LGSCC magazine Los Gatos - Saratoga Camera Club

losgatos-saratogacameraclub.org

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Notices and Coming Events

See the <u>Calendar</u> on our web site for latest updates or details.

Next Competition - Mon. Oct. 6, Zoom & In-Person

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 October will be Jane Postiglione. In stating her philosophy, she says, "As a Photographer, I believe it is important to consciously select visually interesting subject matter with appealing compositional elements, shoot at the best time of day to portray the image, use the best technical parameters to capture the image and tell the subject's story, Her website - https://photographybypost.com

Categories for October- Besides the monthly categories of Mono and Color – the challenge categories will be Travel 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, 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. MORE

Travel Category

A Travel image is a portrayal of the real world we live in, as it is found naturally. There are no geographic limitations. Content guidance:

- 1. If the image is predominantly or exclusively a land-, sea or cityscape, these "scapes" must include characteristic, distinctive and recognizable physical features, although it is not necessary that the image identify the exact location.
- 2. Images that predominantly or exclusively depict people and their activities must illustrate a distinctive culture of a country, region, or continent.
- 3. Images that predominately or exclusively depict animal populations are allowed, if the animals are in their native environment and are characteristic of that . . . MORE

Print Competitions Schedule

Prints will be judged every other month along with projected. For 2025, prints will be judged in:

December - Journalism, Nature, Color, Monochrome

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



2022 Travel 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.

How to Register: - Log-on to the club website, Click on the event under "calendar" Questions, email <u>here</u>

Member Biography - Rick Whitacre, Joined 01/2013

When I retired in 2008, my wife and I started traveling more and I wanted to capture images of our trips. Unlike a lot of our members, I took very few images when younger, so all this was new to me. Thank goodness I started in the digital age because I never would have had the patience (or discipline) to learn with film. A friend helped me pick my first camera and loaned me a couple of books to read on the way to New Zealand. By the time I got back, I was hooked!

"The Club has been a great place to learn, socialize, and get valuable feedback during competitions"



I took several classes at West Valley College to learn the basics. While I tried all types of photography, I was drawn quickly to landscapes and a little later to nightscapes. From there, I started chasing eclipses, meteor showers, comets, auroras, and more recently Deepscapes. I love being out in the wilderness in the middle of the night trying to make technically complex, but visually compelling images.

I have been a member of LGSCC since about 2013 and have served as President, Print VP, Projected VP, Webmaster, and various assistant roles. The Club has been a great place to learn, socialize, and get valuable feedback during competitions. I do a yearly night photography workshop in Yosemite with The Ansel Adams Gallery.

Website: www.whitacrephotography.net

Flickr: https://flic.kr/ps/uFQvd

Workshop: https://www.anseladams.com/products/photographing-nightscapes-in-yosemite







September Competition Winners Tell Us How They Made It



■ Ibex Dunes Blue Hour, Paul Dileanes, Color Projected

Ibex Dunes is located in an isolated corner of the southern part of Death Valley NP. It is a 1.3 mile hike from the nearest jeep road. Most of the time I visit these dunes I am the only person there. On this particular March morning the wind was blowing very strong, so strong that my footprints disappeared in a matter of minutes. Setting up a tripod was out of the question. The blowing sand and early blue hour light created a soft monochromatic atmosphere that I personally found captivating. Even at a shutter speed of 1/200 the moving sand softened the texture and details of the dunes while also creating a misty look around the foreground elements.

Technical Details:

Canon R10 with RF-S 18-150 lens (129mm) 1/200 sec. f/8, ISO 2000

Dune photography Tip: When photographing in sandstorm conditions, protect your gear. My gear survived, but I was picking sand out of my teeth for several days.

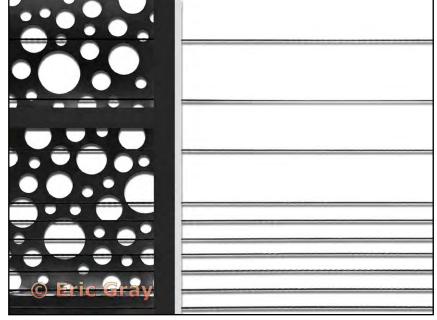
Corporate Railing - From the series *Photos* made to be touched. Please touch, Eric Gray, Creative Print

On my way into Valley Fair to buy pants, I noticed this panel in the parking garage. It had large holes in it and cables to separate pedestrians from walking to their deaths three stories down.

