

Southwest Missouri Camera Club

Photogram

FEBRUARY

Club Meeting Topics: Capture Groups -
Super Trip Introduction / First Quarter
Competition Results



A bird sitting in a tree is never
afraid of the branch breaking.
Its trust is in its own wings.
Believe in yourself.



What's in it for you this month?

- February 11:** Connect Social at Neighbor's Mill Bakery & Cafe
- February 12:** Club Meeting at The Library Center * Capture Groups
- February 14:** Field Trip - Schaffitzel's Flowers & Greenhouse, Springfield
- February 26:** Club Meeting at The Botanical Center * First Quarter Competition Results
- February 28:** Field Trip - Butterfly Palace, Branson

Carrie's Corner



Carrie Alkier
President

What an incredible start to 2026! Our kickoff meeting and first Connect Social were filled with exactly the kind of energy I hoped for—genuine connection and a shared passion for our craft. Seeing the room buzzing with ideas reminded me as much as we enjoy our cameras and the thrill of capturing the perfect photo, the real magic happens when we connect with each other and share our energy and our unique ways of seeing the world.

As we move into this year, I want to encourage you to dive in headfirst. Our **Capture Groups, Create & Explore Field Trips**, and **Connect Socials** are the heart of what we do. They are the perfect places to ask those “silly” questions, share a lens, or simply find a new perspective with friends who “get it”. I’d love to see that energy continue to grow, so please make plans to join us for our February Connect Social—it’s a fantastic opportunity to relax, talk shop, and get to know your fellow photographers better. I also encourage you to sign up for a Capture Group and join us on our February field trips to put your skills into practice. Don’t just wait for the perfect weather; some of the best growth happens when we just show up and start shooting together.

On a personal note, I’ve been thinking a lot lately about “the wait”. Whether it’s stalking a single Kinglet for an hour or waiting for a Monarch to choose your milkweed, photography teaches us a rare kind of patience. My challenge to you this month: slow down. Find one subject—even if it’s just in your backyard—and stay with it ten minutes longer than you think you should. You might be surprised by the extraordinary details that reveal themselves when you stop rushing.

Here’s to a year of slowing down, seeing more, and sharing the journey. I’ll see you out there with your camera, capturing the memories that make this club so special!

Carrie


Focused on a vibrant 2026 and the new stories we’ll capture together. 



Photo Credit: Doug Sampson

Just for fun! There is a hidden snowflake on one of the Photogram's pages. If you find it, make note of its location, and place it in a drawing at the Feb. 12th meeting for a chance to win a 'fabulous' door prize! :)

Meet 'n Greet a Board Member



Carrie Alkler
President

This is me! My journey into photography began as a practical way to document my daughters growing up. Today, that passion has shifted into the fun challenge of capturing the energy and magic of my grandchildren's childhood adventures. I'm at my best outdoors when the sun is shining - you'll likely find me on a hiking trail, bird watching, or out on my bike. When I'm not chasing a shot or a trail, I might be baking a batch of my family's favorite cinnamon rolls or making what my grandson calls "the best cinnamon apples ever."

This is my photography! For me, photography is about the thrill of "the find". I once spent over an hour stalking a single Ruby-crowned Kinglet at Fellows Lake just to get the shot. Whether I'm there or lost for hours in a botanical garden, time seems to vanish. My creative concentration lies in the details of nature - I love the intricate details of macro photography, especially the delicate wings of butterflies and the hidden textures of flowers.

This is my photography philosophy! Photography is the art of learning how to slow down enough to see the details the rest of the world misses. It is the ability to find the extraordinary within the ordinary, capturing details of nature that I never would have noticed before I had a lens to witness them.

This is my vision! Serving as president for 2026, my primary goal is Engagement. I want SWMCC to be the go-to spot for fun and social connection. I am dedicated to enhancing our community through a consistent social calendar, including Capture Groups, Create & Explore Field Trips, and Connect Socials. Our tagline says it all: Capture. Create. Connect.

From the Backyard to the Adventures to be Had! Photography has taken me to "magical" places - from witnessing the breathtaking sight of half a million snow geese at Loess Bluffs to seeing over 1,000 eagles this past January. However, some of my favorite subjects are right in my own backyard - the local birds, deer, turkeys, hawks, butterflies, and native flowers. My "Adventures-to-be-Had" list includes: Amsterdam - catching the Tulip Festival in full bloom, Michoacan, Mexico - seeing the millions of Monarchs at their overwintering sanctuaries, and Tour du Mont Blanc - trekking the 100-mile circuit through France, Italy, and Switzerland.



