

Southwest Missouri Camera Club

# Photogram

## MAY

Club Meeting Topics: Competition Results  
and Judging - 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter & Scavenger  
Hunt Voting



Carry a little  
sunshine in your  
pocket.



### What's in it for you this month?

- May 13:** Connect Social - One 2 Five Taproom - Rogersville
- May 28:** Club meeting - Botanical Center \* Scavenger Hunt and Quarterly Competition Judging \* Capture Groups

# Carrie's Corner



**Carrie Alkier**  
President

## Focusing on the Details

As the lush greens of May take over our Missouri landscape, the world around us becomes a tapestry of intricate details. While April was about the "big picture" of our connections, May invites us to do something different: to lean in and look closer.

In a world that often moves too fast, photography gives us permission to slow down. This month, I challenge you to find the "small worlds" right under your feet. Whether it is the delicate architecture of a flower petal, the translucent wings of a dragonfly, or the texture of weathered bark at the Botanical Gardens, there is a profound intimacy in macro photography. When we focus on the details, we aren't just taking a picture; we are paying attention to the quiet beauty that others might walk right past.

## Opportunities to "Focus" This Month

- **Sense of Place Deadline:** Our portfolio project for the Springfield Botanical Gardens is entering the home stretch! All submissions must be uploaded by **June 30**. This is our chance to leave a lasting legacy as a "Park Partner," so please keep those shutters clicking.
- **Google Drive Uploads:** Don't wait until the last minute! Please continue to upload your best shots to our shared folder. Seeing your progress inspires the whole club and helps us stay organized as we curate this collection.
- **Capture Group Outings:** This is prime month for our field trips, including the Route 66 Centennial Kickoff and America's 250th anniversary and the Battlefield Mall Farmers Market.
- **Keep an eye on the schedule** for upcoming Capture Group outings and opportunities.
- **Member Spotlight:** Share your best "detail" shots on our Facebook page this month. Let's fill our feed with the textures of spring!

## Reflection: The Beauty in Small Things

Sometimes we get so caught up in the "wide-angle" view of our lives—the big deadlines and the busy schedules—that we lose sight of the small joys. As we prepare for our 50th Anniversary Celebration next month, let's remember that the legacy of SWMCC isn't just measured in decades; it's measured in the thousands of small moments, shared tips, and individual friendships captured over the last 50 years. I challenge you this month to find one small thing you would normally walk past and give it your full attention. You might be surprised at the beauty you find when you truly focus.

*Carrie Alkier*


 President, SWMCC



Photo credit: Carrie Alkier

# Meet 'n Greet a Board Member

## This is me!



Richard Baumann  
Board Consultant

I am a photographer who loves the technical stuff about cameras, lighting, optics and all kinds of gear. My motto is "If they make it, I must need it." Problem is, all that equipment does not a photographer make—it's the vision, the story, the connection to the viewer that makes the image worth hanging in the exhibit, not the gear. And that is my challenge and why I have been a member of SWMCC since 2018...

(My wife Virginia is also a member of the club but hasn't held a camera since I gave her one in high school...)

I grew up in Miller, MO, not far from Springfield, and graduated from (then) the University of Missouri at Rolla with a degree in Aerospace Engineering. From there I spent seven years in the Marine Corps as a fighter pilot flying f-4 Phantoms.

After coming back from Viet Nam, I finished grad school at Rolla and started my own business after working in technical positions for several large companies.



## This is my photography!

Lately, I have been working on storytelling by shooting LEGO Mini Figures and other self-contained dramatic scenes that require an acute sense of place and setting to produce some drama and always with an element of irony and fun.

I have included several of my creations in this Photogram. The first one is titled "Have You Gotten the Ski Bug Yet?" for obvious reasons (look to the left).

You may have seen the one I did last summer—it's all about our intrepid reporter at a disaster scene where everything is happening at once, fire, insect invasion, torrential rain storms—the photo journalist is on the scene and so calm amid the chaos.

There's also one of a librarian who just found out his job was replaced by an AI bot that can't put a book back on the shelf. He's a bit overwhelmed with the idea of it all!

But it's my LEGOs that I can go to for a sense of fun and whimsy that helps me find something to laugh at in otherwise difficult to understand times. All my LEGO friends are in the (shown) pile, including that wing-sitting journalist, if you can find her!

All of these "story" images were taken in my office "studio" at home, cramped as it is, with lighting, tripods, and LEGOs.



