

MAY 2026

(final issue of 2025/2026 season)

Schedule Meetings/Locations:

NOTE – IN GENERAL, MEETINGS ON THE 2ND MONDAY WILL BE HELD IN PERSON. ALL OTHER MEETINGS WILL BE VIRTUAL. (Unless otherwise noted in the schedule.)

Board Meeting:

1st Monday of the Month* 7:00 PM
(Zoom-virtual)

In Person Meeting:

2nd Monday of the Month* 7:15 PM
First Baptist Church of West
Hartford
90 North Main Street
West Hartford, CT 06107

Competition Meeting:

3rd Monday of the Month* 7:15 PM
(Zoom-virtual)

General Meeting:

4th Monday of the Month* 7:15 PM
(Zoom-virtual)

*Unless otherwise noted in schedule

Above meetings are held from
September through April (except
December)

**Charter Oak
Photographic
Society, Inc.
[COPS]**



***General
Schedule
of Events***

**Charter Oak Photographic Society, Inc.
2025-2026 Schedule**

Month	In Person Meetings**	Competition Judging (Virtual by Zoom)	General Meetings (Virtual by Zoom**)	Other Activities
September	Monday, September 22, 2025 "Photographing Models" with Tom Cuchara, HonNEC of Hamden, CT	N/A	Monday, September 29, 2025 "Finding Your Creative Voice" by Richard Lewis of New Jersey	Check the FOCUS for details on other opportunities as they come up.
October	Monday, October 13, 2025 "Small Group Photo Sharing and Critiques" by COPS Members	Monday, October 20, 2025 Specified Topic: PSA Nature	Monday, October 27, 2025 "Printing Demystified" by Robert Chaplin of Florida	
November	Monday, November 10, 2025 "In the Style of..." by Stan Tetrault of Tolland, CT; "Favorite Places to Photograph in CT" by COPS Members	Monday, November 17, 2025 Specified Topic: Intentional Camera Movement	Monday, November 24, 2025 "A Foundation for the Macro World" by Doug Johnson of Colorado	
December No Meetings in December (Happy Holidays!)			
January	Monday, January 12, 2026 "Small Group Photo Sharing and Critiques" by COPS Members	Monday, January 19, 2026 Specified Topic: Within 30 Minutes of Your Home	Monday, January 26, 2026 "Inside Smart Photo Editor" by Hazel Meredith of Tennessee	*Note: Special Dates for These Events **Unless otherwise noted
February	Monday, February 9, 2026 "Fix Your Photo" by Mark Teitelbaum of West Hartford and Steve Silk of Farmington, CT	Monday, February 16, 2026 Specified Topic: Geometry in Nature (Macro)	Monday, February 23, 2026 "Photographing Nome Alaska" by Henry Doyle of Kentucky	
March	Monday, March 9, 2026 "Zoo Photography" by Meredith Harris of Farmington, CT	Monday, March 16, 2026 Specified Topic: Cell Phone Photographs	Monday, March 23, 2026 "Going to the Dark Side" by Royce Bair of Utah	
April	Monday, April 13, 2026 "Four Creative Techniques that will Rock Your World" by Phil Atiyeh of Cheshire, CT	Monday, April 20, 2026 Specified Topic: In the Style of Famous Photographers	Monday, April 27, 2026 "Capturing Motion" by Betsy Wilson of Pennsylvania	
May	None	Monday, May 11, 2026* Judging for Annual Awards JUDGES ONLY – CLOSED TO MEMBERS	Monday, May 18 2026* "Mini Shows" by COPS Members (IN PERSON)	
..... No Meetings during the Summer				

Updated 3/2/26

Note that the calendar for the 2026/2027 season is in work

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT
[by Gert Perry]

What a wonderful season we have had!

