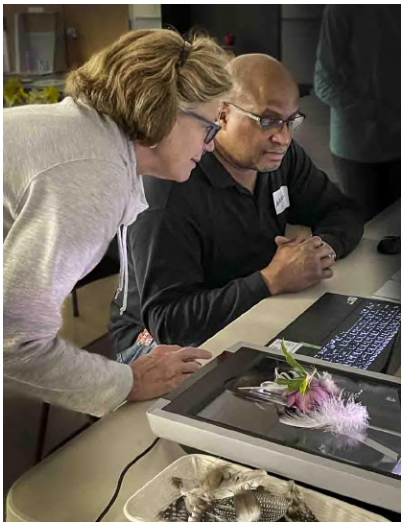
Chester County Camera Club

a community of photographers

May 2023 Newsletter

The Four C's



The Four C's stand for Chester County Camera Club, right? Well yes, but they also stand for what Chester County Camera Club is all about:
Creativity, Collaboration, Camaraderie, and Caring!

The Four C's were really evident at our recent Still Life Workshop in April. The participants in this workshop truly took their *Creativity* to the next level. They photographed some of the staged set-ups, and then put their own spin on them by rearranging, adding, playing with lighting, and more to make an image that spoke to them!

You can see the *Collaboration* between Carolyn Mead and Wayne Dixon in the image above. They worked together at the scanning station, a technique that was new to many, which resulted in Carolyn's lovely image on the right. The cheerful *Camaraderie* was in full swing with folks laughing and talking as they waited their turns at various stations. After two years of virtual meetings and no workshops it was wonderful to see old friends and meet new members!

Our fourth C could have also been Clean-Up, but we'll call it *Caring*, as so many were willing and cared enough to stay and help clean up after the second presentation. And there was a lot of still life "stuff" to pack away and make sure it went home with the right person. The workshop leaders are very grateful to all who helped!

So, we are a 4-C's club and proud to share that with anyone who asks! You can read more about this very successful workshop later in the newsletter and be sure to check out the gallery on our website.

April Highlights:

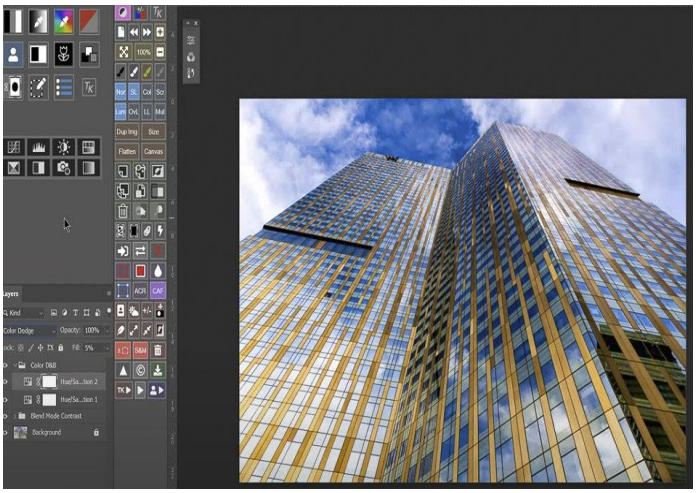
Club Outing: Hagley Museum

A beautiful spring day greeted CCCC photographers at the Hagley Museum in Wilmington, DE. The 'Powder Yard' area on the banks of the Brandywine Creek highlighted the tools, processes and dangers of gunpowder production, and included lots of interesting tools and machinery to photograph. And then of course Hagley also showed off the beautiful and historic DuPont homes and gardens at the top of the hill.

Here are just a few images taken by CCCC photogs: “Drill Table” by Harold Horton, “Hagley Daffodils” by Susan Jones, and “Please Turn Me” by Arvid Bloom. Be sure to check out the gallery for more images.

Post Processing Interest Group - monthly zoom event

Buzz Mossholder continued his series of zoom lessons on photoshop for those interested in learning some useful and technical aspects of this powerful program. The April session focused on how to increase or decrease the contrast of images, both globally and in specific areas using Blend Mode Contrast Techniques, Dodge & Burn Tools, and Curves and Solid Color Adjustment Layers through masks. If interested in participating in future sessions, send Buzz an email.



Members Forum - Add drama to your images with Neutral Density Filters - *by Jim Wilson*

Jim Wilson's presentation demonstrated how, when, and why to use neutral density filters that can make a dramatic difference in your images. In addition to creating images of silky waterfalls and stretched-out clouds, Jim showed how the use of these filters can be useful in other situations. He broke down the steps to adjust camera settings when using these filters, as well as the different types of filters available. And Jim included many examples of impressive images that show what an amazing difference these filters can make.

Watch the video presentation here. Due to some technical sound issues, fast forward to start the video at 4:10. Or, view a pdf version of the presentation here.