A Little Something Extra! The Butterfly Whisperer: This past summer, I witnessed life beginning right before my eyes when a Monarch butterfly chose our backyard milkweed to start her family. My husband and I watched in amazement as she laid her eggs; I found 72 eggs the following day. Within days, our home became a sanctuary, and we raised approximately 250 butterflies - from eggs to caterpillars to witnessing Monarchs, Black Swallowtails, Giant Swallowtails, and Luna Moths emerge from their chrysalises. It was a privilege that no photo can truly express.



Life on Two Wheels: When I am not behind the camera, I enjoy cycling on my "two and a half" bikes: a mountain bike, a gravel bike, and exactly half of a tandem! My husband and I have finished a 100-mile tandem ride in Texas and spent countless miles and hours on country backroads, mountain bike trails, and greenways. We call them "Adventures by Bike", and they've led us to some of our best memories and greatest friends.



Lori Long
Vice President



Linda Wise
Secretary



Susan Gettys
Treasurer



Harley Dutoit
Competitions
Chair



Elaine Miller
Exhibits Chair



Jim Gulley
Field Trip Chair



Kerri Seichter
Web Admin/
Past President



Richard Baumann
Board Consultant



Carrie's
Captures



PHOTOS, PLEASE

Photos due at the **March 26th** meeting.
Botanical Center Exhibit

Eight photos needed, 16"x20" matted/backed
Theme: Blooming Colors / Buds

Barry-Lawrence County Libraries Exhibit

Up to 75 photos needed, various sizes
Theme: What's the Draw: Photography
(any subject welcome)

This exhibit will travel to libraries throughout
these two counties.

Photo pickup: May 28th meeting



Photo Credit: Rachelle Leonardo

2026 BOTANICAL CENTER THEMES & DUE DATES



3/26 – Blooming Colors / Buds

5/21 – Butterflies & Buds

7/23 – Wildlife

9/24 – Fall / Fall Festival

11/12 – Christmas

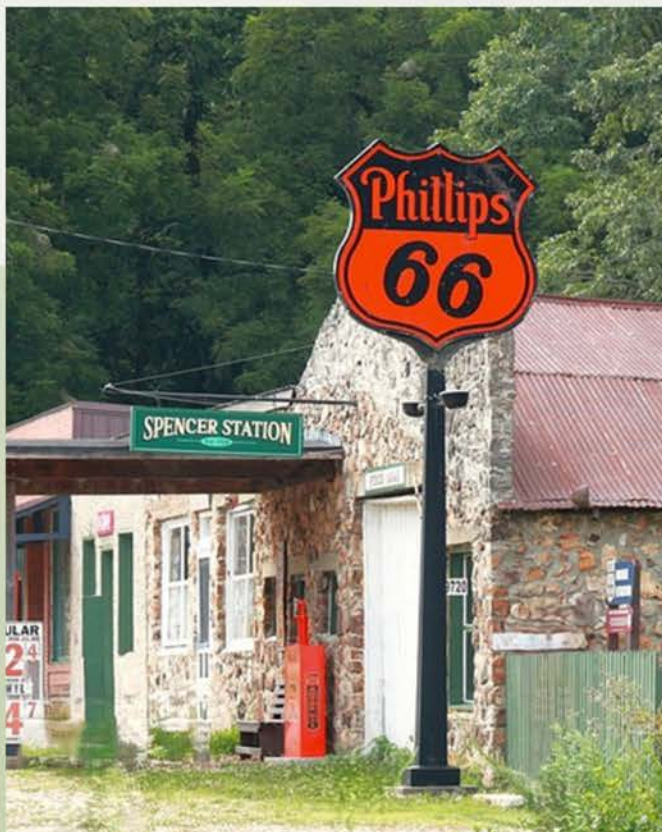


Photo Credit: Lori Long

FEBRUARY/MARCH EXHIBITS

Winter-themed photographs are currently on display at the Botanical Center (as seen in the photo above). Be sure to stop by if you're visiting Nathanael Greene Park - located at 2400 South Scenic Avenue. A big thanks to **Rachelle** for setting up that gallery.

