



Club Notes for January 20252026

NEW YEAR'S RESET

Depending on how you name and store your images, it might be time to create some new folder and naming templates for 2026. If you have some down time, it might also be worth taking stock of your equipment inventory to determine whether some might be put up for resale through our club, Midwest Photo, or another camera/electronics shop. Of course, this may lead also to making some new purchases—remember that, as a Westbridge Camera Club member, you may be eligible for a discount on rental equipment (and some other products and services) at Midwest Photo in case you want to try before you buy. If it is time to replace your competition print mat boards, Reed Arts (3rd Ave) can do custom mat cutting on demand—I was told it takes about 5 minutes on their computerized mat cutter and they keep a large selection in stock. Otherwise, Blick Art Supply has a basic supply of pre-cut mats in stock and Michaels stores can also assist with custom cutting mats. The At Home store (Hilliard) has a wide assortment of inexpensive frames with pre-cut mats if you are thinking about exhibiting your work, and there are often inexpensive frames at Goodwill or other resale shops that might suit your needs.

If you are looking for ideas to get out an “shoot,” the check out the Metroparks website for dates and times of their many Winter Hike events. If the weather cooperates, you might find frozen waterfalls at Hocking Hills and Hayden Falls, or you might travel toward Lake Erie for winter photography (Brandywine Falls, Cuyahoga Valley National Park, or Presque Isle State Park across the border in Pennsylvania). Short-eared owls are in the area for the next couple of months at Battelle Darby Creek, Pickerington Ponds, Killdeer Plains, and even the OSU Airport (dawn and dusk sightings). Have a happy, productive New Year!

Where Do You Store Your Images?

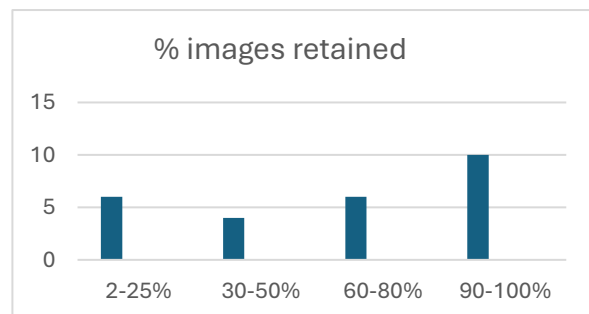
This story begins with sharing results from a club member survey conducted in December. The first question asked members to estimate the number of images they capture in a year. The 27 answers almost all had qualifiers (like question marks or “I have no idea”); here are results for this question.



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The next question concerned what percentage of images club members retained. Again, a lot of us are uncertain about this and comments added insights—despite saving most, only using 4% or 15%.



The final question asked members to briefly describe their image storage systems. A few shared comments about not being very good

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at deleting images, that their “system” was kind of random, and that their “system” was over-loaded with more than 130,000 files. (Just a side note: I confess that my collection of digital images is far greater than 130,000 and I have not yet finished digitizing over 1,000 slides culled out of the over 10,000 stored in boxes before we moved to Ohio.) Three instances combined to generate this story for and about our club. First, a few years ago Frank and I experienced a home break-in where among many stolen items were my external hard drives. Fortunately, much of my photography was either burned onto DVDs or backed up in the cloud at that point, but some images were lost forever. Second, one of our club members (Tom Snide) shared concern over the rising cost of Adobe Lightroom. It got me thinking: what if my images are beautifully catalogued in a Lightroom library (a New Year’s resolution each year for 3 years but not yet started) but I decide to drop this service because of increasing cost? Third, Frank recently exceeded the external hard drive capacity he used for long term storage, and we had to rethink his system. Thus, our interest in how other club members preserve their digital images. Multiple members reported using portable or travel hard drives (SSD recommended), external hard drives, memory cards or iPhone memory, cloud storage (e.g., iDrive, Amazon Prime photos, Google Drive), cloud backup (Blockblaze, Carbonite, and iDrive were mentioned), and/or “on my computer.” One person reported using their website this way, three reported using NAS network storage—which I had to look up. NAS stands for Network Attached Storage which involves hard drives that automatically backup computers and allow remote access from various devices. One person mentioned negatives stored in a binder. One mentioned backup on an external hard drive that is placed in a vault monthly. I’m not sure there is any perfect answer to the dilemmas that abound. With “public” cloud storage systems, there might or might not be fine print allowing the service to use your

