

FOCAL POINTS

Vienna Photographic Society

JANUARY, 2018

INSIDE:

**New Year's Day
Challenge**

**Photo Contests
Galore**

Party Pix

Valley of Fire

**Bald Eagle
Bonanza**

**DC's Most Awesome
Atrium?**



JANUARY, 2018

IN THIS ISSUE:

New Year's Challenge	2
Photo Contests	3
My Fav Photo	5
Chincoteague trip	7
Valley of Fire	10
Jan. 3 Speaker	11
Jan. 13 Field Trip	12
Jan. 17 Competition/Themes	13
Bald Eagles Field Report	14
Meadowlark Field Report	16
Garden of Lights	17
January Forums	18
PSA Reports/News	19
Holiday Party Pix	20
Calendar/Ops/Member News	21
Board/Themes/Focal Points	22
Membership App	23

VPS is a member of



<https://www.PSA-photo.org>

VPS meets the 1st, 3rd, & 4th Wednesdays, September through June at the Thoreau Middle School, Vienna, VA. Visitors are welcome. Please check VPS's calendar for details:

<https://www.VPSva.org>



NEW YEAR'S DAY CHALLENGE

Start 2018 right with a healthy New Year's Day hike and a winning photograph. Just stroll through one of Virginia's 37 state parks and then enter its photo contest:

<http://www.dcr.virginia.gov/state-parks/blog/virginia-state-parks-first-day-hikes-2018>

Our closest state parks are [Mason Neck](#) (bald eagle opps on Belmont Bay in Lorton), [Leesylvania](#) (scenic Potomac River in Woodbridge), [Sky Meadows](#) (uncommon red-headed woodpeckers and the Appalachian Trail in Delaplane), and [Lake Anna](#) (family- friendly waterfront in Spotsylvania).



**COVER
PHOTO &
TEXT BY
BARB
JOHNSON**



It had been snowing all day and I was practicing with my husband's new camera around the house and peering outside as the day wore on. We have bird feeders in the backyard but my favorite is the hummingbird feeder, which attracts absolutely no hummingbirds. But it doesn't matter, because I still like it.

It was pure luck that I was looking out the patio door as the snow was coming down and all the sudden this dark-eyed junco landed on the top of the heart and looked at the snow covering the bowl with this look on his face.

I fell in love with this photo and I was very excited that it was accepted into Nature Visions. I was even more excited when I was told that someone wanted to buy it—and they actually did!

PHOTO CONTESTS:

Winners Wanted

Do you sometimes stumble upon a photo contest after its entry deadline has passed? Here is a preliminary list of some contests to help you plan. Deadlines that are available now are listed. Others will be added in a future newsletter. Did I miss anything? Please email me at Barb22030 AT yahoo DOT com. - **Barbara J. Saffir, Editor**

NAME/DEADLINE/WEB

AAA World (October)

<https://midatlantic.aaa.com/aaaworld/photo-contest>

Air & Space magazine (November)

<https://www.airspacemag.com/category/photocontest/>

Alexandria, City of (Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities) (October)

<https://www.alexandriava.gov/recreation/info/default.aspx?id=99440>

American Kennel Club's family dog photo contest (Jan. 31)

<http://www.akc.org/pubs/family-dog/photo-contest/>

Anacostia Trails (Maryland) (Sept. 29)

<http://www.anacostiatrials.org/annual-photo-contest>

Aperture magazine (Jan. 31)

<https://www.pictet.com/aperture/portfolio-prize-2018/>

Arizona Highways magazine (TBD)

<https://www.arizonahighways.com/photography/photo-contest>

ArtSpaceHerndon Fine Arts Photography (Jan. 5)

<https://www.artspaceherndon.org/calls-for-art/>

Audubon (April 9)

<https://midatlantic.aaa.com/aaaworld/photo-contest>

Chesapeake Bay Foundation's Save the Bay (March)

<http://www.cbf.org/events/photo-contest/official-rules-and-guidelines.html>

Delaware Tourism photo contest (March)

<https://www.visitsoutherndelaware.com/southern-delaware-tourism-2017-photo-contest>

Engineering News-Record magazine (November)

<https://www.enr.com/2017-Year-In-Construction-Photo-Contest>

ExposedDC (January, 2019)

<http://exposeddc.com/past-winners/>

Fairfax County's "First Hike Fairfax" photo contest (Jan. 2, 8 p.m.)

<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/first-hike>

Farm Credit Midatlantic "Life in the Country" photo contest (August)

<https://www.mafc.com/info/calendar-photo-contest/>

Florida's Birding & Photo Fest (April)

<http://www.floridasbirdingandphotofest.com/photo-contests/4574157377>

FotoweekDC (TBD)

<http://www.fotodc.org/>

Huntley Meadows, Friends of (November)

<http://www.fohmp.org/>

Kenilworth Aquatic Gardens, Friends of (TBD)

<http://www.friendsofkenilworthgardens.org/>

Maryland Department of Natural Resources photo contest (August)

<http://dnr.maryland.gov/Pages/photocontest.aspx>

Maryland Sheep & Wool Festival: sheep photo contest (May)

<http://sheepandwool.org/festival/sheep-photo-contest/>

Miller, Joseph abstract photography exhibit (Feb. 23)

<http://nvacc.org/home/abstract-exhibit/>

Montgomery Magazine, Montgomery County, MD (October)

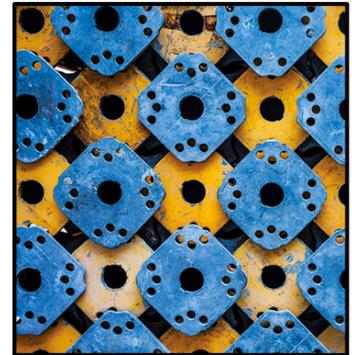
http://www.montgomerymag.com/MM_2017Photocontest.html

National Geographic Nature Photographer of the Year (November)

<http://photography.nationalgeographic.com/nature-photographer-of-the-year-2017/>



Donna Rowley—the Military category winner from last year—caught the Red Arrows at the Air Waves



National Parks: Share the Experience, National Park Foundation (December)

<https://www.sharetheexperience.org/>

National Wildlife Federation (March)

<https://www.nwf.org/photocontest.aspx>

Nature Conservancy (Spring)

<https://www.nature.org/photos-and-video/photography/photo-contest/index.htm>

Nature Visions Photo Expo 2018 (September)

<http://naturevisions.org/>

Nature's Best magazine Windland Smith Rice Awards (Feb. 20)

https://www.naturesbestphotography.com/enter_guidelines.php

Newport News tourism (Virginia) (October)

<https://www.newport-news.org/photo-contest/>

Nikon Photo Contest (February)

<http://www.nikon-photocontest.com/en/>

Northern Virginia Conservation Trust (TBD)

<http://nvct.org/photo-contest-winners/>

Ocean City, Maryland photo contest (TBD)