Looking ahead to March, make plans to travel Route 66 through the lens of SWMCC's members at the Park Central Library - located at 128 Park Central Square.

As a reminder, if you are new to exhibiting, this is a perfect first step—supportive, accessible, and a great way to learn the process while sharing your work with the community. If you have questions or may be interested in participating in one or more of the exhibits, contact chairperson Elaine Miller. She will be happy to help you get started.

CONNECT SOCIALS



SWMCC's first Connect Social was held downtown at Big Momma's Coffee & Espresso Bar "Where conversations flowed as easily as the coffee." Nine members enjoyed sharing, chatting, reminiscing, and discussing. Pictured from left: Carrie, Teresa, Randy, Guy, Doug, Loretta, and Allin.

FIRST QUARTER SOCIALS

2/11 - Neighbor's Mill Bakery & Cafe - 1435 E. Independence St. #110 - 3:00-5:00 p.m.
3/11 - Travellers House Coffee & Tea - 824 S. National Ave Suite A100 - 8:30-10:30 a.m.

CAPTURE

CREATE

CONNECT



Coffee & espresso, downtown



Doug, Loretta, Allin, & Elaine



Elaine & Harley



Warm hands, warm hearts.



Teresa, Randy, & Guy

YOU'RE INVITED

SWEET TREATS, WARM COFFEE, AND EVEN BETTER COMPANY

Wednesday, 2/11



3:00-5:00 pm

Join us for our February Connect Social at Neighbor's Mill Bakery & Cafe. Whether you're looking to meet new faces, catch up with old friends, or simply enjoy the cozy atmosphere of one of Springfield's favorite spots, this is the place to be.

Why attend?



Great Treats: Enjoy fresh-baked goodness from the bakery.



Better Company: Relax and informally network with local peers.



Plenty of Connections: Expand your circle in a low-pressure environment.

No rigid agenda – just show up, grab a snack, and let's connect!

FEBRUARY FIELD TRIP FUN

Oh, the places we'll go...

Schaffitzel's Flowers & Greenhouses

1771 E Atlantic St.

2/14 * 1:00-3:00pm

Depth and Color Combinations

Focus: Valentine's Day, creative framing, color theory, high contrast, autofocus, and macro photo experience.

Logistic Note: Parking onsite, no fee unless you need flowers for the day.



Photo Credit: Schaffitzel Floral Designer, Cori

Butterfly Palace

4106 W 76 Country Blvd - 2:00-3:00 pm

2/28 * 8:00-10:00am

Indoor Macro Photos

Focus: fast shutter speed, color composition, high contrast, macro subjects (butterflies/greenery).

Logistic Note: Wear red or highly colorful attire (butterflies attracted to brilliant colors), focus on using a fast drive handheld lens.

Meet at front door just before 8:00 for early entrance.

Adults \$29.95 and Senior \$26.95. Pass is good for 3 days after purchase as long as the wristband is worn. Go to thebutterflypalace.com for possible coupon options.

Onsite parking, no charge.

Capture » Create » Connect

COMPETE

	Scavenger Hunt	Quarterly Competitions	PSA
Frequency	Twice a year: Spring and Fall	Once each quarter	Three times a year: October, January, March
Timeframe for taking photos	From the night the categories are announced until the deadline	No timeframe, but it is encouraged that photos be taken within the last 18 months.	No timeframe
Required Theme/Categories	Six categories are announced in the spring and another six in the fall	No theme	Categories are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Color • Monochrome • Photo Travel • Photojournalism • Nature
Number of photos	Members may submit one photo for each category. You may enter one or more categories.	Members may enter one photo. There are three skill levels: Beginner, Intermediate and Advanced.	Members can submit one photo in each category for each round.
Submit	swmcc.competitions@gmail.com	swmcc.competitions@gmail.com	swmcc.competitions@gmail.com
Dates	<u>Spring Categories</u> Announced: Feb. 26 Deadline: March 26 <u>Fall Categories</u> Announced: August 27 Deadline: September 24	1st Quarter – January 22 2nd Quarter – March 26 3rd Quarter – June 25 4th Quarter – Sept. 24	Round 1 – October '25 Round 2 – January 9, '26 Round 3 – March 13, '26 <u>2027-28</u> Round 1 – October 8, '26
Results	Photos are presented for voting by members at the meetings in April and October.	Photos are judged by PSA judges. All photos and comments are presented, with winners announced at the end. Presentations are given at the meetings in February, May, August, and November.	Photos are judged by PSA judges. Results are shared when returned. Competition is among clubs across the world. The club is given a ranking for each round and a final ranking at the end of the three competitions.

