

# IN FOCUS



May—June 2026  
Volume 99, Issue 5

The Newsletter of the Photographic Society of Rhode Island

CELEBRATING PHOTOGRAPHY IN RHODE ISLAND SINCE 1927



Road Runner Sizing Diamondback. Photo by Karl Zuzarte

# PSRI

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## Newsletter

**Editorial designer**  
Bernadette van der Vliet  
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## Meet the PSRI newsletter crew



From left to right: Mike Dooley, Bob Mattera, Lincoln Smith, Bernadette van der Vliet and Mary Doo. Photo by Doug Ray

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# President's Message



This current issue comes at a time of renewal for us as a Club—partly due to the nature of the season, partly due to being back in person after our winter Zoom hiatus, and partly because of our upcoming annual business meeting, which will bring about some changes in Club leadership.

This is my last season as President, and this will be my final message in that role, as the next newsletter issue will be released after my current term. I will expand on this later in the issue. For now, I want to extend my thanks to the many people who have helped and encouraged me over the last two years, and especially to those of you who have done so much to make this Club the success that it is.

We will have all the news on upcoming changes for you in the next issue. In the meantime, I hope you take the time to enjoy our usual coverage of what has been happening with the Club over the past couple of months.

*Bob Mattera*



PSRI Open House March 31, 2026. Photo by Bob Mattera  
[See more images on page 15](#)

## PSRI Mission Statement

*The mission of the Photographic Society of Rhode Island is to promote photography as an art form and provide a supportive community for photographers of all skill levels. We aim to inspire creativity, improve technical skills, and encourage artistic growth among our members through education, exhibits, competitions, photo outings, and networking events. By creating opportunities to share knowledge and critiques in a positive environment, we hope to advance the craft of photography in our community.*

*We invite you to join us at one of our meetings to experience this energy firsthand. You will meet people of great photographic talent, and great people to boot.*

## Calendar May/June 2026

(Check the [online calendar](#) for the latest information)

5 May, Tue	6:30 PM	BOD meeting
12 May, Tue	6:30 PM	Social Time
	7 PM	Maceo Susi: "Capturing More Creative Wildlife Images."
19 May, Tue	6:30 PM	Social Time
	7 PM	TBA
<b>May 19, Tue: 6:15-6:45 PM: Print drop off at the church</b>		
<b>Open Competition #5 Deadline</b>		
26 May, Tue	6:30 PM	Social Time
	7 PM	Open Competition #5
2 June, Tue	6:30 PM	Social Time
	7 PM	Annual Business Meeting and Image of the Year
9 June, Tue	<b>No Meeting</b>	
16 June, Tue	6:30 PM	Annual Banquet

### In Person Meeting Place

Lakewood Baptist Church, 255 Atlantic Avenue, Warwick

Directions: (From I-95, either north or south) Exit 14 to RI Route 37 connector heading East, go to the very end of Route 37 connector. This will curve you around and place you on Post Road northbound. You should see Gregg's Restaurant on the left just after you go under Route 37 connector.

Continue north on Post Road. Watch for McDonald's and Walmart on the right. About ¾ mile further north is a traffic light at Atlantic Ave, turn right. Continue ¼ mile to another traffic light at Warwick Ave. Go straight across Warwick Ave. at a slight left angle. Continue on Atlantic Ave. and the Church is on the left and parking lot is on the right.

**Interested in seeing what the Photographic Society of Rhode Island is all about?**

Join as a Guest Member for 30 days. Fill out the [registration form](#) and select the 30 day guest option.

Scan QR code to go to our website



## Upcoming Meetups



PSRI members at the Matunuck Alpaca Farm meetup on April 25, 2026. Photo by Noreen Berthiaume

### May:

Early May: Tulips at Merry Albright's home in Wrentham, MA (exact day TBD)

9th (Sat.): Bird and Wildlife at Horn Pond, Woburn, MA

22nd (Fri.): Trustom Pond National Wildlife Refuge—South Kingstown, RI

### June:

Early June: Berkshire Botanical Gardens, Stockbridge, MA

Early June: Ninigret Trolls and The Fantastic Umbrella, Charlestown, RI

15th (Mon.): Fishing Boats at Sunset: Galilee, RI, 6:30 PM

### July:

Providence Pedestrian Bridge (and surrounding area @ sunset): architecture, long exposures, etc. Providence, RI

### Other Meetups:

Classic and Hot Rod Cars: Oakland Beach Cruise Night, Warwick, RI (dates have not been advertised yet)

Milky Way: Date and place TBD

DTLE (Daytime Long Exposure): Date and place TBD

**Keep an eye out for emails about upcoming meetups.**

### How We Use AI (Editorial Transparency)

We use AI tools—primarily ChatGPT—to assist with drafting and editing parts of this newsletter. PSRI editors set direction, fact-check, and approve all final text. We also use AI for grammar, clarity, and styling as needed.

Unless noted, all photographs are made by PSRI members. If AI is used to generate text or create/alter an image beyond standard edits, we label it clearly as such.

