

PRESIDENT'S LETTER; January 2026

Hi everyone!

Happy New Year! Can you believe it is 2026 already? Even though it seems to have arrived too quickly, we are excited to spend another year with all of you. Here is to more learning, photographing, laughing and simply enjoying each other's company.

To get us off to a great start... the January line up:



Assignment - Circles/Round

This month's assignment invites us to get out with our cameras and look for circles, spheres, and all things round — maybe something we would normally overlook until our camera helps us see it differently.

Check out the write-up in the newsletter for ideas and inspiration.

January Meetings. Etc:

LENS Meeting – Thursday, Jan. 15

Topic: *Printing your photos – Barry Evans*

If you have ever had a photo that looked perfect on your screen only to cross your fingers when you send it out to be printed, you are not alone! Barry will take the mystery out of printing and share how to get the best, most consistent results.

I, for one, cannot wait to learn this process. I would definitely print more photos!

BONUS! We have started our **Member Highlight** feature this month!

Our very first member presenter is **Eric Stogner**, who will spend about 10 –15 minutes sharing his photography journey and some of his favorite images. Come support Eric and get to know him better. Who knows, you might be inspired to be next!

General Meeting – Thursday, Jan 22

Here is what you can submit for critique:

- **Field Trip** – November Field trip to LA Farmers Market / The Grove. It was cancelled, but you may have gone anyway, so use this category to submit your photos from the LA Farmers Market and/or The Grove.
- **Assignment** – Motion Photography
- **Open Category** – Enter any recent photos in any category. ☺

As you know, the critique sessions are a fantastic way to grow as a photographer. AND, we love seeing your images on the big screen.

Whether you use an expensive camera, a simple point and shoot or your cell phone, we love and appreciate all of it.

How to Submit:

Visit PSOC.net, hover over **PSOC** in the top-left corner, and click “**Digital Files**” for all the submission details.

Deadline to Submit: Tuesday, Jan. 20, by 6:00 p.m.

January Field Trip: Sunday, Jan. 25

We have a great opportunity to take a guided tour of Rancho Los Alamitos. It is a very old and historic place. It should be fun!

Please check out the current Newsletter (and maybe last month's as well) for more details on all these topics!

I look forward to seeing you at a meeting or a field trip. No matter what, get out there, have fun, and capture something that makes you smile.

See you soon!

Susan

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MONTHLY MEETINGS

JANUARY LENS MEETING INFO

Thursday: January 15, 2026 @ 7:00 PM

Printing will be the topic for this month's LENS meeting.
Barry Evans will present.

JANUARY GENERAL MEETING INFO

Thursday: January 22, 2026 @ 7:00 PM

The General Meeting will be held on January 22, 2026 at 7:00 p.m. **Motion Photography and LA Farmer's/The Grove** will be the topic to show for critique. **Jeffrey Sward** will critiquer.

PLEASE NOTE: All Members in good standing are encouraged to email up to three images, plus a title photo, to the Digital Show Team at PSOCphoto@gmail.com on or before Tuesday, 6:00 p.m. the week of the show. The deadline is important because the Digital Show Team needs time to prepare all the images for showing. For instructions on submitting your images, see "Digital Files" at our PSOC website. Images must comply with instructions to fit our digital media. Images late or not in compliance will be returned with an explanation.

January 2026 ASSIGNMENT -- Circles and Round Shapes

***** See the Susan Bouet's field trip write-up in this newsletter *****

JAN FIELD TRIP

Sunday: Jan 25, 2026. Lunch @ 11:30am. Tour @ 1:00pm.

“Rancho Los Alamitos”

Covering 87 acres, the South Coast Botanic Garden offers a wide variety of blooming trees, shrubs, and flowers all year.

