

ViewFinder

Newsletter of the Syosset Camera Club —Winter, 2026

Letter from the SCC President, Bonnie Forman-Franco

The members of SCC have had a wonderful past three months of activity.

On November 8th, ten members experienced a private tour of Ellis Island, specifically the hospital including areas which had very limited public access. What was supposed to be a 90 minute tour of the history of nursing at the hospital, turned into almost three hours of history and wandering the building. A great time was had by all. This was followed by a wonderful dinner at Fraunce's Tavern.

December 4th, we had our pot luck holiday dinner. Members brought an assortment of great food including desserts and a wonderful social evening was had by all. As usual, our 50-50 was a success. Hopefully, this will be a tradition for future years to come.

In the spirit of camaraderie, the Fresh Meadows CC invited our club to Movement LIC which is a "climbing facility" for December 16. Four of our members took advantage of the invitation and were able to photoshoot a different type of genre. This was similar but different to our experience at Gleason's Gym.

On January 11, ten members of our club will be experiencing another private tour, but this time of the underground subway system. We will be able to see first hand four stations. More information to follow in the next letter.

Although it appears we had a early winter with the weather, always remember, inclement weather brings great images.

Wishing you all, a very healthy and happy year ahead. I look forward to seeing you all soon.



©Bonnie Forman-Franco

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SYOSSET CAMERA CLUB EXCURSION

Ellis Island Nursing Tour — November 8, 2025

Review by Bonnie Forman-Franco

For many members of the Club, photographing, and getting a tour of the original nursing rooms on Ellis Island was a terrific opportunity, but, per Ellis Island, our numbers needed to be capped at 10 photographers. We reached that number within a day. Those ten club members went on a private Ellis Island Nursing Tour. However, it turned out to be more than just a tour. The group left on a 9 AM boat to the Statue of Liberty ending at Ellis Island. Thankfully, the weather gods were with us. It was a beautiful sunny day.

The tour was originally scheduled to be 90 minutes, however, our original nurse



©Bonnie Forman-Franco

Our exhausting day at the island ended with the ferry back to our starting point. Ten of us then went to Fraunces Tavern for a late lunch/early dinner. We all concluded this was one of the best events the club has ever sponsored and we look forward to many more in the future.

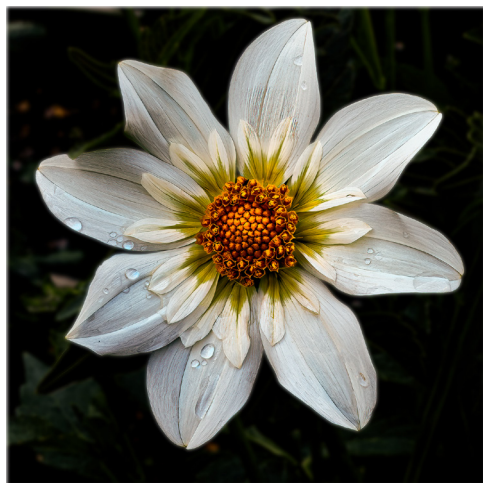
guide could not be with us. We had another nurse who was so taken by our group, she gave us an additional 90 minutes and access to infrequently visited areas. We had exclusive hard hat access to the abandoned complex and she was extremely knowledgeable about the history of health care at the hospital. The hospital opened in 1902 and closed its doors in 1954. **The non-profit group** Save Ellis Island is desperately trying to restore as much of the original buildings as financially and physically possible.

We were able to see the contagious disease wards (measles, tuberculosis and influenza being the most common), the autopsy room, the morgue, laundry room, laundry building and staff houses. We also witnessed art installations around the hospital and grounds which were unframed images mostly reflecting historical immigrant life done by JR-also known as Jean Rene a famous French Street artist and photographer.



©Richard Magro

©Barry Goldstein



Barry's photo of a dahlia after 30 minutes of post-processing



Photoshop generated imaging, using AI, from description "dahlia on blurred background".

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE, READY OR NOT

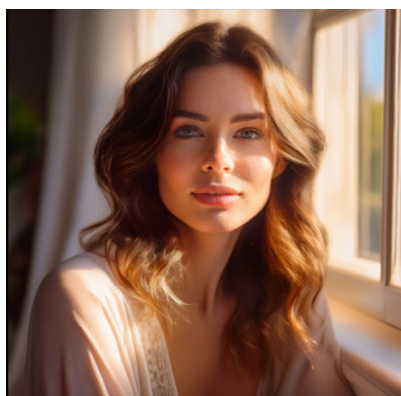
The beginning of a new era?

