THE CHARTER OAK
FOCUS
NEWSLETTER OF THE CHARTER OAK PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

NOVEMBER 2026

ScheduleMeetings/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.
2026-2027 Schedule

Month	In Person Meetings**	Competition Judging (Virtual by Zoom)	General Meetings (Virtual by Zoom**)	Notes
September	**September 14, 2026** "Developing Your Vision: Small Group Image Conversations" by COPS Members	**September 21, 2026** Specified Topic: Reflections	**September 28, 2026** "The Amazing World of Shorebirds" by Alex Eistengart of Cleveland, OH	**Meetings are Monday nights at 7:15, unless otherwise stated.**
October	**October 12, 2026** "Chasing Fall: Favorite Places & Fresh Ideas" by Steve Silk and COPS Members	**October 19, 2026** Specified Topic: PSA Nature	**October 26, 2026** "Beyond the Exposure Triangle: Correct Exposure with Digital Cameras" by Joe Edelman of Allentown, PA	**Check the FOCUS and Website for details on field trips and other opportunities as they come up.**
November	**November 9, 2026** "All About AI: New Directions in Post-Processing" by Steve Silk of Farmington and Jim Brodey of West Hartford	**November 16, 2026** Specified Topic: Leading Lines	**November 23, 2026** "Call of the Wild: Photographing Animals in their World" by Cecil Holmes of Huntsville, AL	
December	..... No Meetings in December (Happy Holidays!)			
January	**January 11, 2027** "Seeing in Black & White" by Stan Tetrault of Tolland	**January 18, 2027** Specified Topic: Fog/Mist/Haze	**January 25, 2027** "Photography Composition" by Rhonda Cullens of Sandy Hook, CT	*Note: Special Dates for These Events **Unless otherwise noted
February	**February 8, 2027** "TBD"	**February 15, 2027** Specified Topic: Tell a Story	**February 22, 2027** "In Depth on Depth: Creating Dimension in Landscape Photos" by Colleen Miniuk of Chandler, AZ	
March	**March 8, 2027** "TBD"	**March 15, 2027** Specified Topic: Deep Depth of Field (i.e., sharp front to back)	**March 22, 2027** "Elevate your Images" by Lee Hoy of Fort Davis, TX	
April	**April 12, 2027** "TBD"	**April 19, 2027** Specified Topic: Uniquely Connecticut (or state you live in)	**April 26, 2027** "Life in a War Zone: Photos from Ukraine" by David Graham of Sarasota, FL	
May	**May 17 2027*** Annual Meeting and "Mini Shows" by COPS Members	**May 10, 2027*** **Judging for Annual Awards** **JUDGES ONLY – CLOSED TO MEMBERS**	**May 17 2027*** This meeting will be in person. See "In Person Meeting" Column	
..... No Meetings during the Summer				

Updated 11/5/26

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT
[by Gert Perry]

Hasn't Fall been really sunny and mild? Most of the trees in my neighborhood have dropped their leaves but one (and only one) is in full leaf and the most amazing bright orange-red!!! I hope you have photos from this amazing season.

Monday, November 9 is our in-person meeting at First Baptist Church. Steve Silk will talk about a number of common AI tools and how they work. Jim Brodey will share Creative uses of AI.

Don't forget.... you might win a free membership for 2027-2028. For each new member you get, you will have a raffle card. The winner will be announced at our final meeting of the Season.

Don't forget: We do not have any club meetings in December.

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 GENERAL CLUB NEWS

We have all been afforded the opportunity to potentially influence the continued evolution of our club by completing and submitting a simple survey. Steve Potashner sent everyone a MailChimp message early in October with a link to that survey. That survey is now closed. The results will be discussed by the board and made available to the membership.

NOVEMBER COMPETITION REMINDER

The competition submission period will close on Sunday, November 8, 2026, 11:30 pm.

This competition will be judged by the COPS AI Judging system. There are new requirements when submitting images into the Creative and Makeups competition types (see Instructions, below).

Dates:
Open: October 26, 2026, 12:30 am
Close: November 8, 2026, 11:30 pm
Competition Date: November 16, 2026, 7:15 pm

Specified Topic:
Leading Lines

Instructions:
Submit images to the COPS Competition Website: https://charteroakphoto.visualpursuits.com/

Please refer to the submission instructions on the COPS Main Website: https://charteroakphoto.org/submitting-images/

On the 'Submitting Images' page, scroll down to the section titled '***How To Submit Images To Monthly Competition***s', read the rules, then click the button labeled '***Download Submitting Instructions***' to download a pdf file describing how to submit images to the COPS Competition Website.

