



the Galleon



The Santa Maria Camera Club Newsletter September 2026

President's Message

Hi all,

Hope to see you at our program meeting on Sept. 2. It's always fun to meet in person. Photographic Society of America's Photo Fest is Sept. 13-19 in Las Vegas. Nyla James and I will be going. Join us for a fun, educational experience. Info: <https://psaphotofestival.org/> Would you like to learn from home for free? Check out the Photoshop Virtual Summit from Sept. 14 to 18. Info: <https://davecross.krtra.com/c/uClw90S6Zy9c/PWe59> On Sept. 16, our competition theme is Still Life. Frank will send a Zoom link. Our Year-end Competition this year is Products. Take your photograph and have it printed on something like a coffee mug or T-shirt or whatever. It can even be a framed print. Members will vote on the entries during our December Holiday Party.

There are two local photo contests you might be interested in:

- The Natural History Museum of SM and the SM Library with our club as a partner is looking for entries for "Inspired by Nature" with cash awards given. The submission deadline is Sept. 11. Info: <https://www.facebook.com/SantaMariaNaturalHistoryMuseum>
- The second one is the 2026 Railroad Photo Contest with submissions due by Sept. 15. Info: <https://slorm.com/events/photo-contest/>

Yours in the light,

Jeanne Sparks

Election of 2027 SMCC Officers

In November we will elect the SMCC Board of Directors for 2027.

Up for election are the officers President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer and six At-Large Board Members.

Each Board Member takes on an area of responsibility. Board terms are only for one year. Having a complete board is essential for the Santa Maria Camera Club to run.

We will announce the slate of candidates at the online **October 21 Competition Meeting** as well as by email. The election will take place at the **November 4 Program Meeting**.

If you are interested in running, contact us by email at santamariacameraclub@gmail.com, or announce your candidacy during the October 21 meeting.

Thank you for participating in the club. Your participation makes our club successful!

Jeranne Sparks & Alan Upshaw

The SMCC Nominating Committee



AUGUST COMPETITION RESULT

Judge: Alla Arutcheva

Digital Monochrome

1ST PLACE	Fast forward	Harold Litwiler
2ND PLACE	The Monolith	Jeanine Bognuda
3RD PLACE	Venetian angel 2A	Jim McKinniss

Digital color

1ST PLACE	Field patterns	Ron Calvert
2ND PLACE	Preening flamingo	Penny Powell
3RD PLACE	Southbound flight	Jeanine Bognuda
HONORABLE MENTION	Clawed by erosion	Jeanine Bognuda

Congratulation to everyone



Ron Calvert



Harold Litwiler



Penny Powell



Jeanine Bognuda



Jeanine Bognuda



Jim McKinniss



Jeanine Bognuda



**JEANNE SPARKS, PRESIDENT
SANTA MARIA CAMERA CLUB**

jeanne.sparks@icloud.com



**NYLA JAMES, CLUB HISTORIAN & PSA REP.
SANTA MARIA CAMERA CLUB**

nylajames@gmail.com

Santa Maria Camera Club Continues to Thrive 88 years Since its Inception

The Santa Maria Camera Club held their first meeting in 1938 when when a group of men got together and decided to share their love for photography. The cameras were large and required tripods. These men felt that this wasn't appropriate for women.

The men got busy and created a Constitution and By-Laws. "This organization shall be known as the Santa Maria Camera Club... The aim of the Santa Maria Camera Club shall be the enjoyment, mastery and furtherance of Pictorial Photography through cooperation, effort and good fellowship."

The meetings would be held every first and third Thursday of the month. The meetings would have coffee breaks and a "Kitty" would be used to help defray expenses. They would have meetings, picnics, competitions, and a bank account.

To make it official, the Santa Maria Camera Club would belong to the Photographic Society of America! So in 1938, this strong desire to photograph through a group of local men became an entity.

A monthly postcard would be sent out to keep members informed of upcoming events. In January of 1955 the first issue of The Galleon was printed and sent out to the members. The name for the newsletter was chosen to represent "Your ship coming in loaded with new ideas, new discoveries and fun." We have kept every issue of The Galleon since then to keep a running history of the club. Our newsletter is published and emailed today by board member Flavio Parigi, keeping us informed about what is coming up each month.

The membership of men were a happy group with a competitive attitude mixed with fun and light-hearted practical jokes. The pictures in our archives show our fearless men sticking out their tongues and doing the bunny ears prank to the guy standing next to them. From the beginning, the club had barbecues and dinners that included their spouses

As our club progressed, a few of the wives began to attend the monthly meetings. Of course, they knew they weren't members. But one woman in particular, Doris Houghton, was outspoken and offered at times to help with some of the secretarial duties. Doris became so regular that the men began to count on her. We're sure that with a little nudge from the women, the men were persuaded to take a vote and open their club up to both sexes. After all, the women were already attending meetings and going on outings. It was nice to have some of the duties relieved by their wives like record keeping and supplying snacks.