## Competition Dates 2026

Special Competition	January 13, 2026 Entry due date: January 9, 2026
Open Competition #3	February 10, 2026 Entry due date: February 3, 2026
Open Competition #4	March 17, 2026 Entry due date: March 10, 2026 2–3 PM and 6–6:30 PM: Print drop off at the church: March 10
Men vs. Women Competition	April 28, 2026 Entry due date: April 14, 2026
Open Competition #5	May 26, 2026 Entry due date: May 19, 2026 6:15–6:45 PM: Print drop off at the church: May 19

To compete in the PSRI Image Competition, your membership must be current and you have to log in at [psri.us](https://psri.us). For more information about the specific competition rules, visit the [competition page](#) on the website. There you will also find the forms to enter your photos.

PSRI is a Proud member of:



## Some IMPRESSIONS OPEN COMPETITION #4, MARCH 17, 2026



Photos by Bernadette van der Vliet

# Open Competition #4 Winning Images



Tara Marshall



Bernadette van der Vliet



Dave DeMarco



Tara Marshall



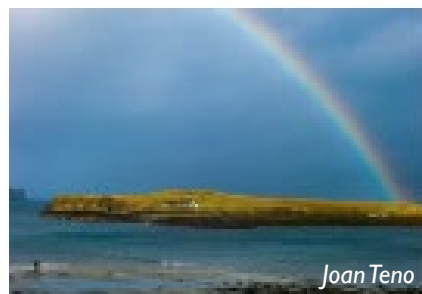
Tara Marshall



Lincoln Smith



Noreen Berthiaume



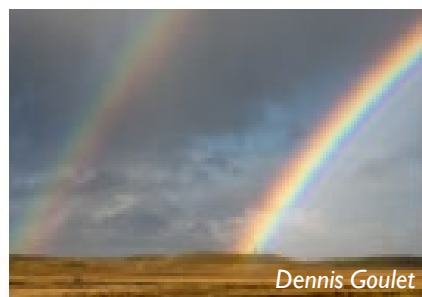
Joan Teno



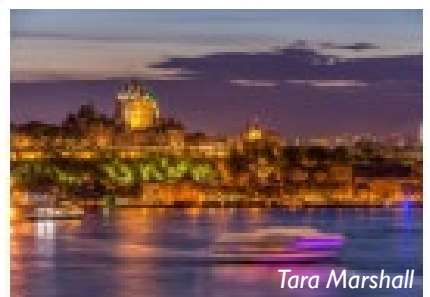
Doug Ray



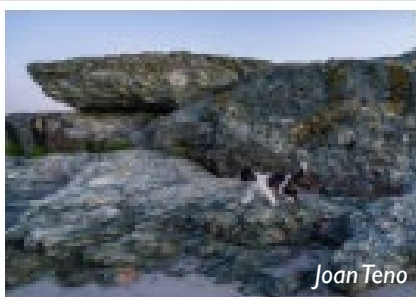
Tara Marshall



Dennis Goulet



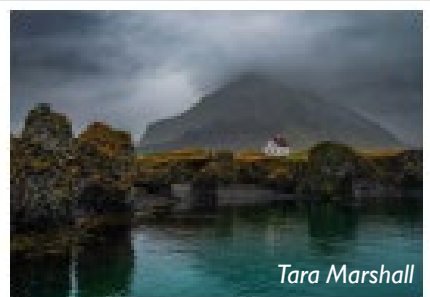
Tara Marshall



Joan Teno



Jeff Reynolds



Tara Marshall

To see the winning images in full size, [click here](#)

# FINAL PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

**By Bob Mattera** It has not been lost on me the last two years as President, of the long history of this Club. I have often said that 100 years is a long time for a photo club to exist, yet PSRI has pulled it off and is still going strong.

I have also been mindful that my term as president will partly close out the first century of our existence and that we all owe something of a debt to the many who have come and worked before us to put this club on the solid footing it is on today.

This Newsletter has had a regular column for roughly a year that is devoted to the concept of AI and how it affects photography. We have done this with an eye toward slowly introducing this new technology to those of you who might be reluctant to embrace it, and yet who might also benefit from using its unique abilities. And what of the next 100 years? Surely there is no way for us to know beyond the idea that what we marvel at today will be dwarfed by what follows in a century's time. Think about how our nascent aviation industry in 1927 would have considered the idea of a round-trip passenger flight to the far side of the moon.

Yet, through the next year and the 99 that come after that, I suspect that one aspect of the Club that will endure is the idea of people being together — sharing photographs, sharing life. And especially of people giving of themselves, selflessly. This has been and still is the cornerstone of what makes this Club what it is today, as I believe it will be in the years ahead.

One parting thought from me is that I hope we all can remember that in a world in which we are powerless to directly change very much of, the one thing we all have control over is ourselves. Ask yourself what you can do — how we can change ourselves to make the world a better place, and surely good things will happen with patience and in time.

## Westerly Museum of American Impressionism MEETUP



**By Lauren Lambert** The beautiful, new Westerly Museum of American Impressionism was the setting for a PSRI meetup on April 19th. Recently opened in October of 2025 by philanthropists and art collectors Cynthia and Thomas Sculco, this

impressive 20,000 square foot facility showcases the vivid colors and expressive brushwork characteristic of the American Impressionist movement of the 1880s–1920s. These works captured the light, color, and movement of iconic landscapes and everyday life in New



Photo by Lauren Lambert

England and the East Coast. The exhibitions were engaging, as we walked through the 11 curated galleries, discussing the paintings, and sometimes noticing familiar, well-known landscapes such as the little red fishing shack in Rockport, MA (also known as Motif #1).