***** See Kurt Bayless's field trip write-up in this newsletter *****

2026 PSOC CALENDAR OF EVENTS (11/24/25)

JANUARY						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
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4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

01 New Year's Day
15 LENS Mtg- Printing
Presenter- Barry Evans
22 Gen. Mtg-to be shown:
LA Farmer's Mkt/The Grove
Motion Photography
25 Field Trip- Rancho Los
Alamitos (tour)
Assignment- Circles/Round

JULY						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
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04 Independence Day
16 LENS Mtg- TBD
Presenter- TBD
23 Gen. Mtg-to be shown:
Santa Monica Pier
Assignment- Rows of Things
12 Field Trip- Balboa Is.-Day/Nig.
Assignment- Shadows/Silhou.
25 PSOC Picnic (Sat)

FEBRUARY						
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16 Presidents Day
19 LENS Mtg- Career in Commercial Photography
Presenter- John Bare
26 Gen. Mtg-to be shown:
Rancho Los Alamitos
Assignment- Circles/Round
11 Field Trip- SD Zoo Safari Park
Assignment- Opposites

AUGUST						
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23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

19 World Photography Day
20 LENS Mtg- TBD
Presenter- TBD
27 Gen. Mtg-to be shown:
Balboa Island-Day/Night
Assignment- Shadows/Silhou.
12 Field Trip- Lyon Air Museum
Assignment- Abstract/Pattern.

MARCH						
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29	30	31				

17 St. Patrick's Day
19 LENS Mtg- Capturing Emotions & Feelings in images
Presenter- Art Ramirez
26 Gen. Mtg-to be shown:
San Diego Zoo Safari Park
Assignment- Opposites
14 Field Trip- Pow Wow CSULB
Assignment- Still Life

SEPTEMBER						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
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1-30 PSOC Library Show
12 Library Reception (Sat)
07 Labor Day
17 Movie Night (Thur. LENS)
24 Gen. Mtg-to be shown:
Lyon Air Museum
Assignment- Abstract/Patterns
27 Field Trip- San Juan Capistr.
Assignment- Lazy/Peaceful

APRIL						
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April 23-26 – Field Trip to Lone Pine, CA
05 Easter
09 LENS Mtg- TBD
Presenter- TBD
16 Gen. Mtg-to be shown:
Pow Wow Ceremony CSULB
Assignment- Still Life
11 Field Trip- China Town
Assignment- Urban/City Sts.

OCTOBER						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
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October 6-9 – Field Trip to Albuquerque, NM
12 Columbus Day
15 LENS Mtg- TBD
Presenter- TBD
22 Gen. Mtg-to be shown:
San Juan Capistrano
Assignment- Lazy/Peaceful
24 Field Trip- Getty Villa (P.P.)
Assignment- Isolated Objects

MAY						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
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24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

10 Mother's Day
25 Memorial Day
21 LENS Mtg- TBD
Presenter- TBD
28 Gen. Mtg-to be shown:
Lone Pine overnight trip
China Town (DTLA)
Assignment- Urban/City Sts.
13 Field Trip- San Joaquin W.S.
Assignment- Forms in Nature

NOVEMBER						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
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22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

11 Veterans Day
26 Thanksgiving
12 LENS Mtg- TBD
Presenter- TBD
19 Gen. Mtg-to be shown:
Albuquerque overnight trip
Getty Villa (Pacific Palisades)
Assignment- Isolated Objects
21 Field Trip- Antique G&SE Mus.
Assignment- Blue and/or Red

JUNE						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
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21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

21 Father's Day
18 LENS Mtg- TBD
Presenter- TBD
25 Gen. Mtg-to be shown:
San Joaquin Wildlife Sanct.
Assignment- Forms in Nature
28 Field Trip- Santa Monica Pier
Assignment- Rows of Things

DECEMBER						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
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13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

NO LENS OR GENERAL MTGS.
04 Hanukkah
25 Christmas
03 PSOC Holiday Party
Show candid shots of members in 2026.
January 28, 2027 Gen. Mtg.:
Show Antique Gas & Steam Eng. Museum & Blue and/or Red.

2026 PSOC What to Show at General Meetings (11/24/25)

This chart shows the dates of general meetings and what to show at each meeting. Pictures for any assignment can be taken anytime during the year-end 2025 and year 2026, as long as the images fit the assignment for the meeting in which you are showing them. We ask members to submit current work for the meeting critiques. Assignments are planned so as to be coordinated with field trip locations. Pictures taken on field trips need not be assignment-related in order to be shown for critique at the meetings.

