the picture now detracts from the composition.



In this photo I cropped the left side of the photo to cut out the propane tanks and as much of the trees as I could. This also allowed me to re-center the church evenly between the left and right sides of the photo. When cropping the left side, I also noticed things were feeling off balance vertically, so I cropped the bottom of the photo a bit, so the church is now close to being centered top to bottom as well.

While this last version of this photo might now be free of the distractions mentioned before, the composition has completely changed from what it was originally.

Also, at this point we are no longer cropping the photo, rather we have used the crop tool to zoom in on the subject in the photo which lowers the overall picture quality and affects the fine details in the photo as well.

If the photo needs to be cropped that far, one might be better off using the camera to zoom in on the subject before taking the photo or taking the photo from a different angle or perspective to avoid the distracting subjects to begin with.

Despite all this, assuming you take this photo zoomed in tight like shown in the last photo above, some commentators who were not aware of the distractions that were cropped out might now say the photo seems to be cropped or zoomed in too tight around the subject. And some might even inquire about what kind of background surrounds this small country church and suggest zooming out a little bit.

In the end it's all about what you want the viewer to see in the photo, and everyone who looks at it might see it a little bit differently. We also must remember what we don't see can be just as important as what we do see.

The rules of composition

When it comes to photography we often hear about the "Rules of composition" but starting out we may not give them much thought. We might even get confused by them and at other times it seems like they just don't work the way we expect.

The thing to remember about the rules though is that there are no hard and fast rules. Rather the rules should be considered as helpful guides that can help add depth and visual interest to your photos.

In this demonstration I will be using some of my own photos to demonstrate how the rules can help.

As beginners we often start out with a habit of just centering a subject in a photo. Or doing other things like putting horizon lines right across the middle and or using the rule of thirds incorrectly.

While this is sometimes OK, it can also be distracting and cause your photo to lack the depth it needs to stand out.

Before learning about the rules of composition I centered the barn vertically and horizontally with the horizon line in this photo when taking this picture. As you can see here, this photo lacks any real depth or visual interest.



However, taking the rules of composition into account, I cropped the top of the picture, so the roof line is now across the center of the picture instead of the horizon line of the landscape behind the barn. While our horizon line and the barn are no longer centered this move helped the visual interest in this photo in a few ways.

First the center focal point is now on the front corner of the barn instead of on the roof of the barn as it was before. This brings more attention to the face and the side of the barn. This move also adds visual interest by eliminating some of the boring sky above the barn. At the same time this move makes the foreground more prominent which makes the barn seem like its setting further back and adds a sense of depth to the photo.



This move also helps this photo lineup with the rule of thirds with the grass line below the barn lining up close to the lower one third line and the middle face of the barn being spit by the vertical one third line on the right side.

However, this photo still seems to be lacking something as the textured roof still has too much prominence in the photo vs the rest of the barn. This is also where it's easy to get confused when using the rule of thirds because other things like leading lines, evading spaces or dynamic tension might make more of a difference.



By repositioning to the side just a little bit, we have now moved the center point just to the right side of the corner of the building which brings more prominence to the front of the barn vs the left side of the barn. Our one third line also lines up nicely with the dark vertical line in the face of the barn as well as with the door at the bottom. This move also creates a leading space between the front of the barn and the right side of the photo which creates a sense of movement between the barn and the gate on the right side of the photo.



The lines created by the grass in the foreground create a narrow triangle that points to the gate on the right side of the photo. Then the gate combined with the grass creates a line that brings your attention back to the front of the barn.

While some might consider the fence post or the gate distracting, they are reinforcing the sense of movement in front of the barn.



Another example

This photo (below) is like the previous photo but is composed a bit differently and has empty space in the sky. But that empty space is filled with colorful soft textured clouds that complement the composition rather than clashing with it.



And leading lines re-enforce directional movement between the door and the right side of the picture.





The sides of the barn also are not centered with the left and right sides of the photo which allows for a leading space between the door on the right side of the barn and the right side of the picture.

Despite that, the vertical center line does line up nicely with the front corner of the barn and the joint between the two sections of the roof while the horizontal center line lines up nicely with the roof lines.



The rule of thirds also helps us position the barn vertically as well as horizontally with the top one third line lining up with the peak of the barn and the bottom one third line lining up with the field, and the base of the barn while at the same time the vertical lines line up with the joint in the roof and the door on the front of the barn.



North Central Camera Club Council



“Where Names Become Faces and Faces Become Friends”

The N4C Bulletin is the official publication of the North Central Camera Club Council which serves camera clubs in Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, Wisconsin, and Wyoming.

Published Monthly. N4C is affiliated with the Photographic Society of America. N4C Bulletin Staff Editor/Publisher: Carl Hardy, torchenterprises72@gmail.com
E-Publisher: Carl Hardy, torchenterprises72@gmail.com

