

Coastal California Journal

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The Prez Pad

With camera in hand traveling through the Canadian Rockies I'm reminded of the many reasons I love photography. Getting out in nature, traveling and learning about places and people, and learning from new photographic experiences.

CCP's journey is to provide an organization that enables members to Develop our skills, Learn from each other, celebrate each other's successes, enjoy the company of others with the same passion for photography.

New Beginnings - Building Momentum

- Significant growth in membership - We have added about 25 people this year and we are approaching 100 members.
- Developing core Working Groups (Competition, Programs) - engaging members to shape our organization, grow our membership.
- Building Community - we are collectively working to building a community where learning, growth, participation, and member recognition are encouraged using our website, social media, zoom, and in person engagements.

Change Happens

- Growth causes change - a challenge we will face to retain our key value and community as we grow.
- Changing Demographics will introduce changes which will challenge us to serve our communities interests, while maintaining the value propositions which encouraged everyone to join CCP.
- Workgroups have impact - Shifting from individuals to working groups to spread the workload requires time to share knowledge and experiences.

Looking towards the Future

- We have lot's to do.
- Our Board is fully engaged, and actively planning.
- We are looking for your help in making Coastal California Photographers your organization, call Mike Mercadante, 408-504-3592 and let's talk about your experiences and how you can help. I'll be back from vacation Oct 21.

—> Mike



Program Workgroup Report

—> LLoyd Delaney

Gary Parsons has joined the program workgroup and will be taking over as Vice President of Programs for 2027. We are taking the theme of “Good to Great and Beyond” to heart and creating events that will enable all members to improve their image making skills. We are always looking for volunteers to join the group to share ideas and want to work to deliver great programs. You do not need to be an expert in any area of photography, just be willing to help with the work. It is a great way to get to know other members and build your skills. Please let me know of your interest (lloyd.delaney@verizon.net).

The CCP.Photos Website is where to find out about what is happening. Go to the Events Tab to look at the current offerings and to sign up. We look forward to your participation.

A New Way to Stay Connected: CCP Comes to WhatsApp

—> Chris Martens

Coastal California Photographers is adding another tool to our communication toolbox, and this one fits nicely in the palm of your hand.

We are setting up a **Coastal California Photographers WhatsApp group** to make it easier for members to stay connected, share information, ask questions, and keep up with what is happening throughout our photographic community.

If you have never used WhatsApp, don't worry. It is a free messaging app that can be downloaded from the Apple App Store or Google Play Store. Once installed, you set up your account using your phone number, and you're ready to communicate with other members.

So, what can we do with it?

Quite a bit.

Need a reminder about an upcoming outing? Want to let everyone know about a change in meeting time or location? WhatsApp makes it possible to get that information to members quickly.

Have a question about a camera, lens, tripod, flash, filter, or other piece of equipment? Ask the group. Chances are someone has already used it, researched it, or knows someone who has.

Members will also be able to share photographs, locations, ideas, and helpful information with one another. And if you have photography equipment you'd like to sell, WhatsApp can provide a convenient way to let fellow members know what you have available.

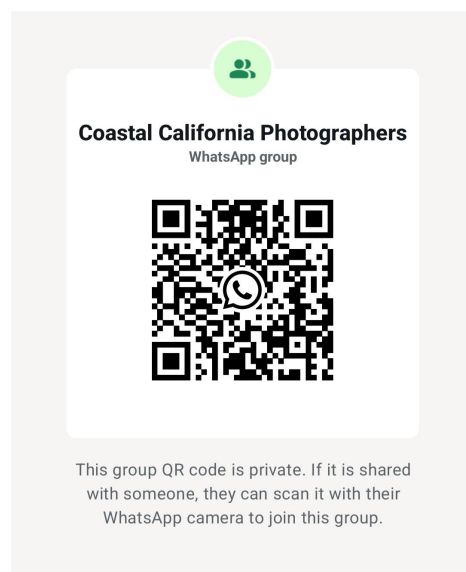
Think of it as another way to tap a fellow photographer on the shoulder and say, **"Hey, have you seen this?"**

WhatsApp (cont'd)

Our website, newsletter, email communications, workshops, outings, and other activities aren't going anywhere. WhatsApp simply gives us another way to communicate, particularly when something needs to be shared quickly.

The goal is simple: **better communication, more interaction, and an even stronger photographic community.**

So, if you're ready to add one more useful tool to your photographer's toolbox, download WhatsApp and join us. Scan this code!



