

MAY, 2026

Crystal Lake Camera Club

Serving Crystal Lake, IL and Surrounding Communities Since 1980

crystallakecameraclub.com



Street Scene, Elgin, IL

Color Image by Doug Frey (Shown at the April 7 Meeting)

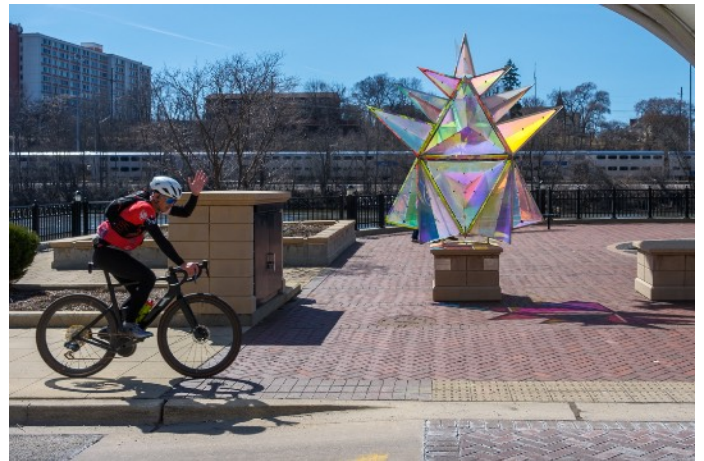
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IMAGES FROM THE APRIL 7 MEETING



The images on this page and on the cover are by Doug Frey. They are all street scenes in Elgin, IL.



IMAGES FROM THE APRIL 7 MEETING



The images on this page are by
Linda Hopp.

Linda said - *My photos were the result of a challenge by Nancy Merkling after a one on one class I took with her. She challenged me to take unposed photos of the grandkids while visiting them in California.*



IMAGES FROM THE APRIL 7 MEETING



The images on this page and the next are by Peter Pelke.

Of the images on this page, Peter said - *The flower and Flowers in a Bottle images were from a Nancy Merkling sponsored "Still Life" workshop. I created the images using natural light on the second floor of the Dole Mansion, of course, going in my own direction and not creating what was presented in the classroom portion.*



IMAGES FROM THE APRIL 7 MEETING



NS 1086



UP 5878

These are by Peter Pelke.

Peter said - *The train image (above) is from Clyman Junction Wisconsin on a brisk spring day. I had just completed running this train through the night and stopped here for a crew change. The sunrise was spectacular and this is right out of my cell phone with only a crop to 8X10.*

PHOTOGRAPHY WORKSHOPS AND TOUR COMPANIES

Notes from a presentation at the April 7 meeting by Jeff Chemelewski and Jo Randall

Why do a photo tour?

- Your skills will improve, often greatly. You will have at least one professional and often two. Most are more than happy to help and give advice.
- You will be taken to places unknown to others. The professional often scouts locations before your trip and will plan the day depending on weather etc...
- You will be with a group of other serious photographers. The more advanced members are also willing to give advice.
- Most tours provide transportation with necessary vehicles for off road locations.
- You will come home with a wonderful library of images!

Tour Companies

- **Action Photo Tours - actionphototours.com**
 - Now, my (Jeff's) primary tour company for US travel.
 - Trips now worldwide but centered in Southwest.
 - Generally two professional guides/photographers.
 - Most may not include lodging but some might, such as Winter in Yellowstone.
 - Meals generally not included in package.
 - Their philosophy is capturing the best possible image but trips are arduous.
 - Cost is extremely variable \$2500 US to \$11,500 Iceland.
 - Tours shown:
 - The Wave and Beyond
 - Access to places that may be difficult to get to. In this case, a difficult to obtain permit is required besides the drive and hike on a poorly marked trail.
 - Winter in Yellowstone and The Tetons
 - Access to Yellowstone is only allowed with permits and via snow coaches or snowmobiles. Driver/guides know where to find wildlife.
 - Fall Color in the Cypress Bayou
 - Spectacular experience deep in the marsh land of Texas/Louisiana.
 - Several tour companies offer this trip: pick one with a boat instead of a kayak.
 - Oregon Coast
 - Combination of coastal and fall colors of Oregon.
 - Winter in the Southwest
 - Jeff was hoping for more snow in Grand Canyon, Bryce and Zion but...
 - Centered out of Kanab, Utah with excursions to various locations.
 - Wildflowers of Mt. Rainier National Park
 - Wildflower workshops can be very hit or miss.
 - In some cases, added hiking at elevation is necessary to find blooms.
 - Climate factors play a huge role.
- **Rhapsody in Light Photo Tours - rhapsodyinlight.com**
 - A one man operation run by Joseph Thomas.
 - Jeff did another wildflower workshop with Joe but in summer at Crested Butte, Colorado.
 - Again, climate dependent and some altitude hiking required.
 - Lodging and meals not included in this workshop.