Submission into the following competition types remains unchanged: Open, Wildlife, Monochrome, Specified Topic, AI and Unedited.

NEW: Images submitted into the **Creative** competition type that contain hand painting or hand work must have -HP appended to the image title.

NEW: Makeup images must identify which competition type they belong to – the title must have one of the following appended: -Open, -Wlife, -Mono, -ST:*topicname,* -Cre*,* -AI, -Uned.

Competition results will be shared November16 at 7:15 at our monthly competition meeting.

Good luck in the competition,
Steve Silk, November Competition Chair

Questions can be directed to:
Steve Silk, silk.steve@yahoo.com. 860-324-8543
Steve Potashner sjpotashner@sbcglobal.com 860-869-9959
Stan Tetrault stantetrault@comcast.net 860-794-9166

THIS MONTH's WORKSHOP- NOVEMBER 9th

All About AI: New Directions in Post-Processing

AI is transforming the art of photography, and in this workshop we will look at some of the ways the evolving technology is affecting post-processing. In "Ten Ways AI Has Improved Processing," we'll look at how AI's ever deeper integration with Lightroom and Photoshop revolutionizes the way images are edited.
Then, Jim Brodey, our resident AI aficionado, will demonstrate how he uses image generating software such as MidJourney to create imaginative, and sometimes magical, scenes.

PROGRAM/GENERAL MEETING (ZOOM)- NOV 23

Call of the Wild: Photographing Animals in their World

This class focuses on elevating your wildlife photography from simple snapshots to impactful images by mastering creative and technical execution. You will learn essential skills like composition, timing, and light to better capture animal behavior and convey a sense of place.

Bio:

Cecil Holmes is a professional outdoor and nature photographer that lives in Huntsville, Alabama. Cecil spends a lot of his time traveling and photographing. He has a love for nature, wildlife, and travel and that is expressed in his images. Cecil's images have appeared in articles and advertorials in publications such as Nature Photographer, Outdoor Photographer, Shutterbug, and many local publications.

MONTHLY WORKSHOP SUGGESTIONS PLEASE

Some of the monthly Workshops have already been arranged for this season. However, you have the opportunity to help shape this season's content and learning. Please offer your thoughts as to appealing topics and/or speakers. Give this some thought, then email your suggestions to Steve Silk (silk.steve@yahoo.com) and Jim Brodey (jimbrodeyphotography@gmail.com). Thanks in advance!

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED- PLEASE HELP!!

Volunteers are needed to assist with administering our photo competitions. Even though we will be using an AI tool to replace human judges, there is still work to be done. The position of Competition Chair will see a reduced workload thanks to AI. The position of Competition Chair Assistant takes on the new tasks of running AI sessions and ensuring quality control of AI generated content.

For more information, check our club website for access to updated competition documentation at https://charteroakphoto.org/competition-chair/
Further inquiries can be sent to:
Stan Tetrault stantetrault@comcast.net
Steve Potashner sjpotashner@sbcglobal.net

These are vital roles for us to continue having competitions!

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.

MEMBERS IN ACTION

This new section of Focus is intended to give Members the opportunity to share with fellow Members what you are up to. That can be; photographic adventures, participation in competitions outside of club events, sales and/or exhibits of your work, etc. If you have something to share, you are welcome to email a short write-up to me [Jack Strand] at jack_strand@yahoo.com so I can include it in the next issue of Focus.

HEADS UP: JANUARY's WORKSHOP

Seeing in Black & White-By Stan Tetrault

Overview

The workshop teaches members to judge whether an image will work in monochrome, then shows how to get there in Lightroom and Photoshop using their own images.

By the end of the session, participants should be able to:

- Explain what is lost and gained when color is removed
- Pre-visualize a scene in tones rather than hues
- Use the B&W tools and masks in Lightroom Classic, and adjustment layers and dodge/burn in Photoshop
- Follow a repeatable color-to-monochrome workflow on their own files

FOCUS ON PHOTOGRAPHY's HISTORY

ABRAHAM LINCOLN, 1860

Abraham Lincoln was a little-known one-term Illinois Congressman with national aspirations when he arrived in New York City in February 1860 to speak at the Cooper Union. The speech had to be perfect, but Lincoln also knew the importance of image. Before taking to the podium, he stopped at the Broadway photography studio of Mathew B. Brady.

