Member Handbook

Simsbury Camera Club

**Simsbury Camera Club
P.O. Box 321 Simsbury,
CT 06070**

www.simsburycameraclub.com

Table of Contents

About this Handbook

This handbook is intended as a welcome to new members of the Simsbury Camera Club, and as a reference for all members. It provides information about what we do and how we function.

Some information about the club and its activities changes from year to year, such as meeting dates and topics. Current and timely information is shown on the SCC website www.simsburycameraclub.com, and reference is made to the website where appropriate.

Our Mission

The mission of the Simsbury Camera Club is to serve our members by encouraging development of photographic skills through education, exhibitions of photographic accomplishments, and by friendship with others who share a love of photography. The Club also shares its talents with individuals and organizations in our community.

Our History

The Simsbury Camera Club was begun in 1955 by a small group of photography enthusiasts as a way to share knowledge with and learn from others of like mind. For many years the club's members worked with film cameras using slide and print films. Digital photography was used in the club side by side with film for several years, and eventually became the sole medium of most of our members. Along with digital photography came the growing use of computerized image editing and creative manipulation, giving rise to additional learning opportunities.

Our Activities

Meetings

The club meets twice a month from September through May, generally in the evenings on the first Monday and third Wednesdays of each of those months. All meetings are open to the public, and we welcome guests as well as members. The first meeting of each month is either a presentation by an outside speaker, or an instructional class given by one of our members. These meetings are usually held in the Simsbury Library Presentation Room on the lower level. The second meeting of each month is a presentation and evaluation of images submitted by members for our monthly competitions (see below), often followed by a short informational presentation and discussion. The location for these meetings is Eno Memorial Hall in the Old Court Room on the lower level. A break is scheduled in each meeting, so there's opportunity to socialize and discuss photography questions. Please see the calendar on our website for specifics of dates, times, locations, and topics, as these can change.

Membership

Although all meetings are open to the public, some club activities are members-only. These include competitions, displays, calendar submissions, and an online discussion group. Dues are set each year by the SCC Board of Directors, and are shown on the membership form available on the club website.

A special word about membership and participation: The best way to learn is to participate in club activities and ask questions. if you need assistance with particular features of your camera, software, or photographic technique, a mentor can be assigned to you for special one-on-one help. You only need to ask.

Also, keep in mind that the Simsbury Camera Club is a volunteer organization. Don't hesitate to volunteer your time for particular activities or events that interest you – your participation will be welcome. In addition, suggestions for discussion topics, field trips, etc. are always appreciated.

A list of club officers and committee heads appears on our website. If you need help spotting one of them at a meeting, ask the greeter at the back of the meeting room or any other member.

Competitions

Why compete? It's a way to show your work to people who have a deep interest in photography and to learn from their feedback. This can help you improve your images and broaden your outlook. It's also a place to see the work of other members and find out what they're learning, discovering, are excited about and experimenting with, then to hear the judges' comments on their efforts. We all benefit from this sharing in that it generates new ideas and possibilities.

Competing is always full of surprises and sometimes disappointments. It's a thrill when your images get great scores and can be discouraging when what you thought was a wonderful shot gets a poor score. However, if you keep an open mind what you learn can help you become a better photographer and open up whole new areas of photographic interest.

Internal Competitions: Members can, if they choose, submit images to our monthly club photo competitions. This is an opportunity to show others the work you're doing and receive constructive criticism on how to improve the images. Each month there is a specific topic, encouraging members to try new subjects and to reinterpret familiar ones. The images are evaluated by experienced club members at separate judging sessions (open to member observers), and the results and summary comments are presented at the second meeting of each month. Images are scored, ribbons awarded, month-to-month totals retained, and awards presented at the end of the club year. More details about how all this works are given later in this handbook.

External Competitions: SCC is a member of outside organizations, some of which sponsor periodic competitions of their own. The club has a small committee that chooses submissions to some of these external competitions from our internal competition winners. The club also participates annually in these external competitions:
- Connecticut Association of Photographers (CAP) (Competition is held every other year.)
- New England Camera Club Council (NECCC)
- Photographic Society of America (PSA)
- Glennie Nature Salon sponsored by the Merrimack Valley (MA) Camera Club.

Individuals can choose to join PSA and CAP and compete on their own.

Displays

Monthly:
The Simsbury Camera Club has a standing agreement with the Simsbury Public Library to utilize one wall in the downstairs hallway to mount displays of print images by our members. Each month we show usually 6-10 prints by a single member, along with that member's photographer's statement and (if desired) price list and contact information.

Annually:
SCC once a year reserves the wall space in the large downstairs Presentation Room to display print images submitted by our members. The number of photos we can accept for display from each member depends upon the number of members wanting to participate. We hang as many as the room will reasonably hold, (about 60 depending on sizes submitted) and again include photographer's statements, business cards, and price lists as desired by our participating members.