After the museum, we enjoyed lunch and each other's company at the nearby Cooked Goose in Westerly. Some of us ventured into Watch Hill to take photos by the water but we didn't last long due to the strong winds. Instead, a few of us walked off our lunch at Wilcox Park, enjoying the beautifully landscaped grounds with its flowering trees, statues, and spring flowers.



Photo by Noreen Berthiaume

# THE PSYCHOLOGY OF MATTING PRINTS

**By Michael A. Di Stefano, APSA, HonNEC** Matting prints is not as simple as one would think. There are the physical properties of measuring, marking & cutting, but then there are the aesthetic properties of the choice of color of the mats. That's right, you don't always have to mat your prints with white mats. The galleries say you have to if you're going to show your images in either solo or group exhibitions at galleries. I've never received a competent explanation for why white mats are the only way to exhibit in galleries. So I Googled it, and here are some reasons: continuity & consistency, it concentrates focus on the image, it's a classic, professional & timeless museum-like look, and it works for most photography styles. I say that my photography is my expression of my art, and I want it to portray the way I feel it is best presented.

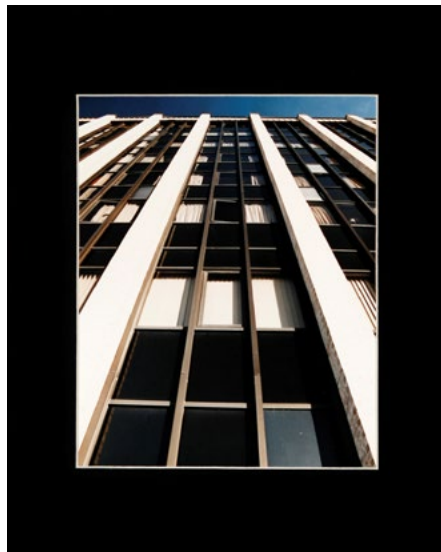
So, here is my "personal opinion" on how best to complement photographs within the framing of mats. Visual appeal may be subjective. You might not agree with what I'm going to express here, but just be open to the example images presented below.

First, there is the size/width of a mat made proportionally to the size of the photograph. This makes a statement to the viewer about how the photographer would like their image presented. Thin border mats will be subordinate and weak to the image itself, while a thick border mat will stand out as equal and supportive to the print.

Second is the tone of the photograph. For the basic choices there are: white, black, or some tone of gray. These three tones can be used on both color or B&W images. The tone affects how the viewer perceives the shadows and highlights of an image. Black mats accentuate the highlights or lighter portions and also make colors seem more saturated. Therefore, a black mat works well when the center of interest is light or the highlight of the

image, i.e., waterfalls, lighthouses & night/twilight images. If your image is a "low-key" style, then black mats will work most of the time.

Conversely, white mats accentuate the shadows or darker portions of a print and make colors seem less saturated in a print. White mats work well when the center of interest is dark or in the shadows of the image, i.e., portraits, beach scenes, & silhouettes. If your image is a "high-key" style, then white mats will work most of the time. See photos 1 & 2 for how black & white mats change the appearance of the same image.

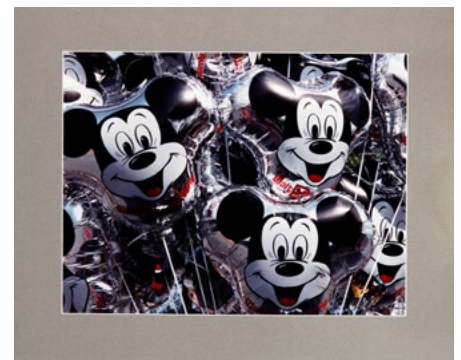


1



2

Grey is considered a neutral mat. It's the "safe," "middle of the road" choice when subjects of interest are neither light/highlights nor dark/shadows in a print. Gray mats work well when there is a balance of dark & light. Gray mats work when a white mat makes highlights in the image look dirty or not bright white, such as in winter snow scenes, or when black mats make darks look muddy or not pitch black. Cream or ivory is also considered a neutral mat and works well for sunsets or wildlife images. See photo 3.



3

Color mats are another way to affect how the viewer perceives the colors in the presented image. They can make a particular color in the subject stand out. Double color matting can make dual-color subjects stand out as well. But be warned — colored mats are subjective to the viewer and especially to judges. Color mats must be matched to the subject color exactly. A close match is never close enough and will hurt the image's presentation. The best way to use color in matting is with a subtle inset double mat. Here, a thin 1/8"–1/2" color border is placed next to the image, and the white, black, or neutral color mat is placed over the color mat and holds a majority of the mat border's weight. See photos 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8.

In closing, use tone/color techniques and effects safely and sparingly. "Subtleness has tremendous strength."



4



5



6



7



8

## PSRI FLASHBACK: Capturing Moments, Reviving Memories!

By Lincoln Smith. The author of this article was S. M. Gourse and it was published in the "In Focus" newsletter of the Camera Club of Providence, Volume 57: No. 2, November-December 1984, Our 57<sup>th</sup> Year.

### Members Prints Exhibited

Throughout the years I've seen hundreds of prints submitted in our competitions, and often I regretted the brief time available to examine them and looked forward to a more leisurely opportunity to see them again.