<u>DATE OF MEETING</u>	<u>FIELD TRIP TO SHOW</u>	<u>ASSIGNMENT TO SHOW</u>
January 22nd	LA Farmer's Market/The Grove	Motion Photography
February 26th	Rancho Los Alamitos/Long Beach	Circles/Round Shapes
March 26th	San Diego Zoo Safari Park/Escondido	Opposites
April 16th	Pow Wow Ceremony/CSULB	Still Life
May 28th	China Town/DTLA <i>AND</i> <u>Spring Overnight Trip - Lone Pine</u>	Urban/City Streets
June 25th	San Joaquin Wildlife Sanctuary/Irvine	Forms in Nature
July 23rd	Santa Monica Pier	Rows of Things
August 27th	Balboa Is.-Day-Night/Corona del Mar	Shadows/Silhouettes
September 24th	Lyon Air Museum/JW Airport	Abstract/Patterns
October 22nd	San Juan Capistrano	Lazy/Peaceful
November 19th	Getty Villa/Pacific Palisades <i>AND</i> <u>Fall Overnight Trip - Albuquerque</u>	Isolated Objects
December 3rd	PSOC Holiday Party (Greenbrook Clubhouse)	Candid shots of PSOC members on field trips & other events in 2026
Jan. 28, 2027	Antique Gas & Steam Engine Museum/Vista	Blue and/or Red

January 2026 Assignment – Circles and Round Shapes

To be shown at the February 2026 general meeting

By Susan Bouet

As always, our monthly assignment is designed to inspire you to get out and photograph! This month, the assignment is about **Circles and Round Shapes**. Below are some ideas to get you thinking!

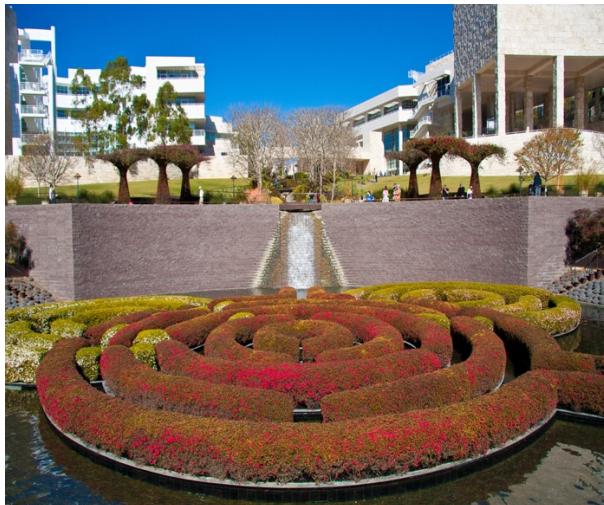
Use Compositional “Rules”

- **Frame:** shoot through circular openings (pipes, rings, tunnels)
- **Repetition:** multiple circles creating patterns
- **Rule of thirds:** place your circle at intersection points
- **Negative space:** isolate a single circle against minimal background
- **Leading lines:** curves that guide the eye through the image
- **Try different perspectives:** close-up, looking down, looking up
- **Play with color** – mono or complimentary, etc.
- **More** – Reflections, Shadows, Suggests a circle or round object.



Places

- **Nature** – Trees, Flowers, Water ripples, Cut Fruit, Moon, Sun, Plants, Animals
- **Architecture** – Buildings, Staircases, Windows, Domes, Rotundas, Manhole covers, Balconies, Light fixtures, Silos, Water towers
- **Urban & Street** – Bicycle wheels, Parts of Cars, Lights, Food, Clocks
- **Abstract & Artistic** – Light painting, Bubbles, Reflections, Cans, Shadows
- **Human Element** – Sports balls, Musical instruments, Round glasses/sunglasses, Man Made



Settings to Experiment With:

- **Shallow depth of field** (f/1.8-2.8): blur background, sharp circle
- **Deep depth of field** (f/11-16): layers of circles all in focus
- **Slow shutter** (1-30 seconds): light trails in circles, spinning objects
- **Fast shutter** (1/500+): freeze motion of rolling/bouncing balls

Remember: The best photographs tell a story or evoke emotion. Try to avoid just documenting circles and find the ones that have **character, context, and meaning!** If you are drawn to a particular circle or round thing, that's when to press the shutter!