<http://www.oceancity.com/submit/>

Ocean Conservancy's Marine Wildlife & Seascape photo contest (July)

<https://oceanconservancy.org/2017-marine-wildlife-seascape-photo-contest/>

Olympus Global Photo Contest (Feb. 25)

<https://gopc.olympus-global.com/2017/>

Orvis Catalogue Cover dog photo contest (March 31)

<http://www.orvis.com/s/welcome-to-the-orvis-cover-dog-photo-contest/6335>

Outdoor Photographer magazine (several dates)

<https://www.outdoorphotographer.com/photo-contests/>

Piedmont Environmental Council (September)

<https://www.pecva.org/about/get-involved/135-photo-contest/390>

Poolesville, Maryland Chamber of Commerce (December)

<http://www.poolesvillechamber.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/2018-Photo-contest-entry-form.pdf>

Popular Photography magazine (several dates)

<https://www.pophoto.com/contests>

Rangefinder magazine (December)

<https://www.rangefinderonline.com/contests/>

Smithsonian magazine (November)

<https://www.smithsonianmag.com/photocontest/>

Sony World Photography Awards (Jan. 3)

<https://www.worldphoto.org/sony-world-photography-awards>

Travel & Leisure magazine (October)

<http://www.travelandleisure.com/photos/2017-photo-contest-rules>

Vienna, Town of calendar (TBD)

<https://www.viennava.gov/>

Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries magazine (Feb. 5)

<http://www.dgif.virginia.gov/photo-contest/>

Virginia Safari Park (August)

<http://www.virginiasafaripark.com/Events/SafariShots/2017SafariShots.aspx>

Virginia State Parks First Day Hikes Photo contest (Jan. 1)

<http://www.dcr.virginia.gov/state-parks/blog/virginia-state-parks-first-day-hikes-2018>

Virginia Zoo, Norfolk (TBD)

<http://virginiazoo.org/photo-contest/>

Virginia: "Scenic Virginia" conservation association (May)

<https://scenicvirginia.org/2017/03/photo-contest-open/>

Virginia: Virginia's Soil & Water Conservation Districts (August 15)

<http://vaswcd.org/photocontest>

Washington Post travel photo contest (July)

https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/travel/submit-your-photo-to-the-2017-washington-post-travel-contest/2017/06/07/09bfbcae-4bce-11e7-bc1b-fddbd8359dee_story.html

Zeiss photography award (Feb. 6) <https://www.worldphoto.org/sony-world-photography-awards/2018/zeiss>



MY FAV PHOTO

Eclipsed by the Sun

By Lisette Brisebois

Long before the eclipse, I wanted a filter for my camera. My son insisted on ordering a page of Helios solar film. With the solar film we made a filter for a telescope, three pairs of solar viewing glasses from a cereal box and the solar film, filters for our binoculars, and a filter for my camera. We had enough film left over to give it to our neighbors for them to make solar glasses on the day of the eclipse. We decided to film the eclipse on my full frame DSLR from our backyard in Virginia.



It was amazingly hard to find the sun. We used the star app on the iPad. We used our solar glasses and finally we found the sun. Getting even a good tripod to hold steady at the angle of almost vertical was another challenge. The settings were also hard to judge on my DSLR. I didn't realize I was getting black images for many of my shots. I needed to use a slower shutter speed which I found counterintuitive as the sun is light.

Luckily for us, after the moon has shielded the sun to the maximum, I could look at my images on the computer. After the brief violent storm with hail, the sun started shining through heavy rain. We rushed out again and set up the tripod and camera to get a few more shots of the moon hiding the sun.

Just watching the eclipse is a life-changing event. Getting some images is such a bonus, but less important than the experience itself. In retrospect I should have taken the advice to practice ahead of time. I am now looking forward to the next eclipse with great joy and every day I think how wonderful it would be if that day also held a solar eclipse.

(Editor's note: Future eclipses are posted here: <https://eclipse.gsfc.nasa.gov/SEdecade/SEdecade2011.html>)

MY FAV PHOTO

Bluebird in the Snow

By Patricia Deege

This is one of my favorite winter pictures. When I looked out of my French window, there were five bluebirds huddled together on my bird feeder, all fluffed up in the cold. I ran for the camera but by the time I returned, only one bluebird remained. I was happy to get just this one, although five would have been a miracle. I never had bluebirds visit before and I have never seen them since. It was a wonderful experience and a lovely memory.



(Editor's Note: This won the photo competition at VPS's holiday party last month.)

A Chincoteague Thanksgiving

By Dennis Tarnay, Jr.

Photos by Dennis Tarnay, Jr. and his sister, Stella



Julie C., my sister Stella, my four-legged companion, Lulu, and I participated in VPS's post-Thanksgiving field trip to Chincoteague and Assateague Island on Nov. 23-25. The weather was brisk but beautiful. Julie, Lulu, and I stayed at the American Best Value Inn and Suites, while Stella opted to stay at the Chincoteague Inn. On Friday, Julie and I made the best of the afternoon by driving the car-friendly Chincoteague Island Wildlife Loop and photographed egrets, blue herons, and a pack of ponies. Afterwards we caught sunset photos at Saxis Island's North End Point shoreline. The evening was celebrated with tasty Thanksgiving leftovers and fresh pies. Of course, we left plenty of time for show and tell of photos.