Be careful what you wish for. Wouldn't it be nice if we could say what we want and the software would do it? Yes, it would, it almost does, and it will.

It is happening in almost every industry; photography is certainly no exception. Having AI do repetitive tasks is a good thing. It is not cheating. It is still your own work, just a whole lot easier. It's like using a snow blower instead of a shovel. The problem is that AI is not stopping there. It is increasingly capable, intelligent and like a double edge sword can inflict harm.

The future is clear; image creation and photography will become mutually exclusive pursuits. Can anyone doubt that in time, software will create images in your style?

AI is more than simple code. It knows what makes something beautiful or what makes it ugly, and it learns! In the image below, I specified a 'beautiful young woman sitting by a window.' The image was made from my brief description but



AI image generated based on my instruction to create of "a 'beautiful young woman sitting by a window.'"

not by me. I didn't pick up my camera to create this image, and I didn't do any post-processing on it. I find no satisfaction in having specified what I wanted AI to produce, no satisfaction. The satisfaction of achieving a successful image is having controlled all the inputs.

Probably as a backlash reaction to AI, there is a rebirth of film among a growing number of enthusiasts. You may be surprised to know that film sales have increased over 230% in the past 5 years with new film stocks this

(A.I. article continues on next page)

Artificial Intelligence, Ready or Not *(Continued)*

year from Kodak, Ilford and others. The common explanation is a desire by enthusiasts to achieve the look of film. If you believe that, I have a bridge you might be interested in. Digital photography is more than capable of achieving the look and feel of film with less effort. Some cameras like those from Fujifilm, give you a choice of film looks in the setup menu. The real interest in my humble opinion is a desire to recapture the magic of photography, a tactile process entirely the work of the photographer, starting with a concept and created through composition and hands- on manipulation.

With AI assuming an increasing role in image creation, we face a dilemma as a camera club. It is essential to the foundation of the craft, to clarify what qualifies as our own work. It is still possible to use Photoshop and Lightroom without invoking their AI features. However, going forward the integration (infestation) will become so pervasive as to be difficult or impossible to use the editing tools without AI lending a heavy hand in the creative aspects.

If you believe what you've read so far won't affect you, you can continue to use the programs of your choice as your images become increasingly beautiful with decreasing effort. If on the other hand you begin to miss the full creative experience and find value in authenticity, there are alternatives.

Alternative A: Embrace AI. You won't be able to call it your work, but you'll most likely get over that. It's something to think about!

Alternative B: Rip the Band-Aid off. Abandon gems like Lightroom, Photoshop, etc. and use GIMP or any of several programs that do not utilize AI. You may be surprised at how good they are. You can play with GIMP by downloading it. It's free.

Alternative C: No post processing! Use images straight out of the camera. I don't care how good you are, those images will be a big snooze. Just sayin.

And finally: Go analog. Yea I know, that's a little drastic but could be a whole new world of fun. Maybe there would be enough interest to start a group within the club. Imagine dusting off a vintage camera and making a few enlargements the old fashion way. This is real photography folks.

In Memoriam: Joe Nightingale

Joe Nightingale passed on, the Syosset Camera Club lost a true scholar and gentleman.

Joe was a member of the Club for over 20 years, and during those years, he was an active member, most recently functioning as First Vice President, and as Treasurer, but Joe helped wherever he could, whether it was helping Sylvia with the set up of SCC parties, or helping Bonnie in her various functions as president.

Whether photographing wildlife or photographing bridges, Joe gave it his all, experimenting with equipment, going on SCC trips, and sharing his knowledge with Club members with a great generosity. Joe Nightingale, you will be missed.





HOW HE GOT THE SHOT

PETER NEWMAN

Interview of Peter by Lee Goldstein



©Peter Newman

This photo was submitted for the monthly (October, 2025) Syosset Camera Club competition. The meeting was on Zoom, so, sitting behind our own laptops or phones, we couldn't hear the reactions to the photo from our fellow Club members, but sitting behind my own computer screen, looking at that angry face, I couldn't stop laughing. When I stopped laughing, I thought, "how on earth did this photographer get this shot!" I found out the photographer was Peter Newman, a longtime member of our Club. I emailed Peter, with questions for this feature...

Lee: I love that shot of that bird you entered for the October Club competition, Peter. Where, how, did you ever get that shot?

Peter: The image is a hungry chick - a cuckoo. As far as I know, chicks from all species are always, always hungry.

Lee: Where were you when you got this shot?