January 2026 Field Trip

Rancho Los Alamitos
6400 East Bixby Hill Road, Long Beach CA 90815

Date: Sunday January 25, 2026
Hours: 1:00 P.M. – 5:00 P.M.

Information: (562) 431-3541
<https://www.rancholosalamitos.org>

Assignment:
Circles & Round Shapes

Parking and Admission

Parking and Admission are “free.” There is LIMITED parking spaces available.
Carpooling is encouraged, but not required.

1. Enter at the Bixby Hill residential security gate at the intersection of E. Anaheim Road & Palo Verde Ave. Note: Be sure to tell them you’re visiting the Rancho.
2. Drive up the hill and find Rancho Los Alamitos at the top. Park in the visitor lot.
3. When you arrive, the check-in desk is in the Rancho Center.

Lunch

Marri's Pizza and Italian Restaurant - 11:30 A.M.

6436 Stearns St., Long Beach CA 90815 (southeast corner of Stearns & Palos Verde)

Information: (562) 596-5771

Carpool

Meet at 11:00 A.M. at the south end of the AAA parking lot located on the northeast corner of Beach Boulevard and Stark Drive in Huntington Beach.

Guided Tours

Sign up for Docent-Guided Tours of the Ranch House - Explore the Rancho's history with a knowledgeable guide.

Visitors can reserve a 1-hour, docent-guided tour at 1:00, 2:00, 3:00, or 4:00 pm. Walk-in tours are available as space permits. Masks are optional, but encouraged on tours. All are welcome.

*** PSOC will arrange for a guided tour at 1:00 P.M. (max. 10 people)**

Photography for Personal Use

Rancho Los Alamitos is a beautiful and rare open space in Long Beach, making it a popular place for taking photos. Photography during open hours is welcomed to small groups (six or less) and limited to personal cameras (no tripods).

To maximize guest experience, uphold our values as a historical site, and prioritize safety, we kindly ask that our photography policy is followed.



History of the Rancho

Rancho Los Alamitos, the "Ranch of the Little Cottonwoods," is a Long Beach City Landmark and twice-listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The Rancho is located on Tongva-Gabrielino land known as "Povuun'nga." From the Tongva people who lived and gathered at Povuun'nga through waves of newcomers from Spain, Mexico, the United States, and more, the site has nurtured a great diversity of peoples and cultures over thousands of years. Today, the 7½-acre site includes four acres of nationally significant historic gardens, a ranch house (1790-1933), and a restored barnyard of the early 20th-century working ranch.

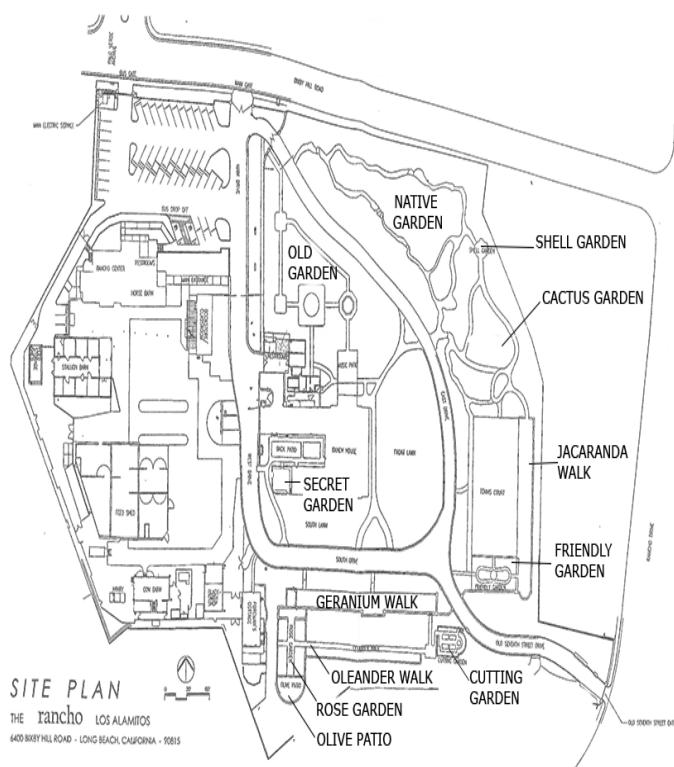
The Nieto family built an adobe on a hilltop near the location of Povuun'nga sometime between 1790-1834. It is believed the adobe sheltered vaqueros and horses at this outpost location on the Nietos' sprawling ranch land. The hilltop provided superior views of the surrounding terrain, as well as excellent drainage for vulnerable adobe structures. But the most valuable resource of all was the fresh-water spring near the base of the hill.

