In this issue - underlined items are links
January 5, zoom only 7:30

Featured Cover by Jim Lamb
(see makers description on page 6)

Notices and Coming Events

See the Calendar on our web site for latest updates or details.

Next Competition - Mon. Dec. 1, In-person & Zoom

Submission Rules – Members may enter a maximum of two projected images. On months with prints, a maximum of three images may be submitted as three prints or a combination of prints and (up to two) projected images.

Our meeting judge for January will be Greg Geren. In stating his philosophy, he says, "The impact of a picture is often more than just the sum of the components of the scene. The technical details are important, but not always necessary to convey the impact of the moment."

Categories for January - Besides the monthly categories of Mono and Color – the challenge categories will be Creative and Journalism projected.

Journalism Category

Images with informative content and emotional impact
• Reflecting the human presence in our world.
• The journalistic (story-telling) value of the image should receive priority over pictorial quality.
• Images that misrepresent the truth, such as those from events or activities arranged specifically for photography, or of subjects directed or hired for photography, are not eligible.
• The title should identify the activity (answer who, what, where, when and why) and complement the story as shown in the image and is restricted to 200 characters including spaces in this category.
Allowed editing techniques:
• Cropping, straightening and perspective correction.
• Removal or correction of elements added by the camera or lens, such as dust spots, noise, chromatic aberration and lens distortion.
• Global and selective adjustments such as brightness, hue, saturation and contrast to restore the appearance of the original scene. . . . MORE

Creative Category

Creative photography is producing an image through the use of imaginative skill or originality of thought including the altering of reality. No image should be eliminated from competition simply because it looks realistic, provided it shows originality of concept. Creative images may include modifications in the darkroom, on the computer, or in the camera, as well as unusual points of view, imaginative use of subject matter or lighting, or any other presentation that begins with the maker's photograph or a . . . MORE

Print Competitions Schedule

Prints will be judged every other month along with projected. For 2026, prints will be judged in . . .
Watch this space for months that will have prints

Special Interest Group Links below
(Click on any SIG title for detailed information)
Special Interest Group - Seeing in Sixes
Special Interest Group in Monochrome Photography
Special Interest Group in Photoshop
Special Interest Group - Novice Only
Special Interest Group - Bird Photography

2016 Journalism Projected

Monthly Hands-on Photo Editing Session *- register to attend – Check the Club Calendar for dates, usually the last Wednesday of the month 3:45 - 5:45 at the Saratoga Library. We'll edit photos you bring.* **How to Register**: *- Log-on to club website, Click event under "calendar"* Questions, email here

◄ **Bike Practice, Jim Katzman, Journalism Prints**

Both of my winning images were a result of being a part of 52 Frames – a website that gives a weekly challenge which forces me to get my camera out at least once a week. The challenges are not competitions, and they vary greatly from the challenge categories of our club. The emphasis is on creativity and good photography. The challenge was sports photography for this image with an extra challenge of doing a panning shot. I have practiced panning in the past. I use the "spray and pray" technique. Put the camera in burst mode at 20 frames/second, shoot a lot of images (spray) and pray you get some perfect shots where the action is in perfect focus, and the background is blurred because of moving the camera with a slow shutter speed. This is the only time I ever shoot in Shutter Priority mode (doing panning shots). I shot a little over 1000 images this way during the hour I was there and got about 20 perfect shots!

The tech info: Sony A9 camera, burst mode, f/7.1, shutter priority, 1/25 sec, ISO 100, using a Tamron 28-300 lens at 28 mm processed in Adobe Lightroom

