

Southwest Missouri Camera Club

Photogram

APRIL

Club Meeting Topics: Sense of Place Portfolio
Project * Tech Tips for Better Wildlife
Photography



Carry a little
sunshine in your
pocket.



What's in it for you this month?

- April 08:** Connect Social - Pasta Express
- April 09:** Annual Club Picnic - Botanical Center
- April 23:** Club meeting - Botanical Center * Tech
Tips for Better Wildlife Photography

Carrie's Corner

April – A Season of Connection

Spring has officially arrived in Springfield, and with it, renewed energy is blooming within our club. April is shaping up to be one of our most vibrant months yet, centered entirely on the theme of connection—with nature, with our craft, and most importantly, with each other. Whether you've been with us for years or are joining for the first time, there is a place for every single one of you here. We are more than just a group of photographers; we are a community that grows stronger with every shutter click and every shared conversation.



Carrie Alkier
President

We have an incredible lineup of opportunities to get you involved this month:

- Connect Social ~ April 8 | 6:00pm–8:00pm @ Pasta Express 3025 W Republic Rd: Join us for a relaxed evening of conversation, building friendships, and pasta.
- Annual Club Picnic ~ April 9 | 4:00pm–7:00pm @ Japanese Stroll Garden Pavilion: Dust off your picnic blankets! Bring your own dinner and your camera gear; drinks and desserts will be provided by SWMCC. It's the perfect time to celebrate our community and work on our Sense of Place project.
- Sense of Place Photography Project: Our portfolio project for the Springfield Botanical Gardens is in full swing. This is a beautiful way to contribute to our "Park Partner" legacy—don't forget to capture those early spring blooms!
- Club Merchandise: Gear up! New embroidered hats, t-shirts, and more are arriving soon. Pre-orders are happening now, and merchandise will be for sale at the picnic (cash or checks only).
- Capture Groups: Our smaller, interest-based groups are hitting the trails. These are the best way to get hands-on experience and learn from your peers in the field.
- SWMCC Meeting ~ April 23 | 5:45pm–7:45pm @ Springfield-Greene County Botanical Center: We are incredibly honored to welcome Noppadol Paothong as our special guest. His world-class expertise in wildlife conservation photography is sure to leave us inspired.

Reflection: Completing the Circle


During a travel adventure, I captured a photo of a bridge where the reflection in the water perfectly mirrored the arch above, creating a complete, unbroken circle. It struck me as the perfect metaphor for our time together at SWMCC.

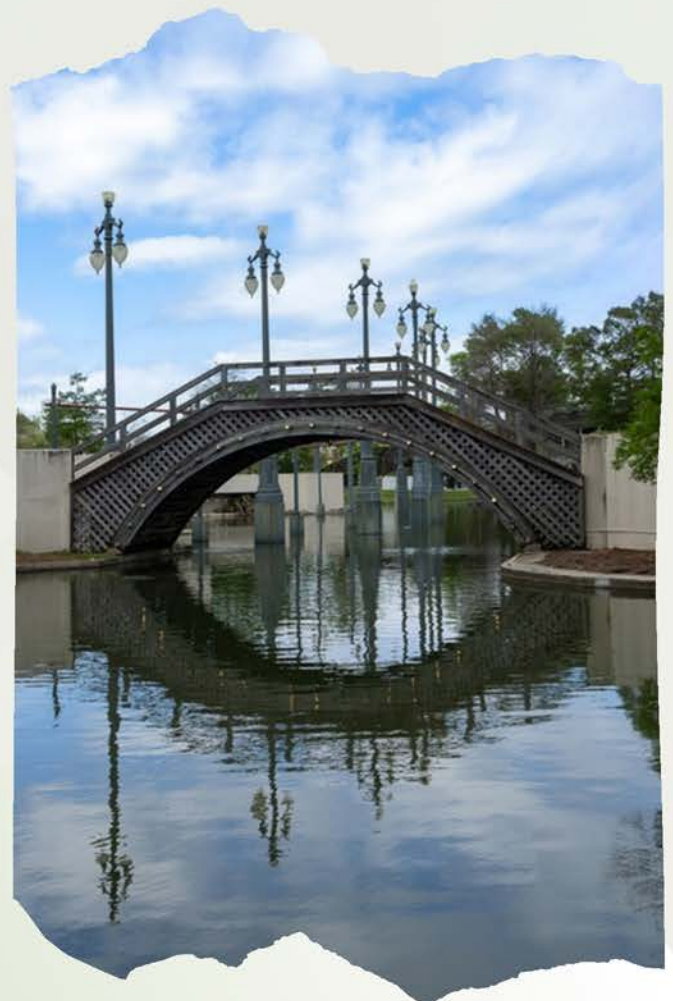
In photography, a bridge is what connects us to our subjects - it is the lens through which we reach out to the world. But a bridge alone is just a structure. It is the reflection - the way we share our work, support one another in our Capture Groups, share field trip adventures, and show up for our Connect Socials - that truly completes the circle.