Here's the link: <https://chat.whatsapp.com/I0J5nbG75Wp3UwyDRzvyXBNew>

And don't worry. We promise not to judge you if your camera bag weighs more than your suitcase.



Membership Update

—> Ron Kaplan ronkap@verizon.net

Fall has arrived - even if the weather hasn't quite made up its mind yet. After a brief and welcome cool-down, we're heading back into a stretch of hot days. I know many of us are ready for those cooler temperatures to return.

I'm happy to share that CCP welcomed **twenty-two new members over the summer**. Since our last newsletter, we've added **Bryson Brooks, Rick Hustead, and Lori and Tony Writer**. We're delighted to have you with us.

Memberships are wonderful, but joining alone isn't enough to get the full value of CCP. This applies to both new and longtime members - many of you haven't joined an event in a while. CCP is a friendly, supportive community of people who love photography, and participation is truly where the learning and friendships begin.

We offer a wide range of events, both online and in person. Not every event will match your interests, and that's okay - try one or two and you'll quickly see how much you gain from being involved.

I've been a member for two and a half years, and in that time my photography has improved significantly (I started from a pretty low base!) and I've made many new friends. Showing up makes all the difference.

And remember, organized events aren't the only way to connect. Once you've created a login on the website, you can access the membership roster, which includes email addresses and phone numbers. Reach out to members you've met - chat about photography, ask questions, or meet up one-on-one or in small groups. It's a great way to build relationships.

On that note, a quick word about volunteer opportunities. We have a few working groups - Programs (events) and the Competition/Critiques Group - and we're always looking for more helping hands. We're also seeking:

- **A volunteer to bring snacks and water** to the monthly critique meetings (eleven meetings in 2027)
- **A technical backup** for the monthly critique sessions, to support the team if anything unexpected comes up

If you're interested in volunteering or have any questions, please call or email me. I look forward to seeing you soon.



Coffee, Cameras and Cars

—> Chris Martens

On a beautiful Sunday morning, the shutterbugs gathered on the hallowed grounds of the **Honey Cup Coffeehouse and Creamery in Oxnard**. In attendance were Bill Horstick, Ron Kaplan, Marcial Keyzer, Chris Martens, Matt Moody, Bruce Shoppe, and Lori and Tony White, who came as guests and apparently liked what they saw. They joined CCP the very next day. Now that's what we call developing an interest!



Like the Knights of the Round Table, although none of us were actually English, the group gathered not to discuss politics, solve the world's problems, or why we were actually at a rectangle table instead of a round one. We were there to discuss the issues that really matter: **cameras, lenses, photography, and how much gear one person really needs.**

There was plenty of sunshine, puffy clouds, good coffee, and, as you may have gathered from the title, **cars from across the pond.**

As this was our first gathering, everyone quickly seemed to “click.” Conversation *focused* on cameras, photography, techniques, equipment, and the occasional war story about getting *the shot*. Nothing was left *unexposed*, and as the *pixelated* (okay a stretch on that one) thoughts developed, very little was *filtered* from the frank and friendly discussion.

After a couple of hours, however, the group *zoomed* in on the photographic opportunity. The British car show was walking distance away, and a collection of beautiful automobiles was waiting patiently to have their pictures taken.

So, naturally, after a couple of hours we packed up and headed out. We rightly made our way ...wait, we left the coffee shop, right, left, which way,... we didn't know if we should walk on the right side or the proper side of the sidewalk.

And what a show it was or we were, not sure which!



—> Chris Martens

There were Jaguars, Mini Coopers, Aston Martins, Triumphs, and many other examples of British automotive craftsmanship. Chrome was gleaming, paint was polished, and more than a few photographers immediately began looking for the right angle. After all, when presented with that much British metal, it would have been a **shame not to focus**.



Hutch (no last name required... well, you know it's Hutch) and Steve Light were also at the car show but those blokes had to leave before they could join the rest of the group for another cuppa and some photographic commiseration.

By the end of the morning, it was clear that the Coffee and Camera Gathering had accomplished exactly what it was intended to do. There were cameras, conversations, coffee, cars, and plenty of laughter. No formal agenda. No presentation. No pressure. Just photographers getting together and enjoying the fellowship of people who understand why someone might stand in one spot for twenty minutes waiting for the light to change.