85 Suns, Harlan Crowder, Creative Projected ▶

On August 21, 2017 we experienced a partial solar eclipse in Northern California. I didn't have the right photographic equipment for a direct image capture. I'd heard that you could make a small hole in a piece of paper and use it as a pinhole camera to project the eclipse image onto another piece of paper. I tried it out and it worked well. If it was successful for a single pinhole, I thought it would be interesting to try multiple pinholes. Our kitchen colander with 85 holes was perfect; I projected the image onto a piece of paper and photographed the result. I tidied it up in Photoshop and called it 85 SUNS.
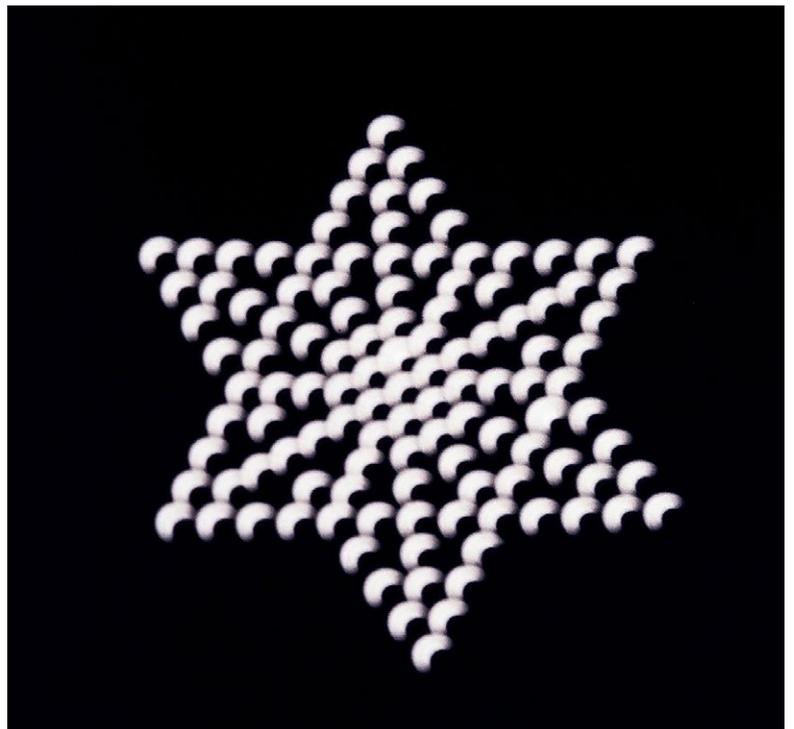
December Competition Winners Tell Us How They Made It
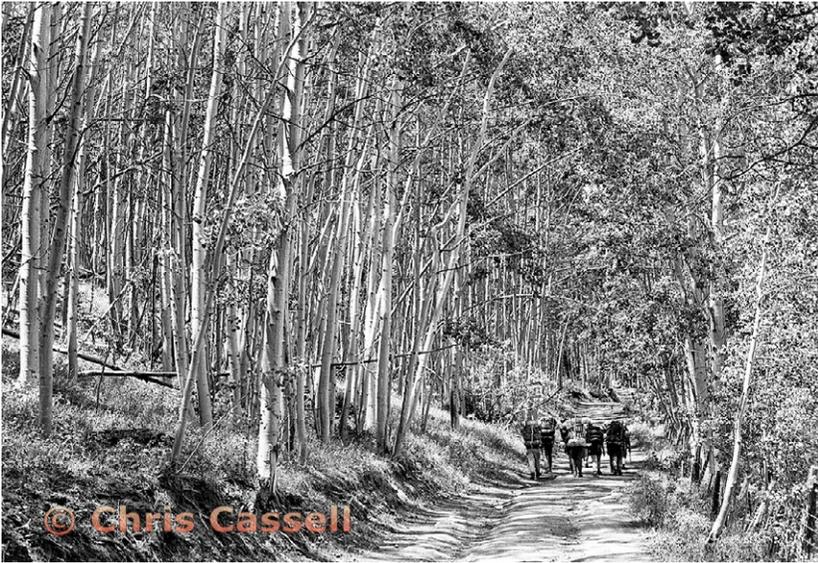
© Chris Cassell

◄ **Through the Aspens - on the Trail to Capitol Peak, CO, Chris Cassell, Monochrome= Prints**

This was the first memorable photo I ever took, and I'm surprised I've never entered it before at this club. As I was finishing the 1978 school year at the Univ. of Chicago I bought my first 35mm SLR, an Olympus OM-1. I proceeded to the summer graduate program at the Los Alamos Scientific Lab, NM, and went on several weekend trips into CO that summer with the Los Alamos Mountaineering Club (and, no, it's not true that they don't need flashlights because they glow in the dark). A quick grab shot here, trying not to let the group get too far ahead; Capitol Peak near Aspen is one of the CO "fourteeners". Shot on Ilford FP-4, a rather contrasty monochrome film that worked well here. My only lens at the time was 50mm; exposure recording lost but likely ~1/125sec & f/11 & possibly with a red filter. Scanned to digital years later, processed in Adobe Lightroom