The blacks in this image are raised in relief and that makes the whites appear slightly debossed.

Objects with textures or linear edges make the best subjects for my photos made to be touched series and I am constantly on the lookout for new images that fit the bill. If you see something that might meet my criteria send me a location and detailed description.

Shot on an Apple iPhone 12, f/1.6, 1/318 sec., ISO 32, focal length 4mm - these *specs are weird but true*.



September Competition Winners Tell Us How They Made It (continued)



◀ A fledged tree swallow is fed by a parent, Charles Rath, Nature Projected

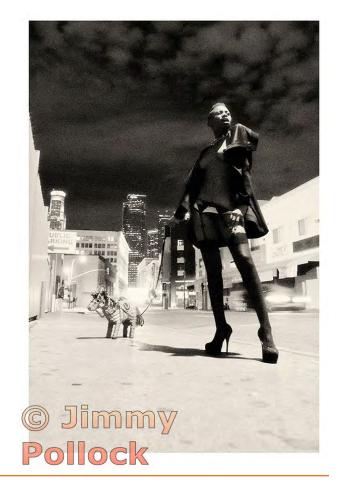
What appeared to be a lone tree swallow on a fence became a flurry of action as another tree swallow hovered over it. The capture looked promising but what was really going on took some research to understand. The full sequence captured followed the fence sitting tree swallow watch and respond to the parent. The research found that tree swallows only feed a fledged chick for a brief period of around 3 days making this capture a rare moment in the life of a tree swallow. The fledgling needs to learn fast, joining the flock of tree swallows flying low, at high speeds, over the marsh picking off insects to eat. For a stationary bird on a fence, the fast shutter speed could have been slower but was no match for the hovering adult tree swallow swooping in to deliver a meal. In the end the motion blur captures how it felt while making this image.

The capture was made with a Sony A1 and Tamron AO67 50-400mm @400mm f/6.3, 1/2000s, ISO 1250.

Vel Walking Her Pinata, Jimmy Pollock, Monochrome Print

This was shot very late at night Downtown LA. Vel is fantastic to work with and when I told her "lingerie and pinata" she said she was all in! There are 3 images from this shoot that are popular but this is the one that tells the story. We were pretty much left alone though one passer-by couldn't believe what he saw, shook his head, and kept moving along.

I shot it with my Nikon D7100 with a Nikkor 17-35, no flash, just ambient light - love those street lights. Edited in PS and Nik. Printed on Epson Smooth Pearl.



September Competition Winners Tell Us How They Made It (continued)



■ Boatman, Myanmar — Fishermen on Inle Lake have developed a distinctive one leg rowing style, Harlan Crowder, Travel Print

Inle Lake is a 50 square mile body of water in central Myanmar. Large sections of the lake are covered by tall reeds and floating plants. Local fishermen have developed a distinctive one leg rowing style that allows them to stand and see beyond the vegetation as they navigate the lake. I was crossing the lake in a fast motorized skiff when I spotted this fisherman nicely framed by his boat, the vegetation, and the nice cloudy sky. I knew it might make a good photo but the difference in speed was a challenge. One shot was all I got. Luck favors the prepared.

Olympus E-M5, Lumix G Vario 12-35/2.8, ISO 200, 28mm (56mm FFE), f/9.0, 1/100 sec with post-processing in Lightroom.

Parking Garage/Aquarium, Eric Gray, Creative Projected ▶

On my way back to the car after shopping at Valley Fair, I noticed these open panels with thick wire cables in the parking garage wall. I could see through the open holes that showed the ramp headed down from an upper floor. At first I wondered if those cables would be strong enough to stop a car from crashing over the barrier, near my parking space.

© Eric Gray

My second thought was it would be

fun if these panels had images hanging in them. One step further - I imagined those large panels could be aquarium tanks. I dropped photos from various trips to area aquariums into my Photoshop document and adjusted blacks and highlights in Camera RAW.

Shot on an Apple iPhone 12, f/1.6, 1/309 sec., ISO 32, focal length 4mm - these specs seem weird but are true.

