



SOUTH TOWNS CAMERA CLUB VIEWFINDER

VOL 1, ISSUE 3

FEBRUARY, 2021



© Sarah Connaughton

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



Hello Friends. We are almost there. That is, completing a weird season with the crazy virus. I think we are doing well, and we are going to make it. Needless to say, there wouldn't have been a successful season if it weren't for number one, Billy Callahan. and number two, Janet LoPresto. They were and are great and we are lucky to have them as part of STCC.

One of the few upsides because of the virus was that we were able to get programs and judges from all over the world. That has been interesting. It is kind of fun to hear our images critiqued by someone with a British accent.

As far as interclub competitions, our entries for the four McKellar competitions have been entered. I have sent you all an email with our entries. As of this writing, the results for the first two competitions are in. We are in second place with 290 points behind Science Museum with 294 points. Remarkably interesting!!

For the PSA competition, two competitions have been entered with one to go. As of today, out of 27 clubs from all over the world, we are in fourth place with 63 points, behind the first-place club with 68 points. As of the second competition, ribbons have been awarded to Carol Pustulka, Manny LoPresto, Norm Queeno, and the coveted Award of Merit to Maureen Szuniewicz.

I just submitted our 20 images for the Golden Horseshow Competition. You should all have received an email with the entries. It is an exceedingly difficult task just picking out 20, not because they weren't good, but because they were all good. The judging will be in conjunction with the CanAm. We should all be very proud of how well we have done in the various competitions. A credit to you and South Towns Camera Club.

So, keep shooting with your camera and make sure you get your virus shots!!! Stay safe, President, Manny LoPresto

CLUB INFORMATION

MEETINGS:

1st and 3rd Thursdays
September through May
7:00 pm

Basic Photo Class
6:00 pm on 1st Thursdays

Hamburg Community Center
107 Prospect Ave
Hamburg, NY 14075

INFORMATION:

Call Joan at 716-652-7419
Call Sarah at 716-655-3891

WEBSITE:

<https://stcc.photoclubservices.com/>

FIND US ON FACEBOOK:

[Southtowns Camera Club](#)

MEMBERSHIPS:

Niagara Frontier Regional Camera Clubs:
<https://nfrcc.org/>

Photographic Society of America:
<https://psa-photo.org/>

VISITORS ALWAYS WELCOME!

DUE TO COVID-19 ALL MEETINGS ARE VIRTUAL FOR THE 2020-21 SEASON

STCC OFFICERS—2020-2021

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Print Chair, Deanne Cunningham deecunning@aol.com 716-435-8558	Membership, Tim Grabowski timothytimdad@aol.com 716-337-3680
Print Chair, Sally Zerfas szerfas60@yahoo.com 716-560-9826	Past President, Norm Queeno dajokerman72@gmail.com 716-697-3312

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MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR AND VP...



Greetings!

I cannot believe we are more than half-way through the camera club season. To quote the President of Hilbert College, "Many people would say that 2020 was a year to forget. But I believe it was an unforgettable year."

We have successfully held fourteen fully remote meetings, featuring speakers and judges not only

from around the country, but from around the world! I am proud that our membership has remained stable...a big thank you to our steadfast and loyal members! I am grateful to our own Billy Callahan who made the necessity of being remote a successful reality. We all owe him an enormous debt of gratitude.

With only two programs and three competitions left, the season is winding down and I am starting to look to, and plan for, the future. I am confident that the day is coming when this pandemic will be part of our shared memory; when we will take a breath and appreciate what we have overcome and all we have learned. Who even knew what Zoom or WebEx was before this? It is impossible right now to know if we will be able to meet in-person or forced to continue to meet remotely but, if you have any suggestions for instructors for next season, wherever they may be located, please pass that along to me.

Enjoy this issue of the electronic STCC Viewfinder. There are lots of pictures to enjoy, news about upcoming events, and a Member Profile about long-time member Deanne Cunningham, and more. Thank you Deanne for allowing us a peek into your journey and sharing your beautiful photos.

I am looking forward to hearing your ideas and suggestions. Please let me know what you thought worked and what we could improve on. My email address is jlop206@gmail.com. Stay-Tuned and Stay Safe!!! Janet LoPresto, Editor and VP

COMPETITION STANDINGS

AS OF FEBRUARY 2021

PROJECTED IMAGE GENERAL

BRONZE			
SILVER			
1	Erickson	Joan	13.80
2	Ennis	Clare	12.60
3	Moyer	Tracy	11.00
GOLD			
1	Blette	Amanda	12.25
2	DeVoy	JoAnne	11.20
DIAMOND			
1	Moyer	Dan	13.20
2	Fischer	Garrett	12.80
3	Grabowski	Timothy	12.40
3	Metzler	Joanie	12.40
4	Gorski	Lisa	12.00
5	Damico	Michael	11.00
5	Vassie	Thomas	11.00
PLATINUM			
1	Smith	Thomas	14.20
2	Pustulka	Carol	14.00
3	Miller	Karl	13.60
4	LoPresto	Janet	13.40
4	Queeno	Norm	13.40
5	Connaughton	Sarah	13.20
6	LoPresto	Manny	13.00
7	Regula	Rich	12.75
8	Metzler	Charlie	12.60
9	Fairbanks	Michael	12.40
10	Queeno	Sandy	12.25
11	Stry	Darleen	12.20
12	Barton	Janice	11.80
13	Gilcrist	Gerrie	11.20
13	Maher	Michael	11.20