- **Strabo - phototc.com**
 - Strabo is an American company that often works with other tour companies such as Lofoten Tours, which is centered out of Norway.
 - International photo tours is their specialty - Patagonia, Iceland, Greenland, Faroe Islands.
 - Generally all inclusive including upscale lodging and meals.
 - Not inexpensive.
 - Strabo provides a professional photographer plus a local guide/photographer.
 - May be more about the trip and less about “getting that killer shot.”
 - Patagonia - My (Jeff’s) very first experience with photo tours. A professional photographer I’ve known for many years announced a trip, and that he was guiding. On a whim, I signed up.
 - Iceland - A photographers dream.
 - Has become popular and expensive.
 - The country decided to harvest tourists instead of sheep.
 - A small local guide will get you to places the large tour busses will not go
 - Early summer may be ideal.
 - Greenland
 - This trip was to Disco Bay and the town of Illulistat.
 - Most of the photography was from a boat shooting icebergs in the bay.
- **LofotenTours - lofotentours.com**
 - Lapland in Winter - Amazing adventure!
 - Northern Finland and temps can be frigid.
 - The main draw is a daily buildup of hoarfrost and snow on pine trees.
 - Must be prepared for the weather, as this trip is above the Arctic Circle.
- **Nancy Merklng Productions - nancymerkling.com**
 - nancy@nancymerkling.com
 - Nancy is local and much more affordable.
 - Local excursions including street photography and Door County.
 - Chicago Street and Architecture
 - \$150 single day workshop offered May 30th.
 - A great start if you haven’t done any previous workshops.
 - You will get the feel of having a dedicated professional with you to help with settings, composition and locations.
 - Door County Fall Bootcamp Workshop
 - Oct 8-11 for \$950 which includes lodging and meals.
 - Not listed on her website, so you need to contact her directly.
 - Parke County Photo Bootcamp Workshop
 - Oct 29-Nov 1 for \$950 including meals and lodging.
 - Parke County is in Indiana and is the home to many covered bridges.

**THE BOTTOM LINE IS ...
IF YOU WANT TO IMPROVE YOUR SKILLS,
A WORKSHOP IS THE ROUTE TO TAKE!**

CHICAGO STREET PHOTOGRAPHY PHOTO WALK

A CLCC Event

Get those batteries charged and your memory cards cleared—our **Chicago Street Photography Photo Walk** is officially happening **Saturday, May 16th!** This is the perfect chance to explore the city's energy, architecture, and hidden corners through your lens alongside the rest of the club.

Getting There

We're making it easy to travel together! We'll be meeting at the **Pingree Rd Station in Crystal Lake** to catch the train into the city:

- **Departure:** Train #UNW 702 departs at **7:03 AM** (arriving at Ogilvie Station at 8:23 AM).
- **Return:** Train #UNW 713 departs at **2:30 PM** (arriving back at Pingree Rd at 3:48 PM).

Meeting in the City

If you prefer to drive in, take a different line, or board at another station, no problem! We will officially gather at the **Ogilvie Transportation Center (OTC)** by the **escalators at the Madison Street entrance at 8:30 AM.**

What to Bring

- Your camera of choice (DSLR, mirrorless, or iPhone).
- Comfortable walking shoes (we'll be covering some ground!).
- Rain gear if it look like rain.
- A light snack or water.

RSVP

We already have several people confirmed, but the more the merrier! **Please reconfirm your spot or let Doug Frey (doug.frey@me.com) know if you'd like to be added to the list** so we can have an accurate headcount before we head out.

Chicago is full of stories waiting to be captured. We can't wait to see the city through your eyes!

Last Saturday Morning Breakfast Meeting – Everyone invited!

Please join your CLCC friends for the casual breakfast meeting on the last Saturday of the month. Lively discussions, good food! This month's will be on **Saturday, May 30, 2026, 8:30 AM** at

Buttered Toast Restaurant, 2520 Bunker Hill Dr, Algonquin.

Next month's breakfast meeting will be June 27.

THE FUTURE OF CLCC

Notes from the April 7 Meeting ~

Submitted by Judy Jorgensen

The meeting began with Jeff Chemelewski and Jo Randall presenting information on photography workshops they have experienced: what to expect, how prepared to be, how to safeguard your equipment, cost range, etc. The images they showed as a result were extraordinary.