Capture >> Create >> Connect

COMPETE

(continued)

The process to enter photo competitions has been streamlined this year. ONE email (found below) will be used to enter ALL competitions. In addition to the guidelines found on the competitions chart (previous page), photographers must include their **name** within the email, and state **which competition** their photo is being submitted - this is especially important in instances when deadlines overlap. In cases where there are multiple categories, i.e., Scavenger Hunt and PSA, include the **category** as well. (Don't assume the chairperson will know your intended category. For example, a field of wildflowers could be considered Nature or Color.)

Harley Dutoit, competitions chair, will confirm your submission and route your image to the appropriate person for further processing.



swmcc.competitions@gmail.com

All entries are submitted digitally to the email above. Photos should be resized to no more than 1920 px wide or 1080 px tall, jpg format. Rename your photos with the image title: ImageTitle.jpg



NOTE: Rule of 5

As a result of a Facebook Survey on competitions, members elected to keep the current format of the quarterly contest intact with the beginner, intermediate, and advanced categories. However, to keep the competitive spirit alive, a new "Rule of 5" proposal will be implemented on a trial basis (1st & 2nd Q).

If the beginner or intermediate level has fewer than five entries, a temporary merge into the next category above it, respectively, will be made for that quarter's competition.

The announcement was made at the January 22nd meeting.



February Club Meetings

Capture Group Conversations

The implementation of Capture Groups to SWMCC's program offerings has been met with enthusiasm and genuine interest among club members.

To date, a total of seven confirmed groups offer the following topics of interest: Flower Macro Photography - Leader Chuck Bruton; Night Photography/Long Exposure: Time Collectors - Leader, Randy Connell; Sportography (Action Photography) - Leader, Lori Long; Abstract Photography - Leader, Elaine Miller; Macro Photography - Leader, Ross Payton; Artistic Floral Photography - Leader, Linda Wise; and New Shooter/New Camera - Leader, Randy Henderson.

Tonight's agenda includes an overview of what these groups are and why they have come about. Richard Baumann, board consultant and facilitator of the Capture Groups, will discuss the areas of focus and will summarize some of the activities that have been in full swing since the groups' inception.

Members will have the opportunity this evening to meet with individual groups that they are interested in joining (or may just want to hear more about), and groups will discuss the logistics of carrying out activities throughout these (beginning) winter months and setting up possible dates/times to interact within the group.



More information on Capture Groups can be found on the private Facebook group entitled "Southwest Missouri Camera Club (Paid Members Only Group)".



Time Collectors CG met on the square for some nighttime photography. Photo by **Randy Connell**.



Doug Sampson captured this festive downtown scene as a participant in the **Time Collectors CG**.



Tom Severt, member of the **Sportography CG**, froze the action in this collegiate hockey game during a field trip at Brightspeed Rink.

Where in the World is (insert your name here!)?

Super Trip Discussion Talk



If the idea of taking a Super Trip sounds even a little intriguing, come find out what it's all about at the February 22nd meeting. **Susan Gettys** will open up the dialogue about the club's history with super trips and kick off the initial discussion for a possible 2026 SUPER trip. If you like to travel (a little or a lot!), create some great memories, capture some stunning images, and connect with old and new friends while doing so, let us know! Put on your thinking cap and tell us where in the world you would like to be found this year while photographing with SWMCC's like-minded friends.



Photography Weekly Themed Challenge

Did you know SWMCC sponsors a weekly themed photo challenge? This Challenge just celebrated its nine-year anniversary on January 11th, 2026. Its current administrator is **Suzanne English Walker**, a club member for approximately 15 years. Regarding the recent anniversary, Walker said, "I hope you all have had fun in the last nine years. I SO enjoy looking at everyone's entries!"