CCP encourages all members to come out to these informal gatherings. They are a great way to meet fellow photographers, exchange information, ask questions, share experiences, and perhaps learn something new. Most importantly, they provide something every photographer can use: **fellowship with others who share the same passion for creating images.**

So, bring your camera, bring your questions, bring your stories, and bring your appetite for coffee. You never know what might develop.

And if there happens to be another British car show nearby...Well, that would simply be a matter of proper timing!



Member Spotlight Series

A recurring series celebrating the members of Coastal California Photographers; their lives, experiences and inspirations.



Susannah Sofaer-Kramer: A Life Choreographed by Art

Some people discover their life's passion in a single defining moment. For Susannah Kramer, it was never that simple. Her journey through dance, theater, film, and photography was not a series of separate careers, but one continuous artistic evolution. Every chapter prepared her for the next, even when she had no idea where life was leading.

Born in a small village in Scotland during the darkest days of World War II, Susannah entered a family where the performing arts were woven into everyday life. Her maternal grandparents and great-grandparents were celebrated opera singers, her mother was a professional dancer, and her father was an accomplished British actor. Their home was filled with musicians, actors, brilliant conversation, and the unmistakable rhythm of a theatrical household.

Long before she was old enough to decide what she wanted to become, her future had already been chosen.

At just four years old, Susannah was enrolled in ballet classes. Her mother, whose own dancing career had been interrupted, devoted herself completely to ensuring her youngest daughter would fulfill the dream she herself could no longer pursue. Ballet became more than lessons. It became a way of life.

The discipline produced extraordinary results. Susannah possessed exceptional talent and quickly excelled as a dancer. Yet dance came with an unseen cost.



Member Spotlight (cont'd)

As her mother's attention became increasingly centered on ballet training, Susannah's father watched his wife devote herself almost entirely to their daughter. In his eyes, he had lost the woman he adored. Although never spoken outright, Susannah would later recognize that this shift profoundly altered her relationship with her father. His resentment toward the situation became part of the fabric of their family life, leaving emotional scars that would remain throughout his lifetime.

Still, the stage called.

After immigrating to the United States in 1956, when her father's major flourishing film career brought the family to Hollywood, Susannah continued her intensive dance training. During her high school years Susannah danced with the Ballet Concerto of Los Angeles, sang in coffee houses like the Troubadour and performed in many plays at Hollywood High School. Upon graduating from high school, she immediately joined the National Company of *My Fair Lady*, launching a professional career that would take her from Broadway productions to television spectacles alongside entertainers such as Perry Como and Bob Hope.

Her greatest opportunity arrived after an audition that could easily have overwhelmed even the most seasoned performer. Competing against nearly *three hundred dancers* for the film adaptation of MGM's ***West Side Story***, only two were selected.

Susannah Sofaer was one of them.



She loved acting.

Working under the legendary Jerome Robbins proved transformative. Beyond appearing in one of Hollywood's most celebrated musicals, she gained something equally valuable; having Jerome Robbins on her résumé opened doors throughout the entertainment industry. She would later describe it as the credential that allowed her to work virtually anywhere as a dancer. However, within a year she suffered a serious foot injury and had to stop dancing.

Yet despite the success, dancing was never the destination she truly envisioned.

