



North Central Camera Club Council

N4C February 2024 News Bulletin

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In order to facilitate more interaction between members, we had a N4C discussion meeting on January 19th via Zoom. Discussion topic was the N4C Annual Fall Convention. Fourteen members were in attendance. Discussion led to possibly having a meetup to take photos in a central location. Several members are researching the Renaissance Festival in Shakopee MN to see if we can find nearby accommodations and a room at a hotel or nearby church in order to have some round table discussions. No date was set and we are just researching at this time. Hopefully more info at our next meeting:

Next N4C Board Meeting Zoom will be February 16th at 6pm

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83928125124?pwd=2V7p0oXloVZPzqQQ3GTlxhyNj18FwQ.1>

Please join us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/N4C.us>

Print Entry and Judging Notes:

Just a reminder to allow extra time for print entries especially with winter weather. USPS has been terribly inaccurate with their delivery estimates.

Please do not adhere anything to the back of competition prints like feedback or ribbons. Rules state they need to be returned in the same condition that they were sent. Adding regular tape to prints makes it hard to resubmit or to have them in good condition to send in for the best of the best year end competition.

Instructions to Print Judging Club: Entries will be judged in accordance with "Instructions to Judging Clubs" provided by the designated Council Chairperson. This form, when completed, will be mailed back to the entering club, together with entries submitted, and awards, if any. Comments should bring out the strong and weak points of each entry, as well as any suggestions for improvement. If there are any questions, consult the designated Council Chairperson. Be sure to send a new Entry Blank to the entering club for use in the following month's contest. If there are any questions, write the designated Council Chairperson, who will give all inquiries prompt attention. Note: Under this method each club will know what awards

were received covering their entries, as well as the rating of each entry submitted by its members. The next issue of the N4C Bulletin will contain a list showing ALL of the awards made by the judging club in this competition.

I still have a landline (don't laugh) 563-583-7128. Call or text me at 563-590-9868, email me at president@n4c.us or jennifer.tigges@gmail.com or become my Facebook friend and message me via Facebook messenger <https://www.facebook.com/jennifertigges>

Jennifer Tigges

Your 2024-2025 President



Bulletin Editor

1st Place Digital Images are still included in the N4C Bulletins. The N4C website <http://www.n4c.us> presents all the monthly Digital winners on page 1.

"Since prints are not shown on the website, I will present all the Print winners in each issue of the N4C Bulletin," commented N4C Bulletin Editor Carl Hardy

Where Names Become Faces and Faces Become Friends!

LINKS ARE AT THE END OF THIS BULLETIN FOR EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS FROM N4C CLUBS WEBSITES. AND AND EDUCATIONAL ARTICLES.

Carl Hardy, N4C Bulletin Editor

Merry Christmas to all N4C members and N4C Clubs



Meet the N4C Board

Paul Grillo

N4C Director 1

Retired, Previously worked in the Business Forms & Management area for the past 40 years for NCR, CIGNA and Principal Insurance. Responsible for forms design and workflow analysis. Started with Photography back in the 70's but dropped it for a number of years and started up again in 2011 just prior to retiring. It is my official hobby but also golf and fly-fish.

Member of Des Moines Camera Club since 2011 holding position as the coordinator for N4C. At that time, became Member of N4C and have held several Director positions over the years. My photography includes almost all subjects, wildlife, action, macro, landscape, street, and architecture. I do not do much individual/personal portraits and I don't do Weddings! I enjoy travel associated for photography but gladly shoot locally.

My photos have been published in Iowa Magazines, Silos & Smoke Stacks, and on websites for Minnesota Travel. I have been a consistent winner in Iowa State Fair contest winning several top awards including Photo of the Year in 2016. I also work the State Fair to help coordinate intake and with the judging session (I do not judge). I am on Facebook, but my photos website is on Flickr. I have also won Photographer of the Year for N4C in the past.

Paul Grillo Photography





N4C January (2025-01) Contest Results

Digital Altered Reality

- 1st Waiting for Mom - Sharon Watson, Fargo-Moorhead
- 2nd Catching Fairies - Kevin McTague, Dubuque
- 3rd Paris Staircase - Kathy Bury, Saint Paul
- HM Butterflies on Bobbins - Peggy Boike, Saint Paul
- HM Fall Migration - Janell Gibson, Black Hills
- HM WorshipDance - Craig Alberty, Black Hills
- HM Other Side Down - Nikki McDonald, Omaha

69 entries from 16 clubs. Judging Club: Iowa City Camera Club. Chair: Bob Rude. Judges: Mark Gromko, Diana Borash, Kristel Saxton. Comments: Nice mix of techniques. Lot's of talk from judges on the top 10 entries. A fair amount of entries had nice techniques but didn't work on that image.

