

Club Activities During Pandemic

Dennis Goulet Photographic Society of Rhode Island (RI)

PSRI has had two digital and print competitions, The images were judged ahead of time with the judge and then a zoom meeting was conducted with the members to comment on the images and announce the winners. For the prints we did a digital version on the first judging, then for the last print competition judging holding the print competition and Print of the Year judging at the same time with only two staff and the two Judges. We then used digital images of the prints to conduct the presentation and comments on the prints using a Zoom meeting.

I gave a Zoom presentation to the Medford Center for the Arts in April, and PSRI has had presentations from TJ Thorne, Tony Sweet, Rad Drew, and on the 28th we have Charles Glazer, Canon Explorer of Light.

Dave Westlake Quiet Corner Camera Club (CT)

To keep active during the Pandemic we are doing the following:

- We have a monthly digital photo challenge. The members are given a theme, Images are posted on SmugMug and voted on by the members
- We are planning to hold monthly Zoom meetings. We are compiling a viewing list of Youtube videos and/or webinars. One will be chosen by the board initially and the members will view it at their leisure and it will be the topic of discussion in the virtual club meeting.

Any suggestions from other clubs concerning virtual or safe distancing activities would be greatly appreciated.

Rhonda Cullens Flagpole Photographers (CT)

Things Flagpole Photographers did when the pandemic hit

1. We switched to online virtual meetings for our monthly competitions. We used to have competition categories of Digital Assigned Subject and Digital Open A and B, and Print Assigned Subject, Print Open Color, and Print Monochrome. We changed those categories to Digital Assigned Subject, Digital Open Color A & B, and Digital Monochrome A & B.
2. In lieu of our regular program night, the club participated in Matt Kloskowski's free Virtual Program on "How to Edit Your Photos Like a Pro in Lightroom and Photoshop."
3. We offered two "Virtual Scavenger Hunts" which were a lot of fun. (*See details below.)
4. We normally have our end of year print competition held at our local library. However, since the library is also closed, we put together a "Virtual Exhibit" showcasing a winning photo from each of the 34 different members who placed in this year's monthly competitions. These photos were also used to create a video set to music. The "[Virtual Exhibit](#)" was featured on both the club's website as well as that of the [C.H. Booth Library](#).
5. We continued to send out our monthly Newsletters to keep members informed of what's happening with the club, NECCC, and other things of interest.
6. We changed our club rules of requiring all competition photos to have been taken in the previous 24 months, extending that to 36 months for next year. This recognizes members aren't getting out as much to take photos, but may have more time to look back through and edit their photos they've taken in the last few years.

*Click for full "[Virtual Scavenger Hunt](#)" details. Basically, 10 categories were drawn from a hat live on our club's Facebook page. Photographers had 6 hours to take, edit, and upload one photo per category. Then all participants and other club members voted for their favorite photo in each category to determine winners. The link above shows all of the creative entries and gives another link to the "[Winners Gallery](#)".

Things the club is looking at doing this fall if we still can't meet

1. Continue with virtual meetings and competitions.
2. Offer all our club programs virtually.
3. Offer additional Virtual Scavenger Hunts.
4. Look at offering other industry programs and webinars that might be of interest to members.
5. Look at the possibility of continuing our matching up of member "Leaders" with "Learners" in a socially distant or virtual way to encourage one-on-one assistance and growth.

Barbara Krawczyk Westfield and Springfield(MA)

Westfield

We lost our meeting place in April because we met in an assisted living center. So our last in person meeting was in March. This is what we've been doing. One of our members has volunteered to manage an email exchange of digital photos. She and I decided on four new topics/subjects a week for our club members to work on creating. All the subjects we pick can be taken at home, on a walk or in our yards. No traveling is required. We have just completed our 17th week! My volunteer gathers all the entries and then sends them out via email. People can comment on them, etc. The goal is to take new photos to keep ourselves engaged and active in photography. We are a small club of 20 and about half participate but not every week. For example, this week's topics were Monochrome, Looking Inside, a photo that depicts a quotation, movie, book title, phrase; and Pairs. One of our first exercises was to do a very popular topic: create from items at home, a famous painting. We've had nature topics, architecture topics, still lives and all sorts of creative ideas. It is unclear whether we will be able to meet in our former location so we will investigate our local athenaeum that has a big theater than can accommodate social distancing. Thus far, the athenaeum has not opened fully so we shall see.