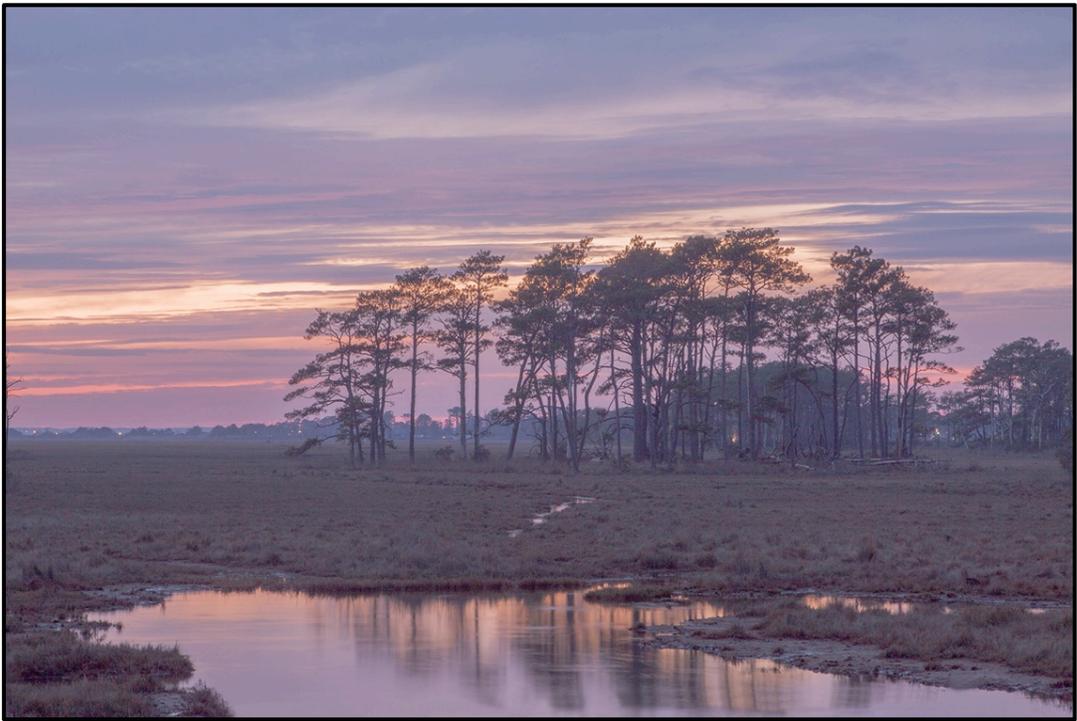


On Saturday morning, Julie and I caught a beautiful sunrise, complete with misty fog and a circular rainbow, and then drove the Chincoteague service road that is only open to the public on Thanksgiving weekend, and had plenty of opportunities for some nice photo of the ponies. Stella on the other hand, enjoyed the Wildlife Loop's trails and took time out for the Chincoteague Craft Fair. For dinner, we met at AJ's on the Creek Restaurant for a great island meal.



By Sunday morning, we were acclimated to "Island Time" and it was time to head back. After a filling breakfast at Maria's Family Restaurant, Julie, Dennis, and Lulu on their way to Northern Virginia, they stopped at Blackwater, NWR for some beautiful winter landscapes, blue herons, egrets, and eagle photos. Stella stayed on "Island Time" a little longer to take one more walk around the marshes and visited Chincoteague's micro-downtown, with its lovely book store and the last open cafes of the season.



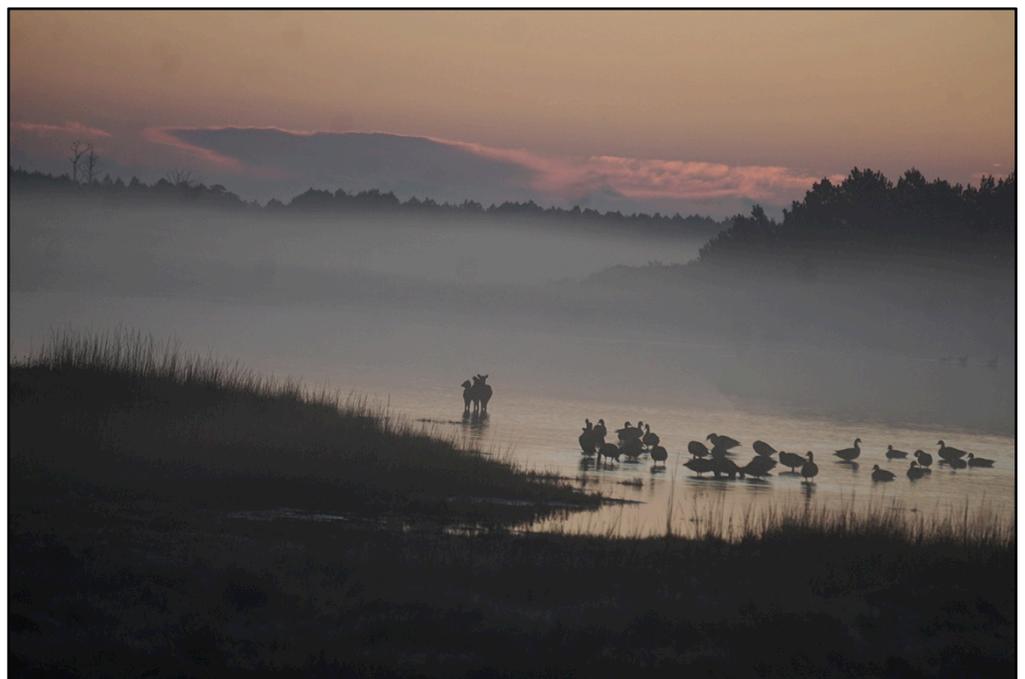


Chincoteague Memories

Photos and Text by Julie Cochran

Our trip to Chincoteague, VA, Nov. 24-26, 2017 with Dennis T. and Stella T.

Dennis picked me up at 10:30 a.m. Friday morning and we got there at 2:30 p.m. We went to Sussex and got some different sunset shots. Dennis and Stella made a Thanksgiving dinner and brought it down. It was very good. The cranberry sauce was very good and the turkey soup was wonderful, as well as the sliced turkey we had in the room. Stella brought the delicious pies. The next morning Dennis and I got up at 5 a.m. and we hit the refuge for sunrise. We had a beautiful morning. It was foggy and there were geese and deer in the ponds. And as we were leaving, we looked over on the other side of the road and there was a rainbow in the fog as depicted in the pictures. We had frost on some bushes. I tried taking pictures but they did not come out very good. Dennis and I went back to the room and took a nap to rest up for the service road drive. We arrived at the service road about 2:30 p.m. It was a great time. We saw lots of ponies outside of our car. You could reach out and touch them -- but I did not. But I would recommend it for next year. Then we went to AJ's for dinner and found out sadly that the owner is going blind. Her friend is managing the restaurant. It was a very good dinner Saturday night. Sunday morning we got up and ate breakfast at Maria's and then went to the motel, packed up, checked out, and drove to Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge in Cambridge, MD. We saw some snow geese but they were too far out to take pictures. We did we did get a couple heron shots before we came home.



Valley of Fire

By David Kepley

In November I took a photo workshop with Jennifer King (<https://www.jenniferkingphoto.com/p/photoworkshops>) at Valley of Fire State Park, about an hour north of Las Vegas, NV. The park consists of a variety of red rock formations that have been sculpted over the eons by what little water they get. The relentless process of erosion has uncovered many different colors embedded in the native Navajo Sandstone.

If you get a chance to go, you will be treated to desert landscapes, slot canyons, sagebrush, native American petroglyphs, and strange caves. To me the most exciting features were the tight washes where the water carved out beautiful shapes. Also bluish rocks sitting next to the reddish sandstone fascinated me; the color combination was terrific!



We stayed in Overton, NV, which is not much to look at. There are two restaurants in town, one Mexican and one with standard America fare, but the town has a well-stocked supermarket. The motel (there is only one!) is of the three-star variety. The park is about a 30-minute drive from town.

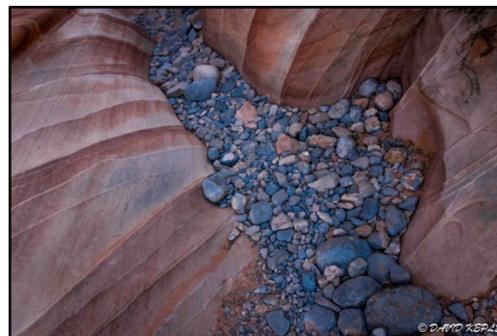


The workshop went from Sunday, when we all flew in, to Thursday, when we drove to a follow-on destination. (More in a later article.) We got up each morning before dawn to catch the best light of the day and shot until around 9:30 a.m. Then we went back to the motel for a nap. (I needed it!) In the afternoons we had a workshop on Photoshop techniques. Then we went out again late in the day to catch sunset.