- Financially sound
- 14 new members
- Brought back refreshments and more socialization
- Raffle for free membership
- One time small print competition : theme “cold” for trophy
- Excellent website
- Added the AI category in competition...without adding scores
- Wonderful Workshops
- Grand Programs

For next season:

- Creative solution to competition scoring and support concerns
- Community Outreach
- More mini print contests with trophies
- Field Trips
- Public display of prints

Remember that we are a club and need volunteers for activities.

Please find a way to take part in this important support of Charter Oak Photographic Society!

COPS BOARD STARTING SEPTEMBER 2026

Via the COPS Charter's required selection and confirmation process, the COPS Board's Officers and Trustees will be comprised of the following esteemed club Members;

President: Gert Perry

Vice President: Steve Silk

Treasurer: Mark Fox

Secretary: Lynda Hintz

Trustees 2026-2029: Steve Potashner, Stan Tetrault

MEMBER-to-MEMBER SALES/GIVEAWAYS

This space affords Members the opportunity to make a Member-to-Member sale or giveaway of your photographic equipment and/or supplies. COPS Inc. will not be a direct participant and thus will have no liability in any transactions. Interested sellers are welcome to send me (Jack Strand) an email [jack_strand@yahoo.com] with the text which you request be considered for inclusion in the next issue of FOCUS.

IMAGES OF THE YEAR!!!

The winners of the annual Images of the Year Competition were announced at the May 18th In-person meeting. Those excellent photographers, and their amazing images, are shown below;

Digital Open: Go With The Flow by **Steve Silk**

Digital Wildlife: Orange You Glad To See Me by **Steve Silk**

Digital Monochrome: On The Edge by **Steve Silk**

Digital Creative: Winter Woods by **Cindy Gosselin**

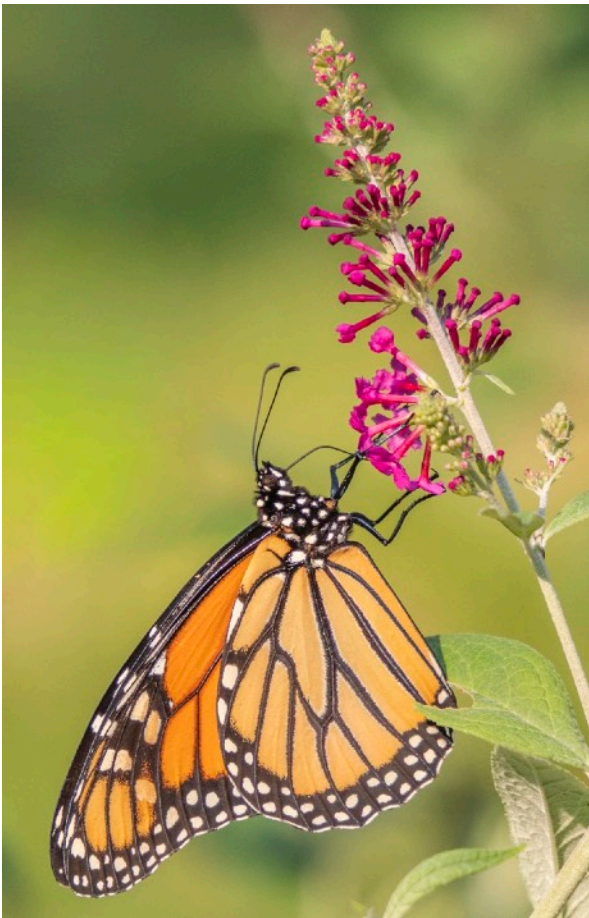
Rich Nature: Butterfly On Pink Flower by **Paula Fink**

Sibley Travel: One Morning at the Allee des Baobabs by **Steve Silk**

[see above photos on following two pages]



Charter Oak FOCUS MAY 2026



USE OF AI IN SUPPORT OF FUTURE COMPETITIONS (by Stan Tetrault)