When we engage with each other, our individual passion is reflected back to us, making our community whole. This April, as we walk the trails at the Botanical Gardens or sit together at our annual picnic, I encourage you to look for those reflections. Whether you are a long-time member or joining us for the very first time, your presence is the piece that closes the loop. We aren't just taking pictures; we are building a circle of friendship that is as sturdy as a bridge and as beautiful as a perfect reflection.

I look forward to seeing all of you, and your unique perspectives, this month!

Carrie Alkier

 President, SWMCC



Meet 'n Greet a Board Member



Susan Gettys
Treasurer

This is me! My photographic journey began in early adulthood. Shortly after college, I bought my first film camera, Canon AE-1, and took it with me on my travels. One of the first trips I can remember with my camera was going to Oregon and exploring along the coast. The following year, I traveled to Canada, and I had a chance to go to Ottawa and see the changing of the guard in the capital. I enjoyed taking photos then and wish I could find those photos now! Over the following years, I photographed all my travels and nearby places.

When I retired in 2013, I switched to digital and bought a Canon Rebel. When I moved to Springfield after retirement, I discovered the Southwest Missouri Camera Club and was invited on a field trip to Nathanael Greene Botanical Gardens. The club members were friendly and helpful as I was new to the digital camera world. I joined the club soon after this, and my learning began. I have upgraded cameras several times since then and currently shoot with a Canon R5.



This is my photography! I started entering competitions to get feedback on my photography. I felt like I had arrived when one of my photos was chosen as the 2017 Basic Photograph of the Year. It was a picture I had taken at Glade Creek Grist Mill at Babcock State Park in West Virginia. I kept entering competitions, scavenger hunts, theme challenges, and any opportunity to gain feedback on improving my photos. I was thrilled when I earned enough points during competitions to be named Basic Photographer of the Year in 2019.

2024 was another successful year for me in our Quarterly Competitions. I won Photographer of the Year in the Intermediate category and one of my photos was chosen as Photograph of the Year. Several of my photos from an amazing trip to Tanzania won awards that year.

I love photographing anything outdoors – flowers, landscapes, national parks, and wildlife. It's a great way to capture sights as I travel. I've been fortunate to travel to Africa on safari twice and loved capturing the animals in their natural habitat.



Carrie Alkier
President



Lori Long
Vice President



Linda Wise
Secretary



Harley Dutoit
Competitions
Chair



Elaine Miller
Exhibits Chair



Jim Gulley
Field Trip Chair



Kerri Seichter
Web Admin/
Past President



Richard Baumann
Board Consultant



This is my photography philosophy! Photography is all about learning to capture the beauty in our world and present it to others in an interesting way. I am learning Intentional Camera Movement, abstract, and more creative photography. I recently bought my first Lensbaby lens after watching a seminar from Anne Belmont. I was able to try it out on a bucket-list trip to Keukenhof Gardens near Amsterdam last year. It is taking a bit to really learn how to maximize the effects, but it is fun learning. The photographs on the previous page are from this trip, showing some of the more creative aspects of flower photography. The photo in the middle was manipulated using the Tiny Planet Circular app for the iPhone. The other two were taken using multiple exposure in-camera, something new that I learned on this trip. My camera has a setting to merge several photos together and create these beauties.