PROJECTED IMAGE CREATIVE

BRONZE			
1	Zernentsch	Charles	9.50
SILVER			
1	Ennis	Clare	12.40
2	Moyer	Tracy	11.75
3	DeVoy	JoAnne	9.80
GOLD			
DIAMOND			
1	Moyer	Dan	12.60
2	Fischer	Garrett	12.20
3	Vassie	Thomas	10.50
PLATINUM			
1	Smith	Thomas	13.60
2	Grabowski	Timothy	13.20
3	LoPresto	Janet	13.00
3	Pustulka	Carol	13.00
4	Fairbanks	Michael	12.40
4	Stry	Darleen	12.40
5	Barton	Janice	12.20
6	LoPresto	Manny	12.00
6	Miller	Karl	12.00
7	Connaughton	Sarah	11.80
7	Maher	Michael	11.80
7	Metzler	Charlie	11.80
8	Regula	Rich	11.00
9	Gilcrist	Gerrie	10.80
10	Metzler	Joanie	10.40

COMPETITION STANDINGS

AS OF FEBRUARY 2021

PROJECTED IMAGE MONOCHROME

PROJECTED IMAGE MONOCHROME			
BRONZE			
SILVER			
1	Erickson	Joan	13.80
2	Ennis	Clare	12.60
3	Moyer	Tracy	11.00
GOLD			
1	Blette	Amanda	12.25
2	DeVoy	JoAnne	11.20
DIAMOND			
1	Moyer	Dan	13.20
2	Fischer	Garrett	12.80
3	Grabowski	Timothy	12.40
4	Metzler	Joanie	12.40
5	Gorski	Lisa	12.00
6	Damico	Michael	11.00
6	Vassie	Thomas	11.00
PLATINUM			
1	Smith	Thomas	14.20
2	Pustulka	Carol	14.00
3	LoPresto	Janet	13.40
3	Queenno	Norm	13.40
4	Connaughton	Sarah	13.20
5	Miller	Karl	13.10
6	LoPresto	Manny	13.00
7	Regula	Rich	12.75
8	Metzler	Charlie	12.60
9	Fairbanks	Michael	12.40
10	Queenno	Sandy	12.25
11	Stry	Darleen	12.20
12	Barton	Janice	11.80
13	Gilcrist	Gerrie	11.20
13	Maher	Michael	11.20



1. Digital images must be submitted to competition on the **FIRST THURSDAY** of the month by midnight

2. The Monochrome Digital Image Category has been added

There now are three Digital Image Categories: General, Monochrome, Creative/Artistic

Into each category, you can enter:

- General - Up to 2 images
- Monochrome - 1 image
- Creative/Artistic - 1 image

3. Monochrome Digital Image Rules:

- A member CAN submit an image in the General Category, then convert that image to monochrome, and submit it into the Monochrome Category
- A member CANNOT submit the same monochrome image into both the General Category and Monochrome Category

4. Definition of Categories:

- General – Open category. Includes all genres such as nature, pictorial, monochrome, infrared, etc.
- Monochrome – Image must be tints/shades of one color
- Creative/Artistic – Photography producing an image using imaginative skill or originality of thought, including the altering of reality. Includes modifications made on the computer or in the camera

STCC PROGRAM SCHEDULE 2020-2021

All Meetings are "Virtual" Due to Covid-19

Prior to each meeting, members will receive an email with a link providing access to the meeting

September 3	<i>The Visual Power of Contrast—Lisa Langell</i>	Website: www.langellphotography.com
September 17	1st Projected Image Competition Submit images by September 3, 2020	
October 1	<i>Photoshop: Targeted Adjustments—Tim Grey</i>	Website: http://www.timgreyphoto.com/
October 15	2nd Projected Image Competition Submit images by October 1, 2020	
November 5	<i>The Secret Power of RAW Files: How to Get the Most Out of Your Raw Digital Files—Joe Edelman</i>	Website: https://www.joedelman.com/
November 19	3rd Projected Image Competition Submit images by Nov 5, 2020	
December 3	<i>Flower Photography—Mollie Isaacs</i>	Website: http://awakethelight.com/
December 17	To Be Announced	
Jan. 7, 2021	<i>Light...Shadow...Background—Kevin Loughlin</i>	Website: WildsideNatureTours.com
January 21	4th Projected Image Competition Submit images by Jan 7, 2020	
February 4	<i>The Art of Landscape Photography—Kah-Wai Lin</i>	Website: https://kahwailin.com/
February 18	5th Projected Image Competition Submit images by February 4, 2020	
March 4	<i>Making the Most of the Wildlife Photographic Experience: Preparedness & Skill Meet Luck- Lee Hoy</i>	Website: WildsideNatureTours.com
March 18	6th Projected Image Competition Submit images by March 4, 2020	
April 1	<i>Top 10 Ways to Make Your Photography Worse—Lee Hoy</i>	Website: WildsideNatureTours.com
April 15	7th Projected Image Competition Submit images by April 1, 2020	
May 6	Projected Image of the Year Competition Submit images by April 22, 2020	
May 20	<i>Annual Awards Banquet</i>	