Digital B&W

- 1st Silver Fox - Kim Walter, Southwest Iowa Shutterbugs
- 2nd Lilly after the Rain - Deb Shoning, Des Moines
- 3rd In Quarter Time - Crystal Johnson, Minot
- HM Flying Fast - Allen Kurth, Omaha
- HM Concentration - Cindy Carlsson, Saint Paul
- HM King Vulture - Marianne Diericks, Western Wisconsin
- HM Adams_Late_Night-[2] - Michael Greiner, Sioux City
- HM Spools of Thread - Peggy Boike, Saint Paul
- HM Moon Piercer - Wesley Gee, Des Moines
- HM Ground-Cherry - Martha Farwell, Great River
- HM Water off a ducks back - John Corey, Minnesota Valley
- HM Waiting - Jeff Westgard, Fargo-Moorhead

113 entries from 20 clubs. Judging Club: Shutterbug Camera Club. Chair: John F. Larson, Jr.. Judges: Michelle Hall, Sarah Bissell, Karla Gerst. Comments: The judges worked very hard to separate the top seven images in order to pick the top three winners and then the Honorable Mentions.

Digital Journalism

- 1st July 4th Parade - Mariann Cyr, Western Wisconsin
- 2nd Teeth Rattler - Steve Hansen, Black Hills
- 3rd On The Way Down - Ken Cheung, Minnesota Valley
- HM Kid's Division of the Indian Relay championships - Tom Arnhold, Topeka
- HM Letting It All Hang Out - Ken Cheung, Minnesota Valley
- HM vikings-can-jump - Drago Nemec, Photoshooters Club
- HM Head Over Heels - Karen Mahoney, Black Hills

64 entries from 16 clubs. Judging Club: Omaha Camera Club. Chair: Nikki McDonald. Judges: Dorothy Sansom, Marty Barker, Mike Barker. Comments: Judges commented on all entries. Judges looked for photos with a clear story, human interest, and good facial expression as well as high image quality; a number of entries lacked one or more of these.

Digital Nature

- 1st Wing Tip Drag - Steve Fleagle, Iowa City
- 2nd Quit Bothering Me I Am Having A Bad Day - Peggy Volden, Fargo-Moorhead
- 3rd Orange-Bird - Sheldon Farwell, Great River
- HM On A Mission - Martha Farwell, Great River
- HM Baby Mallard - Larry Syverud, Saint Paul
- HM Jellyfish Collision - Craig Peterson, Minnesota Valley
- HM American Avocet - David Heemsbergen, Western Wisconsin
- HM Lasioglossum on flowers tongue - Jeff Westgard, Fargo-Moorhead
- HM Super Moon Lightning - Chris Carlson, Duluth-Superior
- HM Sólheimajökull - Marc Ye, Saint Paul

95 entries from 18 clubs. Judging Club: Sioux City Camera Club. Chair: Carl Hardy. Judges: Carey Anderson, Carl Hardy, Carol Blair.

Digital Pictorial

- 1st Child of the American Steppe - Ken Epstein, Saint Paul
- 2nd Lightning Strike - Chap Achen, Western Wisconsin
- 3rd Night Train - Teresa Hofer, Black Hills
- HM Church Red Moon - Kevin McTague, Dubuque
- HM BadlandsBlues - Craig Alberty, Black Hills
- HM Gold Lagoon - John Corey, Minnesota Valley
- HM Fall Sunrise - Steve Fleagle, Iowa City
- HM Gypsy Violinist - Craig Peterson, Minnesota Valley
- HM Spoonbill Family Portrait - Marianne Diericks, Western Wisconsin
- HM Comet 23 A3 Over the Desert - Mark Guinn, Black Hills
- HM Grandpa Got Me - Rick Graves, Minnesota Valley

109 entries from 19 clubs. Judging Club: Duluth-Superior Camera Club. Chair: Lucy Kragness. Judges: Joni Tauzell, Brian Rauvola, Laurie McShane.

Digital Travel

- 1st Sikies-garage-Fargo-ND - Drago Nemec, Photoshooters Club
- 2nd Foggy Morning over the Slovenian Hills, Slovenia - Margaret West, Omaha
- 3rd High Trestle Bridge, Des Moines Iowa - Ron Schmidt, Omaha
- HM Day's End at Pinnacle Point, Badlands SD - Nikki McDonald, Omaha
- HM Eiffel Tower, France - Kevin McTague, Dubuque
- HM Egypt Falls, Nova Scotia Canada - Mike Barker, Omaha
- HM Loring District-Minnesota - Dennis Kroll, Western Wisconsin
- HM Morning Light at Dream Lake Rocky Mountains National Park CO - Ron Tigges, Dubuque

- HM Sydney Australia Opera House at Night - Brenda Heard, Wichita Area

83 entries from 18 clubs. Judging Club: Fargo-Moorhead Camera Club. Chair: Bruce Bernstein. Judges: Sharon Watson, John Calvin, Gordon Court.