Carrie Alkier  
President



Lori Long  
Vice President



Susan Gettys  
Treasurer



Linda Wise  
Secretary



Harley Dutoit  
Competitions  
Chair



Elaine Miller  
Exhibits Chair



Jim Gulley  
Field Trip Chair

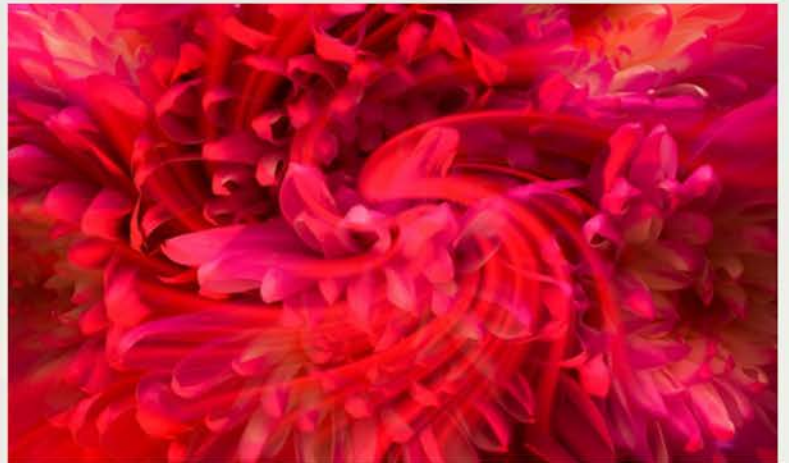


Kerri Seichter  
Web Admin/  
Past President

## This is my photography philosophy!

I often say that I wish I could see through the eyes of our other club members like Chuck Bruton or Linda Wise and see what they see when they approach a scene. It seems so natural for those artistic photographers and so oddly foreign to an engineer and techie like me.

I do love their images and have patterned some of my photography after some of the amazing work I have also seen published from Julia Anna Gospodaru, Michael Frye, and lately, John Day, who produces amazing ICM images. We studied these and other artists at various times in the club - one of the many benefits of membership and attending presentations and meetings.



## This is my vision!

My goal for the club this year is to help the board wherever I can to become as responsive to members' needs as possible and to make the new Capture Groups successful. I can tell you that every member of this board clearly understands that our mission is to produce opportunities that help members advance their photography and get value for the time they spend in club activities. Carrie and the other board members are working tirelessly to make that happen and we are all seeing the enthusiasm that comes from that effort.

# May We Connect?



Tap into this month's social gathering at **One 2 Five Taproom** to experience the familiar good conversations and social interactions with friends and fellow club members. If you come hungry, the Taproom offers signature pizzas, salads, snacks & shareables and desserts. In addition, beverages include cocktails, mocktails, beer, spirits, wine, Kombucha & Na Beer, and soft drinks.



**Wednesday, May 13<sup>th</sup>, 5:30-8:00 PM**

## CRUISE ON IN TO FIELD TRIP FUN

*Oh, the places we'll go...*

### Route 66 Centennial Kickoff America's 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary



#### Location

Springfield Downtown Square  
(additional information will be posted on FB)

#### Ongoing Dates

April 30 - May 3

#### Focus

Aperture, Depth of Field, Compensation, Framing, Storytelling

#### 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.

#### 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  
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



Pedalers Bicycle Museum is open.  
High-wheel bicycle photo op!

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



# Farmers' Market

## Location

The Battlefield Mall  
Springfield

## Times/Dates

9:00 AM / Saturday,  
May 23rd



Photo Credit: Lori Decker

## Members Weigh In

### What are some low cost accessories that help you produce quality images?

masking tape \* black tape \* level \* clothes pins \* duct tape mini tripod  
\* spare cable release \* spare light meter \* safety pins \* white reflector \* tape measure  
\* spare pc cord \* circular polarized filter

### What are some tricks of the trade you use to get great photos despite low/inadequate lighting situations?

use a reflector \* strobe or flash \* flashlight \* mount camera on a tripod for long  
shutter speed/long exposure \* raise ISO then utilize denoise in post if necessary  
\* mirror lock up (DSLR)



Chuck Bruton



Doug Sampson



Shell by Elaine Miller

### Current Exhibits

This month, we invite you to experience "Intimate Perspectives: Whispers of Detail" at the Library Center, on display throughout May and into early June. This exhibit showcases close-up and macro photography that reveals the quiet beauty found in life's smallest details, encouraging viewers to slow down and see the familiar in new ways.

### Upcoming Exhibit

Looking ahead, please bring your submissions to the meeting on May 28. We will need eight photos for the Botanical Center exhibit, with the theme "Butterflies and Birds."