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images in various ways. As with any internet use, there is always a question of security. However, there is a tremendous benefit in having “off-site” storage of image files. They are far less susceptible to localized natural disasters (fire, flood, tornado) and theft of equipment. External drives and memory cards, if labeled well, offer close-at-hand convenience and avoid internet issues. But if you have a large library of images, you are likely to exceed their capacity. And, these are susceptible to localized disasters, theft, and hardware failure (drives, chips, and CDs/DVDs all can fail spectacularly). I exceed my laptop’s storage capacity on every wildlife photography trip, necessitating memory card backup on SSD external drives. Storing a lot of images on your computer might slow down your other computer activities.

The main takeaway from our survey has to do with reliability: how reliably, routinely, and religiously do we follow through on our best practices for storing and backing up our images? We can automate only just so much of the process; we need to assertively protect the images that we create. Well, at least the percentage that we choose to keep. Hopefully, this has been interesting information shared among our club members.

January Education Program

Our club education committee invited Ned Pennock to present at our January 5th meeting. He titled his talk: “Lessons learned from a (mostly) self-taught photographer.” He plans to display multiple images and walk us through how he captured each. Ned is joining us from the Dayton area (Centerville). Ned self-describes as loving playful experimentation with photography and continually developing new skills—learning from both successes and failures. He enjoys many types of photography including family photos and portraits, landscapes, cityscapes, nature, events and

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(January Education continued)

performances, still life, and more. His goal is to create compelling images that will be enjoyed for generations to come (he is both a father and grandfather). He accomplishes this by combining good composition with natural or creative lighting, paying attention to details, and listening to others' ideas and perspectives. In addition to his one-hour, planned presentation, Ned has offered to stick around and present some auxiliary information for any members wishing to stay later.

Note that our club liaison member, Skip Kremer, has arranged a February virtual speaker presentation that our club is co-hosting. Cleveland fine art portrait photographer Herb Ascherman is scheduled for a Zoom presentation on February 23 (a non-club meeting Monday evening). Stay tuned for more details, but in the meantime, you can visit Herb's website at <https://aschermanphoto.net/>. This presentation dovetails nicely with our April portraits competition theme.

Club Competition News

Our club's January competition theme is "Taken In 2025." This is a great chance to conduct your own personal year in review for your photo activities. Your digital image submissions are due in Zenfolio or emailed to Carol Shurlow (shurlowc751@gmail.com) by 10:00 pm, Monday January 12th. Images should be placed in the category selected during prior competitions this year (Novice, Intermediate/Advanced, or Master). Bring your mounted monochrome and/or color prints to the competition judging on January 19th. Our Competition Committee has arranged with **Madison Price** from Midwest Photo to serve as our judge for January's competition. You may recognize her as a member of the sales floor team (assistant manager) where she has been working for almost 2 ½ years. Madison indicates that she first got started in photography when she needed a hobby to fix boredom. She primarily shoots with Canon and is currently earning a post-BA certificate in

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digital marketing from Columbus State Community College where she also has recently completed coursework in interactive media and graphic design. Madison taught a class on developing black & white film at Midwest Photo last year and wants us to know that Midwest has a darkroom available for individuals interested in renting to develop their own film. Tours are available!