September Competition Winners Tell Us How They Made It (continued)



■ Motel, Jimmy Pollock, Travel Projected

I found this motel in Oakland adjacent to a house I was shooting that had some interesting clothes hanging out to dry (may submit that pic sometime - ha!). I really liked the sign and the palm trees which made it seem like nothing had really changed over the years. And, that the sun was somewhat aimed into the lens back-lighting the motel sign really made it for me.

I shot it with a Yashica T4 35mm point and shoot film camera. The lens is a Carl Zeiss Tessar fixed lens. Used Ektar 100 film, scanned with very little editing - wanted to keep the sun flare.

San Francisco High-Rises, Ed Stein, Monochrome Projected

While on a walking tour of San Francisco some years ago, I came across this view of Columbus Tower (also known as the Sentinel building), apparently next to, and the same height as, the Transamerica Pyramid. In fact, the Transamerica Pyramid is about three blocks further south on Columbus Avenue which is obscured by the older tower at this angle. The difference in the number of stories of the two buildings is the clue to this optical illusion. With oncoming traffic stopped, the viewer's eye is led by the crosswalk directly into the scene.

The image was cropped in from the sides and converted to monochrome in Lightroom. Photoshop was then used to remove some distractions followed by bringing out shadow detail at the restaurant entrance with Silver Efex Pro. Lightroom sky masking and adjustments were then used to remove halos where the edges of the buildings meet the sky.

It's noteworthy that the old Columbus Tower is now home to Francis Ford Coppola's American Zoetrope Studio and Café Zoetrope.

Canon PowerShot G9, (35mm equivalent), 1/640th sec at f/4.0, ISO 100



September Second Place Competition Winners

















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

Program - Branches in Time: A Photographic Study of the Bristlecone Pine

by Tim Aston Program link https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83867887467?pwd=Z5kf0b2Gl2AxeSIcpsxtgWXH8bzQag.1

September 29, 2025 - Club member Tim Aston will present a in-depth look at techniques he uses to capture Bristlecone Pines. In this program, Tim will discuss his understanding of light and subjects in the Ancient Bristlecone Pine Forest. He'll go into detail on several images that required repeat visits to achieve, as well as images where he used previous experience to make an impactful image on the fly. Tim offers books, prints, and classes customized to student learning goals. email: tim@astonmyerphotography.com website: astonmyerphotography.com website: <a href="mailto:astonmyerph

email: tim@astonmyerpnotograpny.com website: astonmyerpnotograpny.com



Bristled Forest Floor



Octopus Eye



Sunning Mermaid

AI and You

by Eric Gray, the information below is meant to be educational about how AI can and does effect images in post-processing. This is the third of several articles I am developing on the ever changing world of AI in Photography. Please send me your comments/opinions on this topic and I will endeavor to include in upcoming articles. See some comments below right.

What are the benefits of AI camera systems? from https://shotkit.com/ai-camera/

AI cameras enhance photography by automating complex tasks and introducing new capabilities. They can recognize and track objects, adjust settings based on the scene, and improve image quality through noise reduction and enhanced sharpness. AI cameras also offer advanced features like portrait mode for professional-looking bokeh effects, and super-resolution for enhanced detail. (*Ed. note - so AI is in nearly all new cameras, see if yours is on the incomplete list below*)

They can even simulate lighting conditions and apply artistic effects, making it easier to capture high-quality images. These features make AI cameras a powerful and exciting tool for both professional photographers and casual users.

Sony Alpha a7R V: Sony's Alpha series is renowned for its high-quality mirrorless cameras, and the A7R V has been packed with some serious AI magic. It boasts AI-powered autofocus that can track subjects with remarkable precision, even in challenging lighting conditions. You'll never miss a moment with this one.

Nikon Z8: Nikon enthusiasts won't be disappointed with the recently-released Z8. This mirrorless camera utilizes AI algorithms to optimize its autofocus performance, allowing for fast and precise subject tracking.

Canon EOS R5: Canon's flagship mirrorless camera, the EOS R5, combines impressive image quality with AI capabilities. It features AI-based subject recognition, which helps it identify and track people, animals, and even birds. Plus, its advanced autofocus system takes advantage of deep learning technology for superb performance.

Fujifilm X-T4: Fujifilm's X-T4 brings together the charm of this brand's famously retro-styled cameras with modern AI enhancements. It employs intelligent autofocus algorithms that can detect and track subjects with remarkable accuracy. This camera also incorporates face and eye detection technology to ensure sharp portraits every time.