Altered Reality Prints

1st Vamprilla - Drago Nemec, Photoshooters Club
2nd Nautilus in Blue - Nancy Heather Brown, Des Moines
3rd Small Day - Gordon Rath, Dubuque
HM Light Bursts of the Forest - Stephonie Schmitz, Dubuque
HM The Culled off Colored Leaf - Dwight Tomes, Des Moines
12 entries from 6 clubs. Judging Club: Minot Camera Club. Chair: Tim Zeltinger. Judges: Cory Hansen, Adam Papin, Danielle Schmidt. Comments:

B & W Pictorial Prints

1st Ice Cream Man - Todd Johnson, Minot
2nd Prime Chevrolet - Crystal Johnson, Minot
3rd St. James Church - Robert Lahti, Duluth-Superior
HM Second Strike - Karen Leonard, Saint Paul
HM Land Formations of North Caineville Mesa - Stephonie Schmitz, Dubuque
HM Waterworks Lights Infrared - Patty Foster, Des Moines
36 entries from 11 clubs. Judging Club: Southwest Iowa Shutterbugs. Chair: Kim Walter. Judges: Debbie Bates, Linda Freeman, Annette Pingee.

Journalism Prints

1st House on Fire - Drago Nemec, Photoshooters Club
2nd Snow Day - Jennifer Parker, Dubuque
3rd Raise Your Right Hand - Todd Johnson, Minot
HM Edina Pitcher - Peggy Boike, Saint Paul
HM 2:07 at Mile 25 - Ken Epstein, Saint Paul
HM This is Bull - Gordon Rath, Dubuque
21 entries from 8 clubs. Judging Club: Kuntemeier Kamera Club. Chair: JoAnn Kuntemeier. Judges: Jane Kemp, Jeanie Yee, Karen Caswell.

Nature Prints

1st Born to a "Harsh Land" - Todd Johnson, Minot
2nd Aurora Cascade - Robert Lahti, Duluth-Superior
3rd Stone Chase 049T in the Reeds - Deb Shoning, Des Moines
HM Hermit Thrush - Kevin Smith, Sioux City
HM Yellow Lady Slipper - Drago Nemec, Photoshooters Club
HM Eagle on Ice - Kevin McTague, Dubuque
36 entries from 11 clubs. Judging Club: Southwest Iowa Shutterbugs. Chair: Kim Walter. Judges: Debbie Bates, Linda Freeman, Annette Pingee.

Pictorial Prints (Color)

1st Still Life with Pear - Deb Shoning, Des Moines
2nd Layers of Nature - Stephonie Schmitz, Dubuque
3rd Frozen - Marc Ye, Saint Paul
HM Misty Morning in the Driftless - Henry Matthiessen II, Dubuque
HM Aurora Reflection - Diane Lowry, Des Moines
HM Passagee - Mary Klauer, Sioux City
28 entries from 9 clubs. Judging Club: Minot Camera Club. Chair: Tim Zeltinger. Judges: Cory Hansen, Adam Papin, Danielle Schmidt. Comments: Some very nice images 28 in all.

Travel Prints

1st Horseshoe Bend at Sunrise Page, AZ - Stephonie Schmitz, Dubuque
2nd Grand Island Light House - Jack Howells, Des Moines
3rd Sea Gulls Expecting a Meal - Steve Simmer, Saint Paul
HM Kilauea Lighthouse Kauai, HI - Karen Durrant, Dubuque
HM Wall of Division Jerusalem, Israel - Dwight Tomes, Des Moines
HM Artists Point, Grand Marais, MN - Drago Nemec, Photoshooters Club
23 entries from 8 clubs. Judging Club: Kuntemeier Kamera Club. Chair: JoAnn Kuntemeier. Judges: Jane Kemp, Jeanie Yee, Karen Caswell.