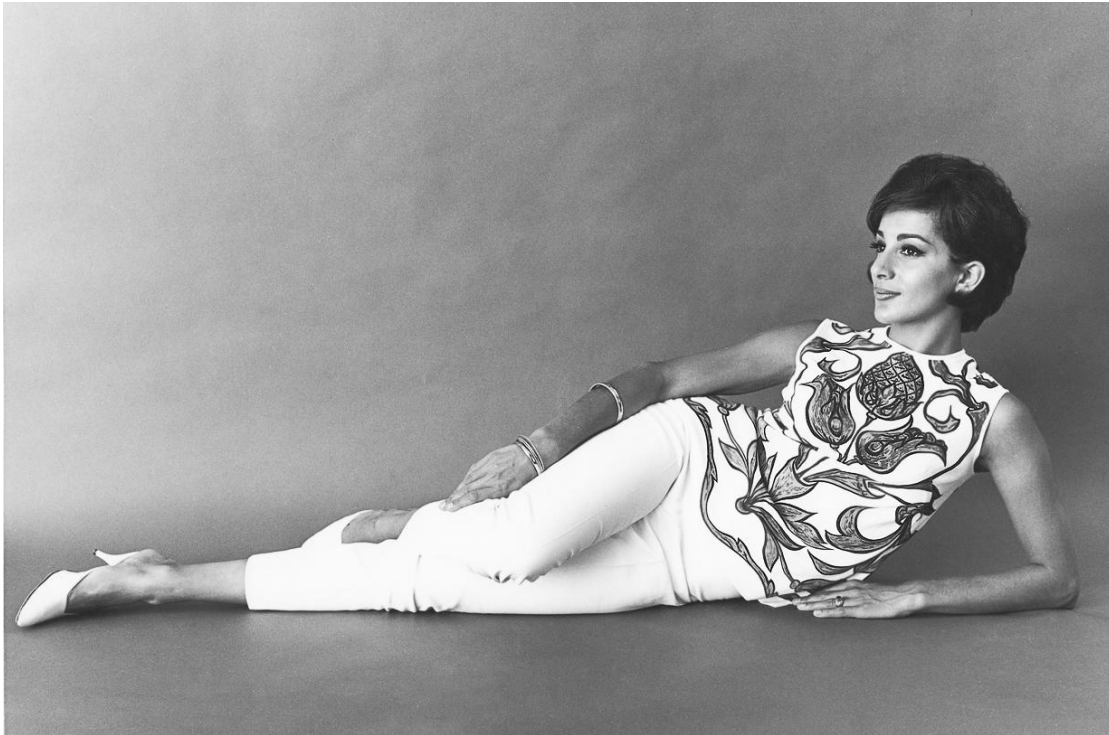
She loved acting.

She loved singing and joined the New Christy Minstrels.



Member Spotlight (cont'd)

She loved musical theater, where performance became storytelling rather than simply movement. Throughout her career she appeared in stage productions ranging from Neil Simon comedies to *Side by Side by Sondheim*, *Earnest in Love*, and numerous other theatrical productions that allowed her to combine acting, singing, into the kind of performances she had dreamed about since childhood.



Life, however, has a remarkable habit of redirecting even the most carefully planned careers.

After raising a family and moving to Hidden Hills, California, Susannah finally fulfilled another lifelong dream that had nothing to do with the stage.

She bought a horse.

Like many English girls, she had adored horses since childhood but had never been allowed to ride because it was not compatible with her ballet training. Now, for the first time, she could immerse herself in the equestrian world she had long admired.

One horse became two.

Two horses became five.

Trail rides became riding lessons.

Lessons became competitions.



Member Spotlight (cont'd)

Competitions unexpectedly became the doorway into photography.

While videotaping riding lessons and photographing friends at horse shows, Susannah began noticing something curious. Her photographs consistently stood out. The composition was stronger. The timing was better. The storytelling felt more complete.

Years spent studying choreography had taught her balance, rhythm, movement, and composition. Countless hours under theatrical lighting had given her an intuitive understanding of light and shadow. Stagecraft had quietly become photographic vision.

Photography was not replacing her artistic past.

It was collecting all of it.

Working first with film and black-and-white darkroom techniques, Susannah soon embraced digital photography and became an early adopter of Photoshop, mastering the software long before modern conveniences simplified digital editing. Her lifelong fascination with science and physics blended naturally with her artistic instincts, creating a rare balance of technical precision and creative expression.

What began with photographing horses gradually expanded into landscapes, wildlife, nature, and fine art imagery. The same patience and discipline that had once defined her dancing now shaped every photograph she created.

A friend suggested she expand her interest by joining the Ventura County Camera Club where her commitment extended far beyond creating images. Over the years she has served in virtually every leadership position the VCCC organization has offered, generously sharing her experience, mentoring fellow photographers, organizing programs, and helping shape the club's future through decades of dedicated volunteer service.

Those who know Susannah today recognize an accomplished photographer with an extraordinary portfolio. Yet her photographs represent far more than technical excellence. They embody decades spent understanding movement, light, emotion, timing, composition, and storytelling across multiple artistic disciplines.

From a wartime childhood in Scotland to Hollywood sound stages... from Broadway musicals to equestrian arenas... from the darkroom to digital imaging... Susannah Sofear-Kramer has lived a life devoted to seeing beauty, expressing emotion, and telling stories.

Today, she continues that journey through the lens of her camera, reminding fellow photographers that every life experience, whether joyful or difficult, eventually finds its way into the images we create.

Three of Susannah's favorite images are shown below on the next page....