Panasonic Lumix GH5: The Lumix GH5 from Panasonic is a favorite among videographers, and it incorporates AI features to take your video recording to the next level. With AI-based object recognition, it can track moving subjects seamlessly, ensuring smooth footage.

Sony ZV-E1: The latest Sony full-frame mirrorless camera for vloggers is equipped with an AI processing unit for framing stabilization, subject recognition and more.

These are just a handful of examples, but the world of AI cameras is pretty much spreading everywhere. So keep your eyes peeled for these features in any new camera releases.

By Rick Tavan - You asked for thoughts on AI in photography: This depends on the mission of a photograph. Usually choose just one from this list, some will fall into multiple categories:

- 1. Selling one's own art to the public AI should be allowed, no holds barred. If they buy it, it's good. (Don't pass off faked journalism as art, though!)
- 2. Selling art on assignment to a client AI is fine if and to the extent that the client allows it. The client always deserves to know.
- 3. Journalism AI should be allowed unless it changes the journalistic message. Which is likely to happen in many cases, so I hope its use is pursued cautiously. It's a great way to find the best of 100 related images. It's larcenous to change the head of a subject. (The Lincoln pic below was a portrait, probably category 2, OK. The Stalin pic had clear journalistic intent and was fraudulent.)
- 4. Submitting to a competition Every competition sponsor will have its own rules or will adopt or adapt the rules of another organization. They will be inconsistent and all over the place. Love 'em, live with 'em, or leave 'em.
- 5. Personal satisfaction, sharing with friends, giving away to the public AI is allowed, no holds barred, no need or way to enforce any limitation. However, AI modification of images that are or imply journalism is becoming the Fourth Degree of Falsehood, i.e. "Lies, Damn Lies, Statistics, and Photography."
- 6. Scientific inquiry AI is obviously allowed, often essential, provided the user clearly defines its use and impact.

And, as pointed out in previous article - computational photography, especially with emerging cell phones, will make all of the above much harder to enforce. Sigh..

Lincoln's head added to someone else and Stalin removed undesirables





A Case for AI

by Alex Cooke, fstoppers.com (Ed. Note - not all of these techniques are currently allowed in some competition categories)

7 AI Tools Every Photographer Should Actually Be Using

The photography world is buzzing with AI talk, but let's cut through the noise. While everyone's debating whether AI will replace photographers, smart professionals are quietly using artificial intelligence to streamline their workflows and deliver better results to clients. These aren't gimmicky features or experimental tools that might work someday. These are practical AI applications that are already saving photographers hours of work.

Effortless Subject and Sky Masking

Gone are the days of spending twenty minutes carefully tracing around a subject with the pen tool. Modern AI masking tools can identify and select complex subjects, backgrounds, and skies with remarkable accuracy in seconds. Lightroom's AI masking capabilities deserve special recognition for transforming the basic editing workflow in ways that many photographers are still discovering. The People, Objects, and Sky masking options use machine learning to identify subjects within your raw files, allowing for targeted adjustments without ever leaving your catalog. Portrait photographers can now isolate subjects for skin tone adjustments, eye brightening, or background darkening with a single click. The Sky selection tool has revolutionized landscape photography workflows.

Advanced Noise Reduction That Preserves Detail

High-ISO photography has always been a compromise between capturing the moment and accepting image quality degradation. AI noise reduction tools have fundamentally changed this equation by learning to distinguish between actual image detail and unwanted noise patterns. Topaz DeNoise AI and DeepPRIME use machine learning algorithms trained on millions of images to understand what constitutes legitimate texture versus digital noise. These tools analyze pixel patterns at a microscopic level, making intelligent decisions about what constitutes signal versus noise based on context and surrounding image information.

AI-Powered Portrait Retouching for Natural Results

Portrait retouching has evolved beyond simple blemish removal to include sophisticated skin smoothing, teeth whitening, and eye enhancement that maintains a natural appearance. Tools like PortraitPro and the neural filters in Photoshop can automatically detect facial features and apply adjustments that would typically require skilled manual work. The AI understands facial anatomy well enough to enhance features while preserving the subject's natural character, avoiding the over-processed look that plagued earlier automated retouching attempts.