Digital Altered Reality

1st Waiting for Mom - Sharon Watson, Fargo-Moorhead



Digital Black & White

1st Silver Fox - Kim Walter, Southwest Iowa Shutterbugs



Digital Journalism

1st July 4th Parade - Mariann Cyr, Western Wisconsin



Digital Nature

1st Wing Tip Drag - Steve Fleagle, Iowa City



Digital Pictorial

1st Child of the American Steppe - Ken Epstein, Saint Paul



Digital Travel

1st Sikies-garage-Fargo-ND - Drago Nemec, Photoshooters Club



Altered Reality Prints

1st Vamprilla - Drago Nemec, Photoshooters Club



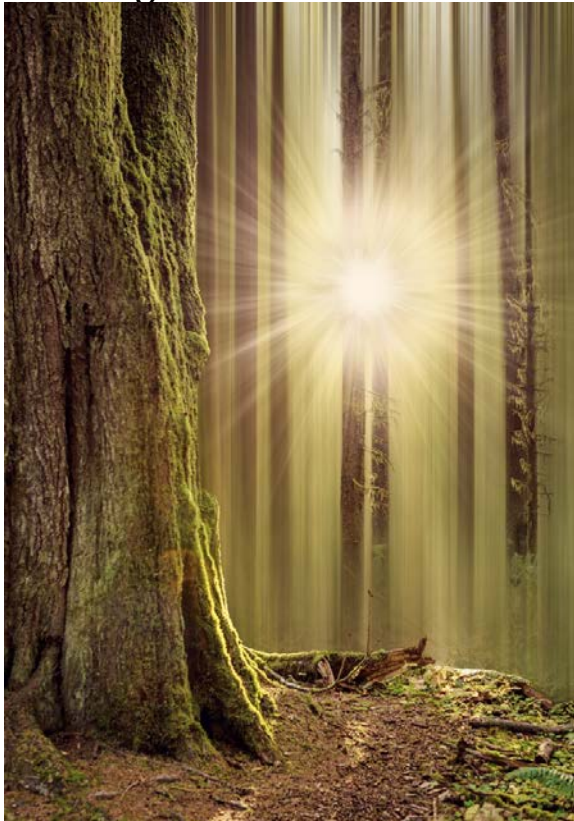
2nd Nautilus in Blue - Nancy Heather Brown, Des Moines