STCC MEETING—MARCH 4, 2021

LEE HOY

*Making the Most of the Wildlife Photographic Experience:
Preparedness and Skill Meet Luck*

LEE HOY...OLYMPUS EDUCATOR, PHOTO INSTRUCTOR AND OWNER/
OPERATOR OF BIG BEND BIRDING & PHOTO TOURS



As owner/operator of Big Bend Birding & Photo Tours, I focus my time

on helping others enjoy the beauty of the Big Bend National Park Region and serving as a freelance photographer when time permits. Publishing is fun, but my main interest is in helping others find that special bird or teaching them to capture spectacular images while they are visiting Big Bend National Park or surrounding areas. I am an award winning photographer and my images have been in Texas Parks & Wildlife Magazine, Texas Highways, Bird Watcher's Digest, & NANPA's Expressions.

I also serve as a photography workshop instructor for Wildside Nature Tours and Kevin Loughlin with destinations such as the Galapagos Islands National Park, Ecuador, Amazon Riverboat Cruise, Costa Rica, Glacier National Park, Yellowstone National Park

in winter, and more. You can see some of my images from these destinations in my portfolio page on my website.

My photography experience began at the age of 16 when my mom gave me a Canon AE1 with a broken meter and I bought John Shaw's The Nature Photographer's Complete Guide to Professional Field Techniques. With this book, I learned the sunny f/16 rule and with many rolls of slide film in hand, I headed to the Wichita Mountains National Wildlife Refuge in southwest Oklahoma near where I lived at the time. This is how my love for photography was birthed and later with a new camera and lens, my grandparents took me on my inaugural trip to Big Bend National Park and the surrounding region.

I was delighted to be named an official Olympus Educator after making the switch from a full frame system which I had used for over 25 years to the Olympus OM-D system in April 2019. I have never been happier with my gear and its features and abilities.

THURSDAY,
MARCH 4, 2021,
7:00 PM

AGENDA:

- Introductions & Greetings
- **Preparedness** - Before & When You are in the Field
- **Skill** - Wildlife Photography Skills
- **Luck** - When Preparedness & Skill Meet at the Right Moment

[CLICK HERE to register](#)
Click on the link to get an invite to the meeting

For more info about Lee Hoy and Big Bend Photography, click here:
<https://leehoyphotography.com/>



wildlife images by
LEE HOY



Click below for info on Wildside Nature Tours

[HOME - Wildside Nature Tours](#)

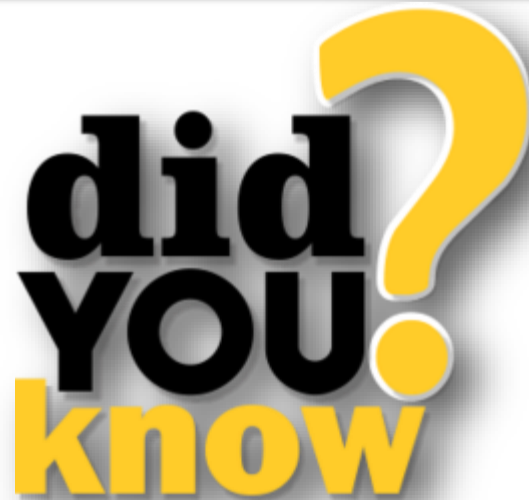


Website Improvements

Billy Callaghan and Joan Erickson have cleaned up and reorganized the STCC website. In addition, they have implemented these two major improvements:

- On the Home Page, the most recent competition's images now scroll through showing the maker's name, image title and score.
- To see the images most recently submitted to the McKellar and PSA, click on *Competitions* in the top menu bar and then select *2020-2021 External Competitions*. The images will display along with the maker, title and score received.

Thank you Billy and Joan!



TO DISPLAY A MEMBERSHIP LIST

1. Click on *Organization* on the top menu bar
2. Select *Membership List*
3. Select *Show All Active Users*

YOU CAN ADD YOUR PHOTO TO THE WEBSITE

1. Click on *My Account* in the top menu bar
2. Select *My Account Settings*
3. In the bottom box, click on *Change Avatar Image*
4. Click on *Select*
5. Navigate to the file of the picture you want to insert
6. Click on *Open*
7. Click on *Save Uploaded Image*

Click this link to go to the STCC website, log-in
and add your photo

[South Towns Camera Club \(photoclubservices.com\)](http://SouthTownsCameraClub(photoclubservices.com))

UPCOMING EVENTS

STCC AWARDS BANQUET & SUMMER PICNIC

Hi Friends,

Just a note to inform you that we haven't forgotten about the Awards Banquet. We're on top of it, just waiting to see what the future holds. The tentative date that we have reserved is May 21, 2021. So for now we have to keep doing the right thing and see what lays ahead.