Monthly Meeting

Valerie Hoffman - Soft focus using Lensbaby and shallow depth of field

One of the best ways to create more unique and compelling images, is to render it in a way that is not normal, or natural to the human eye. There are a variety of ways to do that, but one that Valerie loves is in the realm of Soft Focus Photography. She shared a variety of ways that you can create unique images that differ from all the rest.

Valerie discussed the more obvious ways-such as soft-focus lenses and accessories, as well as the role aperture can play. And she included several great options as well, including in-camera focus bracketing and stacking, in-camera double or multiple exposures and more! If you missed this fascinating presentation, here is the link.

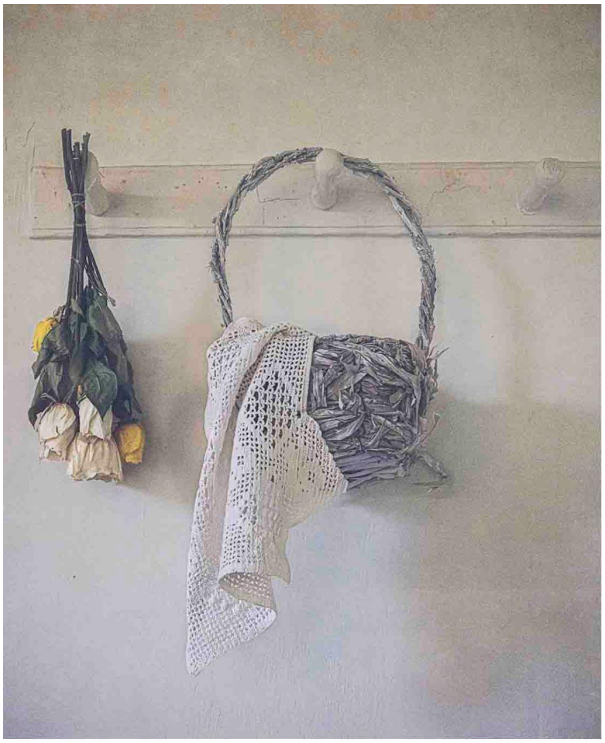
Mentor Meeting - by Sue Hare
Composition for Landscape and Macro Photography

Sue Hare shared a very comprehensive presentation covering a multitude of compositional guidelines for both landscape and macro images. She paired each tip with examples, and provided in-depth explanations for each technique. This is an excellent primer for anyone who wants to learn about or improve their compositions.

A pdf of this presentation can be reviewed in two parts: Click here for Part 1 and Part 2. Or you can watch the full video of the presentation here.

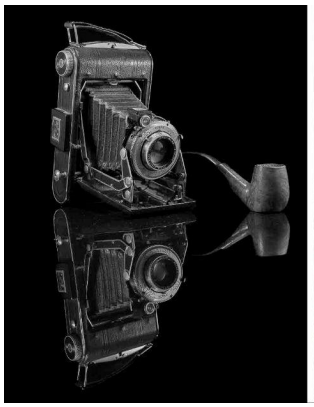
Club Outing: Kuerner Farm

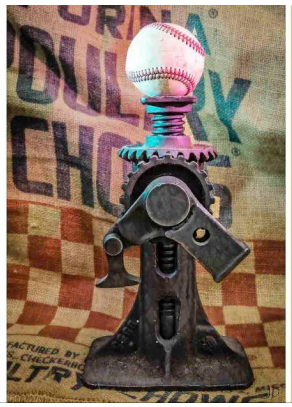
Some came with props. Some came with a costume. Many offered to pose for one another. All came with their camera and an open mind to capture the spirit of Andrew Wyeth at the location where he created more than a thousand drawings and paintings.



Here are just a few of the many images created on a beautiful spring day at the Kuerner Farm in Chadds Ford. “Kuerner Farm Hooks” by Valerie Dunn, “Farm Reflections” by Denise Molzahn, “Spring Fed Redux” by Corinne Masur. Many more wonderful images are in the CCCC gallery.

Still Life Workshop - Two sessions of fun!





This workshop was so popular it had to be repeated! Two sessions allowed almost fifty club members to participate in this fun, creative and hands-on workshop. Hosted by Carol DeGuiseppi, Ginia Apostolacus and Betsy Wilson, the session started with a short slide presentation outlining tips for successful still life photography. Then attendees were let loose to play with tables full of odd and interesting objects that they could combine with various backgrounds and lighting set-ups to create their own unique still life. And creative they were!

Above are a few of the unique compositions - "Memories of a Father" by Susan Jones, "Cheers" by Carolyn Mead, "Batter Up" by John Dolph, and "Irises" by Helen Wagner. Check out more images in the CCCC gallery.