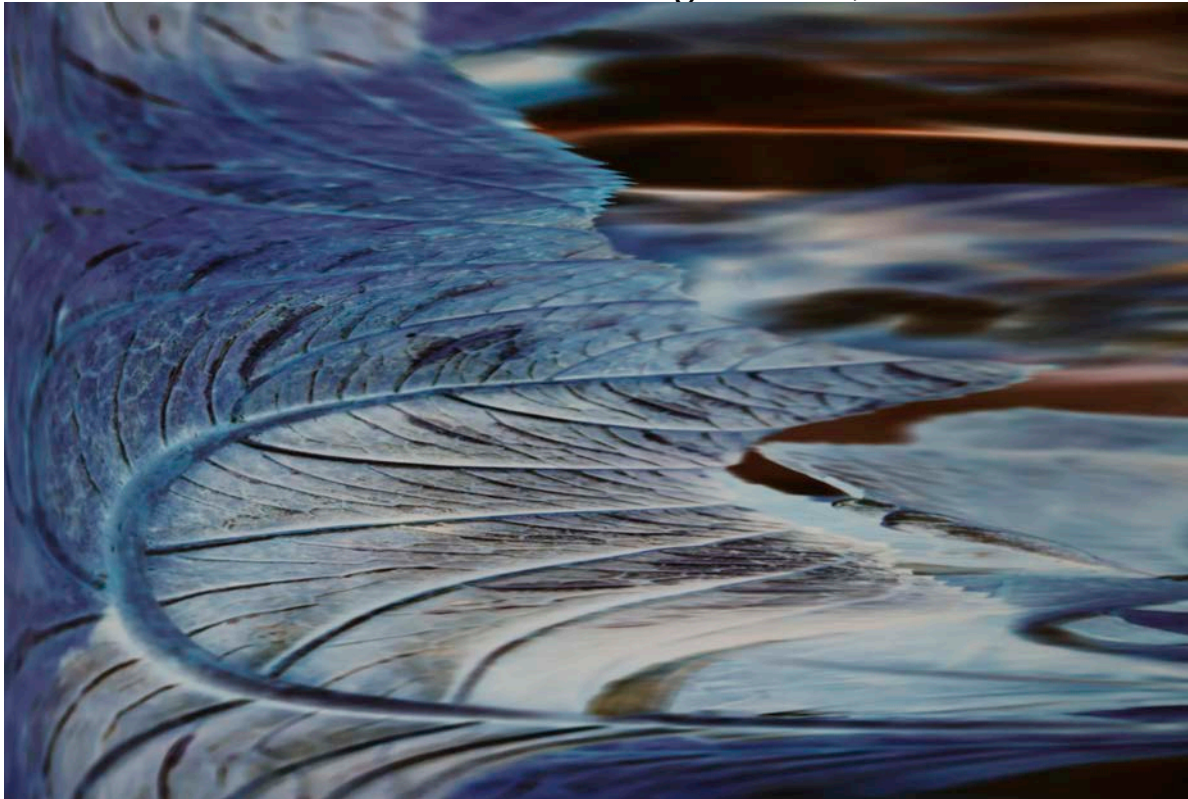
3rd Small Day - Gordon Rath, Dubuque



HM Light Bursts of the Forest - Stephonie Schmitz, Dubuque



HM The Culed off Colored Leaf - Dwight Tomes, Des Moines



B & W Pictorial Prints

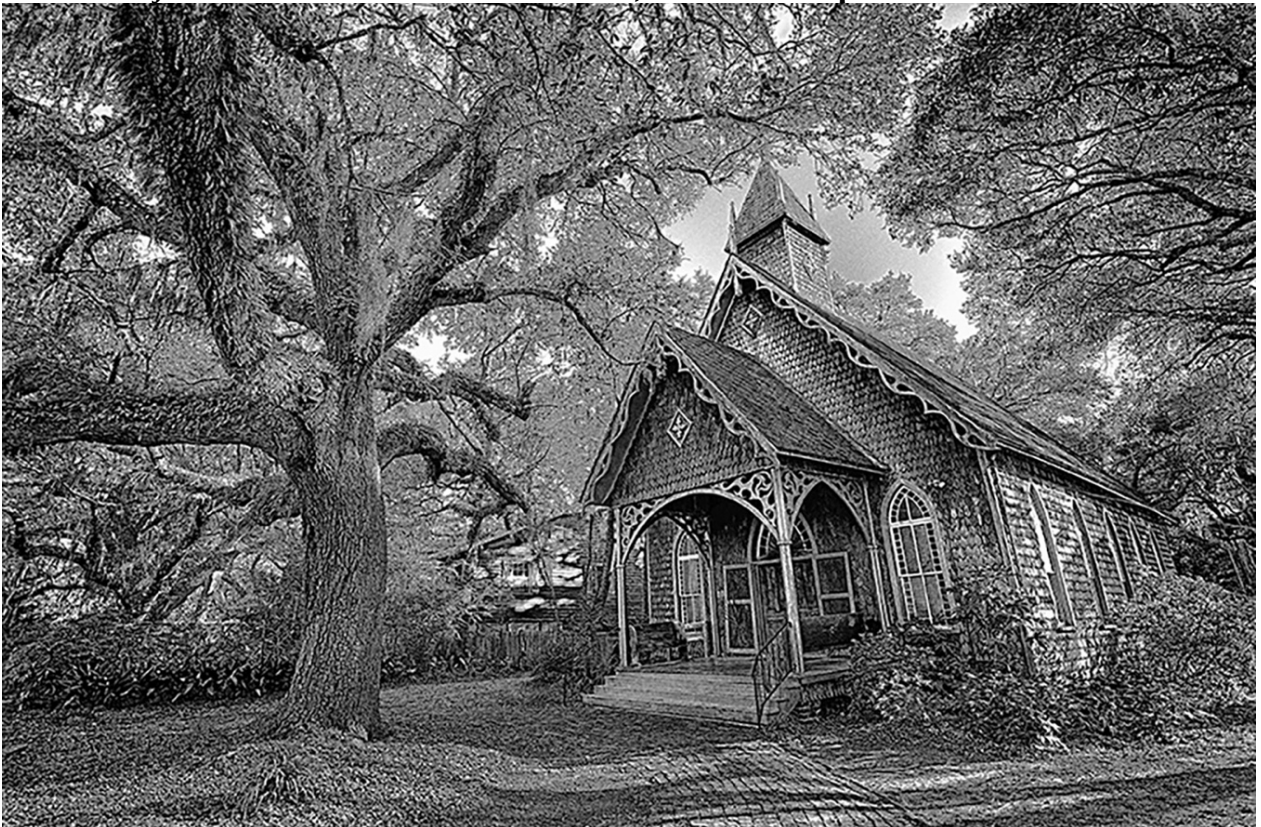
1st Ice Cream Man - Todd Johnson, Minot



2nd Prime Chevrolet - Crystal Johnson, Minot



3rd St. James Church - Robert Lahti, Duluth-Superior



HM Second Strike - Karen Leonard, Saint Paul



HM Land Formations of North Caineville Mesa - Stephonie Schmitz, Dubuque



HM Waterworks Lights Infrared - Patty Foster, Des Moines



Journalism Prints

1st House on Fire - Drago Nemec, Photoshooters Club



2nd Snow Day - Jennifer Parker, Dubuque



3rd Raise Your Right Hand - Todd Johnson, Minot



HM Edina Pitcher - Peggy Boike, Saint Paul



HM 2:07 at Mile 25 - Ken Epstein, Saint Paul



HM This is Bull - Gordon Rath, Dubuque



Nature Prints

1st Born to a "Harsh Land" - Todd Johnson, Minot



2nd Aurora Cascade - Robert Lahti, Duluth-Superior



3rd Stone Chase 049T in the Reeds - Deb Shoning, Des Moines



HM Hermit Thrush - Kevin Smith, Sioux City



HM Yellow Lady Slipper - Drago Nemec, Photoshooters Club



HM Eagle on Ice - Kevin McTague, Dubuque



Pictorial Prints (Color)

1st Still Life with Pear - Deb Shoning, Des Moines



2nd Layers of Nature - Stephonie Schmitz, Dubuque



3rd Frozen - Marc Ye, Saint Paul



HM Misty Morning in the Driftless - Henry Matthiessen II, Dubuque



HM Aurora Reflection - Diane Lowry, Des Moines



HM Passage - Mary Klauer, Sioux City



Travel Prints

1st Horseshoe Bend at Sunrise Page, AZ - Stephonie Schmitz, Dubuque



2nd Grand Island Light House - Jack Howells, Des Moines



3rd Sea Gulls Expecting a Meal - Steve Simmer, Saint Paul



HM Kilauea Lighthouse Kauai, HI - Karen Durrant, Dubuque



HM Wall of Division Jerusalem, Israel - Dwight Tomes, Des Moines





This is the list of N4C Judging Clubs for February.