Urbane Digger Bee asleep on the sepal of a sunflower. These bees rest on and around the sunflower during the night till the morning, Anar Daswani, Nature Projected ►

I visited Yolo County this year to check out the sunflower fields. I arrived past their prime bloom time, but there were still a few sunflowers remaining. One of them had all these bees sleeping on and around it. I used my macro lens and took a lot of photos. This was one of the photos that appealed to me

Sony a1; Sony 90 mm f2.8 lens; ISO 500; 90 mm, f11, 1/200

◄ **She leans into the light as if listening for what's next, Pam Perkins, Monochrome Projected**

This photo was taken on a movie set at a ranch in Santa Fe, New Mexico as part of the Santa Fe Workshop I attended in August called "The Western Portrait." The light coming in from the window offered an outstanding spot to seat the model. She adopted her own pose which was perfect for a winning black and white.

Leica SL3, 24-70 lens, 1/250 f2.8, iso 400   54mm.

007 Nightcap., Jim Katzman, Color Prints ►

Both of my winning images were a result of being a part of 52 Frames – a website that gives a weekly challenge which forces me to get my camera out at least once a week. The challenges are not competitions, and they vary greatly from the challenge categories of our club. The emphasis is on creativity and good photography.

The challenge for this image was a single light source; mine was a Neewer 9-inch soft light, an LED panel light. I shot in a completely dark room at night. I was going for a mood shot. This was a single image.

The tech info: Sony A7R4 camera with a Sony 24-70 lens at 37mm on a tripod, Aperture priority at f/11, bulb mode with a cable release, 13 second exposure processed in Adobe Lightroom.

◄ **Comet A6 Lemmon over the moonlit High Peaks in Pinnacles NP, Paul Dileanes, Color Projected**
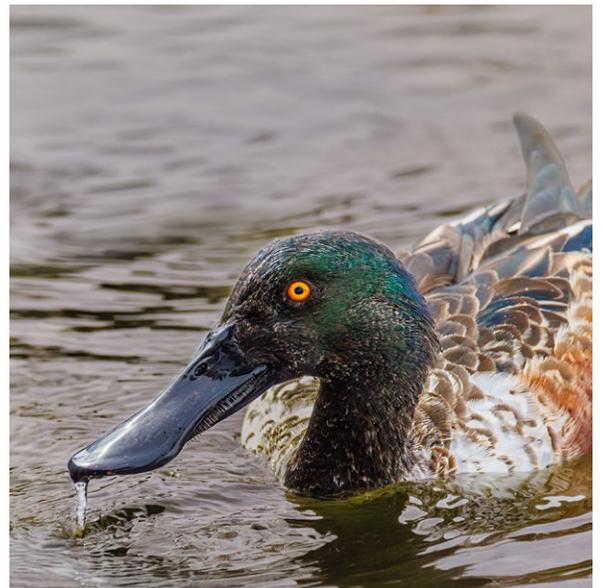
This was my second attempt at photographing Comet Lemmon in Pinnacles NP. During the first attempt the skies were less than ideal with some hazy clouds and the moon out. The night I took this shot, the sky was clear and the moon did not rise until later. The comet became visible about 90 minutes after sunset giving me less than 20 minutes to finalize my camera position and capture multiple images to stack. After the comet disappeared behind the ridge, I waited for the moon to rise and illuminate the High Peaks for my foreground shot. I stacked the sky images in Deep Sky Stacker. I then processed the stack twice, resulting in 2 images: one for the stars and one for the comet. By processing the comet separately, I was able to bring out more detail and structure in the ion tail. The two sky images were then blended with the foreground image.

Canon R5 with RF 100mm/2.8 Macro, Ioptron Skytracker pro, Comet 10x 30 sec at f 4.0, ISO 1600, FG Moonlight 30 sec., f4, ISO 800, Stacked in Deep Sky Stacker, processed in Photoshop

A Male Northern Shoveler (Spatula clypeata) as seen at Bayland Nature Preserve Palo Alto CA. Birds feed by straining small crustaceans though their amazing bills, Jim Lamb, Nature Prints ►

This photo was taken on October 25, 2025, the location is The Duck Pond at Baylands Nature preserve. The bird is a Male Northern Shoveler, that I have taken photos of before. This bird's primary food is small crustaceans which they strain through their bills. This is the best photo I have showing the baleen-like structure in their bill for filter feeding. The camera used is a Canon R5. The lens is a Canon 200 - 800 mm telephoto lens set to 800mm. Exposure was 1/4000 sec., f11, ISO 6400. The crop is about 40% of the image. Only minor adjustments were made to the image. Just out of view in the lower left corner is a concrete curb. I would have placed more space between the bill and the edge of the image, but removing items is not allowed in the Nature category. I opted to place the bill close to the edge of the image versus showing some of the concrete edge of the pond. I really liked the eye in this image.