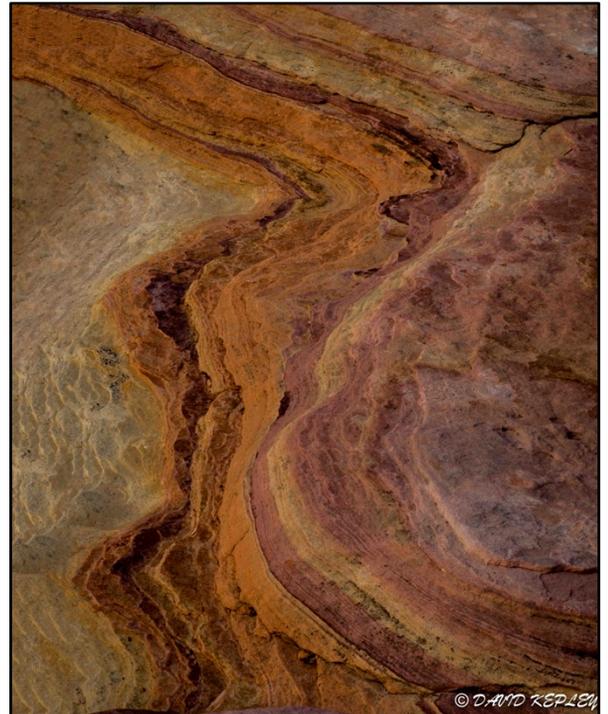
Jennifer and her husband, Randy Wilson, led the group. They will give you as much or as little guidance and ideas on composition and technique



as you would like. This tour happened to be an “advanced” workshop, so all of the photographers were well acquainted with their equipment. I learned a lot from them! Her “classic” workshops are suitable for photo enthusiasts of all levels.



This is the fourth workshop I have taken with Jennifer King and I have loved them all! Here are some of my pix. To see more, visit my website at



<https://davidkepleyphotography.smugug.com/Travels/Valley-of-Fire-NV/>

Jan. 3 Speaker: Alan Goldstein

"Come Fly With Me" (Drone Photography)

Thoreau Middle School, 7:30 p.m.



A member of the Northern Virginia Photographic Society since 2012, Goldstein has been involved in some way or other with photography for the past 55 years. It all began with a science teacher instructing him on the art of film developing. At that time he was using a Kodak Brownie. Veering off during his teenage years to using an 8mm movie camera, he returned to still photography during his college years and working as a reporter for his hometown newspaper.

Goldstein was supposed to call in a newspaper photographer for photos, but the photographer lived nearly 30 miles away, so he opted to take photos himself. At first, he used a Polaroid Type 103 for photos since it made instant, crisp pictures. But encouraged by a classmate and photographer, Goldstein got access to the college's darkroom, and processed Tri-X each time he had a news event or other photo request. This, plus being a radio disc jockey probably contributed to his less-than-stellar GPA!

After graduating from college, he enlisted in the Navy, becoming a Navy Journalist and later commissioned as a Public Affairs Officer. Goldstein's high school girlfriend had a Nikon SLR, and that became his Holy Grail. As a low-ranking Navy man, he scraped up the money and bought his first true SLR — a Minolta SRT-101. As he progressed up the Navy ranks, he upgraded to a Minolta X700.

Fast forward to 2003, Goldstein's brother-in-law was getting married and he was the photographer. An acquaintance who was a Nikon rep loaned Alan a D100. It was love at first click! Since then, he has had a D100, D200, D300, D800 and now a D810, with a D850 on order.

Retired from the Navy in 1994 and retired from Civil Service in 2011, Goldstein is happy to spend his time making images. He loves photographing just about everything, but really likes night scenes and landscapes. His photos have been used for greeting cards by non-profits, used for proposals by environmental entities, have been used by sports web sites, have appeared in newspapers, and even hang in a gas station.

<http://goldsteinphoto.com/>

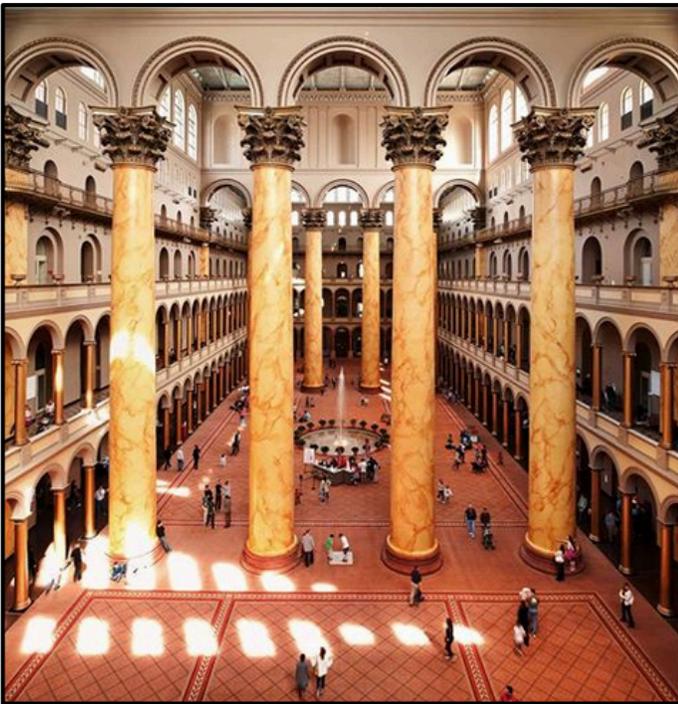


Jan. 13 Field Trip: *Awe-inspiring National Building Museum*

On Saturday, Jan. 13, VPS members will venture to the National Building Museum. We'll meet near the museum's entrance at 10 a.m., when it opens. It's located at 401 F St. NW, Washington, DC, across the street from the Judiciary Square Metro station on the Red Line



(<https://www.wmata.com/rider-guide/stations/judiciary-sq.cfm> <https://www.nbm.org/visit/>). The museum itself as "one of the most awe-inspiring places" in the capital, "with a soaring Great Hall, colossal 75-foot-tall Corinthian columns, and a 1,200-foot terra cotta frieze." The building was constructed in the late 1800s as the headquarters for the United States Pension Bureau, as a grand space for DC's social and political functions, and to commemorate the service of the Civil War's Union troops.



The museum also has interesting exhibits and a cafe. It's a private museum, so tickets are required, which you can get ahead of time online or at the museum.

(https://secure2.convio.net/nbm/site/Ecommerce?store_id=2041)

Depending on the weather, we may also explore the surrounding area. Please email me with your cell number if you'd like to attend. Thanks.