COPS Competition and the Future of Judging

- **The problem** - multiple challenges with procuring judges and inconsistent judges evaluations
- **Committee work** - meetings held, test findings, and the decision to use Claude.ai
- **AI judging benefits & trade-offs** - what's automated vs. what still needs volunteers
- **Cost & safeguards** - \$20/month, hybrid human-AI oversight model, quality control steps
- **Testing findings** - finer granular scoring, weighted criteria by category, and tiebreaker logic

Stan's complete presentation to the Board can be found on the COPS main website: <https://charteroakphoto.org/competitions/>

COPS MAIN WEBSITE UPDATES (from Steve Potashner)

Prize winning images from COPS competitions were chosen to provide new sets of photos for the 'Home Page' (<https://charteroakphoto.org>), the 'Programs Page' (<https://charteroakphoto.org/programs/>) in the EVENTS menu, and the 'From Our Workshops Page' (<https://charteroakphoto.org/from-our-workshops/>) in the LEARN menu.

A new page on 'Camera Simulators' (<https://charteroakphoto.org/simulators/>) was added to the LEARN menu. These are software tools that mimic how real cameras capture images. They are like virtual camera labs – you can experiment with camera settings and lenses in a controlled digital environment. You can practice without a real camera by adjusting certain camera settings and instantly seeing the results in the on screen photo. Several sites are listed which allow you to experiment with settings for shutter speed, aperture, ISO, and lens combinations.

The website continues to offer video recordings of recent program presentations. On the 'Programs Page' (<https://charteroakphoto.org/programs/>) in the EVENTS menu, look for program titles with the word 'Video' displayed.

COPS GENERAL CLUB NEWS

In April's competition, Members; Steve Potashner, Steve Silk, Stan Tetrault, Paula Fink, Chris Thomas, Cindy Gosselin, Mark Teitelbaum, Rich Rosania, Pam Hastings, Ira Scheinerman, David Scheinerman, Martin Krucinski, and Mark Fox submitted season points, and award, winning images. Give them your congratulations when you see them! Their terrific work is posted on the COPS Main Website. In the menu, select GALLERIES > COMPETITION WINNERS > 2025-2026 APRIL.

2026/2027 COMPETITION TOPICS

September: Reflections

October: PSA Nature

November: Deep Depth of Field (i.e., sharp front to back)

January: Fog/Mist/Haze

February: Tell a Story

March: Leading Lines

April: Uniquely Connecticut

A NEAR-TERM LEARNING OPPORTUNITY



**Lightroom Virtual Summit
2026**

June 1 – 5, 2026

46 classes over 5 days from 17 of the
world's best educators.

We're excited to announce the Lightroom Virtual Summit 2026, with all your favorite work-class instructors presenting a wide range of classes, including brand-new sessions called The Edit Room, where each day instructors will edit Raw files submitted by our attendees. You can get more details below.

**Get all the info and sign up here: <https://www.lightroomsummit.com/>
Excerpt from the Educational Summits Newsletter, May 2026, Dave Cross LLC.**

FOCUS ON PHOTOGRAPHY's HISTORY (a new addition to FOCUS)

Salvador Dali by Philippe Halsman | 1948

Philippe Halsman's life's work was to capture the essence of those he photographed. Knowing a standard portrait of the flamboyant Salvador Dali was not going to wash, he set out to create something extraordinary.

Halsman even roped in his wife and daughter to assist in throwing the cats and water into the frame. After 26 shots they finally captured this image that has echoes of Dali's own artwork in it. **Note:** Remember that was all film so it had to be done in a single frame - there was no Photoshop!

Halsman and Dali both had an unusual sense of style and creativity – some might even say bizarre. They collaborated on many projects together, including Halsman recreating one of Dali's paintings of a skull using human nude figures.

Halsman helped to shape modern-day portrait photography. His images of Dali, Albert Einstein, Marilyn Monroe and Alfred Hitchcock broke the mold and encouraged photographers to collaborate with their subjects.