The revival of the Print Display Stand at our meetings is a gratifying idea, not only because it offers the members of our club the chance to appreciate the fine achievements of many of our print makers, but because it is also an incentive for our darkroom workers to know that their work will be before the public more often.

It may be of interest to know that the excellent display stand was built by a master craftsman, our own

Charlie Sears, about 6 or 8 years ago. At that time Charlie and his committee lugged the stand around to locations in the Providence area, to banks and libraries, and set up exhibits for the winners of our Annual Salon. I'm sure that their effort was instrumental in developing greater public interest in the club.

Renewing use of the display stand is one of President Reuel's innovations, and he deserves to be congratulated for the time and effort spent in making the exhibits possible. The work of Connie Villard and Al Houde was shown at the first and second meetings. Future displays are as follows: Nov. 27 – Julia Stevens, Dec. 11 – Simone Robitaille, Feb. 12 – Alan August and Feb. 26 – John Parfitt.

# Ask AI

**Bob:**

“Design a 4 week program for a member who wants to improve their composition and creativity. Offer sound practical advice up front, then provide weekly assignments, goals, and future learning ideas.”

**ChatGPT:**

That’s a strong prompt—clear, practical, and very “PSRI.” Here’s a clean, publish-ready response you can run verbatim:

## Ask AI: Designing a 4-Week Program to Improve Composition and Creativity

**Question:** Design a 4-week program for a member who wants to improve their composition and creativity. Offer sound, practical advice up front, then provide weekly assignments, goals, and future learning ideas.

**Answer:** Improving composition and creativity in photography is less about learning rules and more about learning how to see. The camera is rarely the limitation—our habits are. Most photographers fall into patterns: same angles, same subjects, same approach. Growth comes from deliberately breaking those patterns.

A few practical ideas to keep in mind before starting:

- Slow down. Good composition rarely happens in a rush. Spend time observing before you press the shutter.
- Move your feet. Small changes in position often make the biggest difference.
- Simplify. Strong images usually have fewer competing elements, not more.
- Shoot with intent. Ask yourself: *What is this photo about?* If you can’t answer that, the viewer won’t be able to either.
- Review your work honestly. Your growth will come as much from editing and reflecting as from shooting.

With that in mind, here is a structured 4-week program:

### Week 1: Seeing and Simplifying

**Goal:** Train your eye to recognize strong, simple compositions.

**Assignment:**

- Shoot at least 20 images where the subject is clearly defined and isolated.
- Use one lens or focal length only.
- Avoid cluttered scenes—actively remove distractions by reframing or changing position.

**Focus Areas:**

- Rule of thirds (use it, but don’t force it)
- Negative space
- Clean backgrounds

**End-of-Week Review:**

Select your best 3 images. Ask: Is the subject immediately clear? What could I remove?

### Week 2: Perspective and Movement

**Goal:** Break out of habitual shooting positions.

**Assignment:**

- Photograph 10 subjects from at least three different angles each (high, low, side, close, far).
- Avoid shooting at eye level unless it truly works best.

**Focus Areas:**

- Leading lines
- Foreground / midground / background layering
- Depth and dimension

**End-of-Week Review:**

Compare versions of the same subject. Which angle tells the story best—and why?

### Week 3: Light and Timing

**Goal:** Use light as a compositional tool, not just illumination.

**Assignment:**

- Shoot the same location or subject at two different times of day.
- Capture at least 15 images where light itself is a key part of the composition.

### Focus Areas:

- Direction of light (front, side, back)
- Shadows and contrast
- Golden hour vs. midday light

### End-of-Week Review:

Identify how light changed the mood or clarity of your images. Which light best served your intent?

### Week 4: Creativity and Personal Vision

Goal: Move beyond exercises and create with intent.

### Assignment:

- Produce a small series of 5–7 images around a theme (e.g., solitude, motion, color, routine, contrast).
- Plan at least part of the shoot in advance rather than reacting entirely in the moment.

### Focus Areas:

- Storytelling
- Consistency across images
- Emotional or conceptual impact

### End-of-Week Review:

Lay out your series. Does it feel connected? Does it say something beyond individual images?

### Looking Ahead: Continuing Growth

Start a long-term project (3–6 months) around a subject or theme that interests you.

Seek feedback regularly—from peers, mentors, or a club environment.

Study the work of photographers you admire, but ask *why* their images work.

Revisit your own images after time has passed—you will see them differently.

Most importantly, keep shooting with intention. Consistency matters more than intensity.

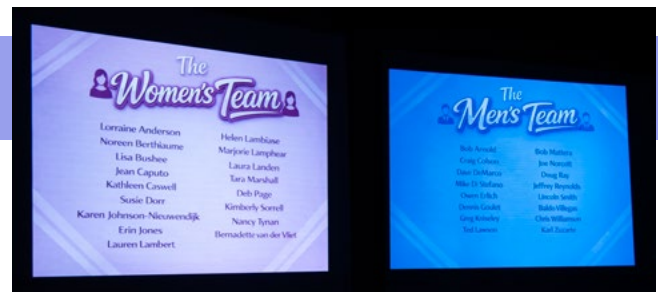
Creativity is not something you wait for—it is something you build through practice, reflection, and a willingness to experiment.

## Men vs Women Challenge

**By Tara Marshall** What an incredible night! Our first-ever Men vs Women Challenge turned out to be one of the best-attended in-person events we've had in a long time—and for good reason.