The decade of the 1920s when Florence Bixby developed her gardens at Rancho Los Alamitos was one of the most prolific and important periods for the creation of large and medium-sized gardens in Southern California. The large fortunes made from the movie industry, oil discovery and real estate ventures encouraged flamboyance and conspicuous consumption. A combination of available money, nurseries specializing in a wide variety of exotic plant material, skilled gardeners (often trained in Europe), fine building craftsmen, and innovative landscape designers created unparalleled conditions for the development of beautiful and expressive gardens.

Rancho Los Alamitos stands apart from the obvious opulence of many estates of the period. In 1932, Marian Cran, the English garden writer, celebrated Rancho Los Alamitos as a rare example of a "pioneer home" in California. Her sensitive appreciation of Florence Bixby's gardens emphasizes their understated elegance.

The existing gardens were created between 1920 and 1936 and while such notable designers as the Olmsted Brothers Firm, Florence Yoch, and Paul Howard were involved, the guiding influence is clearly that of Florence Bixby. The gardens at Rancho Los Alamitos eloquently express the personality of their creator, Florence Green Bixby, a modest, inward-looking woman who was never quite able to embrace the robust, ranching activity so loved by her husband. Photographic evidence indicates that there were no really rare or difficult-to-maintain plantings in Florence Bixby's garden. Rather, in developing her gardens, she attempted to "civilize" the area around the rambling adobe ranch house in a way that complemented the home and expressed her own taste and interests.

Florence Bixby's elegant gardens are notable for the way in which they extend a modest domestic tranquility into the garden. The restrained plant palette in combination with the beautifully dimensioned spaces give quiet strength and character to the garden. Created in an age of flamboyance, the gardens at Rancho Los Alamitos represent a remarkable personal aesthetic, sensitive to the traditions and scale of the past, and at ease with the relaxed dictates of outdoor living.



During your visit, wander garden trails, learn from knowledgeable docents and volunteers, meet the barnyard's resident livestock (horses, sheep, goats, chickens, and ducks), and explore California history.

The Rancho's mission is to inspire a sense of community by educating and engaging visitors with its rich history, compelling stories, and authentic connections to California's past.



All photos by Kurt Bayless

Photographing Opposites

By: Jeffrey Sward

Opposite Definition (Webster)

Part of a pair that is corresponding or complementary in position, function, or nature. The clash of two elements.

Elements of Opposition

- 1) Form. Shapes can be
 - a) Hard-edged (squares, triangles, rectangles etc.)
 - b) Soft-edged (circles, ovals)
- 2) Size
 - a) Think big vs. little
 - b) Wide vs. narrow
 - c) Long vs. short
- 3) Contrasting Elements
 - a) Size
 - b) Emotion
 - c) Nature vs. Man-Made
 - d) Sunny vs. Overcast
 - e) Day vs. Night
- 4) Perspective & Angle
 - a) High vs. Low
 - b) Inside vs. Outside
- 5) Light & Shadow
 - a) Silhouettes
 - b) High Contrast
- 6) Motion vs. Stillness
- 7) Color
 - a) Place opposite colors (complementary colors like red/green or blue/yellow) next to each other
- 8) Texture
 - a) Combine smooth surfaces (water, glass) with rough ones (rock, bark)
- 9) Conceptual Opposites
 - a) Order vs. Chaos
 - b) Presence vs. Absence

How to

- a. Make a list of interesting opposites and dichotomy samples
- b. Choose certain locations likely to find these samples.
- c. Re-shoot the same subject at different times and/or with different lighting
- d. Post-process one image digitally section-by-section using different techniques
- e. Combine two images of opposites digitally

References

Agarwal, Sonika. *YouTube*, 4 Mar. 2025.