- KNOW your equipment WELL
- have a backup camera along
- be prepared to get up early
- dress for the weather and terrain
- KNOW your editing program WELL

The general consensus is workshops are worth it! Possible price range \$175 for local street photography to over \$12,000 for trips.

Show & Tell - The topic was *imitate the style of Ansel Adams with a subject that he would not shoot.*

- Peter Pelke: Flower images from a still-life workshop, two train engines
- Linda Hopp: Grandkids candid
- Doug Frey: Elgin street scenes

Discussion - We talked about sending images to Doug for critiquing starting in May, showing more before and after editing images, learning more about how to edit images, creating a style. Also, feel free to re-edit your older photos. Shoot in raw and jpeg if your editing software does not keep the raw data non-destructive.

Use your tripod more, it slows you down and you can see things differently. At sunrise and sunset, be sure to look behind you as well. Sun reflecting off clouds behind you can be spectacular. Remember, the more you shoot, the better you get, the more photography rules you learn, the more you realize, there are no hard fast rules in photography.

A REMINDER: **Show & Tell** and **Before & After** run more smoothly if images are sent to Doug before the meeting instead of on flash drives given to him at the meeting. He would like them a few days before the meeting so he can prepare the presentation. See page 11 for more information.

Take a moment to contribute to the Facebook **Crystal Lake Camera Club Group Chat** page (see page 11).

The **Landscape and Nature Photography** small group is meeting regularly on the 3rd Wednesday of each month at Doug Frey's home (see page 10).

Have an idea for an outing? If you have an idea or plan and want company, let Doug Frey know.

CLCC is in need of more people to help provide direction for the club's future. Do you have ideas about presentations, discussion topics, club activities, or directions CLCC should be going? The easiest thing to do is to ask "Why isn't CLCC doing _____?" The better thing is to say, "Let's try _____, and I'll help it happen."

CLCC is a volunteer organization - YOU ARE NEEDED to make the club more valuable.

The Future of CLCC (continued)

The **CLCC Breakfast Meeting** is the *last* Saturday of the month (unless otherwise noted due to holidays, etc.) at Buttered Toast by Home Depot on Randall Road, Algonquin. All are welcome (see page 8). The next breakfast meeting is Saturday, May 30.

Become an ACTIVE CLCC member - your presence, your contributions, your participation is what will elevate the club experience for everyone. Most everything that happens in the club is by volunteers, that is, members choosing to participate because they *love photography*. CLCC needs *you!*

CLUB MEETING CALENDAR

All meetings start at 7PM and are at the Algonquin Township Building, 3702 Northwest Hwy, Crystal Lake, in **Meeting Room 2**. Enter at the back of the building.

May 12 *Image Theme: Photograph your first name from shapes naturally found in the environment. No manipulation is allowed.*
Show & Tell and Before & After

Show & Tell and Before & After have provided some lively, informative conversations for CLCC attendees. Great suggestions for outings and club offerings have come from these activities.

For Show & Tell: submit 3-4 JPG images to Doug Frey (doug.frey@me.com) on the **Sunday before the meeting** date. You can also bring them on a flash drive, but submitting them earlier is preferred, and helps the presentation go more smoothly.

For Before & After: submit *pairs of JPG images* to Doug Frey (doug.frey@me.com) on the **Sunday before the meeting** date, or bring the images on a flash drive (submitting them earlier is preferred, and helps the presentation go more smoothly). The pairs would include the image as it came out of the camera and the image after post-processing. Be prepared to tell (and perhaps even show) the changes that were made.

LANDSCAPE & NATURE SMALL GROUP

When: Third Wednesday each month, 7PM

Where: 711 Glacier Parkway, Algonquin

RSVP: doug.frey@me.com

This small group meets in Doug Frey's home on the Third Wednesday of the month, 7PM. There are wide ranging discussions from beginning landscape photography, to post-processing, prime locations, both near and far, everything in between, and sometimes beyond! Photos are shared and comments made. It is a very friendly group.

Meetings are casual and relaxed. Any related discussion topics can be brought up. It is a great community learning experience. Let Doug know that you are interested! See him at a club meeting, or send him an email at the address above.

CRYSTAL LAKE CAMERA CLUB OFFICERS

See The Club Directory For Contact Information

President	Judy Jorgensen
Secretary	Open
Treasurer	Gail Schulz
Board Member	Rich Bickham

YOUR IDEAS MATTER!

Do you have a story, images, trip, post-processing technique, event, etc. that would be good for Camera Club members to know about? Your submissions will make this newsletter valuable! Write it up, and send it to **Steven Szalaj**, Newsletter Editor, at szsings@mac.com.