N4C Digital (& Print) Contacts,

If I should contact someone different, please let me know.

IF YOUR CLUB ENTERS PRINTS, SEE BELOW FOR WHERE TO SEND ENTRIES.

FOR DIGITAL ENTRIES, they must be received by 5:00 pm February 15, however make every effort to send them by the 13th to allow time for confirmation.

- Judging may begin on the 16th - make sure you receive confirmation that entries were received.

The cutoff time will be 5:00pm on the 15th giving the judging chair time to organize them for judging starting on the 16th. The point is....don't wait until the last minute. There have been problems with occasionally missing entries when they are not received until late in the night on the 15th.

The 2023-2024 rules are on the N4C web at <http://n4c.us/competition.htm> by clicking the blue "N4C Contest Rules" button. Copy attached. Refer to those until the new N4C Handbook is available.

The the N4C Directory is available by email from Carl Hardy and his email is torchenterprises72@gmail.com The Handbook contains the contest rules and other general N4C Info. The Directory contains the list of judging clubs for all the contests along with contact info for all the affiliated clubs. The Handbook is available for download from the web <http://n4c.us/Supplies-Forms.htm> page.

There are six Digital Image Contests each month - (see the definitions of each category in the Rules):

- Altered Reality (DA)
- Black & White (DB)
- Journalism (DJ)
- Nature (DN)
- Pictorial (DP)
- Travel (DT)

Maximum of 8 entries per club per contest, not more than one from a member in each contest

Do not enter versions of the same image in multiple contests. For example, do not enter both a color and B&W version in the same month. Likewise don't enter both Digital & print versions. If both win, one will be withdrawn. The rule is: "Any entry which receives a 1st, 2nd, 3rd, or HM award in a monthly competition may not be re-entered in the same year or later years, in the same or any other category, regardless of variations or changes made."

Please check your entries before sending them on for judging. Look for three things:

1. File size 750KB max. (A requirement this year)
2. **Longest side 1,920 pixels max.**
3. File name should look like this example: 01,DE028,DP,Beautiful Sunset.jpg

Content of the Email Message when you send the entries:

- a. Subject Line of the Email should say "N4C Contest Entries from _(your)_ Camera Club".
- b. Specify which monthly contest and how many images are attached to the Email.
- c. List the Member Numbers and corresponding member names to ensure that the Judging Club has that information.
- d. Give the Club Name and your full name.
- e. Attach the image files

ASK THE JUDGING CLUB IF YOU DO NOT GET A RECEIVED CONFIRMATION BACK FROM THEM

Please send me updated member lists when you have added Member Numbers. I'm glad to see new members participating in N4C contests. Naturally I need to get them registered so they are properly identified for the judging clubs. For new members, that really should be done a month in advance of entering.

(Entries must be received by 5:00 pm February 15, however **make every effort to send them by the 13th to allow time for confirmation.**

- Judging may begin on the 16th - make sure you receive confirmation that entries were received)

If you have any trouble reaching these judging clubs, let Ken Johnson know as soon as possible.

February Digital Image Judging Clubs:

ALTERED REALITY Digital "DA" (Digital Altered Reality) is the contest ID that goes after the Member Number

Black Hills Photography Club

Kevin Segrud

2105 Meadow Ln

Rapid City, SD 57703

605-209-1696

contest@blackhillsphotographyclub.com

Include "N4C" in the subject line

BLACK & WHITE Digital "DB" (Digital B&W) is the contest ID that goes after the Member Number:

Minnesota Valley Photo Club

Rob Hubbard

6094 Marlen Cir SE

Prior Lake, MN, 55372

612-860-6740

n4c-entries-to-mvpc@googlegroups.com

JOURNALISM Digital "DJ" (Digital Journalism) is the contest ID that goes after the Member Number:

Western Wisconsin Photo Club

Terry Butler

1620 Wexford Way (Correction to Directory)

Woodbury, MN 55125-7502 (Correction to Directory)

612-270-1653

n4ccontest@wiphotoclub.com

NATURE Digital "DN" (Digital Nature) is the contest ID that goes after the Member Number:

Shutterbug Camera Club

John F. Larson, Jr.

300 Lions Hill Rd, Apt W206 (Correction to Directory)

State College, PA 16803

319-671-1568

jflarson114@gmail.com

PICTORIAL Digital "DP" (Digital Pictorial) is the contest ID that goes after the Member Number:

Des Moines Camera Club

Janie Lawson

1381 NW 122nd St.

Clive, IA 50325

515-778-7277

DMCC.N4C.Digital@gmail.com

TRAVEL Digital "DT" (Digital Travel) is the contest ID that goes after the Member Number:

Be sure to include the STATE or COUNTRY of the image in the title.