The evening was an absolute blast, filled with laughter, hooting and hollering, enthusiastic applause, and—just as encouraged—plenty of good-natured boing of the judges. Silvana Della Camera and David Marshak delivered a fantastic performance, combining thoughtful critique, humor, and engaging commentary as they worked their way through some truly outstanding images.

The quality of submissions was exceptional. Entries excelled not only in how well they matched their assigned categories, but also in technical execution—something that really highlights the depth of talent within our membership. In fact,



the judging was so close that only two ties needed to be broken—one going Silvana's way and the other David's. By the end of the night, my cheeks hurt from laughing so much!

And the final result... The women claimed victory this year with a score of 10 to 7!

I have no doubt this will light a fire under the men for next year—and you can be sure the women will be ready to defend their title!

Submitted photos and winning images [posted on the PSRI website](#).

Photos by Bernadette van der Vliet



# Giving Back Through Photography

## BLACK STORY TELLERS



Photo by Lorelei Ludovicz

**By Karen Johnson Nieuwendijk** Over the last six weeks, PSRI's Giving Back Through Photography group has been photographing Rhode Island Black Storytellers (RIBS) Legacy academy. This is a group of individuals who are learning to become effective storytellers. The group met from 11 a.m.–2 p.m. on Saturdays from March 14–April 18 culminating in two storytelling events.



Photo by Gene Whalen

The first, on April 28, featured United Church of Christ ministers who are storytellers. They told stories related to a daily devotional and included having the audience members write their own stories. May 26 will feature only the participants in the workshop.

Lorelei Ludovicz, Marjorie Lamphear, Gene Whalen, Janet Lawn and I were the photographers there to document the series. As any one of them could tell you, this was a lot of fun to do, and RIBS is a wonderful organization to work with. There was a lot of laughter and joy in the air which made it all a wonderful experience. The photographs are given to the organization to use for promotional purposes free of charge.

Giving Back Through Photography has been donating photography services for two years now, and it has served any nonprofit organization that requests our help. Some of the organizations besides RIBS that we have served have been the Pawtuxet River Association, the Ronald McDonald House, the Attleboro Museum of Art, and the Lakewood Baptist Church's Hunger Walk.

This year we hope to add the NEADS organization that trains and provides service dogs for people who have a disability.

We also have a '[Giving Back](#)' tab on our website and where organizations can find and fill out a request form for our help in documenting an event.

**If you are interested in getting involved with this group or know of a non-profit that could use our services, please contact me at [kejnie@gmail.com](mailto:kejnie@gmail.com)**



Photo by Marjorie Lamphear



Photo by Janet Lawn



Photo by Karen Johnson-Nieuwendijk



Photo by Lorelei Ludovicz

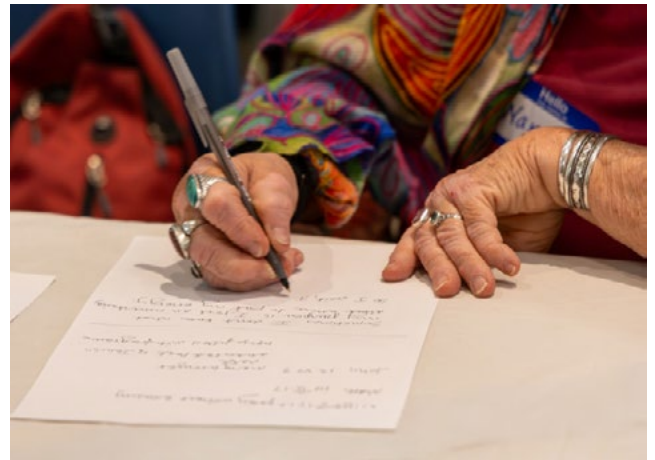


Photo by Janet Lawn



Photo by Karen Johnson-Nieuwendijk



Photo by Gene Whalen



Photo by Marjorie Lamphear



Photo by Janet Lawn

# 21st Annual RI COMMUNITY FOOD BANK BENEFIT CONCERT was a *HUGE SUCCESS*

**By Lincoln Smith** Lakewood Baptist Church hosted its 21st Annual Rhode Island Community Food Bank Benefit Concert, Palm Sunday, March 29th. This year's concert was dedicated in memory of Manny Alves who was a long-time member of Lakewood Baptist Church and who had a passion for helping people with food insecurity.

The first benefit concert, organized by Pastor Nancie Mooney and Lincoln Smith was held Palm Sunday night, April 13, 2003. Seven churches participated and 350 lbs. of food and \$1,165 was collected for the food bank.

Following Pastor Nancie's retirement, Lincoln continued putting the concerts together until 2019. Due to COVID concerts were not held from 2020–2022. Over the first 20 years of concerts, they raised \$52,014.46 for the Food Bank and 10,598 lbs. of food for Westbay Marketplace.

This year's event raised \$4,556 from the free will offering for the RI Community Food Bank and collected 1,020 lbs. of food which was delivered to Westbay Marketplace. Those participating included the Warwick Central Baptist Church Choir, Acoaxet Chapel Praise Team, Westport, MA., The Concordia Singers from Concordia Center for Spiritual Living, Woodbury Union Presbyterian Church Choir, Haven United Methodist Church, East Providence (Pastor Juhee Lee, Violin, Jay Baylon, Baritone, Lori Phillips, Soprano and Sugie Jung on the Piano), Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints RI Youth Choir (Abigail Barrus, Flute, Amelia Ferrell, Harp, Alysa Smith, Harp and Marni Leavitt on the Piano), Lakewood Baptist Church Choir, Pastor

Ron and Victoria Duguay, Lakewood Baptist Church and Pastor George Barclay, Norwood Baptist Church.