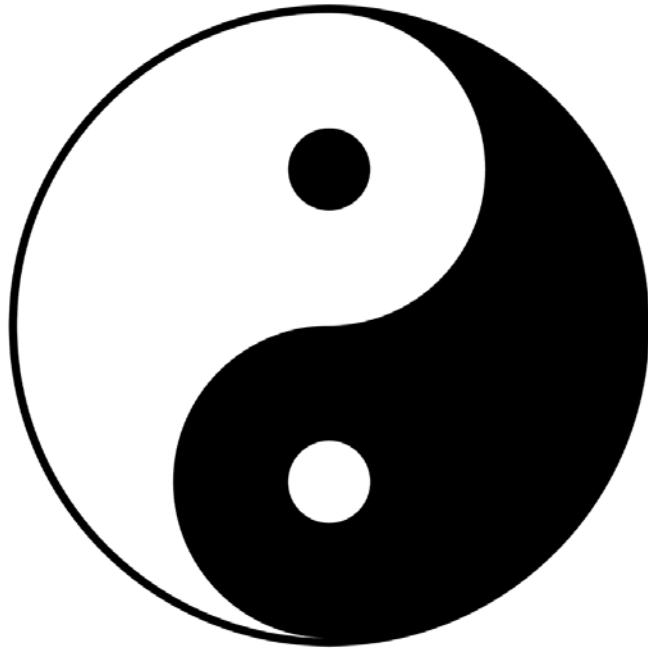
Gonzalez, Luis E. *Photographic Opposites: Dichotomy*, 11 June 2016.

Koskeda, Ken. *Opposites*, 29 May 2014.

Pedersen, John. "Techniques for Photographing Opposites." *YouTube*, 2024.

Walton, Stephen. *Creating Conflict in Photography*

Woods, Tom. "Dream Life Photography." *YouTube*, 10 Oct. 2024.



Zhou Dunyi: Yin Yang Symbol



Kim Schou: Valademar's Slot



Dave Smith: *Do The Opposite*



Peet deRouw: *Opposite*



Wieteke deKogel: *Opposites*



Elaine Farrell: *Amsterdam Tunnel*



Kana Photography: Untitled



Turbosquid: Product Photograph

SAN DIEGO ZOO SAFARI PARK

WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 11, 2026

CARPOOLING: Meet in the AAA parking lot at 8:00 AM (northeast corner at Beach and Stark)

LUNCH: Meet at 12:30 PM at **Mombasa Cooker** (located at the south end of Nairobi Village lagoon) They serve sandwiches, burgers, fresh entrée salads, etc.

PARK ADMISSION PRICE: \$76.00 per person

Admission is "free" to seniors 65+ during the month of February 2026.

<https://sdzsafaripark.org/seniors-free>



Images by Mike Whitmore

The renowned San Diego Zoo Safari Park presents more than 3,500 animals roaming in large enclosures that replicate their natural habitat. Go on a safari adventure unlike any other outside of Africa itself, with exhibits inspired by the African Serengeti and the Asian Savanna.

Directions

The Safari Park is at 15500 San Pasqual Valley Road, Escondido, California 92027-7017.

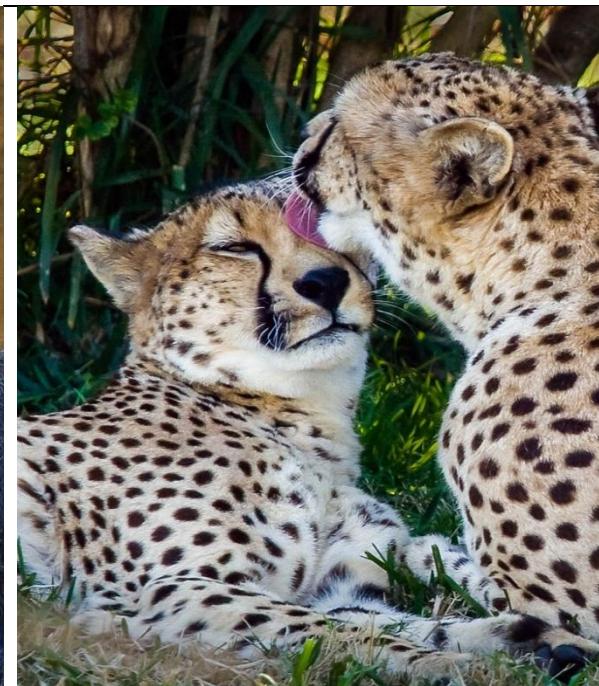
Directions from the NORTH (southbound): From Interstate 5 (Orange County, Los Angeles), take the State Route 78 East exit at Oceanside, proceed east to Interstate 15 South, exit at Via Rancho Parkway (Exit 27) and follow the signs to the Park. From Interstate 15 (Riverside), exit at Via Rancho Parkway (Exit 27) and follow the signs east to the Park.