This is my vision! Every year, my goal is to learn something new. The design of this year's camera club activities will help me reach my goal, and I hope it also meets the club members' needs. The structure of Capture Groups should enable all participants to learn and grow as photographers. I can't wait to see everyone's photos at the end of the year. I'm also excited about the opportunities to get to know more of our members through the Connect Socials.



'EXPRESS' YOURSELF AT THIS MONTH'S CONNECT SOCIAL



Join us for our April Connect Social at **Pasta Express**, where, according to its website, you can come as you are and depart with a contented heart, a satisfied appetite, and a beaming smile. Sounds like the place to be! We will meet **Wednesday, April 8th, from 6:00-8:00 PM.**

Why attend?

- Great Food : Enjoy 'quick service Italian dining and a menu brimming with tantalizing dishes'.
- Better Company: Relax and informally network with local peers.
- Plenty of Connections: Expand your circle in a low-key environment.
- No formal agenda – just show up, grab a bite to eat, and let's connect!



APRIL SHOWERS BRING FIELD TRIP FUN

Oh, the places we'll go...

Cherry Blossom Kite and Pinata Festival

Location

Springfield Botanical Gardens
2400 S Scenic Avenue

Time/Date

1:00 PM/April 11

Focus

Creative compensation, light exposure, fast shutter speed - capture action, expressions

Logistic notes

Cost and parking are free

Other notes

Enjoy live culture performances and browse a mini market featuring Japanese and Mexican snacks, candies, beverages, and souvenirs.



Gardner's Orchard & Bakery Tulip & Baby Animal Festival

Location

Brighton, MO * 4455 W Farm Rd 2

Times/Dates

3:00-5:00 PM/April 10 (Fri)

12:00-2:00 PM/April 18 (Sat)

Focus

Creative compensation, use of color, outdoor lighting - tulips, baby farm animals

Logistic notes

Admission/tickets required - TBA via Facebook

Other Notes

This destination features thousands of blooming tulips and baby animals - typically running throughout the month of April. Acres of endless tulips designed for photography and enjoying the beauty. Interacting with baby animals, a plus! Come experience a popular spring outing for photos, picking flowers, and fun on the farm!



National Route 66 Centennial Kickoff and America's 250th Anniversary

Jefferson Avenue Footbridge Lighting Ceremony

Location

Springfield Downtown Square
(additional times/information to be posted on FB)

Ongoing Dates

April 30-May 3

Focus

Aperture, Depth of Field, Compensation,
Framing, Storytelling

Logistic notes

The entire district transforms into an impressive patriotic experience filled with energy, heritage, food, music an unsustainable spirit of America's great roads and railroad.

Other notes

From daytime festivities to evening entertainment, this blowout bash features live music, classic cars, local food, history, and once in a lifetime events honoring the Rehabilitation of the historic footbridge.



Jim Gulley

Friday, May 1st

All evening, live music, local foods, history, and entertainment

6:00-9:00 PM - Classic cars, including vehicles from the Great Race Spring Rally after parade

8:00 PM Footbridge lighting and drone show

Saturday, May 2nd

8:00AM-1:00PM - Classic Car Show

8:00-2:00PM - C-Street City Market, Footbridge Plaza

10:00-11:00AM - Jefferson Avenue Footbridge Dedication Ceremony

11:00AM-6:00PM - Live music, history, shopping, and food

Up for a Challenge?



Carrie Alkier

Our March Zoom presenter, Lisa Langell, who spoke on "Putting the Right Words with your Photography", challenged photographers to come up with a quote or title for a photograph BEFORE taking it, and THEN go out to try to 'find' that photo to match the words.

That sounds like a unique and fun way to challenge not only your brain, but also your creative side.

Below is a list of a few sayings to get you started, spark some creativity, or challenge you to come up with your own photo adventure! If you decide to participate, place your photo(s) on the Facebook page and label it with the words you chose first!

*Hope sees light, even in the darkness
Half empty or half full, it's a matter of
perspective*

Into the unknown

*An optimist sees the rainbow in the midst of
thunder and lightning*

Clearly misunderstood

Due diligence

The language of dreams

Simple strength

May 2nd activities, cont.