- Lori Saunders, VP, Field Trips

(loriasaunders AT gmail DOT com)

Jan. 17, 2018 Competition

Judge: Greg Holden

Thoreau Middle School, 7:30 p.m.



Photography provides me with an artistic escape from my day job as an aerospace engineer. It is my way of sharing with others how I see the world around me. My photos are mainly from adventures traveling the United States and hiking in various parks, where I enjoy the challenge of finding interesting shapes and juxtapositions in nature and making

the most of situations I discover. While I have seen many beautiful sunrises and landscapes, I find that the little scenes often overlooked by others are the ones that fuel my photographic creativity. I am always looking beyond the obvious and photographing the things that others might not even notice like an acorn sprouting, the patterns made by rust and faded paint on an old automobile, or textures in the windblown sand of a local beach. Sometimes the most amazing images are right there under your feet.

I live in Maryland and I'm a member of the North Bethesda Camera Club (<http://www.nbccmd.org>). You can follow me on Flickr:

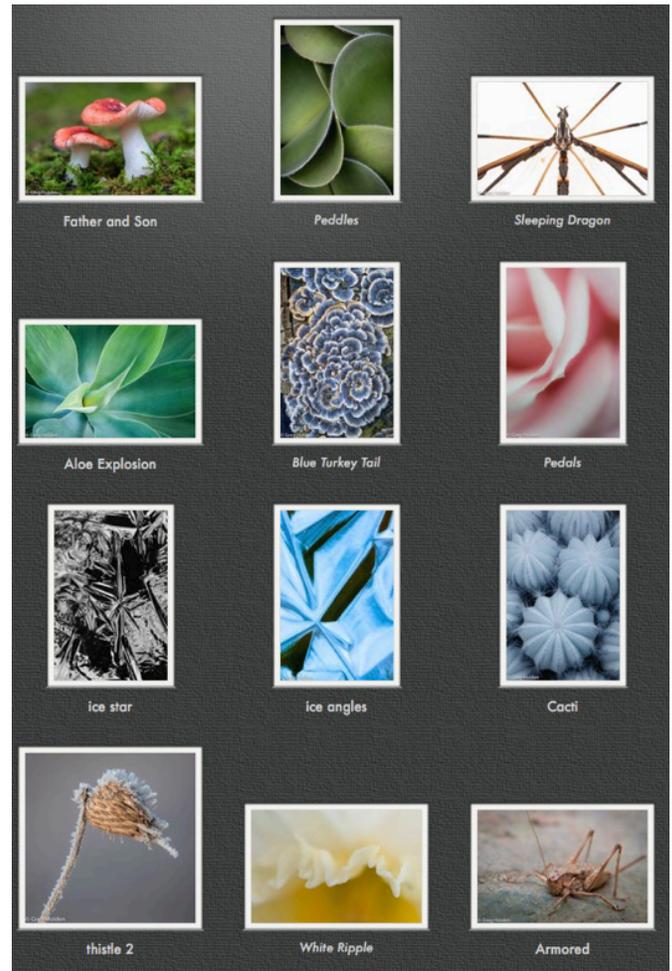
<https://www.flickr.com/photos/holdengs> and

Instagram: @imagesunderfoot or visit my website:

<http://www.imagesunderfoot.com>. I am available for

private instruction and I also teach classes through

Capital Photography Center: <http://capitalphotographycenter.com/>



Jan. 17 Themes: *Simplicity and Abstracts in Nature Digital Art*

Simplicity: This style of photography takes a minimalist approach to conveying a message/mood. Include only the essential objects that add value to your photograph and exclude details that may distract or confuse the viewer. Examine your final photo and determine if there is anything else you can leave out that will make your message stronger. Here is a link to examples of simplistic/minimalist photography

<https://digital-photography-school.com/minimalist-photography-4-tips-to-keep-it-simple-with-a-maximum-impact/>

Abstracts in Nature Digital Art : Your nature image should not include the hand of man (people or man made objects) Nature abstract images can be created by focusing up close on a small area of something, or focusing on an area from a great distance away. The resulting image ceases to be representational and becomes an abstract series of lines, shapes, patterns. Abstracts can also be achieved by moving the camera (swiping) or rotating the lens while taking the photo. Slowing the shutter speed can also achieve interesting results. Check out this link <https://digital-photography-school.com/creating-abstract-images-in-nature/>

A digital art theme allows you to transform your original photograph, using your choice of apps, software, filters, textures, etc., into something that is more akin to fine art.

Dam Eagles

Dec. 3 Nature Field Trip Report

Photos and Text by Lisette Brisbois



FRANKLY, VPS, I DO

GIVE A DAM . . . if

it's the Conowingo Dam

field trip in December.

Dammed if you do,

dammed if you don't.

That was my feeling when

I set my alarm for 4 a.m.

Doubly so when I actually

got up at 4 a.m. Triply so

when the rain poured

down when I was circling the Baltimore beltway in my car. I decided that since my GPS was failing me, I would drive to the Conowingo Dam, sit there in the rain and return home. Arriving at Conowingo Dam, a stranger inquired, "Did you know about the rain?" By that time the rain had subsided to more of a mist and I felt confident taking my camera and enormous lens out of my car. For photographing the famous Conowingo eagles, I took my full frame Nikon camera and the fabled 200mm to 500mm Nikon lens that the other VPS members had used last time I was at Conowingo, just days before that lens actually arrived at my home. I had used a poor substitute and my photos were unimpressive. I also took my good travel tripod. When I saw Gloria Spellman with a similar camera and the same lens with her Think Tank case on wheels, I realized that there were alternatives to carrying the lens around like a baby. If you want to catch some sharp bald eagle



photographs, you really need a lens longer than 300mm. The VPS members at Conowingo were all using DSLRs.

There were lots of people along the river when I arrived and Sigma was there, possibly lending lenses in an oversized tent. I heard that there were lots of people from Philadelphia and someone near us was from Long Island.

I went down to the beach with the fishermen where VPS had set up the previous time I was there. I was delighted when Kathy Swoboda and her husband, Pat Nayak, called to me from a higher elevation and I decamped to join them. More on the fishermen's plight later. There were lots of eagles, but apparently few fish. Much of the time the eagles were on the other side of the river. One eagle did catch a fish, but dropped it in the parking lot behind us. I felt very sorry for him/her.

Just being there is worth the drive. When you are watching eagles, even from a distance, the people no longer seem relevant. Hearing eagles make their weird eagle noises is blissful. Not so blissful is the loud alarm coming from the dam when water is being released. Before long, much of the beach I had been photographing from was flooded with water and the fishermen left in a hurry.

Best of all, it is great to be with amazing photographers like Kathy and Gloria. They are so generous in sharing tips and encouragement. I feel like I learned so much from them. VPS has many facets, but to improve your photography, if it does need improvement, nothing beats going on VPS's field trips.