Looking ahead to February, our competition theme is "Open" (judged by Vince Noble), March is "Shiny Objects" (judged by Alison Crocetta), and April is "Portraits in the Style Of..." (judged by Bobbie Atlas and Ray Clark). The list of artists whose style your April submissions relate to is posted on the club website under the Competitions menu, along with a brief description of what each artist might mean to the two judges. The website includes instructions about naming the files and prints that you submit—instructions specific to the April competition theme. Hint: you need to reference the works being emulated in each submission and prints will need your club ID number, not your name, as judges will need to reference the print backs concerning who each is "In The Style Of..." An additional note posted on the website indicates that our April judges will be expecting portraits of people for this theme, not landscapes or animals.

Photo Feedback Interest Group Update

John Butterfield has announced the next photo feedback interest group session. The third of the club season is scheduled for Monday January 12th 1:00 to 3:15 pm at the Old Worthington Library's Meeting Room, 820 High Street, Worthington 43085. Interested members should register by email with John at jbutter47@gmail.com before noon on Friday January 9th (first come, first reserved). Participation is limited to 15 club members and open to all skill levels. Photo Feedback sessions provide a relaxed, fun, peer-group atmosphere for receiving and delivering constructive feedback on one

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another's print or digital images. We tap into the expertise and experiences of fellow club members in these sessions, as well as getting to know each other a little better. Each participant may present up to 2 images, digital (due preferably by noon Saturday January 10th) and/or as matted prints. Many of the shared images have subsequently received recognition in our club competitions!

Exhibitions

The club's Exhibit Committee (John Butterfield, Joyce Fasone, and Steve Organ) arranged a club exhibit at the Bexley Library. The show will be displayed from Saturday January 10 to Saturday February 28. The exhibit will feature work from 29 club members, with each currently limited to one framed work. Once all participants provide their artwork dimensions and orientation (portrait or landscape), the committee can assess the possibility of accepting additional works—they have recorded any requests for two prints and the corresponding response dates. Assignments are made based on order of signing up. The library's gallery space is described as "somewhat quirky," with the committee estimating that 30-35 prints can be accommodated. If you have not already signed up but are interested in participating, notify John Butterfield jbutter47@gmail.com. The Bexley Library is located at 2411 East Main Street. Library hours are Monday-Thursday 10am-8pm, Friday & Saturday 10 am-6pm, and Sunday 1pm-5pm.

Member Noted Opportunities

Jim Urzykowski sent the club members a note concerning updating your in-camera copyright "stamp" to 2026 (if you use one). If you are unfamiliar with this option, consult your camera manual—copyright details can be automatically embedded in your metadata for every image captured.

Roberta Kane suggested a free webinar with Freeman Patterson: The Flora and Ecology of Namaqualand (South Africa). This is

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scheduled for January 8th, 7pm Eastern. He will discuss the breathtaking explosion of spring wildflowers in the region. The webinar is hosted by Charles Needle Photography in preparation for a late-2026 workshop. If interested, register for the presentation at https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_VfG6Dk8pRQuR7F2eiLlfDA#/registration

Member News

Congratulations to John Butterfield whose "Time and Tobacco" print earned a second-place award in the Arts & Culture category of the 2025 International Photography Competition hosted by The Ohio State University Office of International Affairs. A second phot, "A Good Catch," received an honorable mention in the People category of this annual competition. More than 390 photographers submitted approximately 785 images across three categories: People, Places, and Arts & Culture. The judging panel selected 40 images to display at the International Photo Exhibition. Club member Donna Winters served as a judge during 2024. All current students, faculty, staff, visiting scholars, and alumni of OSU are eligible to participate in this annual competition.

Club Newsletters

Our club newsletters are developed by the Communications team based on information shared by club members and our busy committees. As always, the Communications team invites you to send information and newsletter ideas to Audrey Begun (audrey.begun@gmail.com) and John Butterfield (jbutter47@gmail.com).

Please consider volunteering for the Communications team in 2026-2027. Audrey and John are happy to assist, but Audrey will be retiring from this role at the end of our season (May 2026).