Please make your submission by the 22nd of the month.

Join the **Crystal Lake Camera Club Group Chat** on FaceBook:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/446897199179146> or scan this QR Code:

This is a closed group, so only members have access. Request membership through the page. Then, post your favorite images, join in the discussions, share information about photo outings, speakers, contests, etc.

Only group members will see your posts.



GALLERIES, STORIES, VIDEOS AND INSPIRATION ON THE WEB

(Click any bold-face heading, or underlined text, to follow the link)

Celebrities Need Passport Photos, Too

In a photo studio on Oxford Street in London, near the American Embassy, David Sharkey did the impossible: he created hundreds of flattering passport photos.

From the New York Times: Our Pulitzer Prize-Winning Photographer's Work From Gaza

Saher Alghorra won the 2026 Pulitzer Prize in breaking news photography. With international journalists barred from the territory without Israeli escorts, Mr. Alghorra, a Palestinian photographer, played a crucial role. Here is a selection of work for which Mr. Alghorra was awarded the prize.

I've Photographed Protests Around the World. This Still Surprises Me

Matthew Connors is an artist and photography professor at the Massachusetts College of Art and Design. He is the author of the forthcoming monograph "The Axe Will Survive the Master." In this short essay with photos, he reflects on his 13 years of photographing conflict in our world.

Watch What Happens When A Drone Is Flown Directly Into The Center Of A Tornado

A team of storm chasers thrust a drone into the eye of the storm in a bid to gather data on one of nature's most extreme weather phenomena.

These Modern-Day Photographs Highlight Why Pompeii Still Attracts Tourists and Archaeologists

The eruption of Mt. Vesuvius froze the ancient Roman city in time, giving modern-day humans a remarkable vision into the past.

Every Photographer Should Try Abstract Photography

Breaking free from rules and habits is key to developing true photographic mastery – and abstract photography might be the fastest way to get there. It teaches you camera skills like no other genre.

This 2,500-Year-Old Photo Technique Lets You Shoot Without A Camera Lens – Here's How To Do It

The camera obscura, also known as a pinhole camera, is one of the oldest photographic concepts in history, dating to the 5th century BC. Here is a way to try a simple, lens-free photo technique.

Helpful Resources - New links added!

Contribute to this page! *If you have resources that you find useful, please share that link with me. Include a short summary of what can be found in the link. The reference can be a video, web page, PDF, or any other format that has an online link. Send your contributions to szjsings@mac.com by the 20th of each month.*

~SJS, Newsletter Editor

Profoto Tutorials, submitted by Kevin Getty:

Tips and Tricks

<https://profoto.com/us/tips>

A terrific collection to help photographers of any level.

Photographic Composition Webinar, submitted by Scott Larsen:

The Art of Photography: Crafting Compelling Compositions

tinyurl.com/5ak88xt6

Natural Habitat Adventures posts a weekly webinar. This hour-long video is very helpful.

Photographers you may be interested in viewing, contributed by Judy Jorgensen:

Dan Anderson

danielandersonphotography.com/

Beautiful color landscapes and seascapes with striking composition from America, Norway, Faroe Islands, Scotland, Patagonia, Ireland, Antarctica, Europe, Iceland, etc. If you love black and white, check out his American West, Europe, Antarctica, and Greek islands black and white images of land, sea, and architecture.

Ed Callaert

edcallaert.photoshelter.com

This nature photographer travels extensively along the west coastal and mountain states as well as upper to mid east coast United States. His gallery is full of colorful landscapes and seascapes with interesting composition techniques you may want to try.

Willard Clay

willardclay.photoshelter.com

This landscape and bird photographer has a vast collection in his gallery by states and a stunning collection under birds. He also teaches at Mayslake in the Forest Preserve District of Dupage County. Enjoy, study, and try.

Resource for camera repair, contributed by Bill Batalden:

APS (AUTHORIZED PHOTO SERVICE)

8125 River Dr # 100

Morton Grove, IL 60053

repair@authorizedphotoservice.com

(800) 406-2046

Bill said: "I recently had my camera & lens repaired at APS authorized camera repair. I felt the work was good and the price reasonable. They give an estimate, which you have to approve, before proceeding with the work. When I spoke with the owner, he said he could offer a 'Club' rate."

Helpful Resources (continued)

Resource for camera repair, contributed by Sandy Wittman:

ROYAL CAMERA SERVICE, INC.

1134 E Lake Street
Hanover Park, IL
(630) 372-6150

Sandy said: "I had my Canon 7D Mark II repaired there this fall. They did an excellent job in about 10 days. The price was very reasonable. I found them to be knowledgeable and professional."