Even though Black & White was the only category of competition for many years, color eventually made its place in the club. Soon after, we had several print categories including Momchome, Color A and Color B (for beginners and advanced) and Color Slides A & B. When covid struck, we took our competitions online with only two categories: Digital Monochrome and Digital Color, which we continue to have today.

Over the years, the club evolved into a true part of the community. Our competitions became a regular part of the local newspaper, the Santa Maria Times, where members would show off their monthly winning images. We announced events and kept the community aware that the Santa Monica Camera Club was always open for visitors, which we continue to do today.

The club calendar is packed year-round. We have numerous field trips throughout the year. Each month, we have a program meeting, a competition and a breakfast. In the summer, we have a picnic and Pizza Party. In December, we have a holiday meeting. In January, we have our annual awards reception at a special location to recognize members who have done well in our competitions and to honor one individual who has shown exceptional dedication during the prior year. We present that person with the Shepard Award, named in honor of our late member Dr. Dennis Shepard who secured our meeting room for us free of charge in-perpetuity. Since we have our program meetings in a retirement community, access is a challenge, but we can't beat the price and it's a beautiful place.

The members of our camera club have a strong bond to each other because we all have that desire to learn and improve our skill.

Our field trips are not only good for experiencing new and different locations and subject matter, but socializing creates a closeness that can only develop when we face difficulties, excitement, weather and beauty together. Field trips lasting several days create a bond through caravanning across deserts and through mountains together, sharing meals with evening camaraderie, dealing with unplanned photo ops seen from car windows, early morning sunrise shots and dealing with unexpected break-downs. These events are similar to what families go through. These all create memories tying us together. We even met a photographer on one of our trips who joined our club and became a prominent member.



Many of our field trips have been to state parks such as Sutter's Fort, Big Sur, Redwoods, Elephant Seals, Big-Rocks, Painted Caves and the annual trip to Carrizo Plain to capture the amazing burst of color of orange California poppies, purple lupines and phacelia, tall desert candles and yellow blazing stars.

Yosemite National Park has been an annual favorite in the winter. We could never get enough of the beautiful snow-covered beauty. We captured the amazing horsetail falls together, dealing with extremely high parking tickets. We visited the slot canyons of Antelope Canyon, Pinnacles National Park, The Grand Canyon and Saguaro. Members have also explored Figueroa Mountain, Piedras Blancas, Montana de Oro, the Salton Sea, Petrified Forest, Mono Lake, Joshua Tree- and even Texas for the solar eclipse.

We believe that our club has developed a strength that has tied us together and kept the passion of photography strong because we've lived it together. We feel like family and value our participation in the club.

Since we are online once a month for our competitions, you can join us from anywhere. Or if you're in the Central Coast of California, stop by. We'd love to see you!

Visit www.santamariacameraclub.org for more information or email us at santamariacameraclub@gmail.com.



DEBORAH KALAS

Horse-obsessed from the beginning, Deborah grew up with a unique understanding of horses that led to a lifelong devotion to photographing wild horses. From that journey came her award-winning book, *The Wild Herd: A Vanishing American Treasure*, released in 2019.



Deborah will present a program on photographing wild horses and her experience of publishing an award-winning coffee table book, *The Wild Herd; A Vanishing American Treasure*.

To learn more about Deborah and her work, visit deborahkalas.com.



September 2, 2026 7pm to 8:30 pm
Merrill Gardens 1350 N Suey Rd, Santa Maria, CA
For gate entry instructions
RSVP to SantaMariaCameraClub@gmail.com
SantaMariaCameraClub.org

SMCC Field Trips for September 2026 by Penni Powell

Please note: Bad weather can cancel outdoor activities. Contact the leader if you are in doubt. Check your email for any updates.

Sept 12th-13th Central Coast AirFest in Santa Maria – FYI centralcoastairfest.com

Sept 19th (Sat 9:50am – 2pm) Santa Maria BBQ and Music Festival at Pioneer Park (1150 Foster Road) “Where the Smoke meets the Sound”
smbbqfestival.com

Meet up at the festival entrance at 9:50 am because even though the festival opens at noon, we have early access to the BBQ action. Free parking onsite and free admission. Please check for email updates and RSVP for the field trip so I can look for you.

The early entry granted by the organizers to photograph in the BBQ area doesn't include BBQ tasting. For that, you would need to purchase a BBQ Tasting Ticket (\$50 per person or 4 for \$150, order online if you'd like). They would “appreciate any credit possible whenever any of the photos are used for competition or publicity.”

Besides the BBQ, there will be live music and carnival rides and games. If you do not want to do the BBQ tasting ticket route, plenty of food is available to purchase when we work up an appetite getting some super photos.