© Tim Meadows

© Debbie Sy

© Irina Nekrasova

Kelly Zhang

© Charles Rath

© James Lamb

© Chris Cassell

© Paul Dileanis

All results and all images from a competition can be seen by clicking here.

Quiz - Which Pics are AI Generated?

by Eric Gray-

Look carefully and determine which images were created by AI - answers are on the last page of the magazine

1

2

3

4

5

6

by Eric Gray

Cost of AI credits on Images?

So that answer is clear as mud. Mostly because Adobe hasn't made it very clear or hasn't quite figured it out yet.

With your Lightroom/Photoshop subscription you get new credits each month on the anniversary day of when you first subscribed. So if you subscribed on May 12th you will be given credits to use. Then on June 12th you will get a new set of credits.

How many credits?

That is muddy as well. Pam Perkins gets 250 credits each month as does Jeffrey Pawlan but Mercury and several others report 500 credits per month. Yours truly has the pricey Adobe Creative Suite and I get 4000 credits monthly and for a price you too can buy more credits as needed. ***To check how many credits you have currently-*** Click on your Creative cloud icon and then click on the small blue pie chart in the upper right. It will open the box shown at bottom left of this page which shows current AI generation credits. BTW- any credits unused are lost, they don't roll over.

So each time I click an AI function it uses one credit?

Not so fast cowgirl - That depends on which AI tool you are using. Starting to feel a bit like you slipped in a cow pie? You are not alone. Below is a current best guess table of AI functions and the cost of a click for each. Good news, one is free for now.

Remove Tool is currently------------------------------------- Free
Generative Expand using crop tool ----------------------1 credit
Generative Fill ---1 credit
Generative Background ----------------------------------1 credit
Generative Upscale Firefly -------------------------5-10 credits
Generative Image from Text Firefly ---------------------1 credit
Generative Similar Firefly -------------------------------1 credit
Harmonize AI composite ------------------------------5 credits
Firefly Image 4 Ultra model -------------------------20 credits
Firefly Image 5 ---10 credits
Generative Fill/Partner Models in Photoshop see next column
or click [*Learn more about partner models*]
Generative Upscale, AI Denoise, AI Sharpen using Partner Models in Photoshop Varies see next column or click
[*Learn more about partner models*]

AI Premium Partner Tool ---------------------# Credits

Gemini 2.5 (Nano Banana) by Google -------------------10

Gemini 3 (with Nano Banana Pro) ---------------------- 40

Imagen 3 and Imagen 4 -------------------------------- 20

Chat GPT Image ------------------------------------- 60

FLUX Pro Tools ---10

FLUX1.1 Pro Ultra & Flux 2.0-------------------------- 20

Ideogram 3.0 ---20

Runway Gen-4 (720P)------------------------------- 20

Runway Frames & Runway Gen-4 (1080p)-------------- 40

Topaz Gigapixel/Sharpen/Denoise Up to 25 MP -------10
25 MP to 56 MP ------ 20

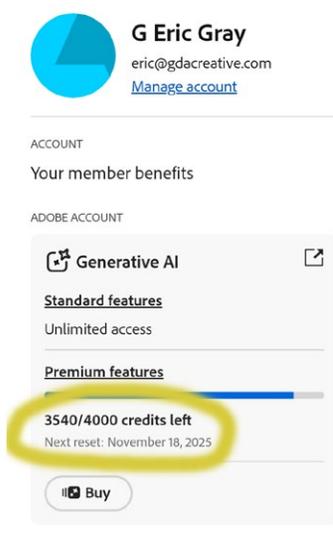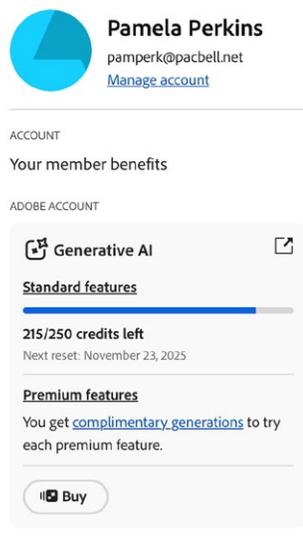**Topaz Labs (Bloom)1 MP to 9 MP ---------------------- 35**