The same goes for the Summer Picnic. Clare Ennis, our hospitality chair, is trying to get a date but Erie County isn't giving out dates as of this writing. So...hang tough and watch your emails for updates.

Manny LoPresto



UPCOMING EVENTS

NFRCC SPEAKER SERIES

The NFRCC & Hunt's Photo and Video are offering virtual presentations

COST:

Single Speaker—\$10 CDN

Entire Series—\$45 CDN

REGISTER HERE:

[NFRCC – Speaker Series | Niagara Frontier Regional Camera Club](#)



PHOTO & VIDEO
Hunt's EST. 1988

Click on links for more info

1

March 15, 2021 at 7:30 pm

[Mike Milicia presents *Color Management: The Why, When, Where and How*](#)

2

April 26, 2021 at 7:30 pm

[Roman Kurywczak presents *Photographing Birds From Portraits to Flight!*](#)

3

June 14, 2021 at 7:30 pm

[Cheryl Belczak presents *Light From Darkness*](#)

4

July 19, 2021 at 7:30 pm

Noah Buchanan presents *Filters*

5

August 9, 2021 at 7:30 pm

[Ellen Anon presents *Landscapes/Seascapes That Take You Away*](#)



UPCOMING EVENTS

CAN AM

PHOTO EXPO

2021 Virtual Conference

April 16, 17 & 18, 2021

Educational Classes and Workshops



Link to the Can Am Website

[CanAm Photo Expo \(canamexpo.com\)](https://canamexpo.com)

Conference Tickets

USA—\$69

Canadian—\$99

UPCOMING EVENTS

CANAM
PHOTO EXPO

Click on
the
pictures
for a link
to more
info

THE INSTRUCTORS



Struan



Miquil Quiles



Matt Kloskowski



Yannick Michaud



Michelle Valberg



Jeffrey T. Barnes



Jacob Stiller



Don Komarechka



Rick Friedman

FOCUS YOUR ART

Photography Education Focused on You

FOUNDERS: LISA LANGELL & AMY JOHNSON

Lisa Langell is Co-Founder of Focus Your Art

This means more great learning opportunities

Lisa Langell has just announced the launch of [Focus Your Art, LLC](#)! Lisa presented South Towns Camera Club's first ever virtual meeting presentation back in September 2020, "The Visual Power of Contrast." In support of Lisa's new endeavor, please check out "Focus Your Art." Here is the scoop:

Together with Co-Founder and fellow photographer, [Amy Johnson](#), Lisa has been working hard for several months to create a resource for you that addresses many of your needs and requests in a way that she is quite excited about!

Lisa and Amy are building Focus Your Art to be something exceptional! They are in the early stages, but they already have a lot to offer! Focus Your Art provides:

- An environment where photographers of all levels inspire each other to improve our skills, refine our eye, and express our photographic vision
- Classes and workshops where Lisa and Amy provide caring instruction. They know what it takes to teach well
- A community where you feel welcome and appreciated

[Click here to explore Lisa's new online, multi-week workshops](#)

McKELLAR COMPETITION



Maureen Szuniewicz, "Dad With His Kids," Score 30



Carol Pustulka, "Portrait of Moja," Score 29



Manny LoPresto, "Mom and Junior," Score 30



Janet LoPresto, "Intense Stare," Score 27

MCKELLAR COMPETITION



Darleen Stry, "Daredevil," Score 24



Janet LoPresto, "Drying Off," Score 23



Carol Pustulka, "Portrait of a King," Score 23

MEMBER PROFILE:

DEANNE CUNNINGHAM



I THINK I MAY HAVE BEEN BORN CLUTCHING A CAMERA...

My father had a photography hobby, and took many shots of me as a toddler...a benefit my sister and brother never enjoyed.

I can't remember a time when I didn't take photos. I recall an early Kodak Brownie, and still have the photos from that time; mostly images taken from mountain tops and lakes.

I was born in Buffalo, and lived there until I was in 7th grade, when we moved to a lake-front house in Angola. My

summers were spent playing tennis, swimming, and water skiing until I was college age, and I got a summer job as a "number please" operator with the phone company in Angola. Hard to believe in this technological age that it was in the days before we had dial phones.

My education continued at Syracuse University, where I earned a BA degree, a Masters in Education from Canisius College, and another Masters in English Folklore from Buffalo State. During this time, I also spent many summers in Ireland, including summer school at University College Dublin, and two summers at Trinity College Dublin.

