

Photo of the Month Competition and Advancement
Photography Club of Sun City Hilton Head
Guidelines and Rules Effective February 2021

A. Participation

1. You must be a paid member of the Photography Club to participate in any competition.
2. You must be present at the competition to enter your photo but there will be a one-time waiver of this rule during each competition year. Contact the Competition Committee to arrange the waiver.
3. A submitted photograph and **all** components of a composite photograph must have been photographed and edited by the member submitting it for competition.

Stock photos, textures, skies and all other stock backgrounds not photographed or created by the submitting member are not permitted.

Elements that are not photographs such as drawings and software programmed brushes that create shapes are not permitted.

The time limit for all components of a composite photo is the same as the original submitted photo.

All post processing (editing) must be done by the hand of the submitting member. You may receive and acquire feedback and critiques, but you must actually do the work yourself.

4. All contest submissions must be checked in by a member of the competition committee or their designee.

B. Photo Rules

1. You may submit only one (1) photo per competition.
2. Photo must have been taken within the last 24 months.
3. Photos that have previously won a 1st, 2nd, or 3rd or Honorable Mention in the monthly competition may not be entered again.

4. All photos must have a hard backing such as dry mounting, foam core (no thicker than ¼") in order for the Committee to be able to handle and display the photo without it bending when displayed in the window at the studio.
5. Mats are not required but if a mat is used it must be either black or white. The picture must not be framed.
6. Photos may be color, black and white, or sepia each month unless the called-for theme is specified to be color related or black and white/sepia specific.
7. Finished Product: The photo may be any size or shape you like, but the final product, with or without a mat, must not exceed 20 inches on the long side. If you are a 1st place winner and your photo will not fit in the standard 11 x 14 or 16 x 20 mats in Pinckney Hall, you may be asked to change your print size.
8. Deviation from these rules or any portion of the competition guidelines may result in a three-month suspension from club competition or other action determined by the club executive board.

If you have questions, please contact John Hock @ hikers2@hotmail.com

C. Acceptable Images

1. A painting, photograph, statue, or work of art that is displayed in a museum, art gallery, or an indoor/outdoor art/craft show is considered copyrighted material and is in violation of competition rules. Statues or works of art in public areas such as parks are acceptable.
2. A key element of our club competition is creativity. In the spirit of creativity, exactly duplicating another person's painting, photograph or work of art is against club rules. You may be inspired by other artists images, adding your own interpretation.
3. **Novice images** are defined as ones that are produced using digital techniques to enhance color, contrast, brightness sharpening or retouching or using tools to eliminate red eye or distractions like glare, name tags, wires, branches etc. In these instances, information is eliminated or enhanced. Focus stacking, bracketing and HDR are acceptable.

Novice photos cannot use Composites techniques.

Definition of Composite: Photos that are made up of two or more distinct photos/parts of photos that are combined to create one image.

4. **Intermediate, Advanced and Experts can use all editing tools, including Composites.**

D. Photo Identification - All photos must be labeled on the back with the following information:

1. Photographer's name
2. Title of photograph
3. Level of photographer (i.e. Novice, Intermediate, Advanced or Expert).
4. Date photo was taken (must have been within the past two years) except for an open theme competition or otherwise specified.

The Sun City Photography Club website has a label template that can be used to identify your photo submission. The form can be found at pcschh.org. Then go to programs, competition, labels.

NOTE: If the Competition Committee deems that the specifications in A, B, C or D above are not met or that the photo is not in the "theme" category, the photo will not be allowed into the competition.

E. Digital Images for Projection

Submit your digital file before Sunday Midnight to enable the judge to view your photo before the meeting. Digital file submissions after this deadline will not be able to compete. **You must submit a digital file to compete.** If an emergency arises contact Bob Ricketts.

1. Minimum file size is half a megabyte, or 500 kilobytes and the maximum is five megabytes. As always, you will receive confirmation that your file was received within a couple of minutes. If you don't then you did something wrong. Correct and resubmit.
2. The judges will be instructed not to make any final decisions until viewing the photo prints on the tables.
3. The judge will see your photo name but not your name on the digital file.

All participants are required to submit a digital copy of their photo, by email to:

<mailto:pcschh1@gmail.com>

All submitted photograph files are removed from their emails and placed in a single folder. Thus, all the necessary identifying information needs to be included in the file name. More than one photo file (not normally required) may be sent in a single email, and high-resolution files are not required since all are reduced to the projector's resolution of 1920 x 960 (approximately one megapixel).