So what the heck Adobe-

I think all of this is unnecessary confusion to your customers and loyal users like myself. Adobe needs to simplify and rework this credit and partner model system or everyone will look for something else.

Photographers use a bundled **Photoshop and Lightroom package** that isn't even listed on your list of credits in the FAQs.

Google search says- For Photography Plans

New Subscribers (after June 17, 2025): 20GB plan: 25 credits
1TB plan: 25 credits.

Existing (before June 17, 2025): 20GB plan: 100 credits.
1TB plan: 500 credits.

Click here to stumble through dozens of questions to find out how many credits are used - https://helpx.adobe.com/creative-cloud/apps/generative-ai/generative-credits-faq.html

Helpful video here - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T71

Pamela Perkins — pamperk@pacbell.net — Manage account
ACCOUNT — Your member benefits
ADOBE ACCOUNT
Generative AI
Standard features
215/250 credits left
Next reset: November 23, 2025
Premium features
You get complimentary generations to try each premium feature.
Buy
Sign out

G Eric Gray — eric@gdacreative.com — Manage account
ACCOUNT — Your member benefits
ADOBE ACCOUNT
Generative AI
Standard features
Unlimited access
Premium features
3540/4000 credits left
Next reset: November 18, 2025
Buy
Sign out

From https://www.boredpanda.com/antique-historical-pics/ *by Kornelija Viečaitė and Jonas Žvilius*

This image captures a moment during the black cat auditions held in Hollywood in 1961 for the film Tales of Terror, based on Edgar Allan Poe's stories. The photo was taken by LIFE magazine photographer Ralph Crane.

A total of 152 black cats were brought by their owners to audition for a role in the "The Black Cat" segment of the film.
The lead role had already been cast with a professional cat; the auditions were for seven understudy roles.
Cats with any white markings, such as a white nose or paws, were immediately disqualified.
The three people pictured are actors Peter Lorre (center) and Vincent Price (right), who starred in the film, along with model Charis Alura (left).

The answer is - they are all AI

by Eric Gray

Below are the prompts for the all AI images layout on page eight. Writing excellent prompts will be a job requirement for image makers in the future. The need for photographers will be greatly reduced as AI will do a pretty good job even with images that demand emotion and special angles.

1. *Create a black and white image, Yosemite's Half dome in winter*

2. *Create a black and white image, Yosemite's Half dome in fall*

3. *Create a low angle image of the Monterey boat harbor - AI failed to use the low-angle portion of the request at least on the first try.*

4. *Create an image of the Golden Gate from the Marin Hills*

5. *Create a black and white image of Levi Stadium*

6. *Create a black and white image of a five year old girl looking out a window*

What changes will AI create for Photographers - Yikes
Not just photographers but everyone that has a job will be affected. The former CEO at Google believes the vast majority of programmers and many other jobs will be replaced in less than one year. https://www.youtube.com/ But back to the photography industry - my somewhat educated guess would say -

• Product photographers will be reduced by 90%

• Stock photos will not be a thing in three years

• Current cost of a high-end Nano Banana image is less than 32 cents so why take an image when AI will provide

• AI will be used by photographers to help create concepts that the public will buy but AI only images will outsell them

• Phones with cameras will access AI to outperform expensive cameras and lenses and camera sales will crater.

Great Photography Articles/Videos

AI Effect on Camera Sales - https://www.google.com/search?q=AI+on+phones+will+affect+camera+sales
10 Photo Mistakes- https://fstoppers.com/education/10-silent-mistakes-wrecking-your-images-and-how-fix-them-718871
Nano Overtakes Chat GBT - https://www.techspot.com/news/110455-found-8-nano-banana-pro-images-show-google.html
Did Smart Phones Kill Cameras - https://fstoppers.com/mobile/did-smartphones-kill-camera-industry-vivo-responds-705191

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