A huge thank you to Mike and Noreen for taking the pictures for me again this year.



Photos by  
Mike Di Stefano  
and  
Noreen Berthiaume

# PSRI OPEN HOUSE

**By Bernadette van der Vliet** PSRI welcomed many enthusiastic guests to its Open House on March 31st. It was a great success and worth repeating!

Members manned tables covering camera basics, Photoshop, Lightroom, image review, matting, printing, and Giving Back Through Photography. There were lively conversations and many questions regarding everything photography. A huge thank you to Bob Mattera for being the driving force behind the Open House and to everyone who volunteered their time and expertise to make the night such a great experience for all!



Photo by Meredith Albright



Photo by Bernadette van der Vliet



Photo by Meredith Albright



Photo by Bob Mattera



Photo by Bob Mattera



Photo by Bob Mattera



Photo by Bernadette van der Vliet



Photo by Bernadette van der Vliet



Photo by Meredith Albright



Photo by Bernadette van der Vliet



Photo by Meredith Albright



Photo by Bob Mattera

# Is Photography a Spiritual Exercise?

by Mary Doo

You are going to laugh, but these days many of the things I see or think about relate to photography. I remember Maria Zorn — a legend to those of us who knew her work. After she retired, she gave away her equipment, including her Nikon 200mm micro lens, to make a clean break. Whoever inherited that lens inherited something beyond its physical value — as it had spent years in the hands of an extraordinary macro photographer, and that kind of history is priceless. And yet even without her Nikon, Maria said she couldn't stop composing wherever she went. She did not deny that this habit seemed like a compulsion.

Photography, over time, seems to shape the way we see and the way we find meaning in ordinary moments.

A few weeks ago, at my Cape Cod church's Bible study group, we watched a talk by Beth Moore on the theme of "Walking with God." I'll admit I always suspected her to be ultra-conservative, but her words were genuinely inspiring. She spoke about how God loved us long before we were aware of it, whether we recognize it or not, and whether or not we reciprocate His love.

This made me think about how we pray to communicate with God. We often come across requests for prayers and intercession on Facebook or elsewhere.

So, if prayer matters to so many of us, how do we make it more meaningful and effective - not as a theological debate, but as a sincere and practical concern - the same way a photographer might ask how to make better images?

I asked my pastor this question during a recent potluck gathering: "How can we make our prayers more effective?"

He thought about it and said something like this: the extent of effectiveness depends on how much we understand God's will. I then asked, "How do we understand that?"

He responded that the most complete theological answer comes from reading the Bible.

Seriously, it reminded me of the answer often given to photographers who ask about a camera function: "Please read the manual." Excellent advice, no doubt - but my crease-free and immaculate-looking manual is close to two inches thick!

Reading is, of course, essential. But so is practice. I believe we should be able to find "best practices" that can make our prayers more effective. So I did some research in this area and tried to connect the effectiveness criteria to photography.

No, I am not trying to convert or preach, so please relax.

### Stillness



Many traditions point to stillness as the starting point of prayer - not merely silence, but an inner tranquility

that makes us genuinely receptive. The Psalms often speak of waiting on God. Contemplative practices across many faiths, even yoga, begin meditation by calming the restless mind.

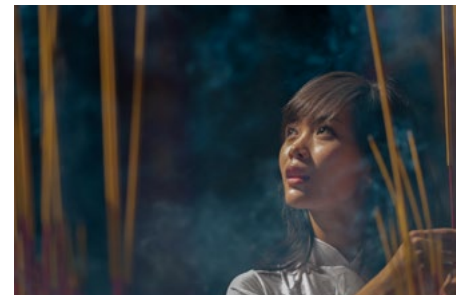
**“Sometimes focus is not seeing more. It is choosing less.”**

You might have heard Minor White's famous advice: "Be still with yourself until the object of your attention affirms your presence."

I believe this means calming our inner distractions and giving the subject time to acknowledge our presence. It is nice to record what is there, but allowing our subject to reveal what else is there, as we quiet our heart and mind, is doubly meaningful.

Stillness is not emptiness. It is preparation.

### Sincerity



Perhaps the most important quality in prayer is sincerity - speaking from the heart rather than repeating familiar words because they are expected. Most traditions emphasize that God is less interested in eloquence than in genuineness. The hymn "Search me, O God, and know my heart today..." has always moved me because of its earnestness.

In photography, authenticity matters more than theory or expensive equipment. Some of our most memorable images are not the

technically perfect ones, but the ones taken with genuine curiosity, sincerity, or sense of wonder. A slightly imperfect photograph made with real interest can resonate more deeply than something flawless but emotionally empty.