April Competition

The assigned theme was “Still Life” and it was nice to see a lot of entries taken at the recent Still Life workshop. Guest Judge, Bob Lyons, provided insight and inspiration as he analyzed images and picked the award winners. There is still one more competition this year to earn more points towards the coveted “Photographer of the Year” award. And all first place ribbon winners from the year will be in the running for the “People's Choice Award”. So be sure to enter next month!

In the print category, First Place winners went to “Rockland Breakwater Lighthouse” by Carol DeGuiseppi and to Denise Molzahn for “Dried Flowers”

Digital first place ribbons in the open category went to Eric Loken for “Lion Lounging in the Mara” and to Robert Friedman for “Amish Man”.

And in the digital assigned category, Robert Friedman earned a blue ribbon for his image “Mandolin Still Life”

Congratulations to the First Place winners! To see all images in the competition, go to Competitions / Competitions Results on the CCCC website, then choose the competition (four categories) and be sure to check the little box “Display all images”.

Upcoming Events:

Reminder: Most meetings and events typically held at Westminster Presbyterian Church will be both in-person and virtual March through June. We hope to see you back in-person at Westminster!

Monthly Critique Group - May 7

If you only do one thing new this spring, join this members-only group and get constructive comments and inspiration from your peers. This group, which meets both in person and via Zoom, could be just what you need for some springtime inspiration!! Contact Jim Samanen; he'll get you all set up!

Members Forum - May 10

Storytelling Through Living Stills with Svenne Juul

Both in-person and zoom, but no recording

Svenne will take us through his ongoing journey into improving storytelling by turning the 'other' still images into 'Living Stills'. If we could only add a little history, life and movement to the images, these 'other' stills have the potential to become more impactful, and tell better stories. Does that pique your interest? Join us!! There will of course be plenty of 'living stills'-samples.

Monthly Meeting - May 10

Overcoming Photography "Writer's Block"

with guest speaker, ***Michael Albany***

Both in-person and zoom

We've all been there! You're out shooting and nothing is inspiring you. It's not what you want; it's not good enough. You're in a slump and not sure how to get out of it. Well, Michael Albany, an award-winning photographer from Philadelphia, will show us what he's done over the years to get out of his slump, get his creativity back, and have fun again!

Mentor/Mentee Meeting - *May 17*

Focus Stacking

In-Person and Zoom

If you've been wondering about focus stacking, but just aren't sure how to get started, here's your chance to get some in-depth information. Svenne Juul will share his expertise and knowledge on this topic.

This friendly gathering also provides opportunities for less-experienced photographers to get personalized instruction and tips from more-experienced members.

May Outings:

Morris Arboretum and Gardens - *May 7*

Here's another chance to visit one of the many beautiful gardens in our area. The private estate formerly known as Compton, opened to the public in 1933 and marked its official transition to a public garden. Today there is something for everyone to enjoy from a train display, to a swan pond to various historic structures, such as the image shown here of a spring house by Denise Molzhan from a previous outing. Come on out and enjoy spring in PA with your fellow shutter bugs! Read more about Morris Arboretum beforehand to learn more!

Philadelphia's Chinatown in Evening - *May 20*

Philly's vibrant Asian enclave, originally settled in the mid-19th century by Cantonese immigrants, provides a sensory experience for all - food, lights, entertainment, and more! We will start before the sun sets and follow the changing light as darkness falls and the lights of Chinatown are lit - a great way to spend a Saturday night and immerse yourself in Asian culture. Photo shown is by Le Ann Embrey from a visit to the Chinese Lion Dance Parade a few years ago.

Important Announcements:

Summer Challenge 2023

It's that time again! Time to think about the Chester County Camera Club Summer Challenge! Stephanie Vacek and Anita Bower have selected another engaging topic to keep us all on our toes! As in the past, there will be two outings (one in June and one in July), each followed by dinner at local restaurants. We'll wrap up the summer at Helen Wagner's home for a potluck supper & photo slideshow in August. This is a great way to stay engaged with the club during the summer months! Stay tuned for the official rollout in late May.

Inter-Club Meeting

We've been invited to join in a zoom meeting hosted by our neighbors to the north, Lehigh Valley Photography Club. Dan Anderson will speak about Landscape Photography with a Drone, which is sure to be of interest to many of us. While this presentation is offered at no charge to us, we need to register through the LVPC and use a special code, **CCC-FREE.**

Dates to Remember

Sun, May 7	Critique Group
Sun, May 7	Club Outing - Morris Arboretum
Sun, May 7	Post Processing Group
Wed, May 10	Members Forum and Monthly Meeting
Wed, May 17	Mentor/Mentee Meeting
Sat, May 20	Club Outing - Philadelphia's Chinatown
Wed, May 24	Monthly Competition
Wed, May 31	Inter-Club Meeting
Sat, June 3	Club Outing - CowTown Rodeo

Opportunities to Show your Work

Here's your last chance to get in on **Peddler's Village** first-ever Photography Competition and Exhibit. The theme of this juried show is "Pets," and selected photos will be on exhibit in their Visitor & Event Center from June 12 to July 30, 2023. Prizes include cash awards and more! Don't delay! Deadline to register is May 12, 2023. Click here for more information.