If you struggle to come up with regular photography subject matter, consider signing up and joining the challenge. Photograph as much or as little as you like. Be aware, this is a public page and not limited to current SWMCC members only.

The following detailed information is taken directly from the Challenge's Facebook page:

This FB page is sponsored by the Southwest Missouri Camera Club (SWMCC) from Springfield, Missouri. The purpose of this page is to provide a weekly photography challenge to members and other interested photographers and to encourage thinking outside YOUR box by providing new ideas of subject matter to photograph or a new way to photograph an old subject.

Weekly challenges will be posted on Thursday evenings and photographers will have Friday through Thursday to post their pictures on the current theme. Pictures with the most likes over the next week will be posted on the cover page. Pictures will rotate weekly.



New “Home” for SWMCC

Exciting news! SWMCC has been given an incredible opportunity to partner with the Springfield-Greene County Botanical Center! In doing so, club members will have many wonderful benefits, which include a facility in which to hold dedicated, year-round monthly meetings, quarterly board meetings, and major events, such as the 50th Anniversary celebration, Annual Picnic, and Annual Awards Banquet. The agreement to become a Park Partner will save the club a substantial amount of money - estimated at more than \$2,000. Amenities include a full room in which to hold meetings, AV equipment, access to WiFi, and kitchen privileges. The immaculate grounds will provide a beautiful backdrop for photography, as it is set in the 55-acre Close Memorial Park which adjoins Nathanael Greene Park. In addition to its classroom, meeting, rental, and exhibit spaces, the Botanical Center has an elevated plaza and roof garden. A library, office spaces, and gift shop rounds out the remainder of the facility.

In exchange for the Botanical Center’s generosity, the camera club is committed to providing high-quality photographs for the Center’s marketing and/or promotional needs and updated images for posters on display in the building’s reception area. The club may also have the opportunity to host photography-related workshops throughout the year.

We are extremely grateful to the Botanical Center, and its director **Katie Keith**, for working with us and placing a value on a partnership with SWMCC! We are looking forward to a wonderful year working with the people there!

Specific details are still being finalized. A schedule of meetings/calendar of events will be finalized soon. Stay tuned for more details. We know you’re going to love it here! Come check it out!

Botanical Center * 2400 South Scenic Avenue * Springfield, MO

Source/Photo Credit: <https://www.springfieldmo.gov/Facilities/Facility/Details/Botanical-Center>



Photo Credit: Chuck Bruton

Camera



Club

Stay warm this winter and promote your favorite camera club at the same time! SWMCC has BRAND NEW GEAR to offer its members, and we are excited to announce orders will be taken at our next meeting.

LIMITED EDITION LOGO BEANIES

There is a VERY limited supply available for immediate purchase at the next meeting. Once these specific colors are gone, they're gone!

4 Black | 2 Dark Blue | 4 Green

3 Purple | 1 Maroon | 1 Pink

Price: \$15 — First come, first served!

LOGO SWEATSHIRT/Gilden Softstyle

Also available for PRE-ORDER in four stunning, photographer-approved colors:

Sage | Stone Blue | Sand | Sport Grey

Price:

\$35 — Sizes S to XL

\$40 — Sizes 2XL to 4XL

IMPORTANT: To secure your sweatshirt order or snag a beanie, please bring CASH or CHECK to the meeting on February 12th.



Logo Stickers

Stick with SWMCC! Promote the club with these classic 3" or 4" logo stickers. Jazz up your gear, computer, notebooks, or your favorite on-the-go cup! You can purchase one (or more!) on club nights at the registration or membership table for \$2 and \$3 each.

Sign up or renew your membership at a local meeting or on the website - www.swmocameraclub.org/join

Family Membership
\$35
Individual Membership
\$25
Junior Membership
\$13

Join Us!

2026 Membership Benefits

- Monthly Meetings
 - Photogram
 - Field Trips
- Capture Groups
- Connect Socials
- Workshops + Programs
 - Competitions
- Community Exhibits
 - Club Picnic
- 50th Anniversary Celebration
- Annual Awards Banquet

Connect

www.swmccameraclub.org
www.facebook.com/swmccameraclub
www.instagram.com/swmcc_cameraclub
swmcamera@gmail.com

FUN!

Save the Date

Club Picnic 4/9
50th Anniversary Celebration 6/25
Awards Banquet 12/17