### Clarity and Focus



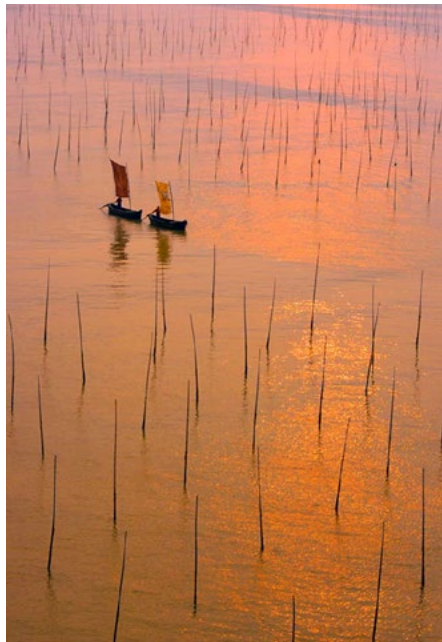
Thoughtful prayer should be specific. Many traditions encourage people to say clearly what they are asking for, subject to God's will, of course, and to avoid vague requests - such as wanting everything to be better in every way without clear direction. Such requests rarely bring clarity.

As you know, in photography, when we try to include everything in one frame, the result is usually confusion. It is even worse when we don't focus on any one subject - unless we are doing intentional camera movement.

Choosing one clear subject or purpose makes the image stronger. Also, instead of trying to photograph everything in the scene, you might focus on one mountain ridge, or even a single dried flower.

Sometimes focus is not seeing more. It is choosing less.

### Patience, Trust, and Waiting



In prayer, answers do not always arrive on our schedule. Many people of faith speak of learning to trust the timing - continuing to show up even when nothing seems to be happening.

Perhaps the darkest phase of faith that may test one's trust is when a persistent prayer does not receive a visible answer. In a recent church retreat, the speaker mentioned Psalm 88, which is often recognized as the darkest chapter in the Psalms. It expresses a deep, raw despair toward God, who seemed unresponsive to his cries and pleas.

Yet there is a profound irony. The psalmist continued to turn to God. He believed that if God was powerful enough to have allowed his terrible situation, he must be powerful enough to change it. This reveals a stubborn faith - the trust that God's silence does not mean the absence of God.

Sometimes life seems to "clip" our joy. However, as photographers, we know that even in dark areas (other than those accidentally shot with the lens cap still on), there is often hidden detail that can be recovered if we look

closely. We may need to denoise the image, but the information may still be there.

We cannot control the weather, the light, or the wildlife. But we can control our preparation, our presence, and our patience.

### Reflection, Humility, and Adjustment



Prayer, practiced seriously, tends to produce reflection - an honest look at ourselves, our intentions, and where we may need to grow. Humility is not self-deprecation; it is the willingness to see clearly and adjust.

Photography offers the same discipline. Reviewing our images gives us honest feedback: the horizon was tilted. The sharpness was in the wrong place. The background was too busy. The composition was mediocre.

Over time, those small corrections accumulate into something real.

### Intentionality and Action

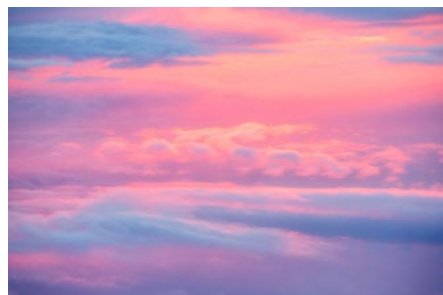


Prayer is not a passive activity. Many traditions emphasize that sincere intention should be followed by deliberate action - that we are participants, not just recipients.

In photography, we may hope for good weather and beautiful light, but we still have to set the alarm clock. We may hope for wildlife to appear, but we still have to charge the batteries and bring the appropriate lenses and memory cards. We may dream of meaningful images, but we still have to learn our craft and show up again and again.

Action is what turns intention into reality. When the light is right and the moment is unfolding, unless we press the shutter, the image will never materialize.

### Gratitude and Appreciation



Gratitude may be the most natural response to both prayer and photography - gratitude for the outcome, the chance to witness

beauty, for the patience to wait, for the lessons learned from mistakes, and for the moments that arrive unexpectedly.

I still remember early sunrise moments in the Canadian Rockies. The mountaintops were crowned with morning light, sometimes looking as if they were on fire. There were times when the scenes felt almost unreal, especially when the reflections were perfectly still, like enormous paintings. I felt deeply grateful simply to be there.

Photography constantly reminds us that we did not create the light, design the clouds, or arrange the sunrise. We simply showed up to enjoy them.

### Conclusion

Meaningful prayer and meaningful photography share many similarities. Both invite sincerity, clarity, patience, and humility, especially when nothing appears to be happening. We prepare, we wait, we adjust, and we do not give up.

Yet when we arrive with attention, patience, and a measure of humility, something remarkable may happen.

We are grateful.



## WE NEED YOU!

We want to hear from you! Submit a favorite photo, recap of a recent workshop or photo trip, spread the word about an upcoming workshop, or share your favorite tips and tricks. The PSRI newsletter is your space to connect and inspire — reach out to us to contribute to the next issue! Email submissions to [PSRI-newsletter@psri.us](mailto:PSRI-newsletter@psri.us)

## Member Exhibitions

### Renewal Resilience

In response to the uncertainty of our times, Art in the Atrium First U member artists are showing their artwork in an exhibit called "Renewal Resilience."

Come celebrate PSRI Members Bernadette van der Vliet, Susie Dorr, Greg Kniseley and more 34 other Art in the Atrium members and view their artwork with brief commentary at the May 21 opening reception, 5:30-7:30 PM, in partnership with Gallery Night Providence.