Pedalers Bicycle Museum is open.

High-wheel bicycle photo op!

11:30AM & 2:30PM - History and railroad exhibits at the Historic Firehouse No. 2.

Just for fun! There is a hidden daffodil on one of the Photogram's pages. If you find it, make note of its location, and place your name in a drawing at the first April meeting for a chance to win a 'fabulous' door prize! :)



Shell by Elaine Miller



Fragile Pause by Carrie Alkier



Pumpkin Stem by Susan Gettys

Exhibits

Current Exhibits

"Blooming Colors and Buds" is now on display at the Botanical Center, showcasing a vibrant collection of floral imagery that celebrates the beauty of the season.

Upcoming Exhibit

From May 1 through June 10, "Intimate Perspectives: Whispers of Detail" will be featured at the Library Center. This exhibit highlights the art of macro photography, with work by **Carrie Alkier**, **Susan Gettys**, and **Elaine Miller**, offering a closer look at the intricate details often missed by the naked eye.

Planning for the Future

Members are encouraged to bring submissions to the May 21 meeting for an upcoming exhibit at the Botanical Center.

The theme is "Butterflies and Birds".

Eight photos are needed, each matted to 16 x 20 outer dimensions, with no frames required.

2026 BOTANICAL CENTER THEMES & DUE DATES

5/21 – Butterflies & Buds

7/23 – Wildlife

9/24 – Fall / Fall Festival

11/12 – Christmas

MEMBERS WEIGH IN

"The best part of camera club this year is the capture groups. I like meeting new people, going on field trips, and learning from other members."

~Jo Bolton

TO NOTE

Lori Decker participated in the Art in Focus exhibit through Springfield Regional Arts Council where she sold one of her prints! She also sold a print when she exhibited at Gailey's Breakfast Cafe with SWMCC last fall.

Lori Long was the first featured artist at the Dade County Art Connect Center in Greenfield, MO. On display is a collection of 10 of her photographs.

If you have a "notable" concerning your photography, please drop a line to rlcclong4@gmail.com and let us celebrate with you!

LOOKING for HELP???

The following members might be your GO-TO for answers!



If new(er) photographers have questions, I'd be glad to help them with....

Using a Sony camera - Linda W. + Tom S.

Light Painting - David S.

Composition - Lori L.

Anything! - Ted P.

Long Exposure Water Photography - Sony H.

Creative Photography, Using Multiple

Exposure in Camera + a Variety of Apps - Susan G.

Most questions! - Chuck B.

Chat with Chuck

Why You Need to Join a Camera Club

I bet you learn something about your camera each time you're on an outing with someone that has a camera brand the same as yours. I know that less experienced shooters learn something as they ask questions like, "What's this?", "How come?", etc., but that's not limited to only newbies! We 'old guys' who have been in photography longer than some of you have had birthdays can learn a thing or two each time we're out with a group too.

One Saturday, Linda Wise, mentor of the Floral Photography group, invited members of her group out to shoot some early flowers at the Waterwise Garden on south National and Woodland. Fellow club member Doug Sampson and myself showed up. Doug and I both have Canon cameras; Doug has the new R5 MKII, and I have the R5. A few months ago, my camera had a software update, and the last couple of times I used it, I noticed a new icon near my ISO setting. Of course, I didn't know what that meant or what it was for. (I just figured it was something Canon had snuck in the settings.)

As we were trying to capture exposure and framing, as Linda was suggesting, I mentioned to Doug that I was wondering what the D+ near the ISO setting meant. He replied that his had that same icon.

Now, at home, I have a 300+ page book on Canon R5. Did I go to it to research the code? Of course not! I, Googled it! I found out the D+ indicates Highlight Tone Priority (HTP) is enabled. (If I set it to that, it was not knowing I did.) D+ is designed to improve highlight detail and extend

dynamic range in bright areas - clouds, snow, and bright white clothing. There is also a D+2 setting, and this is a more aggressive version of the algorithm designed for higher contrast situations. It provides more headroom for white clothing or direct harsh sunlight. So, I went into the Shoot Menu, scrolled down to Highlight Tone Priority, and disabled the feature.