Dubuque Camera Club

Cara Pusateri

3420 Saint Catherine Rd.

Bellevue, IA 52031

563-542-0380

cpusateri5@aol.com

PRINT ENTRIES - JUDGING CLUBS FOR February

Print contest rules are in the attached N4C Contest Rules.

Each of the following three clubs are judging two of the monthly contests:

Entries must be received by these clubs by February 15.

Send both Nature Prints and Black & White Prints to:

Dubuque Camera Club

Stephonie Schmitz

2740 Pleasant View Dr

Dubuque, IA 52001

563-564-9093

info@saodzynz.com

Send both Pictorial Color Prints and Altered Reality Prints to:

Fargo Moorhead Camera Club

Bruce Bernstein

1505 - 8th St S

Fargo, ND 58103

701-235-5945

brucepamfargo@yahoo.com

Send both Travel Prints and Journalism Prints to:

Advise sending entries as soon as possible

This is a small town in ND. This location

results in longer than average delivery times

and weather can also be a factor.

Minot Camera Club

City of Glenburn

C/O Tim Zeltinger

PO Box 97

Glenburn ND 58740

701-790-3008

tzbugman@gmail.com

Ken Johnson web@n4c.us,

A Digital Contest Chair

Enjoy photography whether or not it is yours!

Tips

HOW TO TAKE HOW TO TAKE BETTER PICTURES!

by Jack Vanden Heuvel by Jack Vanden Heuvel North Iowa Camera Club

Photograph what you love. Where is your passion? For example, if you like nature, go for it. If you have no interest in nature, and could not care less about a bird, but you like your children, take pictures of them! Or your dog, abstracts with color, extreme close ups, or buildings!

THINK and dream about what you want to take a picture of, and what that might look like in your head. Then do what it takes to get it. Read a book or two, such as I talk about in my information sheet. Look at photography books to stimulate dreams. To get a wall hanger for your study, or house, of your favorite place in nature, **photograph it in the first hour of daylight, or the last hour of daylight.** Everything looks better then. Even better is usually the “magic light” of the first 2-3 minutes of light. Even if you just want to take a walk, do it in the first hour of daylight, or the last hour of daylight. Actually the first two hours are good, and the last two hours are good. In autumn and November, the sun is low enough to be pretty nice all day long. In photographing people, a medium telephoto is nice. Even stronger telephotos are nice for isolated the subject from the background, and enabling intimate close ups without being in their face and distracting them.

- With people, using backlighting with fill flash is nice too. It makes the hair stand out, the face is without shadows, without squinting eyes, and it all looks better.
- Use a program like Adobe Photoshop. It is helpful for basic things like cropping, fine tuning the exposure, the intensity of the color, and sharpening the photo. You can usually get something like Adobe Photoshop 10 for about \$80. The really good ones like CS5 are \$600. Photoshop is so helpful to take care of problems you could never do anything about in the days of slide film. For example, recropping for composition, lightening up a photo that is a little bit dark, or getting rid of an obnoxious spot on your sensor that sticks out like a sore thumb in the sky.
- With the Digital age, don't be afraid to take a LOT of pictures. Rapid fire is great for key moments, facial expressions on candids, an animal doing something special, etc. When you get them in your computer, DELETE the bad stuff right away, and just keep the good ones. I like to get rid of the bad stuff in Windows, evaluating and deleting in the right *view* selection. I use the “preview” selection for this evaluation process. I then rate the ones I want to keep with a star, and delete all the others under a different *view*.
- Polarizing filters are great, especially in autumn. Get rid of glare off leaves and water with this filter, and allow the true color to come in to the sensor.
- Single Lens Reflex cameras are great. You can do more with them easier, and the big advantage is that you can switch lenses. Then you can get a wide angle, and telephoto lens to play with. Even a macro lens for close ups. Plus you can use a polarizing filter and see what you are doing.
- Get eye level with your subject. This is true whether the subject is a child, an adult, a flower, or an animal. Focus on the eye. In close ups of people or animals or birds, you always want that eye in focus, tack sharp.
- Get the focus right. Any contest will usually pass by any out of focus subjects. They need to be tack sharp. Learn how to run your manual over ride exposure dial.

- Check your LCD readout when exposure is an issue. You can instantly adjust. If you find out you have been shooting too dark or too light, you can change things and get a good photo right away. You have instant feedback. With most camera, holding the shutter down half way will lock the exposure. This means in difficult light situations, where your camera wants to read it wrong, you can point to the area you want exposed, push the button down half way, keep it down half way, and recompose the picture and click. **Go to a Photo Club.**
- Back up your photos with an external hard drive. This is VERY important! Don't lose all those neat photos when your computer crashes. And it will crash.
- Compose with the THIRDS principal. Although it is not a must, it usually is a tremendous help in composition. Pay attention to the sky line, other "lines".
- When there is direction in a photo, such as a person looking to the side, a bird flying, a horse running.... have open area in the photo so they have a place to run, to fly, to look. This means having the person's head in the one third, and two thirds where they are looking open, for example.
- A common mistake is to have the people you want photographed, or the subject too far away from the camera. Ask what you want in your photo. Do you want the people alone, the background blurred out? Do you want to people but the whole mountain on too to give a sense of place, and the bigness of the mountain? Decide this before you compose the photo. Zoom lenses let you stay the same place and have it BOTH ways!
- Stick your elbows in your gut, forming a tripod when you shoot. Do not have your elbows up in the air, since it is not stable. If you chose to buy a point and shoot little camera, get some telephoto power, and Image Stabilization system.