How to display:
Arrangements for displays are made through the SCC library display coordinator. From time to time members will be asked to sign up for these opportunities, and can always contact the coordinator to request a slot. The name of the current coordinator is shown on the club website along with officers and committee heads. Images should be mounted or framed in a way that allows them to be suspended from hanging hooks provided by the library. Descriptions must be on the image frame or mount, not attached to the wall.

Cooperative Activities

The Simsbury Camera Club participates in outside activities in various ways, by arrangement with the activity sponsors. Members volunteer their time and photography skill to support these activities.

Simsbury Fly-In & Car Show:

This event is sponsored annually by the Simsbury Flying Club, and is held at the Simsbury Airport on a day in mid-September. Volunteers from SCC take photographs at the all-day event and the images are donated to the Flying Club for non-exclusive use on their website and in their brochures.

Simsbury Celebrates:

This event is sponsored by the Simsbury Recreation Department and takes place each year on the Saturday after Thanksgiving. There are indoor and outdoor activities, including a parade and fireworks display. Volunteers from SCC take photographs at the various activities and the images are donated to the Department for non-exclusive use on their website and in their brochures. SCC also reserves indoor display space where the club is publicized and members can display and sell their photographs.

Other activities:

SCC is occasionally asked for volunteers to take photographs at events sponsored by other outside organizations. Participation is dependent on member interest and availability, and by agreement between the photographers and the sponsoring organization.

Google Group

Membership dues include the ability to send and receive broadcast emails to and from the club's membership. It's used to alert members to club happenings, to ask for solutions to photography problems, and to share news about new technology or techniques and outside events and opportunities. Access is controlled by one of the site's moderators, so your contact information is private.

Photo Trips

The club offers occasional outings to locations of interest to photographers. These are publicized both at meetings and on the website. Destinations and arrangements are determined by various volunteer members. Suggestions and volunteers for coordinating trips are always welcome.

Annual Year-End Banquet

Each year in early June the Simsbury Camera Club holds a banquet to celebrate the past year's accomplishments and enjoy social time with each other. Trophies and certificates are awarded to the makers of top images selected from monthly club competitions, as evaluated by outside judges. Along with good food and good company, there is often a specially-selected outside presenter. The cost to members and their guests is determined by the Board of Directors based on the arrangements made with the venue by the SCC committee.

How it All Works

How the Club Functions

The Simsbury Camera Club is largely a volunteer organization, headed by elected officers who are supported by standing and ad hoc committees. There is a Board of Directors made up of the elected officers and the heads of the standing committees. Full details appear in the SCC Bylaws, available on the club's website.

Officers are elected by the membership for two-year terms. Committees are staffed by volunteers; where there is more than one member, the head of the committee may be determined by the committee or by the Board of Directors.

Elected Officers are the following:
- President
- Vice President
- Treasurer
- Secretary

The list of committees is subject to change.

Competitions

Within the club we use monthly competitions as a teaching tool, a way to provide feedback on members' images. Images do receive scores and these are tracked over the course of the year, with recognition given to highest scorers. Since each month there are different categories, like Reflections or Creative, the competitions are also a way to encourage members to try different subjects and techniques. The categories for the year and the descriptions of and requirements for them are on the club website.

Each month there is a Regular category and a Special category. Each member may submit up to two images to the Regular category and, if desired, one image to the Special category. Only Regular category submission scores count toward aggregate totals for the member and for the competition class as a whole.

Special categories are intended to be a fun way for members to stretch their photographic skills by trying new and different things without impact to their competition averages. For this reason, images submitted to the Special category contests do not count towards either aggregate scores or the number of images required to move from one class to another.

Competition classes:

Each SCC member who chooses to compete is assigned to one of three competition classes: Class B, Class A, or Salon. All new members start in Class B, which is considered our entry-level class. Class A is intermediate, and Salon is advanced. Images are evaluated and commented upon by the judges without regard to class, but scores are kept within class to determine monthly ribbon-winners and year-end high-scorer awards and graduation to a higher competition class.

How to submit images for competition:

There are specific procedures for preparing, naming, and emailing images for submission to club competitions. These procedures and instructions are detailed on the club website.

How images are judged: Each month a rotating group of four judges come together to view, score, and comment on submitted images. Note that these sessions appear on the club calendar of events and are open to observation by any members wishing to attend. Each judge scores on a point scale, awarding a score of 5 thru 10 based on the judging guidelines. The lowest score of the four judges is discarded – so the highest score an image can receive is 30 points.

Images are evaluated for and scored on Composition, Technical Factors, Interest/Originality/Creativity, and Visual Impact. A guide to photo assessment appears on the club website.