What I consider the first of my three lives was teaching 11th and 12th grade English for 34 years at Eden Central school. The second life was combined with that time, when at nights and on weekends I was part of a folk group. We performed throughout the area, at coffee houses and concerts at Buffalo State and UB, as well as in Toronto.



© Deanne Cunningham

MEMBER PROFILE:

DEANNE CUNNINGHAM

Throughout this time, I still carried cameras around. At some point in the 70's, I went to Australia, with my Grandfather's Argus Rangefinder. I took beautiful shots of Koalas, Kangaroos, and the Great Barrier Reef. When I got home and had the film processed, the images were filled with orange streaks. The camera had developed a light leak.

Not long after that disappointment, I invested in a Konica system, and there began my fascination with birds. On my first visit to Sanibel Island in the early 80's, I raced up and down the beach in front of our cottage, chasing pelicans. With some luck, I captured some in flight and some roosting in the Australian pines along the shore. To this day, my favorite images are of birds in flight. Taking the time (and patience) to photograph them provides both the opportunity and excuse to observe their behavior in their natural settings. The enjoyment of photographing birds led to capturing images of other wildlife, and I was bitten by the travel bug, and Sanibel Island has become an almost annual destination.

At some point, photography became the reason for a trip, (I no longer referred to it as a vacation), rather than an adjunct to it. In the meantime, I never took a class or a workshop, but learned by trial and error, plus a good deal of mind-picking. A number of years before I retired from my first life, I had reached a point where I resented not having enough time to do what I wanted with my photography. I knew that what I really wanted to do was to write articles and provide my own photographs as illustrations. Surprisingly enough, it happened!

When I retired from teaching in '95, I spent five weeks in the late summer, doing a circle tour of the Southwest, and thus my third life began. Photographing wildlife and its environment became my main focus. I spent a

number of late November trips to Bosque del Apache in New Mexico photographing sandhill cranes and snow geese. In the early months of a given year, I enjoyed capturing the elephant seals at San Simeon on the California coast, and California pelicans with their beautiful red throats near San Diego.

For many years, (and more to come) I try to get to the Saint Augustine Alligator Farm in the second week in May. Nesting season in all aspects can easily be photographed then. Birds are mating, sitting on eggs, feeding nestlings, and posing in their glorious mating plumage. Moving up and down the boardwalk is the most walking needed, and you can photograph the birds from sunrise to sunset. It is easily one of my favorite places to photograph, with the added advantage that my sister lives only 45 minutes away.



MEMBER PROFILE: DEANNE CUNNINGHAM

My first two visits to Alaska were in 2003. I became addicted. I really needed a donkey to carry my equipment, as I carried three cameras, and photographed with print film, transparencies, and digital. I have totally lost track of the number of times I have visited Alaska. It competes with Africa as my favorite place for photography.

In 2013 I went to Kenya, and right now I think it is number one for me. I went to Tanzania last October (2019) and if possible would like to return to Kenya in the future.

Over the years, I have been fortunate enough to have received recognition from a variety of sources and organizations, such as NANPA (North American Nature Photography Association), NFRCC (Award for Photographic Excellence), of which I held the offices of secretary and president, and even the Buffalo Zoo. I had prize-winning images published in *Wildbird* magazine three years in a row, and was the primary photographer for the organic gardening book *Great Garden Companions*, by Sally Jean Cun-

ningham, (Rodale Press, 1998).

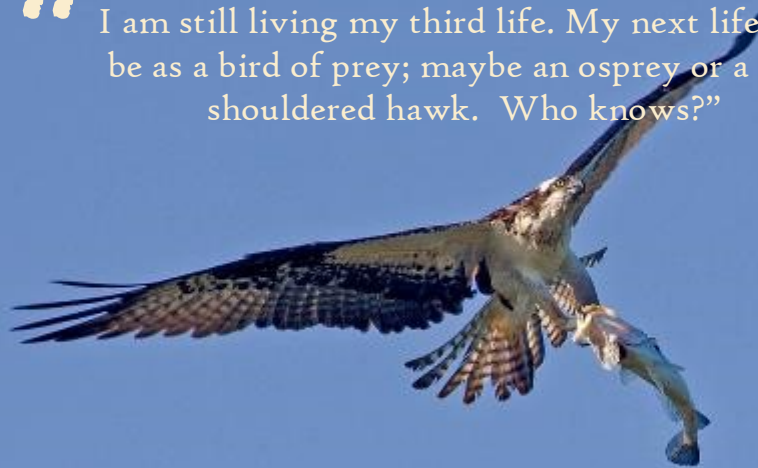
For about eight years, I was the photographer for the "Buffalo in Bloom" gardening contest, and each year my collection of framed enlargements hung outside the mayor's office in the Buffalo City Hall.

Other articles appeared in *Birds and Blooms*, *Shutterbug's Outdoor and Nature Photography*, *Artvoice*, and a variety of photography newsletters and internet magazines.