For more information on the Safari Park, click on

<http://sdzsafaripark.org> For general information, call 760-747-8702.



Image by Kurt Bayless



Images by Mike Whitmore



Our Members Have Been Busy with Great Accomplishments

Kurt Bayless had three photos accepted for the 2026 Wings Over Bolsa calendar (<https://bclandtrust.org/blog/tag/wings-over-bolsa/>).



Rick Taketomo: Rick entered the following photo of a Vermillion Flycatcher to the Monarch Bay photo contest. While it did not win a prize, it is featured on their website (<https://www.monarchbayplaza.com/photography-contest-submissions.html>)



Annette Globits sold a black and white photo from her Mannequin Series, “Star Spangled Mannequin” shown at the Art Lecture at the Oasis Senior Center.





PICTURE THIS

Photographer: Anup Shah

QUEST STATEMENT

Mine is an ongoing search, through the medium of black and white photography, for the enigma, the mystery, and the beauty encountered in the natural world.

MISSION STATEMENT

Live a lot in the wild, encounter transcendent moments, and share the magical moments through the medium of photography.

VISION STATEMENT

By continually examining and experimenting with possibilities offered by photography, I would like to develop my art such that not only does it capture the unique beauty of the natural world and place it in front of the viewer, but also invites reflection on the existence of all life in the grand scheme of things.



Suggested PSOC Critique Guidelines

PSOC was founded as a platform for image sharing and supportive self-improvement. With the expanded utilization of outside professional photographers to critique the members' submitted images, that mission has evolved into a shared desire to become more proficient in the art and craft of photography.

It is the responsibility of those who critique to foster that desire and encourage and **teach** the members through that critique. The critique should be a careful review of the images accompanied by an **opinion** regarding the overall strength of the image, as well as an **opinion** regarding the artistic and technical aspects of the image presented. Although the spectrum of photographers showing images includes beginners as well as some who are very advanced, learning and growth should be encouraged at all levels. The following guidelines have been formulated to bring a consistency of format to the critiques. These are not checklists, just suggestions to help the critiquers help our members improve their photographic craft.

1. What is your overall first impression? What impact does the image have for you? What do you like about the photograph? **Be concise.** Remember you are teaching *all* the members as well as the contributing photographer.
2. What **constructive** comments can you make? How does the composition and framing work? How does your eye take in the elements of the image? What gets your attention, and why? Note use of techniques like "rule" of thirds, leading lines, framing, patterns, lighting choices, and other visual elements. What helpful comments can you make?
3. How do you see the technical and processing factors contributing to the image? This may include perspective, exposure, highlight detail, shadow detail, bright and dark areas, contrast; processing of color or black and white, luminescence, contrast, vignetting, dodging, burning, and cropping.
4. Make it clear that your comments are all **your opinion** on how **you** might do it differently, based on your experience, personal style, vision, and processing preferences. Other artists/photographers may often see the image differently.
5. How might you encourage the photographer? Remember, the photographer has a reason to show this work and obviously feels good about it. **You are encouraged to ask the photographer to comment on what they were seeing and expressing in the image. We would also like you to encourage the members in attendance to participate through questions and comments.**
6. Although the title slide for each member's submittal does not need to be critiqued, an outstanding title image can be *quickly* noted.
7. **Please be concise in your comments.** The meetings are scheduled for two hours, and there can often be well over 100 images submitted.