Note: *One of his more popular coffee table photography books is "Halsman at Work." It includes not only stunning photographs but the stories behind how he made them, narrated by his wife Yvonne who worked alongside him taking photos of him working.*



COPS 2025/2026 ANNUAL SERVICE AWARDS

The Charter Oak Photographic Society is proud to announce that Service Awards were given to both Laura Reinwald and Mark Fox at the annual meeting on May 18, 2026. Our Club has benefitted immensely from their dedication and is sincerely grateful.

Laura has been the Competition Judging Chair for many years and has faithfully, reliably, unflinchingly and gracefully executed the duties of acquiring judges for COPS competitions and filling requests from other photo clubs for competition judges from COPS. She has also served on the Board. These duties have usually involved many hours and days of creative thought and considerable effort on her part.

Mark Fox has contributed many years of service to Charter Oak. Mark has served on the Board for seven years in various capacities. He was also the Editor of the Focus for several years and currently acts as our PSA Representative and the club's Treasurer. One of his first acts as Treasurer was to review and update our banking arrangements, which resulted in a significant increase to the earnings from our accounts.

Please congratulate them and give them your personal thanks for their years of contributions to COPS' successes!

NECCC RECOGNIZES OUR AMAZING PRESIDENT!

The NECCC's Executive Board has awarded **Gert Perry** the Honor of Master Member of the New England Camera Club Council (MNEC).

"Gert Perry is being honored for her extensive service to Charter Oak Photographic Society, Inc. and to camera clubs of the New England Camera Club Council. Recognized as the "energizer bunny" of Charter Oak, she is always willing to step in to help while maintaining her enthusiasm and positive attitude. She has volunteered her time and energies to the club in multiple roles for almost two decades including serving as a President, Board member, and Membership Chair. She is being recognized for her active and long participation as member of the Field Trip Committee, the Nomination and Service Award Committees; for leading small group critique discussions and presenting topics at club meetings and generously sharing her time assisting other camera clubs as a judge as well as offering critiques at Charter Oak". The presentation of Honors will take place at the NECCC Board of Directors and Representatives Annual Meeting on Saturday June 20th.

2025/2026 END-OF-SEASON COMPETITION FINAL STANDINGS

2025-2026 YTD Results				
	TOTALS			
Name	Total # of Images Using the Highest 2 Scoring Images	Total Points Using the Highest 2 Scoring Images	First Prizes	Hon. Mentions
<u>Masters</u>				
Steve Silk	12.0	340.0	8.0	3.0
Cindy Gosselin	12.0	330.0	7.0	2.0
Paula Fink	12.0	326.0	3.0	7.0
Pam Hastings	12.0	320.5	5.0	2.0
Stan Tetrault	12.0	319.0	5.0	5.0
Mark Teitelbaum	12.0	318.0	3.0	6.0
Ira Scheinerman	10.0	278.0	7.0	3.0
Tom Griswold	6.0	155.5	2.0	2.0
Chris Quallen	4.0	104.0	1.0	2.0
<u>Salon</u>				
Steve Potashner	12.0	321.5	10.0	2.0
Rich Rosania	12.0	316.0	6.0	3.0
Chris Thomas	12.0	310.0	3.0	2.0
Emery Thomas	12.0	299.5	1.0	4.0
Mark Fox	12.0	297.0	4.0	0.0
Marci James	12.0	297.0	0.0	1.0
David Hintz	12.0	295.0	1.0	3.0
Lynda Hintz	12.0	292.0	0.0	1.0
Frank James	12.0	286.0	0.0	2.0
Jim Oliphant	10.0	255.5	3.0	4.0
Martin Krucinski	8.0	208.5	1.0	5.0
Jim Brodey	7.0	203.0	0.0	1.0
Laura Reinwald	8.0	200.5	2.0	2.0
David Scheinerman	4.0	103.5	0.0	1.0
Lauren Wang	3.0	74.0	0.0	0.0