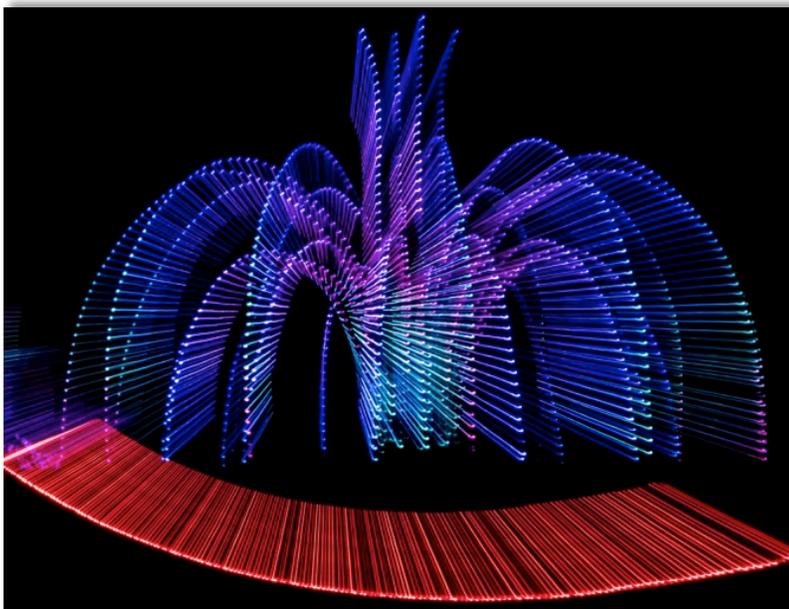
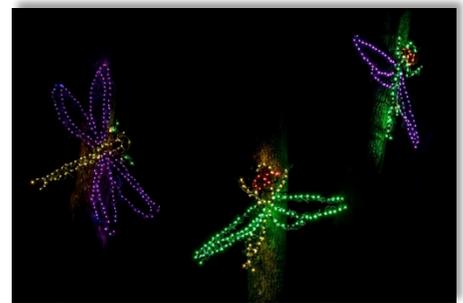
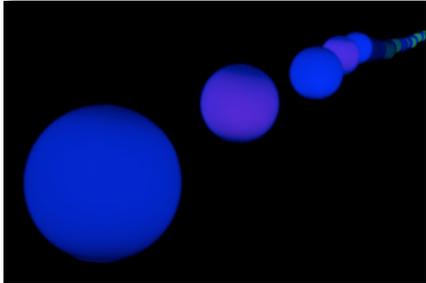


Dec. 7 Field Trip Report

Meadowlark Botanical Gardens' Winter Walk of Lights

By Lori Saunders, VP, Field Trips

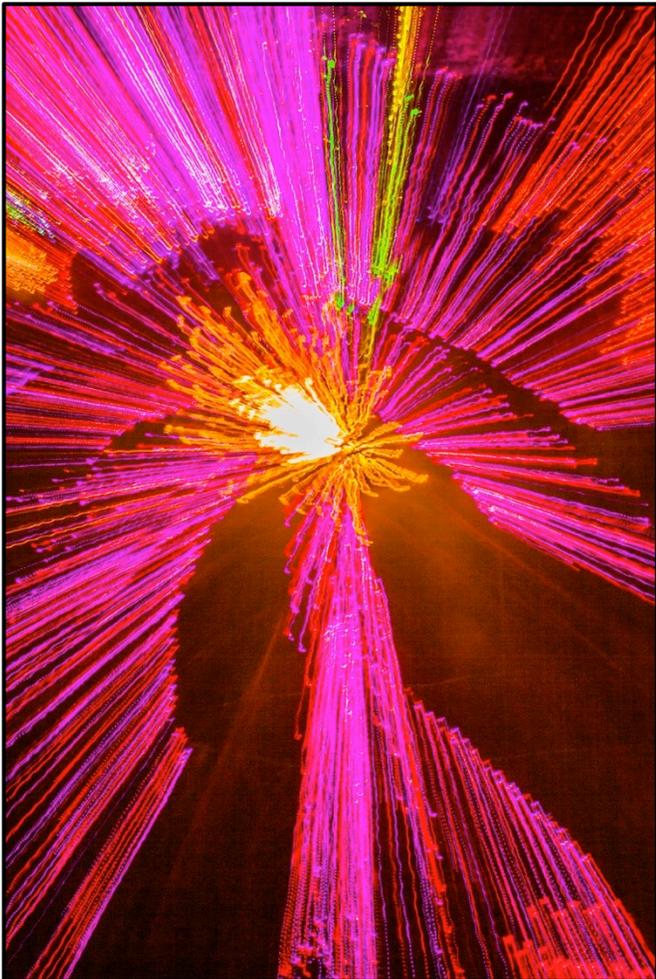
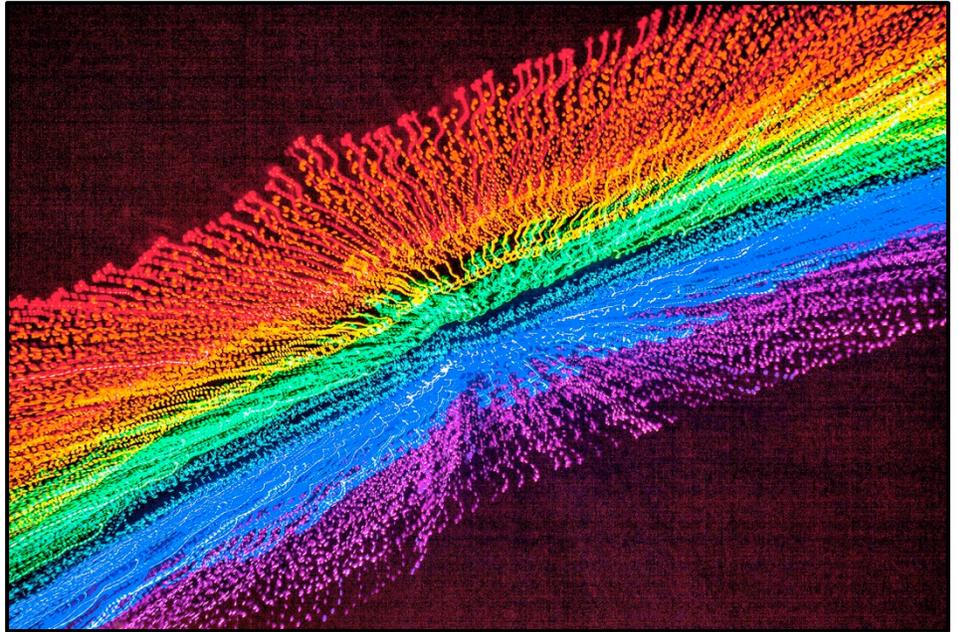
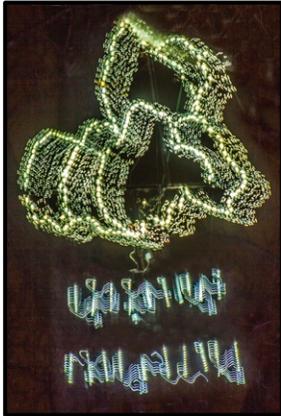
On Dec. 7, VPS members visited the Meadowlark Botanical Gardens' "Winter Walk of Lights" where the gardens were transformed into a lighted winter wonderland. It was great weather and not too cold for December. Everyone met at the entrance for early entry at 4:45 p.m. to get in before the general public and be able to set up tripods and shots before the crowds arrived. It did get quite crowded later in the evening but it's a long path and it was easy to find places to set up. Several of us experimented with zooming lens on the lights to create abstract effects. You may see some in Joe Miller's exhibit this year. The light show is open through Sunday, Jan. 7.