Resource for infrared photography, contributed by Peter Pelke

LIFE PIXEL Infrared Camera Conversions

<https://www.lifepixel.com/>
(866) 610-1710

Resource for purchasing, selling, trading and repairing used camera equipment

KEH

<https://www.keh.com/>
(800) 342-5534

"The original curator and reseller of rare and quality camera gear, KEH has always envisioned a better way to support the passion and profession of photography. We're proud to be the camera community's choice for gear that goes further. Field-tested. Expert-graded. Sustainable. Exchangeable. KEH-approved."

YouTube Channels by specific photographers

These were contributed by Doug Frey:

Nigel Danson - <https://www.youtube.com/@NigelDanson>

Adam Gibbs - <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCDyKBQGE7OOsWeQIPWqVSzw>

fototripper (Gavin Hardcastle) - <https://www.youtube.com/@fototripper>

Simon D'Entremont - https://www.youtube.com/@simon_dentremont

Mark Denney - <https://www.youtube.com/@MarkDenneyPhoto>

Thomas Heaton - <https://www.youtube.com/@ThomasHeatonPhoto>

Ian Worth - https://www.youtube.com/@ian_worth/

A great collection of "how-to" videos:

Providence Photography DFW

<https://www.youtube.com/@providencephotographydfw>

Photoshop Elements+: The Secret to Removing Impossible Backgrounds!**Take Better Photos Episode 3 - ISO and Exposure** (click the title)

Video shared by Bill Tell. Bill said: "*In my experience, this video is essential for anyone who wants a deeper, more complete understanding of exposure and is ready to move to the next level.*"

Capturing the Perfect Holiday Tablescape Just in Time for Thanksgiving! (click the title)

Shared by Peter Pelke - an in-depth article that covers lighting, angles, composition, techniques, gear, and much more.

Adobe Lightroom Classic - Tips and Tricks for a better workflow

Shared by Bill Tell - "*I've been watching a lot of YouTube videos on Lightroom Classic, and this is by far the best one yet. It's packed with solid tips you can apply to virtually any LRC workflow and settings. Incredibly helpful. It will make your post-processing much easier.*"

*Helpful Resources (continued)***What Makes Great Photos Great**

Shared by Bill Tell - *“This video is very good at explaining what makes a photo great as opposed to a snapshot. A snapshot can be technically very good but a great photo conveys emotion that makes one like to look at it.”*

Best L-Bracket Showdown!

Shared by Bill Tell - *“Some photographers have asked me about the L-bracket for attachment of the camera to an Arca Swiss quick release system. This video demonstrates differences between brands of brackets. I highly recommend using an L-bracket if one expects to use a tripod.”*

20 Tips for Starting Out in Street Photography

Shared by Doug Frey - *“Great article to help get started in street photography. Concise and clear ideas with excellent photo examples.”*

Photography Courses Available at the Chicago Botanic Garden through November

Shared by Bill Tell - <https://www.chicagobotanic.org/learning/adult-classes/photography>

Camera Repair: Chicago Camera Specialists, 5 So. Wabash St., Suite 1017, Chicago, Illinois 60603

Phone: 312-332-5538

Shared by Russ King: *“He's only open M, W, F 10:00 am to 4:00 pm. [The owner] is desperate to sell the business, since he's clearly much beyond retirement age, but he cannot find anybody to take over and he feels guilty leaving all his loyal customers in the lurch. But he does a great job, at least on my Nikon, and he's very reasonably priced. Use him, or lose him, I say.*

AN OPPORTUNITY TO SHOW YOUR IMAGES!**4th FRIDAYS ART EVENT AT THE DOLE**

401 Country Club Rd
Crystal Lake, IL 60014
815-347-8535

The next 4th Friday Art Event: **May 22, 2026**

Submission Deadline: Sunday, May 10, 2026, by midnight

Non-refundable submission fee: \$40 for up to 5 pieces submitted

Cash Awards - \$450 total:

- 5 Honorable Mentions: \$50 cash each
- 4th Fridays Team Choice: \$50 cash each
- Kim Holz Memorial Award: \$50 cash
- Nancy Merklings Choice: \$50 cash
- People's Choice Award: \$50 cash

Click here for the **PROSPECTUS** for the Photo-Only Exhibit.

Click here for the **SUBMISSION APPLICATION**

*Note: Photos may also be submitted to the Mixed Art Exhibit, especially if the photo is larger than the requirements for the Photo-Only Exhibit. Click here for the **Mixed Art Prospectus**.*