The D+ or D+2 can be used for RAW files, but it was designed to benefit JPEG and HEIF/HIF files, as it adjusts the in-camera processing. I did not know what HEIF/HIF files were; I had seen that at times on the iPhone, and that was it. I discovered HEIF (High Efficiency Image File Format) and HIF/HEIC (Highly Efficient Image Container) are modern formats that offer superior image quality at roughly half the file size of traditional JPEGs. It's used extensively by Apple (iOS 11+) and modern cameras, like Canon. These files support 16-bit color, transparency, metadata, multiple images, burst, or live photos in a single file.

You never stop learning!



Photo credit: Chuck Bruton

Picnic at the Japanese Stroll Garden Pavilion



Join us for our favorite tradition of the year!

We are heading to the Japanese Stroll Garden Pavilion for an evening of community, food, and photography. This isn't just a picnic; it's a "Photo-Blitz" session to help us fulfill our "**Sense of Place**" portfolio project for the Springfield Botanical Center.

What to Bring

Your Dinner: This is a "Pack Your Own Picnic" event.

Camera Gear: Don't forget your camera, a variety of lenses, and a tripod.

Membership Card: Bring your FOG or SSCA card for entry, or \$5 for our special group rate (if we have 10 or more in our group) into the Japanese Stroll Garden.

What's Provided

SWMCC will provide a variety of chilled individual drinks and a delicious dessert spread!

Upload your photos for the Sense of Place project to
<https://bit.ly/SWMCC-SenseOfPlace>



You're invited to come and socialize, enjoy your picnic dinner, and photograph the Moon Bridge, fountains, heritage buildings, etc., for the portfolio project.

April 9th, 2026 – 4:00 PM – 7:00 PM
Nathanael Greene/Close Memorial Park

Please make plans to attend!



Members' Musings...

Oh, the Places We've Been!

A few of the many far away places our members have had the pleasure of photographing include.....

Bora Bora
Pacific Islands
Germany
Virgin Islands
Kenya
Hong Kong
Budapest
Hungary
Antarctica
Cambodia
Egypt



What's Not to Like?

My favorite thing about photography is.....

taking the photos
capturing something no one else sees
reliving experiences
knowing I created that
telling a story worth remembering

Subject Matters

If I had to photograph only ONE subject the rest of my life, I would choose.....

landscapes
flowers
travel
animals
waterfalls
still life
children



Analog Rules Still Exist

Old film shooters remember when the cameras had no light meter. What would you do to get the best exposure for a landscape image?

You used the "Sunny 16 Rule". What does that mean? On a bright sunny day you would set your camera's aperture to f16 and your shutter speed to the reciprocal of your ASA (ISO).

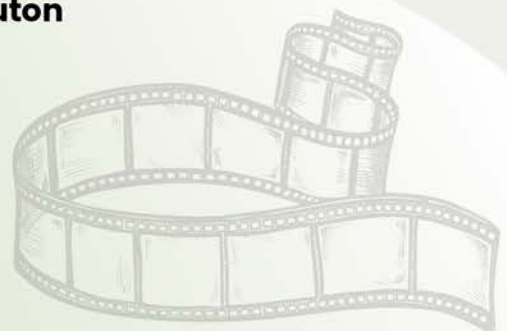
If you were using a film of ASA (ISO) 100, your shutter speed should be 1/100 or 1/125. Most cameras then came with a 50mm lens, and that's basically what everyone used for general photography.

Another old trick that still works today when capturing a landscape - if you want the whole scene to be in sharp focus, front to back, focus 1/3 into the scene; however, if you want the mountain tops a little bit sharper, then focus just a bit past the 1/3 mark.

There is a way you can check your focus/depth of field on most cameras. Have you wondered what the little button does on the right side of the camera body - close to the lens? It shows the depth of field you are capturing. I push it with my ring finger and use it quite often to check my depth of field, especially if I am looking for a blurred background, then I go for a wider aperture. If I want more in focus, like all objects, I check it and go for a smaller opening of the aperture or a higher f-stop.

