**PPC CLUB CONTEST BOOTCAMP**

**20 July 2023**

1. **Introductions**
   1. **Who we are.**
   2. **Experience**
   3. **Expectations**
2. **Overview**
   1. **Club Contests**
   2. **What is a “Contest Image”?**
   3. **Mentoring**
   4. **Printing**

**Discussion Points**

**What is photography? Very simply, photography is *“writing with light”*. A photographer uses light reflecting from surfaces (for the most part) to create a picture. Like writing with words to articulate one’s thoughts, a photograph allows the maker to visually express themselves. The “success” of photograph may be judged by how effectively it communicates the intent of the photographer in making that image. For a contest, I feel that it is the responsibility of the photographer to construct an entry such that a judge can easily interpret and evaluate it and see/feel what inspired maker to do it.**

**The challenge of club photography. A photograph is a two-dimensional representation of a multi-dimensional event. How then can a single picture communicate to the viewer what the photographer felt, saw, smelled, heard, etc. when making the image? The viewer only gets to see a very small depiction of a much larger and varied experience. The maker of the photograph must use the tools available to them to convey to the viewer of the picture the story they intend the viewer to see.**

**Who do you make photographs for? There are many good reasons to use a camera to capture the world around you. Shooting for club contests is an excellent way to practice old skills and learn new ones. The more photos you take and analyze the better you will get. Use the feedback you receive from contest judges and peers to refine your approach. But you should be making yourself happy with your work! A contest judge is merely expressing an opinion at a very specific point in time. Try to always get another person’s opinion before submitting any photo to a contest. Never let a judge be the first person to see your photo.**

**Our Offer To You: A**ccess to individualized, private help with selecting and preparing images for club contests. This includes but is not limited to selecting suitable photos for submission and making contest prints. [Lpetterborg@gmail.com](mailto:Lpetterborg@gmail.com)

**What You Need To Do**

1. **From the PPC Website, click on the Competition tab and access “**COMPETITION RULES AND PROCESS”. Familiarize yourself with this document. Be sure that you know how to resize your files to club contest dimensions, 4096(w)x2160(h) pixels and that you know how to upload your entries to the club site.
2. From the PPC Website, click on the Training/Education tab and access “TRAINING CLASS MATERIAL-2023”. In there you will find a presentation I did on “What Judges Look For”. You should look at that.
3. From the PPC Website, under the Competition tab, look at contest results and listen to the judges’ commentaries to better understand which images score higher and why. Not so you can try to copy them but to see if you can identify any commonalities such as: *Impact, Clear Subject, Technical Excellence, Lack of Distractions.* Another good place to see excellent camera club photo is on the GSCCC Website, [2023-24 Monthly Winners — Gulf States Camera Club Council (gulfstatesccc.org)](https://www.gulfstatesccc.org/202324-monthly-winners).
4. **Select 2 or 3 photos you think you might wish to enter in the August contest (submit by Aug. 17th) and send them to me (I’ll be out of the country until Aug. 4th) and I will see to it that you get feedback in time for the contest.**
5. **You should be looking for opportunities to make photos for the remaining “Themed” contests; “Tools of the Trade”, “Fetes/Festivals”, and “Nature Abstracts”.**
6. **For the print contests (Oct. is “Open” and Feb. is “Nature Abstracts”) you will need to have the highest quality files possible. We will help you select images which we think will work best as prints. If you wish, you can provide a finished full resolution file to be printed and mounted for submission. The cost will be $30.00. These finished files must be ready two weeks prior to turning them in to allow time for the work to be done. We will provide details as we go along.**

**Things I Like To Say**

1. **There are two kinds of pictures, “snapshots” and “thought shots”. A *snapshot* only requires you to point and press. A *thought shot* takes advantage of your brain to make a photograph.**
2. **A good contest entry is a technically well-made photograph of an interesting subject, captured in spectacular light.**
3. **Judging a photograph is very context specific. For club contests, we require judges to “rank order” the entries. This artificially creates “winners” and “losers”. Whatever the outcome of a contest, you can at least learn something.**