Digital Mats & Frames (Photoshop)

There are several reasons for creating a digital mat or frame for your image. Maybe you just want to enhance your image for online viewing. Perhaps you don't have the tools and materials to make a traditional mat for your image. Possibly you can't find the right color or texture of mat to compliment your image. For all these reasons digital matting and framing may be the answer to your needs.

Digital mat and frames can be very elaborate and complex or very simple and basic. Just like the mats themselves, some Photoshop techniques are very complex and intricate, while others are very easy to learn and also look great. This tutorial will help you create digital mats with techniques that are easy to learn but look like you spent hours creating them.

Step One

Open your image in Photoshop. (I'm using CS6 but this technique will work with any of the full versions of Photoshop.) Notice that your image is on a layer called the background layer. Also notice that there is a small lock symbol on the right hand side of this layer. The lock indicates that this layer cannot be moved so we will need to change this setting before we continue. Double click on the background layer. A *new layer* dialog box opens and the default name for the layer is *Layer 0*. You can change the name if you wish or just click OK. Now you will notice that your layer name has changed and the lock on the right side of the layer is gone. This will allow us to go on to the next step.

Step Two

Go to the bottom of the layers palette and while you hold down the *CTRL* key, click on the *create a new layer* icon which is the second icon from the right (next to the delete layer.) This will create a new layer below your image layer.

Step Three

Click on the *Image* tab in the Toolbar in the upper left portion of your Photoshop window. From the drop down menu choose *canvas size*. The *dialogue* box that opens will show the dimensions of your canvas. You can choose to see them in inches, pixels or a number of other choices, by clicking on the arrow in the drop down box in the *New Size* pane. Decide how big you want your mat/canvas/frame to be and enter the appropriate amount into the width and height boxes. Then, if you want to have your image centered in the canvas, just click *OK*.

Step Four

You should now have a transparent frame around your image. We will now fill this frame with a color by going to the bottom of the layers palette and clicking on the *create new fill or adjustment layer* icon (black and white circle.) Choose *solid color* from the menu. You may pick a color from the color picker window or click on a color in your image to choose it for your mat. Click *OK* when you are satisfied with the color.

Step Five

Now select the layer containing your image by clicking on the layer in the layer's palette. Go to the bottom of the *Layers Palette* and click on the *fx* symbol to open the options menu. Choose *Drop Shadow*. Position your cursor on your actual image and holding the left mouse key drag down and to the right. You should see a black shadow begin to appear below and to the right of your image. Position the shadow where you like it. In the *Drop Shadow* dialog box play with the *Spread* and *Size* sliders until you have the look you want.

The DROP SHADOW effect looks great with most images and may be all you need to do with your digital framing. If you would like to try some other effects consider -

1. Create a *Stroke* around your image by clicking on your image layer in the *Layer's Palette* and then clicking on *fx* at the bottom of the *Layer's Palette* and choose *Stroke*. In the dialog box that opens change the *Position* drop down box to *Inside* and adjust the *Size* and *Opacity* sliders to suite your taste. Changing the color of your stroke is easily done by clicking on the black rectangle next to *Color* in the *Fill Type* box. Choose your color just as you did when creating your background layer. Click *OK* to save and apply your stroke.

2. Similar techniques are used to add a texture to your background mat. With the bottom layer in your *Layer's Palettes* selected open the options menu by clicking on *fx* at the bottom of the *Layer's Palette*. Choose *Bevel and Emboss*. In the dialog box that opens click directly on the word *Texture* that appears under *Bevel and Emboss* on the upper left side of the *Styles* box. Choose a texture to add to your mat by clicking the down arrow next to the pattern box. Double click on the texture you like. This will return you to the *Texture Elements* box where you can adjust the scale and depth sliders to modify the texture. Click *OK* when you are satisfied with the result.

Remember that your goal is to produce images that reflect YOUR VISION. I hope this information will help you achieve that goal. If you have any questions contact me at don@dbarnesphotography.com or talk with me at the next North Iowa Photo Club meeting.

- Don Barnes North Iowa Photo Club

GO TO THIS LINK FOR AN EXCELLENT PRESENTATION ON Astrophotography as recommended by Ken Johnson.

<https://www.nikonusa.com/learn-and-explore//astrophotography>



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"Where Names Become Faces and Faces Become Friends"