Happy Snapping!

Chuck Bruton





April Club Meeting



Mark your calendar, friends, you won't want to miss this!

Tech Tips for Better Wildlife Photography

by award-winning photographer

Noppadol Paothong

SWMCC is excited to offer our members an exceptional presentation from renowned photographer, Noppadol Paothong.

Paothong is an award-winning nature and conservation photographer with the Missouri Department of Conservation since 2006. As an Associate Fellow of the International League of Conservation Photographers (iLCP), his work focuses on rare and endangered species, particularly grassland grouse and their threatened habitats.

His photography has graced over 200 covers of Missouri Conservationist and has been featured in Audubon, Smithsonian, National Wildlife, Nature Conservancy, Ranger Rick, and Sierra Club. Over nearly two decades, his dedication to documenting North American grassland grouse resulted in two acclaimed books: *Save the Last Dance* (2012) and *Sage Grouse: Icon of the West* (2017).

Recognized with numerous national and international honors, Paothong also serves on the board of the Sutton Center and judges top photography competitions like the National Audubon Photography Awards. Through exhibits and presentations nationwide, he continues to inspire a deeper connection to wildlife and conservation.

The presentation focuses on practical, real-world techniques—camera settings, autofocus strategies, field workflow, and problem-solving in challenging situations

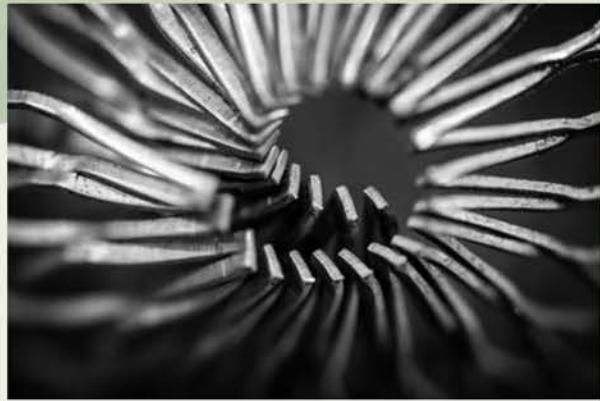
If you appreciate nature, enjoy capturing life on the "wild" side, or just appreciate the opportunity to learn from a master photographer, bring a friend along, and join us for a program that is bound to encourage and empower you to become a better photographer.



Capture Group Recap & Review.



Ross Payton



Randy Connell

The Macro Photography Group looks to improving our knowledge of photographing small things well. We want to increase our ability by sharing knowledge through discussions and practice of this style.



Dallas Maxwell



Tom Severt



Lori Long

Sportography was created to support photographers interested in capturing action. The group has shot a variety of events in small numbers and individually as well. Our constant challenge is working on technical skills to perfectly freeze motion, while simultaneously working to capture emotions that tell a story aesthetically - the perfect combination of great action photography!



Before



After



All photos: Linda Wise

This group approaches floral photography as if it's a painting. Painters choose their subject, position, colors, techniques, and final impact on the viewer. The photographer does the same, only using manual mode with the camera (brush). This group meets weekly in various gardens. Join us!

Capture Group Recaps & Review



Doug Sampson



Randy Connell



Tom Seavart

The Time Collectors is a group dedicated to long exposure photography. We've had three outings so far and plan to have several more before the October culmination. Many in our group had previous experience with night photography while others are just starting to explore the possibilities. We're having a blast!



Suzanne Walker



Kelly Sutton



Hyla Wilde

The Abstract Group has been off to a creative start with two successful outings. Our first stop was Relics Antique Mall, followed by a trip to Founders Park. By focusing our lenses on the interplay of lines, texture, and lighting and slowing down to look more closely and experimenting with unconventional angles, we were able to move past the obvious and find the abstract beauty hidden in everyday items and scenes.



All photos: Chuck Bruton

This 10-member-strong Macro Flower Photography Group is a multi-faceted group that communicates via email, texts, and small group outings. There are educational components and hands-on activities within the group. A working description of this club can be called "The Beauty Up Close".