Garden of Lights

Text and Photos by Dennis Tarnay, Jr.

Julie C. and I went to Brookside Gardens in Wheaton, MD to photograph its "Garden of Lights" on Dec. 10. Midway, we went inside to warm up with hot chocolate and s'mores, and listen to a female violin group playing seasonal music.



January to May Forums

By John Naman, VP, Forums



At every Forum, we will try to have hands-on things to do/photograph and/or totally interactive such as critiques. Please bring a camera. The format is intended to be 30 minutes each for:

- 1) Novice: cell phone
- 2) Intermediate: compact-4/3rds
- 3) Advanced: full-frame

(Note: If Thoreau is closed, a new location will be announced.)

DATES	FORUM SUBJECT
Jan. 24	Critique Editing: Results & Discussion (see more details below calendar)
Jan. 31	Critique Editing 2: remaining Results & Discussion; Round Table Critique
Feb. 28	Flash; Night photography (theme); Paint with light? Indoor, Lighting, ISO
Mar. 28	<i>* Thoreau CLOSED. New location will be announced.</i>
Mar. 28	Macro/close up & Soil Life; Focus, Depth-of-field, and Bokeh Art techniques; Lightbox photography (if time)
Apr. 25	Abstract photography & Creative Challenge (May digital Art theme)
May 23	Field Trip - Sharing Photos taken on VPS Field Trips
May 30	Forums - Sharing Photos from Forum workshops; make plan for next year

The January Forums are non-verbal Critiquing of Problematic Images. Instead of saying, "You should crop here, do this, do that," the image will be online (soon) to fix up the way you think it should be. The fun comes when we get together and compare all the different ways we have to "fix" an image. This has been the most popular Forum in past years. The Problematic Images will be representative of upcoming monthly themes -- Simplicity, Abstracts in Nature, Black and White, Winger, Night Photography, Animals in Motion , Things That Fly, Photojournalism , Town of Vienna, Flowers -- so that we all have a chance to brush up on skills needed soon. Expensive software is NOT required. I am gathering a list of web links to free software, some just apps on a phone, to let us do crop, straighten, lighten, darken, change color saturation, delete certain people from family wedding, etc. The basics.



PSA Report

By Kathrin Swoboda, PSA Representative

PSA Open Winning Images: The following images were selected by a member vote to represent the Vienna Photographic Society in the upcoming Round 2 of the PSA Open (Projected Images Division) Interclub Competition:

- "Egrets Preening" by **Joan Axilbund**
- "Stringer of Pearls" by **Mort Friedman**
- "Lucy in Bubbles" by **Nicol Hockett**
- "Hot and Cold" by **David Kepley**
- "Along Brakemans Bend" by **John Padbury**
- "Cormorant in Breeding Colors" by **Barbara Saffir**



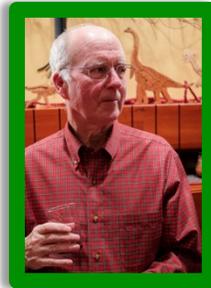
See the slideshow at <https://www.vpsva.org/g/a11cdea3-26db-43e1-a1ff-118ab3387f03> . Results will be available in about 6-8 weeks and will be posted on <https://www.vpsva.org/> under "PSA News."

PSA Study Groups: Are you interested in improving your photography? Do you wish someone would look at your images and give you honest and constructive feedback in a non-competitive situation? Do you like looking at images critically and giving advice? If your answer is "yes" to any of these questions, consider joining a PSA Study group. PSA membership includes the opportunity to participate in study groups at no additional cost. There are many different study groups with focus on various subjects such as: nature, creative, portraiture, general, prints (PPD), and photojournalism (PJD). All levels from beginning to advanced are accommodated. Check out PSA's website at <https://psa-photo.org/index.php?education-study-groups> for the many options.

What is PSA? The Photographic Society of America (PSA) is a "worldwide organization providing a wide range of services that promote photography and benefits to its members." PSA publishes the monthly "PSA Journal," which can be found on our home page. VPS is a member of PSA and competes in the PSA Interclub competitions which pit clubs from all over the world against one another. Please visit VPS's home page (<https://www.vpsva.org/>) and click on "PSA News" for more details.

HOLIDAY PARTY PIX

Here are some photos from the Holiday Party at John Naman's and Rosie Smith's (middle). Thanks to Sharon Connolly and Robert Kelberg for sharing their pics.



Calendar/Opportunities/Member News

- **Jan. 1:** **VPS needs you!** Do you want to volunteer as **VP, secretary, treasurer, VP of exhibits**, or in another important role? Email VPS Pres. David Kepley (kepley DOT david AT gmail DOT com). To help plan **VPS's 30th anniversary**, please contact David Heagy (dheagy AT gmail DOT com).
- **Jan. 1:** **Virginia State Parks' & Fairfax County Parks' New Year's photo contests.**
<http://www.dcr.virginia.gov/state-parks/blog/virginia-state-parks-first-day-hikes-2018>
<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/first-hike>
- **Jan. 3:** **VPS speaker on drone photography**
- **Jan. 6:** **Blackwater NWR workshop with Jim Clark**
<http://www.friendsofblackwater.org/photography-workshop.html>
- **Jan. 7:** Please join **Patricia Deege** at an artists' **reception at Green Spring Gardens from 1 to 3 p.m.** She had three images juried into an exhibit of painting and photographs at the garden. The **exhibit, which runs from Dec. 19 to Feb. 26**, is sponsored by the Vienna Arts Society for its members. The lovely garden and the exhibit are open to the public. (Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Rd., Alexandria, 703-642-5173, <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/green-spring/historic-house>)



- **Jan. 13:** * **VPS field trip** to awe-inspiring **National Building Museum**
* **Photograph models** at Baltimore's Graffiti Warehouse, noon-6 p.m., \$25
<http://graffitiwarehouse.com/event/graffiti-warehouse-glamour-meet-n-greet-party-4/>
- **Jan. 17:** **VPS Competition**
- **Jan. 23:** **Focal Points newsletter deadline 9 pm** (Please submit earlier if possible.)
- **Jan. 24:** **VPS Forum:** Critique Editing
- **Jan. 31:** **VPS Forum:** Critique Editing
- **May:** **USGS Exhibit.** VPS has an opportunity to stage an exhibit of work by club members at the Reston headquarters of the U.S. Geological Survey. This federal agency offers an excellent venue with good lighting and space for at least 60 images. The number of entries per person will be determined upon the interest expressed by members. If you want to participate, contact Patricia Deege at pdeege AT Verizon DOT net or 703-255-1426. VPS is responsible for hanging the exhibit so help will be needed to set it up and take it down. USGS has requested that subject matter be the natural world or geology. Hand of man is okay, but nature subjects are more suitable than portraits, architecture, & city photos.