Springfield Photographic Society

Basically we meet via Zoom. We had our April competition in person, however, after that we lost our meeting place. Our May competition was held thusly: our four judges (club members) for the month viewed the digital entries via Dropbox. Our digital VP created a Word document where each judge lists the score and makes comments. He then created a PowerPoint program that shows all the images with the person's name, image title, total score, honor and comments (if any). This can be found on UTube. Then on our meeting night we held a Zoom meeting so the judges can provide additional comments. For our program nights, we've found speakers with presentations on a variety of topics, similar to what Shiv does for PSA. We also utilize the talents and interests of our members. We recently had a member discuss Milky Way photography and plan to hold a field trip to practice (we will drive ourselves and social distance). Our next member program will be on macro photography.

Our print competition in May was rather creative. Our president had all our print makers submit their prints to his house. He then dropped them off to one of the judges, who then dropped them off at the next judge's and so forth. The VP of digital once again created a document with the categories of prints (Large BW, Large color, small color, small BW, artistic/creative and monthly challenge topic), a place for a score and a comment section. Each print maker submitted their images digitally so that a PowerPoint program could be created that could be viewed by all club members via UTube and on our website. At another Zoom meeting the judges discussed their comments. It worked very well!!

Not sure what is going to happen this fall, but we are continuing to do Zoom meetings/presentations all summer; we normally do not meet from June through August. So this is a bonus.

I hope this provides some ideas to clubs who may wonder how to continue their club activities. Let me know if you have any questions.

Mary Boucher Merrimack Valley Camera Club (MA)

When MVCC had to suspend live meetings back in mid-March, I put together a schedule of weekly Zoom sessions. Some were held at regular meeting times, but not all (one advantage of being on lockdown, people were available to meet pretty much all the time). We had about 60% of our regular attendees join the Zoom sessions. Most of our booked Spring speakers I moved to the fall, so I came up with new content for Zooming.

We had a surprising number of unsolicited emails from photographers offering free webinars, most of which we took advantage of. One speaker was a British photographer, living in France, who took us on a wonderful journey through the seasons in the U.K. We had free webinars from Matt Klowkowski, Lisa Langell, and Steve Gettle. Hunts did a free session for us on the pros and cons of mirrorless cameras, complete with reps from Nikon and Olympus. We virtually presented our digital image-of-the-year judging results. I dug out a list of "small topics" I knew members were interested in learning more about and got those covered by club members (tapping into the talent). I gave a Topaz DeNoise AI demo, possibly convincing a few people to stop fearing high ISO and give it a try. 2 or 3 additional club members did hour-long presentations on various topics. Overall, our members who attended the sessions were very appreciative of the effort made to keep the club going. Some people never attended, but that's to be expected. Not everyone is into, or comfortable with, the virtual world. We did purchase a Zoom membership which was only about \$120 for the first year. I can see the value of maintaining this down the road (\$150/year) to use for supplementing regular weekly meetings with additional content of interest to smaller subsets of members.

Many of our free speakers were photographers who make their living running workshops. By offering these webinars, they are getting an opportunity to make themselves known to a wider audience which will hopefully yield them some new clients for their trips when they resume. Some of these programs I opened up to a couple of other clubs in order to beef up the number of attendees for the speaker's benefit (Greater Lynn and Stony Brook). I understand Lynn did not do much virtually, but Stony Brook did and made some of their offerings available to outsiders as well. Due to this situation we are all living in, we found a new way of presenting content, enhancing the value of the club to its members, and working with our friends in other clubs to help each other out. This has been a silver lining for sure and I hope it continues on and becomes part of regular club life going forward.