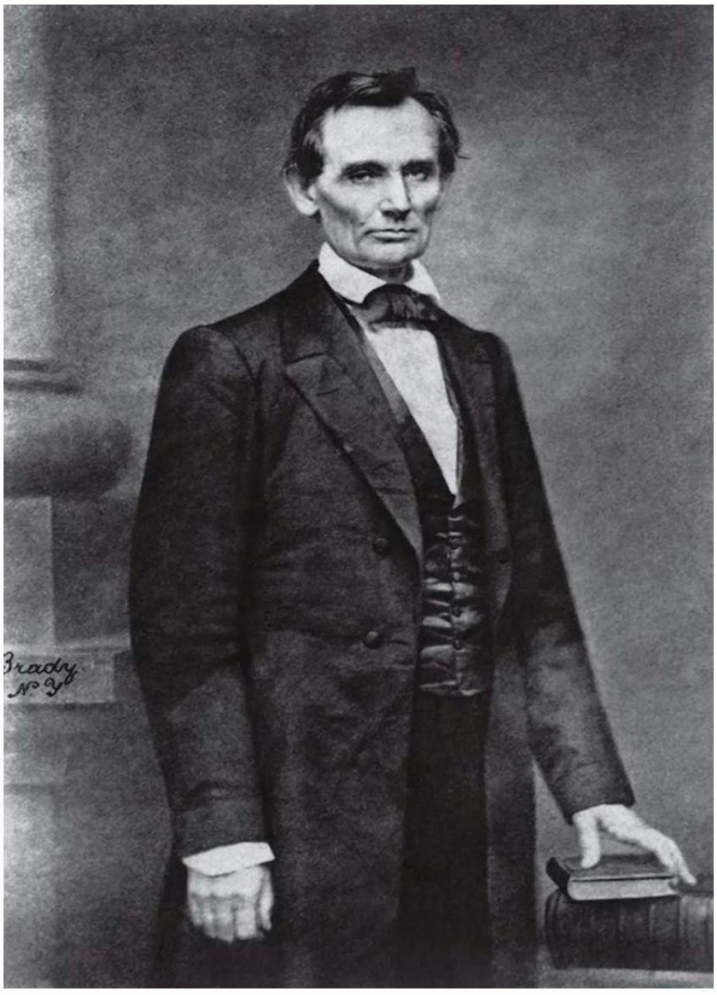
The portraitist, who had photographed everyone from Edgar Allan Poe to James Fenimore Cooper, and would chronicle the coming Civil War, knew a thing or two about presentation. He set the gangly rail splitter in a statesmanlike pose, tightened his shirt collar to hide his long neck and retouched the image to improve his looks.

In a click of a shutter, Brady dispelled talk of what Lincoln said were "rumors of my long ungainly figure ... making me into a man of human aspect and dignified bearing."

By capturing Lincoln's youthful features before the ravages of the Civil War would etch his face with the strains of the Oval Office, Brady presented him as a calm contender in the fractious antebellum era. Lincoln's subsequent talk before a largely Republican audience of 1,500 was a resounding success, and Brady's picture soon appeared in publications like Harper's Weekly, and on Cartes de Visite and election posters and buttons, making it the most powerful early instance of a photo used as campaign propaganda.

As the portrait spread, it propelled Lincoln from the edge of greatness to the White House, where he preserved the Union and ended slavery. As Lincoln later admitted, "Brady and the Cooper Union speech made me President of the United States."

(Photograph by Mathew B. Brady)



2026/2027 OCTOBER YTD COMPETITION STANDINGS

2026-2027 YTD Results

Name	TOTALS			
	Total # of Images Using the Highest 2 Scoring Images	Total Points Using the Highest 2 Scoring Images	First Prizes	Hon. Mentions
Masters				
Mark Teitelbaum	4.0	106.3	4.0	2.0
Cindy Gosselin	4.0	102.7	3.0	1.0
Steve Potashner	4.0	95.1	1.0	1.0
Stan Tetrault	4.0	94.8	1.0	2.0
Pam Hastings	4.0	91.7	1.0	0.0
Paula Fink	4.0	90.0	0.0	2.0
Ira Scheinerman	4.0	84.4	0.0	1.0
Chris Quallen	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Steve Silk	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Salon				
David Hintz	4.0	95.5	2.0	3.0
Rich Rosania	4.0	94.6	3.0	1.0
Laura Reinwald	4.0	92.7	2.0	0.0
Jim Brodey	4.0	92.6	0.0	2.0
Lynda Hintz	4.0	90.2	2.0	1.0
Marci James	4.0	83.0	1.0	0.0
Emery Thomas	4.0	80.7	0.0	2.0
Chris Thomas	4.0	80.4	0.0	0.0
Frank James	4.0	80.1	0.0	0.0
David Scheinerman	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Lauren Wang	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Mark Fox	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Martin Krucinski	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0