Monthly awards: As already stated, submitted images are scored and commented upon without regard to competition class of the maker. Ribbons, however, are awarded within each competition class. This means there are First, Second, and Honorable Mention ribbons given separately for Class B, Class A, and Salon class submissions. In the case of tie scores, ribbons are awarded to each image in the tie.

Eligibility for end of year awards and class graduation: To qualify for end of year awards (see following section), including promotion from one class to another, a member must submit a minimum of two-thirds of the total images allowed for the year, which is 22 images. Therefore, at least 14 images must be submitted during the SCC year to qualify for an award at year-end or to be considered for promotion to a higher class.

How Graduations Work: At the end of the year, the average scores for each individual and each class (the aggregate of all members in that class) are evaluated. A member whose average is above the average for the next higher class is promoted to that class for future competitions. The Board of Directors can promote from B directly to Salon (a jump of two classes) if the average of a member in B is greater than the average of Salon. The Board can make mid-year and other adjustments as required to promote fair competition.

The End of Year Awards

Judging for year-end awards is done by expert photographers from outside of SCC. This is done without regard for the competition class of the maker, except as noted below for specific awards.

The pool of images in this judging includes all first, second, and honorable mention winners from the monthly competition regular and special categories. Non-winning images with a score of 24 or above are also included in this pool. In addition, each member can resubmit one non-winning image that they feel deserves reconsideration.

The winner of each major award receives a trophy upon which their name has been added to the list of all winners of that trophy, and they can retain and display that trophy for a year. At the end of that year, the trophy is returned to the club and the "outgoing" winner has the option of receiving a plaque or a certificate as a permanent symbol of their accomplishment.

End of Year Trophies

Image of the Year: This award goes to the image that the judges find to be the most outstanding.

Alternate Class Image of the Year – The Patrina/Metzger Award: This second-place award is given to an outstanding photo by a maker who is from a different competition class than the maker of the Image of the Year. The trophy was renamed in 2006 to honor Jim Patrina and Bruce Metzger for their dedicated and innovative work in transitioning SCC from slides to digital images. Both continue working to support digital technology advances for the club.

Nature Image of the Year – The Strindberg Award: The winner of this award is the most outstanding of the submissions in the Nature category. These images must adhere to the Photographic Society of America (PSA) definition for this type of photography, which are included in the SCC competition categories document. This beautiful eagle trophy is named for Robert Strindberg, a longtime SCC member who was a well-known New England nature photographer. He won many awards from PSA and the New England Camera Club Council (NECCC), and competed internationally. Robert passed away approximately 1982.

Alternate Class Nature Image of the Year – The Emmons Award: This second-place award is presented to an outstanding nature image by a maker who is from a different competition class than the maker of the Nature Image of the Year. It is named in honor of Ed Emmons, a true master of nature photography. Along with SCC, he was a member of both PSA and Audubon, and delighted in photographing bugs of all kinds as well as birds and mammals. Ed passed away in 2014.

Portrait Image of the Year – The Kennedy Award: This trophy is awarded to the outstanding portrait image of those submitted for the year. It is named in honor of John R. Kennedy, a member of the club from the 1990s on. He was a World War II photographer and became a professional after the war. He specialized in both industrial/architectural and portrait photography. John passed away in 2008.

Travel Image of the Year – The Doherty Award: This award goes to the most outstanding image taken outside of Connecticut that successfully conveys the terrain, people, culture, and/or atmosphere of the locale photographed. The gorgeous lighthouse trophy is named in honor of Patrick Doherty, a member of the club from the 1970s on. He held many offices within the club, and influenced and improved club contests by helping to define the competition classes we use today and by giving seminars for club judges to improve image evaluation. He received many awards from international competitions, and loved to travel and photograph wherever he went. Pat passed away in 2005.

Alternate Class Travel Image of the Year: This second-place award is given to an outstanding travel image by a maker who is from a different competition class than that of the Travel Image of the Year.

Creative Image of the Year – The Gutman Award: This trophy, new in 2015, is presented to the photograph that best represents creativity in image-making. It is named in honor of Nathan Gutman, a long-time and very active member of SCC. He was one of the founders of the Simsbury Public Library photography lecture series, and coordinated that effort for several years. Nathan delighted in using everyday items in new and often amazing ways to create unusual and striking images, and was always working on new techniques to try out then pass along to other club members. A World War II Holocaust survivor, Nathan passed away in 2015.

Other End of Year Awards

Special recognition awards are presented to the first and second place high average scores for the year within each competition class.
– Highest Average Scores Class B
– High Total Points Class B
– Second Highest Average Scores Class B
– Highest Average Scores Class A
– High Total Points Class A
– Second Highest Average Scores Class A
– Highest Average Scores Salon Class
– High Total Points Salon Class
– Second Highest Average Scores Salon Class