BALTIMORE CAMERA CLUB

The oldest continuously operating photographic society in the USA

New Member

Welcome Packet

We want to welcome you as a member of the Baltimore Camera Club (BCC), t*he oldest continuously operating photographic society in the USA*. We believe your involvement with BCC will enhance your interest, knowledge, and skill in photography. Additionally, you have the opportunity to make friends with people who share your passion in photography and be informally mentored by many of them.

This Welcome Packet is designed to fill you in on many of the opportunities and resources made available to you through BCC. Please take the time to look through it and if you still have questions, feel free to ask at BCC meetings or contact members via email.

Again, we welcome you as a member of BCC!

We are grateful for the many people that serve as either Board of Directors or committee members to help provide structure, services and resources for BCC. Every member is invited to attend the monthly Board meetings if they wish. An email reminder is sent out by the President announcing an upcoming meeting. Committee chairs will also announce volunteer opportunities through email.

The current **Board of Directors** are:
President – Diane Bovenkamp
Vice President – Competitions - Tom Gisriel
Vice President – Programs - Christophe Casamassima
Secretary – Mel Holden
Treasurer - Jim Eichelman
Web Chair – Kent Sutorius
Members at Large – Sandy Nichols, Kenny Epps, Lynn Roberts, Guy Alston

The current **Committee Members** are:

Competition Committee - Jim Voeglein
Mentor Committee – Kenny Epps
Field Outing Committee - Lewis Katz
House Committee - Vacant
Member and Visitor Badges -Vacant
Nominating Committee – Vacant
Banquet Coordinator - Vacant
Focal Point Associate Editors - Lynn Roberts & Kent Sutorius

BCC Meetings

BCC meetings are held every Thursday except for during the summer months (June, July, August) when they are held every other Thursday. Please check the BCC webpage calendar for our official schedule.

Meetings normally occur at Mount Washington United Methodist Church (5800 Cottonworth Ave. MD 21209). During the summer months of June, July and August, all meetings will be Zoom only. Zoom invitations will be sent to all active members prior to the Zoom meetings. Starting on September 1, in-person meetings will resume with a hybrid option for members that cannot be present.

Guests are always welcome to request a Zoom invitation by contacting our president or program chair via email in advance of the meeting. We encourage you to join our meeting at 7:30 p.m. to socialize. Programs begin promptly at 8:00pm and end at about 9:30 p.m.

You can also watch recordings of select Zoom meetings at the BCC YouTube Channel.

Meeting information can be found at the BCC website by clicking the Meetings/Calendar tab.

A typical monthly schedule will include the following:

- **Program nights** – special speakers are invited to speak and share on a variety of disciplines of photography.

- **Critique nights** – members are encouraged to upload one of their images to the BCC Visual Pursuits website and have their images critiqued by fellow members.

- **Digital competition nights** – members are encouraged to submit no more than 2 of their images to be judged by an invited judge or a panel

of judges. Due to the coronavirus, digital competitions are being held online.

- **Print competition nights –** members are encouraged up to 3 monochrome prints and up to 3 color prints to be judged by an invited judge or a panel of judges. Check the calendar to see if print competitions are being held. They were suspended in 2021due to the coronavirus.

In addition to our regular monthly schedule, the club also hosts the following events and opportunities:

- **Banquet night** – a banquet is held every June at the end of every club year. Members and guests are welcome.

- **Welcome back night –** a potluck is held every September at the beginning of every club year. Members and guests are welcome.

- **Special events** – occasionally, the club will hold special events offsite at the same time as a scheduled meeting.

- **Field Shoots** – Check the calendar for scheduled shoots.

- **Field Trips** – Check the calendar for scheduled field trips.

- **Gallery Shows** – Check the calendar when these are taking place.

- Opportunities to **participate in local events** – our club has participated in events such as PoeZella and other events.

- Opportunities for **photo shoots** not open to the public – in the past, we have had the opportunity to shoot in the Poe House and the B&O Railroad Museum.

- Opportunities to compete in Maryland Photography Alliance (MPA) events, competitions, and lectures.

Self-Critique & Critique Night

As mentioned above, at least once a month BCC has a critique night where you can up load 1-2 of your images and members provide encouragement and provide tips on improving your photography.

Self-Critique
Apart from Critique night, it is even more productive if you get into the habit of self-critiquing your own images. You will find that you will become a better photographer when using your camera, and creativity with your images will become more spontaneous. You will also notice that your self-confidence as a photographer is growing! You can find many types of criteria for critiquing your images on the Internet, but we have included *The 12 Elements of a Merit Image*, from Professional Photographers of America, (PPA) on the following pages as an example.

A couple of points to consider before using your self-critiquing criteria:

1. You may want to wait a day or two after taking your pictures before critiquing. This will take some of your emotion out the time and effort you put in taking your images and help you be more objective.
2. Delete images that don't make the grade and you will not use. This allows you to concentrate on what works with your images and will encourage you to go out and shoot more and try new things.
3. Learn to listen to yourself. This will help you develop your vision or style. Critique criteria is a guideline, not every point has to be followed every time.
4. You might want to keep a photography journal or takes notes when shooting or evaluating your own images. These notes basically express what worked or didn't work.