The opening features a special performance by a contingent from the Providence Resistance Chorus led by Mahima Kumara. On View: May 21-June 26, 2026. Hours: M-F 9 AM - 5 PM, Sundays 9 AM - 1 PM. Entrance is One Benevolent Street, Providence RI 02906.

For more info, visit [aitafirstu.org](http://aitafirstu.org)

ART IN THE ATRIUM FIRST U PRESENTS

# Renewal Resilience

How Artists Respond to the Uncertainty of Our Times

Opening Reception May 21, 2026, 5:30 - 7:30, Gallery Night Providence

May 21, 2026 - June 26, 2026; Mon - Fri 9 AM - 5 PM, Sun 9 AM - 1 PM

Entrance - One Benevolent Street, Providence RI 02906

Deberoh Thurber

Keith Prue

Michael Walczak

aitafirstu.org

Featuring a performance by a contingent from the Providence Resistance Chorus led by Mahima Kumara.



Photo by Marjorie Lamphear

# Alpacas

MEETUP

**By Lauren Lambert** It was a meetup full of smiles and laughter in South Kingstown as PSRI members, armed with cameras and bags of baby carrots, spent the morning feeding and interacting with ten beautiful alpacas at the Matunuck Alpaca Farm. Carla Davis, owner and manager of the farm, currently has five male and five females Huacaya "Teddy Bear" alpacas, a breed that is known for their thick, soft fleece. It was so much fun spending time with these inquisitive animals, each with their own special personality.



Photo by Noreen Berthiaume

Next, we continued on to the nearby Gentle Farm, owned by Pam Santos. This peaceful haven is home to donkeys, miniature horses, Nigerian dwarf goats, chickens, and rabbits. The name of the farm suits it perfectly as these are the most sweet, calm, and patient animals you'll ever meet!



Photo by Dave DeMarco

The day was made complete with lunch at the Mews Tavern in South Kingstown where great food and company was enjoyed.



Photo by Marjorie Lamphear



Photo by Janet Lawn



Photo by Lauren Lambert



Photo by Bernadette van der Vliet



Photo by Lauren Lambert



Photo by Marjorie Lamphear



Photo by Dave DeMarco



Photo by Bernadette van der Vliet



Photo by Lauren Lambert



Photo by Jean Caputo



Photo by Janet Lawn



Photo by Lorelei Ludovicz



Photo by Lauren Lambert



Photo by Lorelei Ludovicz



PSRI PHOTOGRAPHIC  
SOCIETY of  
RHODE ISLAND

# End of Year Banquet

Tuesday June 16, 2026, 6-10pm

The Safe House  
195 Old Forge Rd, 1st floor  
East Greenwich, RI 02818

6:00- 7:00 PM  
7:00- 8:00 PM  
8:00-10:00 PM

Cocktail Hour  
Buffet Dinner  
Award Ceremony,  
50/50 Raffle & Door Prizes

#### Dinner choices:

- Caesar Salad, Focaccia Bread
- Gemelli with Rose and Prosciutto
- Chicken Marsala, Baked Scrod
- Roasted Broccoli, Roasted Potatoes
- Coffee/Tea, Cookies & Brownies

Vegan, vegetarian, and gluten-free options are available.

Menu selections can be made at the event.

To indicate your preference in advance, please email Tara at [arat1031@aol.com](mailto:arat1031@aol.com).

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**Cost: \$45 per person** (incl. service fees and gratuity)

PayPal (preferred payment method): [treasurer@psri.org](mailto:treasurer@psri.org) (include PSRI EOY Banquet in the memo).

Check by Mail: send to Ted Lawson, 30 Burgess Road, Foster, RI 02825.

In-Person: pay by check or cash.

# Committee Chairs and Co-Chairs

**Communications:** Karen Johnson-Nieuwendijk [psri-communications@psri.us](mailto:psri-communications@psri.us)

**Digital Image Competition:** Noreen Berthiaume [digital@psri.us](mailto:digital@psri.us)

**Historian:** Lincoln Smith

**Giving Back:** Karen Johnson-Nieuwendijk

**Legal Counsel:** Ted Lawson

**Meetups:** Lauren Lambert [psri-fieldtrips@psri.us](mailto:psri-fieldtrips@psri.us)

**Membership:** Bernadette van der Vliet [psri-membership@psri.us](mailto:psri-membership@psri.us)

**Men vs Women Competition:** Tara Marshall

**Newsletter:** Bernadette van der Vliet [PSRI-newsletter@psri.us](mailto:PSRI-newsletter@psri.us)

**Nominating:** Lincoln Smith

**Print Competition:** Tara Marshall [psri-print@psri.us](mailto:psri-print@psri.us)

**Programming:** Sue Babin [psri-programs@psri.us](mailto:psri-programs@psri.us)

**PSA, NECCC and NECCC Digital Representative:** Mike Di Stefano

**Refreshments:** Jean Caputo and Doug Ray

**Slide Competition:** Mike Di Stefano

**Student Activities:** Mike Di Stefano [psri-studentactivities@psri.us](mailto:psri-studentactivities@psri.us)

**Website:** Dennis Goulet, Ian Chernasky, Tara Marshall, Bernadette van der Vliet, Chris Williamson, [admin-x234@psri.us](mailto:admin-x234@psri.us)

**Welcoming:** Doug Ray

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