

Ohio Valley Camera Club

Photo Competitions & Judging Criteria

Revision February 2014

The Ohio Valley Camera Club of West Virginia (OVCC) uses the following criteria for judging photographs entered into the club's monthly \ print and digitally projected competitions: composition, idea content, print/ digital image quality, and print/ digital image presentation. The following paragraphs describe the criteria in more detail.

Composition is simply the selection and arrangement of subjects within the picture area. Photos should have one dominant center of interest. Simplicity is the keynote of good composition.

- The composition should lead the eye to the main subject.
- There should be no elements that distract the eye.
- The center of interest should seldom be in the center of the photo.
- Horizons should be level and should seldom be in the middle of the photo.
- Moving objects such as people, animals, and cars should be placed so they are moving into the photo, not out of it.
- It is to be understood that "rules of composition," while generally best, are not written in stone. Occasionally, there are photographic subjects that are best depicted by violating these rules.
- In addition, especially when photographing action, time may not allow careful application of the rules of composition. Otherwise, the photographer risks missing the "decisive moment."
- Image should be sharp and in focus.
- Image should be exposed correctly.
- Image should have a clear subject and be free of clutter.

Idea Content is the most important element of good photography. Take time to research the subject. Try new angles.

- How original or creative was the photographer in interpreting the subject?
- Is the photograph/digital image similar to others or does it portray the subject in an unusual manner?

Print / Digital Image Quality means the way the image appears to the eye of the viewer. In B&W, the use of contrast is important. An image without sufficient contrast good use of contrast is of little interest. Color quality of an image is likewise important. Rich, saturated color is usually preferred over flat color.

- B&W should have adequate contrast.
- Color should have rich, saturated color.
- Images should be free of unwanted color tones.
- Images must have no dust marks or other flaws.
- Digital Images should be sized appropriately to show the best quality to the viewer.

Print/ Digital Images Presentation refers to the cleanliness of the print or the quality of the digital image and the way it is presented for viewing.

- Images must be free of unwanted scratches or flaws.
- Prints must be suitably matted and/or mounted, with no bubbles, buckling, or other flaws.
- Mats/mounts should be cleanly cut and of a color that does not detract from the print.
- Digital Images should be sized appropriately for the best viewing possible.

For print competitions, prints are placed on viewing racks in advance of the competition so that members can conduct a close inspection of the prints and apply the judging criteria. After the viewing period is over, the membership then walks around and views each print and enters

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the prints score on a ballot. Each member assigns a score to the print using the above criteria. The highest possible score is 7; the lowest score is 1, unless a photo does not comply with the theme assigned for the competition. Out of theme photos are to be given a score of 0.

The same procedure is used for digitally projected image competitions, except that since it is impractical to view in advance, a preview of the digital image is given using a digital projector. Digital Images are not scored during the preview. After the preview, a second viewing of the digital images is given during which the members assign scores to the slides digitally projected images using the above criteria.

2 club members will record scores and announce winners. Points are awarded based on the Rules of Competition document. 3 for 1st, 2 for 2nd, 1 for 3rd. Also, a bonus point will be awarded for image judged Best of Show.

After the scoring of the images, the winners are announced. A constructive critique is offered on all images entered. photographer does not have to claim the image during the critique. He or she will only be recognized if the image is claimed.

Suggestions

To improve the scoring of photographs, the following suggestions are offered:

1. Each image should be judged in strict accordance with the criteria.
2. Each image should be judged as though it were the only entry. Resist the urge to score an image in comparison to the other images in the competition.
3. Prints should be brought to the meeting place prior to 7:00pm in advance of the competition.