Critique Night

Critique night is a wonderful opportunity to receive feedback on your images from fellow photographers. Try and submit your best and most recent images. To submit your images, click login on the main page and login to your account. Once there, click on *My Account* then *My Galleries*. On the page that comes up you see a small arrow pointing to *Member Programs – Critiques*. Click on the arrow and you will arrive at the page to upload your images. You will notice there are videos you can view if you get stuck on how to go through the process.

Guidelines to Consider on Critique Night

1. The decorum is relaxed, friendly and informal. Members will voice what works, doesn't work and possible improvements on your image. Voice your appreciation for those that offer feedback.

2. It might be helpful to take notes on what people say so you can refer back at a later time.

3. Remember you have your own style or vision. You don't have to accept or implement everything members suggest in their feedback.

4. When you offer feedback on other member images focus on what works, doesn't work, and specific improvements.

The 12 Elements of a Merit Image

(From Professional Photographers of America, PPA)

1. **Impact**: Compelling images evoke emotion—laughter, sadness, anger, pride.

2. **Technical Excellence**: The quality of the actual image as presented for viewing. Aspects such as retouching, sharpness, printing, color, and exposure should be spot on.

3. **Creativity**: The image is original, fresh, and an external expression of the maker's imagination.

4. **Style**: The subject matter meshes with the presentation. Style can also include the characteristic ways that an artist applies his or her specific lighting, posing, or compositional style to underscore the desired impact.

5. **Composition**: The visual elements of an image come together to express intent, whether that's to please the viewer or otherwise. The viewer's attention is captured and directed where the artist plans it to be.

6. **Presentation**: The way an image is showcased gives it a finished look. Everything in the presentation—mats, borders, color choices—should work to enhance the image.

7. **Color Balance**: Color work together to evoke feelings in the viewer. For example, it can bring harmony to an image and enhance the emotional appeal. It can also be incongruous to arouse diverse feelings.

8. **Center of Interest**: This is where an image's creator wants a viewer's attention focused. There may be primary and secondary centers of interest. Sometimes all the elements in an image work together to create the center of interest.

9. **Lighting**: The image demonstrates excellence in the use and control of light, whether natural or additive. Light informs dimensions and shape, sets tone and mood, and enhances the image.

10. **Subject Matter**: The subject matter is central to the story being told, so the subject should sync with the story.

11. **Technique**: The approaches used to create the image—lighting, posting, capture, presentation—work together to be effective.

12. **Storytelling**: The image evokes the viewer's imagination. While the act of creating is a personal thing, so too is the act of viewing. Each image is a story, and the one it tells a viewer may be unique to that person.

Competition Nights

At least once a month there will be a competition night. This is an opportunity to enter 1-3 of your images (depending on the type of competition) and be judged by a judge not affiliated with BCC. The types of competitions are:

- Color print
- Monochrome print
- Projected Digital
- End of Year

Instructions on how to present print images and upload digital images can be found on the BCC website. Log in to your account from the main page and click the *Competition* tab for further information and links. Additionally, when logged into your account you can click *Competitions* then *Submit Images to a Competition* and view a video on how to submit your digital image. Please note that digital images should be JPEG format and 1920 pixels on the long side and 1080 pixels on the short side.

What to Expect on Competition Night

Two groups are judged: Associate and Unlimited. The procedure for each group is the same. The images for the group will be presented in 4 stages. For the first stage each image and its title will be presented in ten second intervals. In the second stage the judge will try to offer constructive comments on each image but will eliminate images that will not go to the third round. For the third stage the judge will narrow down the images to the final six and rank the images as: first, second, third, fourth, fifth, and honorable mention. In the fourth stage the six ranked images will be presented again and the person who took the photo can provide a few comments of appreciation and background on the photo.
Competitions can be a valuable learning experience even if you don't win. and remember that even though judges are experienced and follow criteria, they can be somewhat subjective depending on their background and experiences.

Other Resources Provided by and Through BCC

The BCC website provides a number of educational and other resources.

- The *Membership* tab has a link to where you pay your dues and is the place to see Officers and Committee members and view official documents of the club.
- The Meetings/Calendar tab lists upcoming meetings along with speakers, critiques and competitions.
- The Member/News tab provides member websites and their photographic work.
- The Focal Point tab direct you to the magazine of BCC. Diane Bovenkamp is the editor. The magazine presents articles on the scope of photography and provides summaries on previous speakers and competitions. Members are welcome to submit articles.
- The Other Links tab presents other professional photographer websites who are members of BCC, photographers who provide workshops, places to purchase camera and photographic supplies, favorite local photography locations, other photography organizations, and other educational resources.

Mentoring services. BCC members have the opportunity to be mentored. To find out more about being mentored contact Kenny Epps or Roger Miller.

BCC has a Group Facebook page - Baltimore Camera Club Facebook Group

BCC members can receive reductions in admission to other photography events. BCC is affiliated with Maryland Photography Alliance, (MPA) which hosts its annual Odyssey of Light event. It also hosts photo contests and guest speakers (Artist Spotlight).