I have enjoyed presenting multi-media slide shows and other programs over the years, but overall, my best advice would be to shoot for yourself. Do what is enjoyable to you, rather than trying to shoot for the judges. I have also discovered that there is a domino effect to contributing your time and images. It can pay off in income-producing jobs.



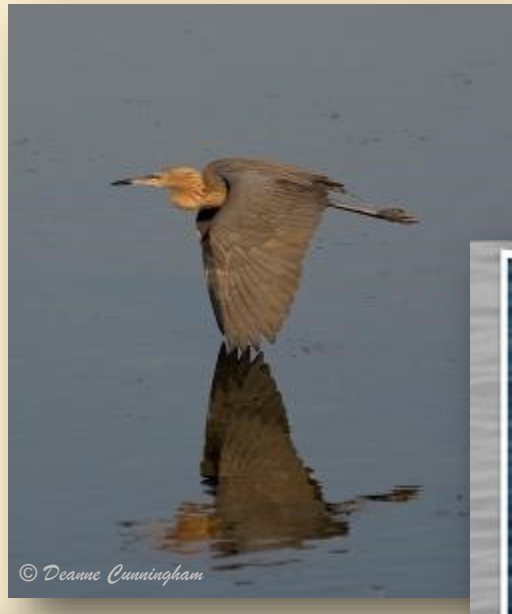
I am still living my third life. My next life will be as a bird of prey; maybe an osprey or a red-shouldered hawk. Who knows?"



© Deanne Cunningham

MEMBER PROFILE: DEANNE CUNNINGHAM

Deanne is perhaps best known for her exquisite photos of flying birds



MEMBER PROFILE: DEANNE CUNNINGHAM



MEMBER PROFILE: DEANNE CUNNINGHAM

Images from African Photo Safaris



MEMBER PROFILE: DEANNE CUNNINGHAM



Continued from Page



“My best advice would be to shoot for yourself. Do what is enjoyable to you, rather than trying to shoot for the judges.”



Winter Photography Tips

If you are like me you are thinking, “Here I am, stuck in Buffalo in February with NOTHING to take pictures of!!!” Not true. Watch for a fresh snowfall and get out there!! If you are prepared and a little brave you can capture some beautiful images. Thank you to Karl Miller, Tim Grabowski, Sally Zervas, Maureen Szuniewicz, Mike D’Amico, Clare Ennis, Sarah Connaughton and Ted Lesinski for sharing their beautiful winter photos and tips as part of this article. Here are some tips for shooting in the winter weather:

AVOID UNDEREXPOSING YOUR IMAGES: Your camera will under-expose snow images and getting the exposure right can be a challenge. Typically, you will need to increase your exposure from what the in-camera meter is showing. I recommend shooting in manual mode. Use your camera meter on the snow and then increase the exposure by +1 stop. Check the back of your camera and make adjustments from there. If shooting in aperture or shutter priority use exposure compensation to increase your exposure. Try starting with +1.0, check results and make adjustments as needed.

Expose for the highlights. Look at your histogram to verify you are not clipping the highlights. Also, use the LCD display on your camera that shows blown out highlights (affectionately called “blinkies”).

Shooting in RAW mode will allow you to make exposure adjustments in post-processing as needed.

CAPTURING SNOWFALL: Use a relatively fast shutter speed for falling snow. Usually a shutter speed between 1/250th to 1/500 of a second will do the trick. One source suggests using longer focal lengths which compacts a scene. This works great for falling snow, as it can give you a very layered look with differently-sized snowflakes. Again, look at the LCD on the back of your camera and adjust as needed.

ACT FAST: To capture a fresh snow fall you have to move fast, as it blows off trees quickly as the wind picks up.

LIGHTING: The sun is at a lower angle in the sky in the winter, and you can pretty much shoot throughout the whole day. The low angle of the sun creates interesting shadows and patterns.

ADD A LITTLE BIT OF COLOR: Winter scenes can be very monochromatic, so adding a little bit of color can make the image pop. For example, have someone wear a colorful jacket and pose in your scene. Or, as the image by Karl Miller that I’ve included in this article illustrates, a little touch of color makes all the difference.

FILTERS: A circular polarizer will help you eliminate glare off the snow and make the sky pop, if you are lucky enough to have a blue sky day...after all it is Buffalo.



Winter Photography Tips

OVERCOMING TECHNICAL CHALLENGES:

Shooting in the cold and snow presents special challenges for your equipment and yourself.

Battery: Cold temperatures cause your batteries to lose power quicker. Bring extra batteries and keep them warm by storing in an inner pocket.

Moisture and Condensation: Moisture is the enemy. Most often, going from cold to warm will cause condensation on your camera and lens. To avoid this, before you move inside place your camera in an airtight plastic bag (ie: zip lock storage bag) and put the camera into your cold camera bag. Once inside, leave your camera bag closed with the camera inside and allow it to warm up slowly. Don't open the camera bag until after the bag and contents have completely warmed up. (You may want to remove your card from your camera before sealing your camera in the bag).