Pumpkin Stem by Susan Gettys



Fragile Pause by Carrie Alkier

# Exhibits

## 2026 BOTANICAL CENTER THEMES & DUE DATES



5/21 – Butterflies & Buds

7/23 – Wildlife

9/24 – Fall / Fall Festival

11/12 – Christmas



### TO NOTE

**Carrie Alkier's** photograph "Fragile Pause" (as seen above) was recently published in the March–May 2026 edition of the Springfield-Greene County Library District's Bookends magazine.

We are excited to share that **Rachelle Leonardo's** photo "Yellow Garden Spider and its Prey" has earned an Honorable Mention award from National Wildlife Federation's Garden for Wildlife photo contest! There were over 9,000 entries from all around the world!

*Congratulations, ladies!*



Photo Credit: Rachelle Leonardo

If you have a "notable" concerning your photography, please drop a line to [ricclong4@gmail.com](mailto:ricclong4@gmail.com) and let us celebrate with you!

# 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter Competition Entries



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## BEGINNER LEVEL IMAGES

Top row: Gay Parita by **Julia Warner** and The Sheep's House by **Harley Galland-Dutoit**

Middle row: Open Glide by **Carrie Alkier** and Thirsty Bear by **Brad Dutoit**

Bottom Row: More to Come by **Mike Holmes** and Christmas Cactus by **Ronny Martin**

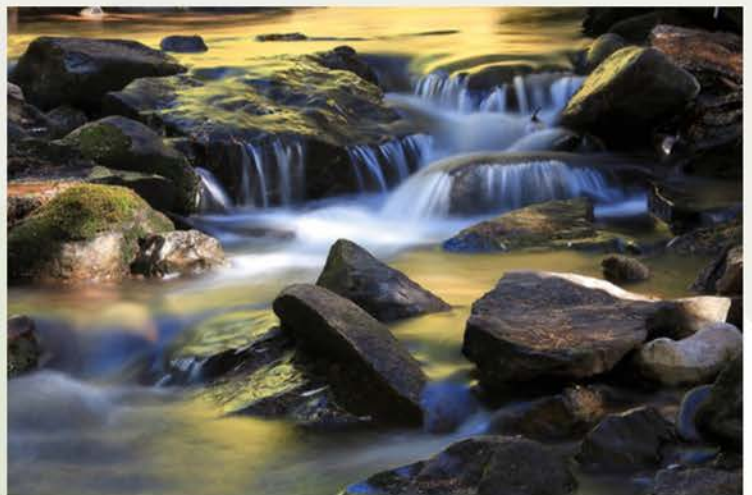
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# 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter Competition Entries

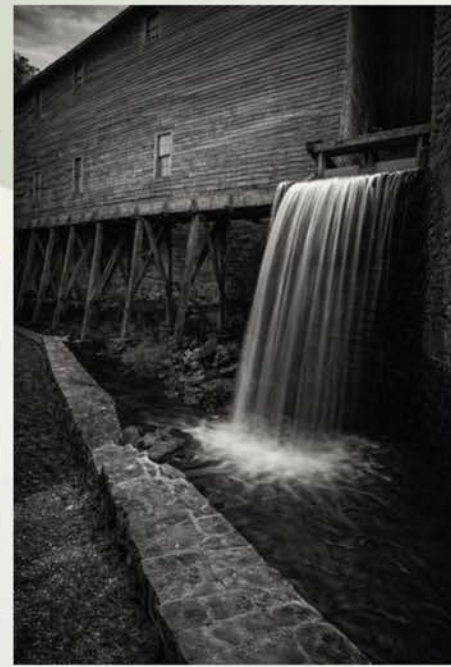


## INTERMEDIATE LEVEL IMAGES

All Geared Up by **David Stotts**, Prague Metro by **Tom Severt**, and Sr. Reflection by **Lori Long**



# 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter Competition Entries



Constructively critique the competition entries then compare your thoughts to what the judges have to say at our next meeting.



## ADVANCED LEVEL IMAGES

Top row/previous page: On Alert by **Rob Duggan** and Bridge of Returning by **Teresa Brown**  
Bottom Row/previous page: Mistress of the Snow by **Lori Decker** and Autumn Gold by **Ted Pagel**  
Top row: Winter's Whisper by **Janice Myers**, Spider's Lair by **Rachelle Leonardo**, and  
Ye Olde Mill by **Suzanne Walker**  
Bottom row: Her Elegance by **Robert Mossack**, Mr. Cardinal by **Janice Rosenberg**, and  
Destiny Gone Awry by **Valerie Rippey**

# Chat with Chuck

## Practice Makes Perfect.....Shoot Daily

You've heard the phrase "shoot daily, practice makes perfect!" Have you done this? How's it working out for you?