Volunteer Positions Available

Our camera club is successful because of the work of all our wonderful volunteers. Here's your chance to get involved with the best camera club in the east! We are currently recruiting for volunteers to fill the roles of **Vice-President**, where you'll arrange for monthly guest speakers, and a **Chair for the Mentor Group**. Let Ginia Apostolacus know of your interest in either of these positions or if you want to get involved on a committee.

Long-time club member and volunteer, ***Jennifer Powell,*** *is in the spotlight this month!*

Volunteer Spotlight

Jennifer has been a member of CCCC for 12 years and has served as Treasurer for two of those years. She was our ribbon coordinator for a few years, meaning she's the one who made sure anyone with a winning image received a ribbon! Additionally, she served on a former Outings Committee and has presented at a Members' Forum in which she shared her passion for photographing waterfalls.

She's always been involved with photography and remembers holding the white stick as a child so her grandfather could make sure all their family photos were perfectly in focus. After that she was always taking photos with her Instamatic with the flash cube on top. We all remember those days, right!? When digital cameras came out is when she really became interested in using a camera to create art.

Her favorite genre of photography has changed over the years. It started with colorful landscapes and floral photography because one of her majors in college was Studio Art with a concentration in watercolor. Then it morphed into black & white landscapes when she realized that she saw patterns and didn't even notice color. Her focus on patterns and light/ shadows then drove her to architectural photography, which today is her favorite. Who knows what the future will bring!

When asked how she's grown or been inspired by CCCC members she had all good comments. Here they are in her own words: "*I can't say enough great things. In fact the other day I was just telling the home security tech about the club. The competitions are so valuable because you and the other participants receive great feedback and suggestions for improvement. The outings bring you to places you might never have known existed and give you a chance to interact with members. The speakers always send me home re-energized. And to top it off, there is so much great talent in the group that I am always motivated to improve.*" And, it looks like she developed a friendship with Uncle Dudley!!

Jennifer recently left a career in Finance, which she enjoyed for 30 years. That background sure came in handy as club treasurer. Now that her kids are grown, she's enjoying a new career in photography. Initially she focused on real estate photography but now she has also expanded into architectural photography for builders and architects. As a new sole proprietor, she's been getting involved with the Chamber of Commerce and other networking groups.

Photography is not her only hobby, as she just recently decided to get back into watercolors (keeping it all art-related!) She bought paints, brushes and paper and made the comment…..*"and boy am I terrible!"* It sounds like she's her own worst critic as we all are, but she's looking for a watercolor club to join!

Another activity that keeps Jennifer busy and active is cycling. She's an avid cyclist who is traveling around the country and the world on a bike with a camera! She just came back from Mallorca and in October she will be cycling across Italy.

Jennifer's closing words to summarize her time and experiences with CCCC were: "*After all these years it's been great to see members' children grow up, follow the most amazing trips on Facebook, learn tips and tricks that I would never have the patience to learn in a book and see true friendships develop. I am so thankful for such a great group of people.*"

Learning Opportunities

Bert Sirkin is offering club members a 20% discount on his upcoming *Understanding Layers in Photoshop* public workshop via Zoom on Saturday, May 6, 2023. Use the discount code ULP20 in the cart. Your member cost will be $27.96 ($34.95 less the 20% discount). Get more information and register here: https://www.eventbrite.com/e/understanding-layers-may 2023 If you have questions, please contact Bert directly at 860-656-7446 or Bert@Photobert.com.

If you're a LightRoom user, you're probably already aware of the update this month, but do you fully understand it? **Matt Kloskowski** does a great job of explaining the changes in an easy to understand video. Check it out here.

Competition Tips

Our assigned theme for our last official competition of the club year is "Unusual Point of View." Here's a chance to push the envelope on your creativity and step outside your comfort zone of shooting straight at your subject. Change your vantage point, like this winning image taken by Eric Loken from a specially designed overnight hide in Africa, and see what you can create! Additionally, you can always find helpful information and inspiration for all our monthly themes here.

Be sure to regularly check the CCCC Homepage for news and updates, as well as links to galleries from recent outings. If you have any information you would like considered in an upcoming monthly newsletter, please contact newsletter editors Carol DeGuiseppi or Betsy Wilson.

And the Last Laugh goes to.....

Norman Maynard

For his comically creative

""*Still Life with Missing Bird*"

This image got its start at our recent Still Life Workshop, but it certainly looks like Norman used his wild imagination and expertise in Photoshop to create this. If you look closely, you can imagine where the bird went!!