Cold Hands: Invest in special photo gloves with fingertips that fold down. See one type of these gloves below. Also, consider using chemical handwarmers.

Keeping Gear Dry: Do everything you can to keep your camera dry. Keep your lens cap on until ready to shoot and use a lens hood. If it is wet outside consider covering your camera and lens with a "rain cover" as pictured below.

Staying Warm: Being in Buffalo, we are all very aware of how to properly dress to stay dry and warm. Dress in layers. You can always unzip your jacket or remove a scarf or hat if you get too warm. I recommend the chemically activated hand and toe warmers.



[Think Tank Photo Emergency Rain Cover \(Medium\) 740619 B&H Photo \(bhphotovideo.com\)](http://www.bhphotovideo.com)



[Freehands Men's Stretch Thinsulate Gloves, Large, Black 11121ML \(adorama.com\)](http://www.adorama.com)

Karl skillfully used post processing to transform these images into magical winter scenes. How many differences can you find? Here is how Karl said he did it: "Step one: Get rid of any annoying distractions using the healing brush and stamp tool. Then the main trick is in Topaz. I used chalk smudge and angelic radiance filters, cut back until they just "looked right," and on the bridge a few other layers as shown in layers images below. These shots were taken on my way home from work. I don't have a go-to spot for winter shots. I rely on the old stumble on something cool when I happen to have a camera with me approach."



18.33%

Layers Channels Paths

Kind

Luminosity Opacity: 73%

Lock: Fill: 100%

- Angelic Radiance
- Chalk Smudge
- Layer 1
- Background copy 2
- Background copy
- Background





15.15%

Layers Channels Paths

Kind [Image] [Circle] [Text] [Crop] [Lock]

Normal Opacity: 100%

Lock: [Grid] [Move] [Crop] [Lock] Fill: 100%

- Black & White 2
- Brightnes...ntrast 1
- dodge -burn
- Layer 2
- Hue/Saturation 1
- Layer 1 copy 3
- Layer 1 copy 2
- Color Balance 1
- Black & White 1
- Layer 1 copy 4
- Layer 1 copy
- Layer 1
- Background



PHOTOS BY SALLY ZERFAS



PHOTO BY MAUREEN SZUNIEWICZ



PHOTO BY MIKE D'AMICO



PHOTO BY CLARE ENNIS



Clare recommends the shooting location of Buffalo Harbor State Park, next to the Small Boat Harbor, on Fuhrmann Blvd.

NOTE: This photo is not from that location.

PHOTO BY SARAH CONNAUGHTON



PHOTO BY TED LESINSKI



PHOTO BY DARLEEN STRY



TIPS FROM DARLEEN:

- 1) Because the winter voids much of the color from our scenes (at least here in NY), when you go out to shoot look more for shapes and contrast.
- 2) When hiking outdoors with your camera if you don't plan on taking images along the way much take your battery out and carry inside your coat pocket to keep warm. Always take spares as the cold drains them faster.
- 3) When bringing your camera in and out of warm environments, like from outside to hot car, make sure your lens cap is on. If you don't have one try a UV filter or even a plastic bag, as the condensation will form on the outer most layer of the lens. Also, put your camera into the camera bag while still cold and leave in there until it warms up gradually.
- 4) For hiking tips—wear wool socks. Take two plastic bags and an extra pair of dry socks with you. Then, if your feet get wet you can put the dry socks on. Then put your feet in plastic bags to keep warm while the shoes are still wet. It's a heck of a lot better than walking around with wet feet.

Before and AFTER

Topaz Sharpen AI

Having just purchased **Topaz Sharpen AI** software, I did a little experiment to see if it really worked...and I am pleased to report I was amazed. And, as a nice added bonus, it is easy to use with minimal sliders and a simple preview window. I used it as a plug-in in Photoshop but you can also use it as a plug-in in Lightroom, as a stand-alone app and in Topaz Studio.

Topaz also makes several other products including DeNoise (reduces noise) and Gigapixel