The following are the requirements for submitting competition photographs for projection:

- a. **The submitted photo file attachment should be a JPG.**
- b. **Rename the photo file following this naming convention:
Level – Photo title – Photographer's name.jpg
Example: Novice – Blue Bird – John Doe.jpg**
- c. **Email your photo file as an attachment to <mailto:pcschh1@gmail.com>**

F. Levels of Competition and Criteria for Advancement

1. **Initial Competition Level** – Typically a new member will begin competition at the NOVICE level. However, the club encourages all members to compete at a level appropriate with their photographic skill, not their relative newness to the club. Therefore, members who join the club with considerable prior photographic experience as a result of other club memberships, educational or professional activities may request to compete at a level higher than NOVICE subject to review by the Competition Committee.
2. **Advancement Through Skill Levels** – Progression through skill levels is based on competency and every club member may not achieve the highest level. Moving to Advanced and Expert requires considerable technical and creative skills that some members may not have the time or inclination to pursue. The more a member participates, the greater the learning and the chance to move up.
3. **Points** – Beginning in the 2016 calendar year, progression through the levels will be accomplished by the accumulation of points from various wins. Every time a member moves up one level, the requirements of the new level apply and the previous points are reset to zero.
4. **Club Competition Points** are achieved as follows:

- a. First Place 9 points
- b. Second Place 6 points
- c. Third Place 3 points
- d. Honorable Mention 1 point

5. Points Required to Advance to a Higher Level

- a. Novice – A Photographer with a very basic understanding of photography.
12 Points are required to move from Novice to Intermediate.
- b. Intermediate – A photographer with some years of experience in photography who can use several shooting modes and understands the basic principles of photography.
18 points are required to move from Intermediate to Advanced. A first place finish is also required in the intermediate category as part of the required 18 points.
- c. Advanced - A photographer with many years of experience in photography who knows how to achieve a creative and technically excellent image.
30 points required to move from Advanced to Expert. Two first place finishes are also required in the Advanced category as part of the required 30 points.
- d. Expert - A photographer with many years of experience in photography who can teach at all levels and has mastered the technical aspects of photography and exhibits a solid portfolio.

6. Explanation of How Points are Totaled

- a. Any combination of award points is possible for advancement.
- b. A Novice who wins a first place (9 points) and a third place (3 points) has achieved 12 points and will move up to Intermediate.
- c. An Intermediate must accumulate the 18 points but one of those point values must be a first place to move to Advanced. Example: A first place

(9 points) and three third place wins (3 x 3 = 9 points) and has achieved 18 points and will move up to Advanced.

- d. An Advanced must accumulate 30 points but two of those point values must come from first place wins. As an example, two first place wins would accumulate 18 points, a second place would add 6 points for a total of 24 points and two third place wins would add an additional 6 points for a total of 30 points. The Advanced would then move to Expert.

7. Award Definitions

- a. A "WIN" is considered being awarded a 1st place, 2nd place, 3rd place or an Honorable Mention.

8. Note: Only "WINS" (as defined above) that were awarded from January 2008 forward will be counted towards advancement from one level to the next.

G. Competition Committee

1. The Competition Committee will organize photos at the meetings, assist the Judge in labeling the winning photos, and facilitate the viewing of the photos. They will also be responsible for displaying the winning photos in the appropriate places.
2. The chairman of the Competition Committee will be responsible for tracking the "WINS" and notifying the Member by email when he/she is to advance to a new level of competition participation.

H. Judging

At each meeting where we have a Competition, we usually have a guest speaker who is versed in photography and that person will be the Judge for that night. Each photo will be shown to the audience but normally only the 1st, 2nd, 3rd and Honorable Mentions will be critiqued by the Judge.

For a First Place to be awarded, there must be three photos entered.

For a Second Place to be awarded, there must be six photos entered.

For a Third Place to be awarded, there must be nine photos entered.

For an Honorable Mention to be awarded, there must be 10 photos entered.

I. Awards and Displays

1. Ribbons will be awarded to 1st, 2nd, 3rd and Honorable Mention winners.
2. The first-place winners on all four levels will have their winning photo hung in Pinckney Hall until the next competition.
3. All 2nd, 3rd and Honorable Mention winners will have their winning photo displayed in the window at the Photography Studio until the next Competition.

J. People's Choice Awards and Best of Year

1. All 1st place photos for the year will be eligible to contend for these awards.
2. Individual 1st place winners on each level will have the option of displaying his/her photo at the December holiday party. The Members attending this event will then vote by ballot counts for the People's Choice, one per level.
3. There will also be one winner chosen for the Best of Year chosen by a vote by the attendees and chosen from all who enter, no matter what the level.
4. The People's Choice winning photos and the Best of Year Photo will be displayed until the next Club Competition.