VPS Board Members



President	David Kepley
First VP	<i>vacant</i>
Secretary	<i>vacant</i>
Treasurer	Burgess Levin
VP, Speakers	Julie Cochran
VP, Judges	John Padbury
VP, Competitions	Janet Gelb
Digital Projection	Mike Cochran, Lilly Heagy, Lori Saunders
VP, Member Communications	Gloria Spellman
Director, PSA	Kathrin Swoboda
Director, Focal Points	Barbara Saffir
Director, Publicity	David Heagy
Director, Membership	Paige Counts
Director, Website	Gloria Spellman
VP, Forums	John Naman
VP, Field Trips	Lori Saunders
VP, Operations	George Silvas
Director, Social Events	Carol Carroll
Exhibits	<i>vacant</i>
Gift Cards	Julie Cochran
50/50 Raffle	Julie Cochran
Nature Visions Representative	Bill Mugg

(To contact the club and/or to volunteer for open positions, please email webmaster@vpsva.org)

February - May Competition Themes

Feb. 21	Black & White Winter Digital Art	Apr. 18	Things that Fly Photojournalism
Mar. 21	Night Photography Animals in Motion	May 16	Town of Vienna Flowers Digital Art

"Focal Points" Newsletter

is published monthly except for a combined July/August issue. Please email member news, story ideas, stories, and low-res photos to Editor Barbara J. Saffir (Barb22030 AT yahoo DOT com).

VPS MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

JULY, 2017 through JUNE, 2018

Mail this application and your check (payable to VPS) or cash to:
VPS, c/o Paige Counts, 10315 Dunfries Rd., Vienna, VA 22181
or hand the payment and application form during any VPS meeting to
Membership Director Paige Counts or Treasurer Burgess Levin

I am a () NEW member OR () RENEWING member. I have been a VPS member since the year (_____)

First Name* _____ Middle Initial ____ Last Name* _____

Street Address _____ City-State-Zip _____

Home Phone _____ - _____ Work Phone _____ - _____ Cell _____ - _____

Email* _____ * = required

NOTE: To receive VPS's Newsletter (*Focal Points*) and other membership messages, you must provide a unique and valid email address. *Focal Points* is emailed to members and posted on the club's website as a PDF file. You need Adobe Acrobat Reader to open it.

PRIVACY: Membership records are maintained by the Membership Director. Periodically, the records are distributed to members to manage VPS's business. Membership records may also be shared with the Nature Visions Photo Expo as part of VPS's participation in that event. Membership records are also available on the VPS website to club members only. VPS will not provide member information to persons or to organizations outside the club, other than specified above. Members may opt to restrict the display of their membership records to other members as follows. Please check one of the options below. This will govern how your records may be displayed to other members on the VPS website:

INCLUDE ___ my name, phone number, home and email address. (This is the default option.)

INCLUDE ___ my name and email address.

INCLUDE ___ only my name.

I have enclosed my check.

() \$40 for a Single Membership

() \$60 for a Family Membership

DUES PAYMENT

() \$20 for non-renewing members joining after January 31.

() \$30 for non-renewing Family Members* joining after January 31

() cash for:

() \$15 for a Student Membership (age 18 or under)

*Family members, please make separate application and use unique email address for each member.

IMPORTANT: VPS Liability & Publicity Release

In consideration of being given the opportunity to participate in a Vienna Photographic Society (VPS) field trip or other event, I acknowledge, agree, and represent that I understand the nature of field trips and other VPS activities, and that I am qualified, in good health and in proper physical condition to participate in such field trips and activities. I fully understand that field trips and other VPS activities are conducted in different environments, and that, accordingly, my photography equipment and I may be exposed to dangers and hazards both natural and man-made. I fully accept and assume all risks and all responsibility for losses, costs, and damages I incur as a result of my participation in VPS field trips or other activities. I hereby release, discharge, and covenant not to sue VPS, its officers, directors, agents, independent contractors, volunteers, members and sponsors.

ADDITIONALLY, I authorize the use of any images submitted to VPS for use by VPS solely for publicity activities such as websites or brochures.

Acceptance of terms of VPS Liability Release (If under 18, parent or guardian must sign):

PRINTED NAME _____ Signature _____ Date _____

PARENT NAME _____ Signature _____ Date _____

HOW DID YOU HEAR ABOUT VPS?

- A Friend VPSVA.ORG Meetup.com Web Search VPS Card/Brochure
- Photo Expo or Exhibit _____ Photo Class or Store _____
- Newspaper _____ Other _____

PARTICIPATION IN VPS SUPPORT NETWORK

VPS has established a support network of members who wish to contribute a few hours each month to assist in VPS program activities, including providing assistance to VPS officers. This network is mentored by the First Vice President of the Vienna Photographic Society.

Are you interested in being listed as a member of the VPS Support Network? Yes No

If yes, please indicate in what areas you might volunteer to help us (a VPS officer will follow up by email):

- WILLING TO HELP WHERE NEEDED
- PUBLICITY: Providing publicity and information to the community about VPS
- INSTRUCTION DEVELOPMENT: Development of ideas for hands-on instructional programs like Forums
- FIELD TRIPS: Planning and arranging field trips
- AUDIO-VISUAL SUPPORT: Helping set up projection equipment at meetings.
- Learn to operate the projection program for competitions.
- SPEAKER PROGRAM: Help with planning guest speaker visits
- GREETING: Greeting new members and guests
- HISTORIAN: Assist in preparing historical documents about VPS activities
- TABLE SETUP: Help with setup for monthly photographic competitions
- COMPETITION JUDGING: Help with selection and planning of judges activity in monthly competitions
- PRINT HANDLING: Assist in passing prints during monthly competitions
- NATURE VISIONS EXPO: Help VPS Rep with the annual regional Nature Visions Photo Expo, Nov 11th-13th
- EDITORIAL HELP: Help by assisting editor with editing/production of monthly newsletter
- ARTICLE DEVELOPMENT: Writing, soliciting or editing articles for monthly newsletter working with the Editor
- PHOTO DISPLAY: Help with planning and arranging member photo displays and external Exhibitions
- WEBMASTER ASSISTANCE: Help with assistance to VPS Webmaster
- PARTY ASSISTANCE: Help setting up parties and social events

PLEASE PROVIDE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION FOR USE BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS.

(Please print.)

Name: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

Questions? Contact David Kepley (*kepley.david AT gmail DOT com* or 703-978-2961)