



In Focus

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Digital Projected Image of the Year and Print of the Year Competitions

On March 17th we will have our annual Digital Projected Image of the Year and Print of the Year competitions.

You may enter four of your best colour prints, four of your best monochrome prints and four of your best digital projected images in this competition.

Please bring in your prints the night of the competition, and send to Karen by March 10 the names of your digital projected images (she already has the images so only needs the names). All of the Image of the Year entries must be the same images you competed with this year, and unmodified since the competition they were entered in. As with all of our competitions, the images must be the work of the maker and cannot be the product of a class or workshop.

After the competition, all submitted prints will be kept for inclusion in the Rainbow competition and returned either after the Rainbow or at the Annual Awards Banquet.

If you have any questions about this competition, please ask Eric or Karen.

Rainbow Competition with Twin Cities

Monday April 7 the Niagara Falls Camera Club hosts the annual Rainbow Competition. This friendly competition with our sister club, Twin Cities Camera Club, from Tonawanda, NY, will showcase the best work from both clubs this year.

We will start with a potluck dinner at 5:30 PM followed by a competition featuring 30 prints and 30 Digital Images from each club. We have seen some fantastic photography this year so hopefully we can bring the trophy back home.

The dinner is a potluck and will follow the same format as our Christmas Potluck. Please be sure to sign up to bring a dish and make a point of coming out to this friendly event.

NFCC Year End Awards Banquet

Our year end awards banquet will be held April 26th at Delphi Banquet Hall. Tickets are \$29 and will be available from Karen at the Image of the Year Competition and Rainbow Competitions.

Elections

Please consider joining us on the executive committee. This is your opportunity to guide the direction of the club. Elections take place March 17th.

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Spring Wildflowers by Scott Simons

I don't know about you, but I'm getting pretty sick of winter, in particular....SNOW.

This winter has gone on far too long and has been too snowy and cold for my taste. I'm ready for spring, or anything close to it. Besides looking forward to the snow melting, I really enjoy seeing the woods come back to life with spring wildflowers. It's a nice feeling, walking through just about any woods and seeing the flowers and leaves starting to poke through last year's fallen leaves. It's even a more enjoyable experience if you can get out and shoot them.



The first flower that pops up through the snow is Skunk Cabbage which is accurately named as the leaves, when crushed, smell like skunk. Skunk Cabbage first arrives with snow still on the ground but at the very end of winter. It appears as a curled up leaf and is dark green in colour. It also generates a little bit of heat to melt the surrounding snow. Skunk Cabbage is found in areas that are more wet than dry and should be up when the horrible white stuff is almost gone.

One of my favourites is Hepatica, and that blooms around the first week of April. The flower comes up first and is amongst the previous year's dead leaves. As the blooms dye off you will start to see the new leaves sprouting. The flowers are quite short, about 2-3 inches with very hairy stems and vary from white to pink and sometimes both light and dark blue. They are found in clumps in the woods and come out long before the canopy. A good place to find them is Louth Conservation Area along the top of the ridge.



If we have a warm spring as we have had for the last few years, there will be an avalanche of flowers to follow. As the sun warms the soil the flowers start picking up momentum and more frequent trips to the woods will be required so things aren't missed. Trilliums, Dog Tooth Violets, Jack in the Pulpit, Wild Ginger, Wild Geraniums, Wild Columbine and Dutchmen's Breeches are all local and fairly easy to get to to photograph. Louth, the Glen and Wood End are all places to check out.



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I would like to take a bit of time to talk about equipment without spoiling the nice thoughts of spring. Obviously, if you want to shoot things that are a bit smaller, you will have to get in close. If you are going to get in close, you will need to have some equipment that will help you out. You can use extension tubes, which are hollow tubes that allow you to focus closer. You could also use close up filters that screw on the front of your lens, also allowing for closer focusing. The best, yet most expensive way is with a macro or micro lens which, by the way, will have the best optical performance. It also goes without saying that if you are getting down to the flowers level and in close, you will need a tripod that will get you there, and don't forget the cable release. Right angle finders and tilting screens with live view are a huge asset for those old enough to remember film. A right angle finder screws into your eyepiece and allows you to look down as opposed to looking straight into the viewfinder.



Remember that there is a good chance that you will be in just about any position to get your shot from kneeling to crouching and even laying on the ground, so dress appropriately for the conditions and bring plastic sheets or bags to keep your knees dry. A set of kneepads might also be in order.

Reflectors and diffusers are also a huge asset. Reflectors will allow you to fill in the shadows by reflecting light back into the subject. At the same time, diffusers will soften hard, direct sunlight and allow for a more soft flattering light. For those that are more technically advanced, off camera flash can be used as rim or back light.

Whether you are lighting people, bugs or flowers, the principles are the same. Softer more flattering light with some of it reflected back into the shadow side and little back lighting for separation for a bit of drama and 3 dimensionality.

So if you are as excited as I am about spring and spring flowers, charge your batteries, dust off your hiking boots and get ready because hopefully..... it's not too far away.

Scott Simons is a Diamond level photographer and is currently the longest serving member of the Niagara Falls Camera Club.

Colour Print Competition

Name	Entries	HA	Score
Bronze			
Gerhard Miethig*	6	6	96
Bebbie Drew	3	3	47
Larry Mathewson	3	3	47
Risa Macdonald	2	2	27
Jim Kershaw	1	1	13
Silver			
Christine Hess **	12	12	199
Gold			
Lorraine Pichette**	12	6	162
Bill Feder	12	4	150
Chuch Martyk	10	7	140
Jim Koniar	10	3	125
Derek Bottomley	5	4	73
Diamond			
Karen Fulham *	12	8	179
George Beehler	10	3	132
Terry Babij	2	1	29

Digital Image Competition

Name	Entries	HA	Score
Bronze			
Pat Lizmore **	12	11	174
Bill Feder *	12	11	166
Jim Kershaw *	12	12	165
Kurtien Gittens *	12	9	158
Debbie Drew *	10	10	154
Larry Mathewson	2	2	30
Silver			
Christine Hess **	12	10	184
Gold			
Derek Bottomley **	12	7	173
Denis Grantham	12	7	166
Chuck Martyk	12	5	157
Laurie Rees	12	5	156
Mary Nikisher	12	5	155
Cindy Phillips	12	4	151
Lorraine Pichette	12	2	145
Cliff Empey	12	3	143
Jim Arcangeletti	10	4	131
Jim Koniar	10	2	113
Diamond			
Scott Simons **	12	12	205
Chris Empey	12	10	197
Laura Cardwell	12	9	182
Terry Babij	12	7	180
Eric Baloga	12	8	179
Karen Fulham	12	5	167
George Beehler	10	2	120

Monochrome Print Competition

Name	Entries	HA	Score
Bronze			
Risa MacDonald	1	1	14
Silver			
Bill Feder *	10	6	128
Christine Hess	6	5	88
Gold			
Lorraine Pichette *	12	6	164
Jim Koniar	7	1	79
Charles Martyk	5	4	73
Derek Bottomley	3	1	38
Diamond			
Chris Empey **	12	10	198
George Beehler	10	4	139
Terry Babij	2	1	29

* - Moves up to next category

** - Top in Category

In Focus is a publication of the Niagara Falls Camera Club, Niagara Falls, Ontario, Canada.

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Articles or comments may be submitted to Chris Empey, Editor
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