September Monthly Critique Merits:

Link to view the September Critique Merit Image Gallery

<https://sept-2026.ccp.photos/set/1f97360e-ae81-493f-b48e-5a1932739510>

Save the Date!

Feb 6th, 2027

Awards Dinner - Bonnie Mercadante, Janice Lindsay and Vicki Stutson are planning our Annual Awards Dinner. **Save the date Saturday, Feb 6th, 2027** for our Awards Dinner. Event-specific information like location, price, etc will be posted to our Events Calendar soon so you can reserve your seats. If you are interested in helping, reach out to [Bonnie](#).



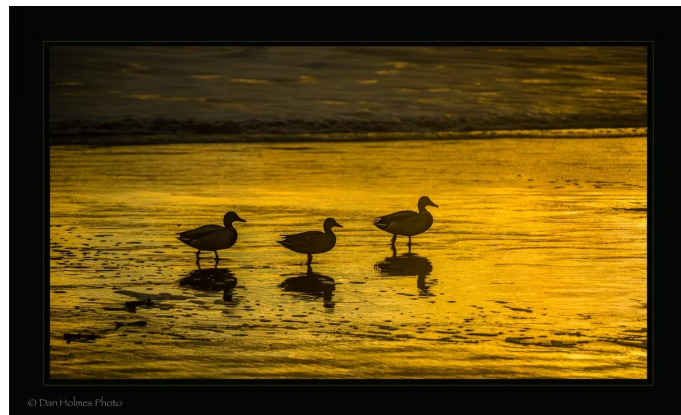
Wise Words From Dan Holmes

Wait and Watch - Then Click

I'll always remember this photography concept - Wait and Watch - presented in different ways by well-known travel photographers Robert Holmes and Nevada Wier during two Mountain Light photo workshops. Robert told the story of coming across a beautiful scene in India that needed to be photographed. The light was great, the backdrop was beautiful, the colors perfect - but it needed a person to complete the story. He leaned back against a wall, waited, and watched until that person happened to walk into the scene, and then created a beautiful image. Nevada told the story of people walking across a wooden bridge in Burma, silhouetted against the sun. The story was powerful; the colors and drama were also perfect - but she needed to wait until each person had walked into the right spot on the bridge. She waited and watched for that to happen, and then when it did, created a powerful and iconic image.

Whether it's a seascape with moving waves, people walking on a bridge, or ducks waddling across a beach - it's a good thing to look, think about what you'd like to see, and wait and watch for it to happen before you click the shutter.

Here's an example of a sequence of ducks walking across a beach. There were three, the light was getting good, the waves were low, reflections were great, and who doesn't like ducks! Now how to turn the three of them into a good photograph? It's super easy to click away and hope for the best - but that doesn't normally work out. It's good to click a couple and capture the memory but then wait and watch to see if they will compose themselves into a more powerful image. Here I followed them with my telephoto, and clicked as they walked, waiting for them to line up, separate, look the same direction, and walk into the reflected gold light. Fun stuff and a good exercise in waiting and watching!



Merchandise Update:

Now that we have a new logo and website, we plan to make both T-shirts and hats available. These will be available for ordering from the website soon. Check out the latest design below.





Coastal California Photographers :

Coastal California Photographers is a non-profit, professional & enthusiast photography organization committed to advancing photographic excellence through education, inspiration, mentoring, and collaborative learning while maintaining the highest ethical practices and conduct standards. We are a proud affiliate of the Photographic Society of America (PSA), the Professional Photographers of California (PPC), and a community network with the Professional Photographers of America (PPA).

CCP Officials Web Links:

General Info/President: mjmercadante@gmail.com

Newsletter Editor: kenmacg@aol.com

Membership: ronkap@verizon.net

WebMaster: TBD

Image Submissions (members only!):

Monthly Critique: janicelindsay@rocketmail.com

Quarterly Competition: danholmesphoto@gmail.com



CCP Club Officials

President:

Mike Mercadante

Vice President:

LLoyd Delaney VP Programs

VP Competitions:

Dan Holmes

VP Membership &

Recruiting:

Ron Kaplan

VP Communications:

Chris Martens

Secretary:

Ken MacGregor

Treasurer:

Robin Swanson

Committee Chairs:

Judge Coordinator:

Alex Andrews

Newsletter Editor:

Ken MacGregor

Monthly Digital Image

Entries and Projection:

Janice Lindsay