At this point, we don't know when we will resume meetings. We are still too large a group to gather based on our current Massachusetts group size restrictions, so our hands are tied until the state loosens up more (and the church we meet at re-opens). Having a high percentage of members 60 and over (myself included), many may be hesitant to return until a vaccine is available. I suggested to our club Executive Committee that they survey the members come mid-August to see how they are feeling about live meetings resuming. I am prepared to keep us going virtually as long as it takes. I am concerned we may lose members and income, but on the plus side the virtual programming is pretty inexpensive. Of all the programs we had, only one charged a fee, and it was only \$75.00. I recently booked a speaker for September and asked him to quote both "live" and "virtual" fees, as the latter should be less considering they don't have to put in the time to travel to our meeting place. He obliged and quoted a lower rate if we have to Zoom his program. This, I expect, will be our new normal, but I am excited at the possibility of bringing in out-of-town speakers who we normally could not afford to bring to a regular club meeting.

More Club Activities During Pandemic

Milt Williamson / Upper Cape Camera Club (MA)

Our last live meeting was March 11 and we had to forfeit only our second March meeting before we got the Zoom platform up and running.

The club competitions for April and May were held with the scheduled judges. We noticed the virtual attendance actually increased, now including members who were still away for the winter.

The two planned programs, one a seminar on Matting, Framing and Exhibiting by two local commercial shops and the second a session with a local backup specialist had to be postponed as not being practical over Zoom.

These were substituted with two excellent Zoom presentations, one by Brewster photographer Steven Koppel and another by Carver professionals Bobbi Lane and Lee Varis. I had been trying for some time to arrange a date with Bobbi & Lee and now because they were also in lockdown we arranged a successful program for May.

Our last meeting for the season traditionally featured a Photos of the Year competition combined with a “pot luck supper”. Zoom cancelled the supper but the competition went on successfully with three judges from three clubs including comments and challenges.

We were able to use our normal judging and competition system — Visual Pursuits Judging and VP Image Competition Manager — along with the Zoom video conferencing system for our normal competition meetings and the combination works quite well.

We continued our monthly meetings for the Steering Committee involving eleven members scattered across the Upper Cape as well as a member in California and two in Florida. These Steering Committee meetings are now continuing throughout the summer via Zoom.

A planned annual exhibit of prints is now a virtual exhibit at the Falmouth Public Library. A January print competition category, “Cape Cod & Islands Boats” is the theme of the exhibit. In June it was arranged and “hung” by a committee over Zoom. Here is the link to the exhibit at the Falmouth Public Library <<https://tinyurl.com/y72xp6j5>>.

Many of our members are participating in other area exhibits and shows so photography is still very much alive at Upper Cape Camera Club.

With an unpredictable future for live meetings, even though our meeting place, The Falmouth Art Center, is now open and will become available in September, our membership is larger than the size of groups allowed to hold meetings, at least for the next few months. We will be planning to make use of the Zoom platform for competitions and programs. The challenge with many of the available webinars out there is to find the ones that are not scheduled for any particular time slot, but live ones where club members can ask questions, comment and so forth.

Chuck Fleishman Oxford Green Camera Club (CT)

I just signed up for a free course, *Seeing Through Photographs* through <https://digitaldefynd.com/best-photography-course-certification-training/>. This course is being conducted by MOMA and it takes several weeks to complete and includes required reading and homework assignments. I plan to do the homework but not necessarily doing the reading.

While the course itself is free there are several prompts to register for a certificate at \$49. You won't get feedback unless you sign-up for the certificate. There are also optional surveys about health, politics, etc. I Googled *Free Photography Webinars 2020* and came up with several interesting links. While I have not investigated or tried any to date I am going to try one of the courses in the link below:

Free on-line photography courses <https://digitaldefynd.com/best-photography-course-certification-training/>

Henry Winkelman Boston Camera Club(MA)

The Boston Camera Club (BCC) switched to only meetings via webex and now ZOOM - we held competitions, photo critiques, a Tri-Club competition with the Stony Brook and Gateway clubs - and all the speakers scheduled for the spring presented on line.

Although our meetings usually end in June, this summer the BCC has had programs almost every two weeks - including digital competitions, photo critiques, Essdras Suarez presented in July and Jack Curran will be with us in August.

The BCC was scheduled to have an exhibit in one of the local libraries. That set of images was set-up in an on-line gallery.