Generative Fill and Intelligent Object Removal

Perhaps the most revolutionary development in recent AI tools is generative fill technology, which can seamlessly remove unwanted objects or extend image borders by creating new, contextually appropriate content. Adobe's Generative Fill feature in Photoshop has transformed how photographers approach composition cleanup and creative extension. Instead of complex cloning and healing workflows, photographers can simply select an unwanted element and watch AI generate realistic replacement content. The technology analyzes surrounding pixels, understands spatial relationships, and creates content that matches lighting conditions, perspective, and visual style of the original image.

The ethical considerations around generative fill deserve serious attention from the photography community. While removing temporary distractions or technical imperfections falls within traditional standards, adding elements that weren't present during capture enters different territory that challenges conventional notions of photographic truth.

Conceptualizing and Planning Photoshoot Ideas

The process works particularly well for commercial projects where clients need to visualize concepts before approval. Instead of expensive test shoots or elaborate presentations, photographers can generate dozens of conceptual images to explore different approaches to lighting, composition, and styling within hours rather than days. The key is using AI as a starting point for human creativity rather than a replacement for original vision, treating the generated images as sophisticated mood boards rather than final artistic statements.

These AI applications aren't replacing photography skills or creative vision. Instead, they're eliminating time-consuming technical tasks that prevent photographers from focusing on what matters most: creating compelling images. (entire article here)



Image by Irina Nekrasova

from Eric Gray

Six club members gathered to explore Garrapata State Park on Sept. 25 and we also took a few photos. Images are seen on this page and many others can be seen in a gallery on the club website. Navigate to: Organization > Galleries > Field Trips > Field Trips 2025 > Garrapata State Park Coastal Photography Folder

Garrapata is a state park of California, located on California State Route 1 - 6.7 miles south of Carmel-by-the-Sea on the Monterey coast. It has two miles of beachfront with interesting rock formations. Also, coastal hiking across the road in a canyon forested by redwoods and a short hikes throughout.



Image by Eric Gray



Image by Chris Cassell





Hoodoo cliff erosion on Highway 1 near the park by Eric Gray



from Charles Rath

Seven club members gathered to view the return of the black Skimmers to South San Francisco Bay and we also took a few photos, some are seen on this page and 28 images can be seen in a gallery on the club website. Here skimmersfieldtripgallery

Black Skimmers are non-native to the region and have found their way to Northern California. Their numbers have grown from a single pair observed in 2004. The colony currently is between 50 and 100 birds.

Gallery can be viewed by members.

Image by Rick Tavan



Image by Jim Lamb



Image by Jeffrey Balfus



Image by Alan Levenson



Image by Charles Rath

Your Next Camera is a Phone?



Images from Apple.com

from Eric Gray

The iPhone 17 Pro is here and it has big possibilities. Of course I will reserve final judgment till the orange one I ordered is in my hands for testing as a go-to, good quality image camera.

My expectations are many.

Number one, I am hoping for better resolution and a lot less visual pixelation when an image is blown up. A 56% larger square sensor should help.

Number two, computational photography improvements. Refinements to final images after an automatic series of 7-11 images are taken and combined to create one best image.



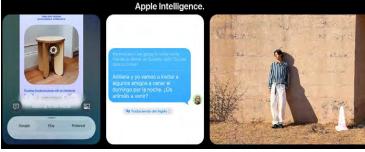
Now that looks familiar - A more natural hand position for photographers

Number three, 4x & 8x optical zoom. I am looking for excellent image quality not just AI tricks. BTW - 4x is 48MP but 8x is 12MP.

Number four, besides the cameras and lenses, I am looking forward to practical uses of AI(Apple Intelligence) to translate voice & text

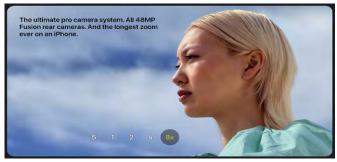
or review a snapshot and have text or siri quickly tell me what it is and where and . . .

Number five, camera RAW images. Since I have not owned a Pro iPhone before, this will be a change offering more color, shadow, highlights and post processing capabilities to an always with me camera.