Peter: I was at the Bronx Zoo and I shot it through glass. I used a collapsible rubber lens hood, pressed against the glass to avoid reflections.

Lee: What was your equipment?

Peter: I used my Nikon D300, and a Nikkor 70-200 lens, with 1.4 extender. The settings I used were 1/125 of a second, f8 and ISO 1250.

Lee: And post processing?

Peter: The usual adjustments for exposure & color in Camera Raw; noise reduction and sharpening in Topaz DeNoise AI and Topaz Sharpen AI. but I only had to do a minor sharpening.

Lee: And how on earth did you get that angle, looking down the bird's throat???

Peter: All chicks keep their beaks wide open, except when they are sleeping. I was lucky that the chick was close enough that I could get the shot.

Lee: Had you ever gotten that kind of shot before?

Peter: Nope

2025 SCC HOLIDAY PARTY

A Comedy of Errors

Review by Jessie McGuire

Some of you missed a memorable holiday party. First of all, the food was amazing, as usual. Steve brought a million pounds of rotisserie chicken, Bonnie a tray of amazing lasagna, Alan a huge plate of shrimp, Frank brought a green salad; I brought the requisite veggies in the form of a stacked ratatouille. There were even more entrees and we had a dessert table that promised pounds if we just looked at it long enough. Everything was out of this world.

The company was pleasant as usual. We laughed and totally enjoyed each other's company. Steve Kessler and Barry Goldstein came away a few dollars richer for having won the 50-50 raffle. We left sated and basking in our friendships.

Why a comedy of errors? Many of you know that a local brownie scout troop has the building reserved from 6-7 and we often cross paths as party planner par excellence Sylvia and her team arrive early to set up. But wait... rather than picking up their children, more seemed to be arriving and staying! The leader told us that they were permitted for 6-8 that particular evening. Tough when our permit is for 7 – 9. What to do?

We were standing out in the parking lot in 27 degrees while the brownies sat entrenched in the warm building over a crafts project. Bonnie to the rescue, who, very tactfully, negotiated with them to leave at 7:30. Leave? That meant clean and stand at the door in their coats until the respective parents arrived to pick up their offspring at eight. Just mild chaos, but they were very nice about it; the food was good, we had a good laugh at the situation and life went on.

Just to add a little spice to the evening, the ladies room door was locked and the maintenance man had left us a message to the effect that he had no key; we'd all have to use the men's room. That worked fine until one of our members accidentally closed that door leaving it locked. And no maintenance man in sight. Various attempts at picking the lock failed. The party may have broken up a little earlier than planned.

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2025 SCC HOLIDAY PARTY: A Comedy of Errors *(Continued)*

Just as an update. Frank, who liases with the town for the use of the building, called them the next day. The Brownies had been permitted for the following Thursday evening! Did they misunderstand? Did a town worker write the wrong date on their permit? Who knows, but they were a week early and we were in the parking lot with food rapidly getting cold. Good job, Bonnie for getting us in before eight, and to everyone for laughing it off and rolling with the punches. We do have an awesome group.

We missed those of you who couldn't make it. We're already looking forward to the end of the year gala. Hope you can make it then. It's not too early to plan the redo and think about what you might want to bring, should we decide that the end of the year party be another successful potluck dinner. We'll make sure the girl scouts aren't invited. Have a wonderful holiday season or, depending when this is published, we hope you all had a wonderful holiday season. See you on Zoom.

WINTER SCC PRESENTATIONS AND EVENTS

January 15	7:30 pm -9:30 pm	SCC Presentation	Wave and Shoreline Photography Meghan Clifford	Zoom
January 22	7:30 pm -9:30 pm	SCC Critique		Zoom
February 05	7:30 pm - 9:00 pm	SCC Meeting	The Club House @ Haypath Road Park	
February 12	7:30 pm -9:30 pm	SCC Competition		
February 19	7:30 pm -9:30 pm	SCC Presentation	Focus Stacking Steve Sattler	Zoom
February 26	7:30 pm -9:30 pm	SCC Critique Zoom		
March 05	7:30 pm -9:00 pm	SCC Meeting	The Club House @ Haypath Road Park	
March 12	7:30 pm -9:30 pm	SCC Competition	Judge scheduled is Barbara Crane	Zoom
March 19	7:30 pm -9:30 pm	SCC Presentation	Aquarium Photography Mat Coker (Ontario, Canada)	
March 26	7:30 pm -9:00 pm	SCC Critique		Zoom

ViewFinder: The Newsletter of the Syosset Camera Club

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