Our newsletter comes out monthly Sept - June. The BCC Blog is sent out weekly or more often to alert the members to photography news.

Plans are being made now for next year. We anticipate being on line for many more months.

The church where we meet has not decided on re-opening plans. Near the end of August Tom Hill, our president, plans to poll the members to see if they are comfortable returning to our meeting space when it will be available.

At the current time - we expect to be meeting on ZOOM for many more months.

Members have expressed an interest in having ZOOM meetings at times - even after we can return to meetings - especially during winter months when travel can be a problem. Also many members live a distance from our meeting place - and with the ZOOM meetings they are able to participate and attend more meetings.

Lisa Lacasse Quichee Camera Club (VT)

The Quechee Area Camera Club in Vermont uses Meetup as our platform. It continues to serve us well. I got ZOOM for the club in early April and it has worked well for us.

We have continued to have "assignments" each week (or every 10 days) that members can photograph, post and make comments on. Assignments have included: Photographing Car Streaks, Photograph Solitude, Scavenger Hunt, Shoot the Same Subject 15 different ways, Reflections, Macro, Sports, Summer Story Telling, Self Portrait, Abstracts, Shutter Speed Fun, Leaves and Trees, Animals - tell your story 2 ways, the color red and a couple different Scavenger Hunts. Members can start the assignment on their own time but they post their images between the start and end date of the assignment (about 10 days). We ask that for each photo uploaded members comment on 2-3 others.

We have also had quite a few ZOOM meetings. 3 of our regular speakers who we would have presented in person just did ZOOM calls - One was a professional critique, One on Lightroom, One on Portraits, and One on Anatomy of an Image. The club felt it was important to honor our commitments to these professionals who have supported our club with their time and we didn't mind paying them for their time. We have also had several ZOOM calls where we share members photos and have open discussions on them. We are starting to do ZOOM calls on specific subjects - we just did one on Photography as a Business and how do you store your photos - By having both of those subjects we appealed to both our members that are trying to sell images and also those who just want to know the best way to keep their images safe. We will continue to add these into the mix.

In addition we have sent out to the members via emails info about free webinars, free videos to watch and learn from as well as different photography sites to explore.

Bill Barnett Connecticut Association of Photographers

I think this collection of ideas is great and I hope to participate in your video meetings starting Aug. 4. These are weird times and lots of creativity is needed.

I have a new program ("Infrared Connecticut") that I can present to any club that has a Zoom account, or possibly Global Meeting that I will use for the first time in October when I am scheduled to present to GBCC. My other programs wouldn't work well in this environment due to video and lots of zooms and pans that can look awful for anyone with a slow internet connection (I know, I tested it with a Zoom meeting between my desktop and laptop).

Clubs that are doing judging virtually should be encouraged to recruit judges from further away than normal since distance doesn't matter. The just concluded PSA portfolio assessment session using Zoom had judges from CT, Nova Scotia, the mid west, and California. This is a chance to get different points of view for club competitions. PSA has a club judging service (<https://psa-photo.org/index.php?club-judging-service>) and they might be willing to recommend judges for clubs that are PSA members.

Sue Michaels Co-President Newton Camera Club

The Newton Camera Club/ Activities during the Pandemic:

having regular meetings on Zoom (adding extra meetings in the summer, with members leading talks on photo editing) holding a virtual exhibit (a yearly event normally held at Newton City Hall) and promoting it holding a virtual scavenger hunt (a year end tradition) writing/publishing an article for the Newton Tab (newspaper) about the club upcoming August new members Mini Show (to encourage participation by new members and those who have not submitted to a show before) participating in the process of planning a multi club competition for the Spring 2021 submitting to a Newton arts photography Covid-19 Contest and providing a judge from our club participating in meetings with the Newton Festival of the Arts and agreeing to provide images if requested by other local arts organizations. using google docs for idea sharing/editing keeping the website up- to- date holding an Executive Committee meeting to determine the schedule for the upcoming season planning and booking speakers and judges for September-December, including a joint meeting with the Boston Camera Club. Some of the speakers live outside of the Boston area

We have had a large attendance at meetings on Zoom.

No problems thus far or things we would do differently ..it took research and planning by numerous people to make everything come together well.