Visual Intelligence - Live Translations -Search, ask questions Auto text translate, about screen content auto voice translate

Editing Intelligence - tap to remove distractions



Enables 12MP optical-quality 8x Telephoto: 200 mm, f/2.8 aperture, Hybrid Focus Pixels, 3D sensor-shift optical image stabilization and autofocus, tetraprism design

Iconic Photo Back Story



Prototype Production: The Terex 33-19 Titan was a single prototype unit; the high cost and limited market demand prevented it from entering full production. Source - u/rockisti / Via reddit.com

from Google Gemini AI

The Terex 33-19 "Titan" was a prototype mining haul truck, developed by General Motors' Terex division in 1973. It was a massive, 350-ton capacity truck, holding the record for the world's largest for 25 years until it was surpassed in the late 1990s. Powered by a diesel-electric drivetrain and an EMD locomotive engine, it was used at mines in California and British Columbia before its retirement in 1991. Today, the sole prototype serves as a public display and tourist attraction in Sparwood, British Columbia.

more from Equipment Journal

Planned in the late 1960s and built in the London, Ontario, General Motors plant, this 350-ton capacity rear dump hauler rolled out of the factory in June 1974. Weighing in at 260 tons empty, 20 metres in length and 8 metres wide, it was quite the haul truck in the era.

This diesel-electric drive rear dump hauler was powered by a 16-cylinder EMD locomotive engine rated at 2,475 kW, which in turn drove an alternator supplying rectified current to the four drive motors located in the rear axle housing.

Initially leased to Kaiser Steel Corp., the Terex Titan went into service for three years at their Eagle Mountain iron ore operation in California. In 1978, it was relocated to their large-scale coal mining operation in the Kootenay region of British Columbia where it remained in service until 1991. By 1993, the Titan was in danger of being scrapped.

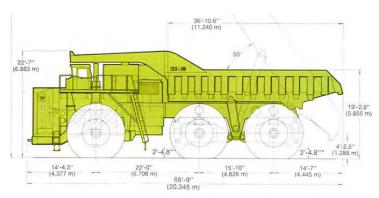


A small Chevrolet LUV pickup truck looks like a toy in the bed of the Terex 33-19 dump truck. Source - u/mohammadali_mak_2004 / Via reddit.com

Due to the generosity of the Elkview Coal Corporation and citizen volunteers that are proud of their coal mining heritage, the Titan was disassembled and moved to its current display location on Highway 3 in Sparwood, B.C. If you're heading by, it's well worth the stop to see this massive one-of-a-kind Canadian built hauler. Many thanks, to those who had the foresight to preserve it.

The Historical Construction Equipment Association 2024 events include Wheels & Tracks, held June 8-9, and the 'Last Blast' event on October 19. Both events are held at the Simcoe County Museum, near Barrie, Ontario. To see more than 60 pieces of vintage construction equipment in action be sure to attend.

HCEA Canada is a proud Heritage Partner of the Simcoe County Museum. For more information, visit https://doi.org/10.1007/j.jc/



AI or Real?

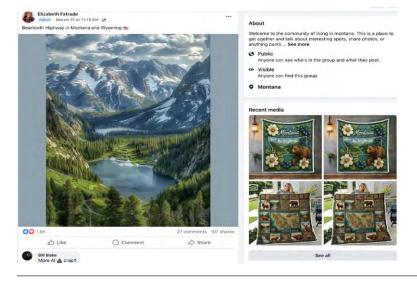
Montana photographer Steve Leitner warns of impact of artificial intelligence

From https://www.ktvq.com/news/local-news/ai-or-real



Photo by: AI Image/Google Gemini

This isn't a real image of a Montana landscape, but instead was generated by MTN using Google's AI image generator, Gemini. The prompt typed in was, "Create a realistic image that looks like a photograph of somewhere in Montana."



MTN (mtmmontana.com) found multiple AI-generated images that were posted to represent real photographs flooding several Montana-themed Facebook groups, like Living in Montana, I Love Montana, and Pictures of Montana. All groups have thousands of members, and images that appeared to be generated by AI usually received tens of hundreds of reactions and comments complementing the scenery.

Great Photography Articles/Videos

 $The \ Human \ Touch - \underline{https://autogpt.net/why-human-touched-photo-editing-still-matters/} i Phone \ 17 \ Teardown - \underline{https://appleinsider.com/articles/25/09/24/iphone-17-pro-teardown-reveals-vapor-chamber} Spotting \ AI \ Fake \ Photos - \underline{https://www.ted.com/talks/hany} \ farid \ how \ to \ spot \ fake \ ai \ photos$

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