Usually it works fine for a while, if you are motivated by a new camera, lens, filter, unique new flower garden, car show, or subject matter you are interested in.

It gets repeated because it's simple and sounds disciplined, but for working adults, parents, busy or burned-out creatives, it can quickly become a guilt machine.

How about instead of shooting daily, build a practice or habit you can sustain. Repetition builds familiarity, familiarity builds confidence, and consistency improves seeing. This frequency can benefit beginners. The problem isn't the advice, the problem is how absolute it has become.

Daily shooting can become counter productive in a few cases. Creative work becomes a daily task you must complete, eventually leading to creative numbness, and you start producing rather than seeing. You begin photographing everything just to keep the streak going. Output increases, but intention behind your images begins to wane - the habit persists, but your work does not improve.

Guilt becomes a major factor; missing a day makes you feel like a failure in practicing your creative process. At this stage your photography starts to feel like a burden; pressure, shame and comparison seeps in.

I feel this often when I see others posting images they've gone out shooting when my excuse is it's too windy, too cold, or I had to tend to the wife! The guilt sometimes makes it more difficult to get back on track.

That advice, shoot everyday, does not take your life into account. Jobs, kids, caregiving, weather, health, money, and energy are not built into that advice.

Shooting daily, without reviewing, can reinforce bad habits, leading to repeated patterns in compositions, subjects, editing and timing. High volume can mask stagnation.

The internet rewards visible activities like reels, posts, daily challenges and updates about your work. Is it really growth if you post content daily? Genuine development is slow and less noticeable in the short term.

When you go shoot, determine whether you're focusing on growth or output - the number of shoots, photos, and posts. The most noticeable growth comes from making better choices, having clearer intent, editing consistently, exercising patience, and applying stronger self-criticism. Shift your mindset to prioritize quality over quantity. Think about what you want to present, pre-visualize the images. Relax and follow that voice in your head - "It's time to go get that image."

After each shoot ask yourself:

- What was I actually drawn to?
- Which image feels strongest and why?
- What pattern keeps showing up in my work?

Happy Snappy,  
*Chuck*



# Capture Group Recaps & Review



All photos: Ross Payton

The Macro group is preparing to have a group workshop this month, where members can work together and try out new techniques.

Macro



Tom Sevart



Tom Sevart



Lori Long

The Sportography Group continues to seek out both school and community events in which to shoot action and storytelling images. To date we have captured high school basketball and baseball, Springfield Rugby Football Club, Evangel University Softball, the Shamrock Shuffle Race, and rodeo events.

Sportography



Julia Warner



Susan Gettys



Kerri Seichter

Last month the Artistic Floral Group began practicing "multiples". Stay tuned in June for some spectacular images of multiples with dreamy backgrounds. The group continues to meet in small numbers for direct instruction and learns new skills, additionally, through instructor-created videos.

Artistic Floral

# Capture Group Recaps & Review



All photos: Randy Connell

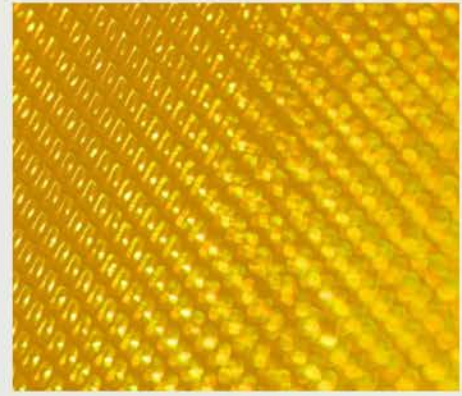
The Time Collectors is dedicated to long exposure photography. The group plans to have several more outings before the end-of-the-year culmination. Many of the group's photographers have experience with night photography while others are just beginning.



Elaine Miller



Kelly Sutton



Doug Sampson

The Abstract Capture Group met on Commercial Street to look for the abstract, exploring familiar surroundings with fresh eyes and creative intent. I always enjoy seeing the wide range of perspectives photographers bring when working in the same location—how each person notices different shapes, textures, and moments. It's a reminder that even shared spaces can yield completely unique interpretations through the lens.



All photos: Chuck Bruton

The Abstract Capture Group continues to meet together in gardens and nurseries around town in small groups to perfect macro skills and techniques.