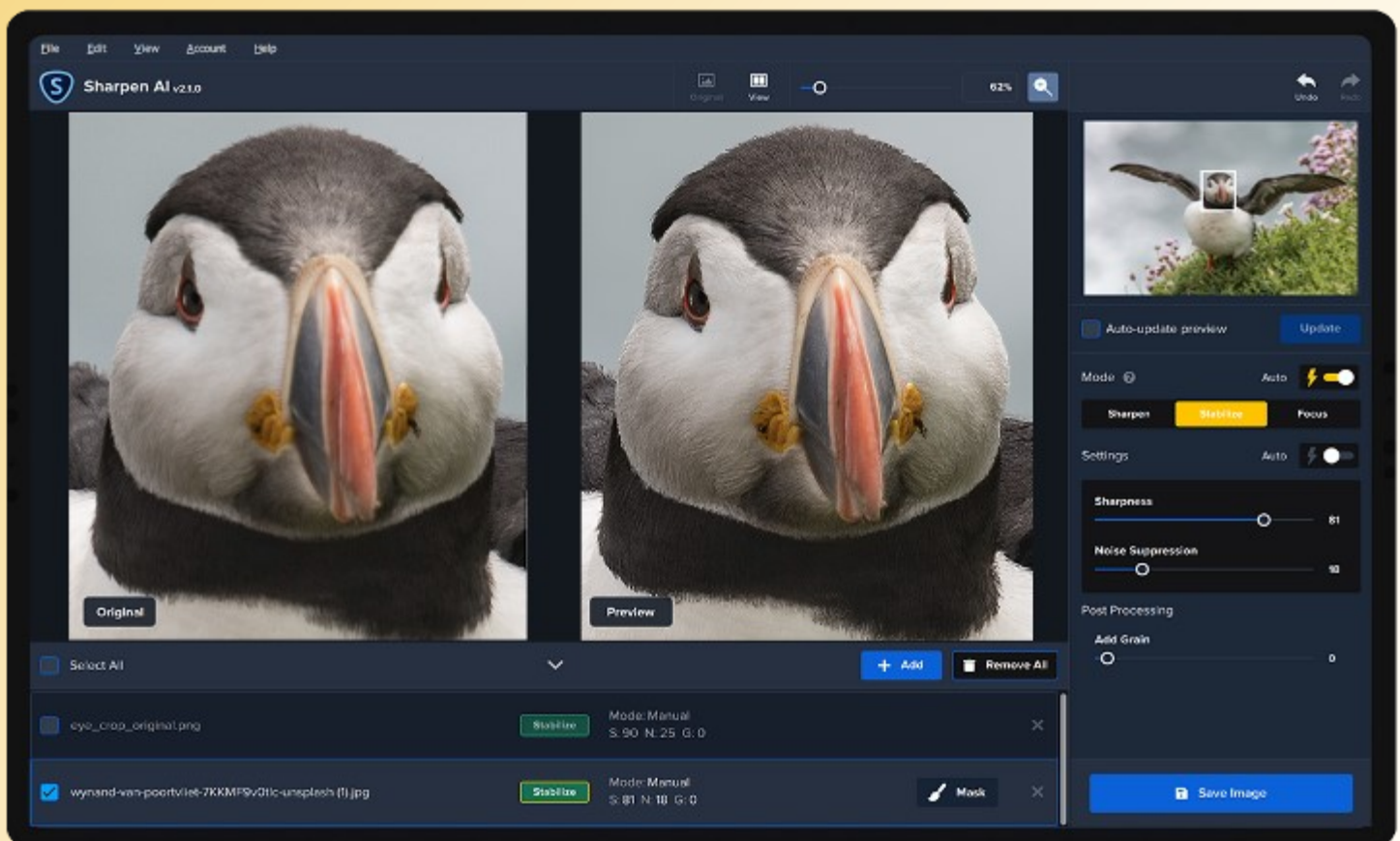
(upsizes images). Here is a link to an article that gives a lot of helpful information about all three. <https://www.ppa.com/ppmag/articles/product-review-topaz-ai-software>

Topaz Sharpen AI is a sharpening and shake reduction photo retouching software, which can help make blurry or out-of-focus areas of your photos sharper.

According to the software maker, "Topaz Sharpen AI is the first sharpening and shake reduction software

that can tell the difference between real detail and noise to create tack-sharp images, even when you're shooting handheld, at night, or with a shallow depth of field."

The image below is from the Topaz website and shows how simple the interface is. Although I plan to watch a couple of videos about using it at a later date, I was able to open the software in Photoshop and use it without any confusion or difficulty.



Before and AFTER

Topaz Sharpen AI

Although I did not run into a problem with processing time (I am fortunate to have a new, fast computer), I understand that in some cases the software can run slowly.

Sharpen AI and DeNoise AI are available from Topaz for \$79 each. For a 15% discount go to Anthony Morganti's website. Once on Any-

thony's website, look on the right-hand side for the discount code and link to the Topaz website. [topaz \(anthonymorganti.com\)](http://topaz.anthonymorganti.com)

Following are my images that I processed with Topaz Sharpen AI. I kept the post processing to a minimum before applying Topaz Sharpen AI. See what you think.

Look at how Topaz Sharpen AI eliminated the camera shake. Not only is the eye much sharper, but check out the bird's legs. Wow!



Before and AFTER

Topaz Sharpen AI



The After image appears so much "crisper" overall and the eye really pops!



Before and AFTER

Topaz Sharpen AI

Before



Look at the difference in the detail in the petals. Did you know the "AI" in the name stands for Artificial Intelligence?



After

Before and AFTER

Topaz Sharpen AI



Before



After

The change is subtle, but note the added sharpness in the center pistil, as well as the stamens in the foreground. And no artifacts or halos!

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THANKS FOR READING!



If you have any
suggestions or
questions please
email me at
jlop206@gmail.com.

Until next time...stay
safe and happy
shooting!