Questions? Contact me penpowell2020@gmail.com or cell phone.



Why go? Here's Santa Maria showing off what it does well: BBQ, live music and fun!

And beyond...

Oct 24th (Sat afternoon) Witches and Warlocks Paddle in Morro Bay

Nov 9th (Mon afternoon) Pismo Beach Sand Art

Nov 15th – 20th? California Route 66, Santa Monica to Barstow or Kingman AZ?

A multi-day field trip with motel lodging. Contact Penni if you are interested. More info to come.

Dec – Oso Flaco Lake

Jan 2027 – LA museum trip, down and back on a Sunday

Got an idea for a field trip? Email Penni at penpowell2020@gmail.com

Message from Adi Ringer

Early Access to Future Trips

Here are a few new trips that are in the works. Let me know if any of these interests you.

- **Patagonia: Pumas of Torres del Paine, April 2028**
We'll spend six days tracking and photographing pumas while surrounded by the dramatic landscapes of Torres del Paine, with fall colors, softer light, and the Andes as a backdrop. Group size will be limited to 6, with 3 spots currently available.
- **Kenya: Great Migration and Mara River Crossing, September 2028**
A 10-day safari built around one of Africa's most powerful wildlife spectacles: the Great Migration River crossing into Kenya. The trip will focus on action, behavior, and iconic East African wildlife, with time in the field to photograph the Big Five and other species across different habitats. Group size will be 6 to 8, with mid-to-high-end accommodations.
- **Birds of Argentina, 2027 and 2028**
Argentina has more than 1,000 bird species across an extraordinary range of habitats, including mountains, deserts, wetlands, forests, and Patagonia. Dates and regions are still being developed, but this trip will be designed around bird photography, habitat variety, and the chance to explore a destination that is still overlooked by many wildlife photographers.
- **Costa Rica: Northern Lowlands, 2027**
I'm working on a new Costa Rica itinerary focused on the Northern Lowlands and several bird species we do not target on the current route, including Agami Heron, Bare-necked Umbrellabird, Three-wattled Bellbird, and more. Dates are still to be determined.

PS: I have **ONE SPOT remaining** for my Tanzania trip in Feb. of 2027 (one single occupancy or two people double occupancy). Experience the great migration up close during the calving season. Full details are available on the website: www.adiringer.com

Wildlife and Nature Photography Tours

Mobile: 805-610-5527

Web: www.adiringer.com

Email: adi@adiringer.com

Meetup: <https://www.meetup.com/nature-photography-group-of-the-central-coast-of-ca/>

INFORMATION ABOUT THE CLUB

Meetings	In September there will be a program meeting (September 2) and the competition meeting (September 16)
Location	Our first meeting of every month will be held at Merrill Garden Retirements Center at 1350 N. Suey Road, Santa Maria. The second meeting will be via Webex. If you want to participate, <i>please send an email to</i> santamariacameraclub@gmail.com
Saturday Breakfast	The meeting will be on September 12 at 1275 Betteravia Rd, Santa Maria. It starts at 8:00 and ends at 10:00.
Membership dues	\$ 35 per person; \$ 50 Family; \$ 30 to participate in the competition meeting. All the due are per year
2025 Club officers	President: Jeanne Sparks Vice President: Heidy Gruetzemacher Secretary: Frank Tromp Treasurer: Alan Upshaw
At-large Board Members	Nyla James, Harold Litwiler, Jim McKinniss, Flavio Parigi, Penni Powell, Diane Thomsen
2025 Competition Rules	Each member may submit a maximum of 3 total image submissions in any category per competition.
Categories will be:	Digital Color, Digital Monochrome
Immediate Past president	Cheryl Decker
2025 Special Subjects	March – Landscape. June – Macro Photography. September – Still Life
Submit your images for digital competition to:	All the digital images can only be submitted by email at this email address santamariacameraclub@gmail.com All the digital images <u>MUST</u> be received no later than Sunday prior to the Wednesday competition. Images not received on time will not be entered in the competition
Galleon Director	Flavio Parigi fparigi@aol.com

COMMITTEE CHAIRS & CLUB VOLUNTEERS

Webmaster	Greg Doudna
Digital Competition Projectionist	Frank Tromp & Jim McKinniss
Program Projectionist	Ron Calvert & Frank Tromp
SMCC Directory & Calendar	Rosie Brancacio
Historian	Nyla James
Judge Recruitment	Harold Litwiler
Saturday Chat	Jim McKinniss
Point Tabulator	Richard Russ & Flavio Parigi
Print Coordinators	Flavio Parigi & Jim Snodgrass
Slide Coordinator	Elaine Calvert
Image scoring	Elaine Calvert, Penni Powell
Program Recruitment	Heidi Gruetzemacher
Refreshment	Everyone
PSA Representative	Nyla Janes
Library Coordinator	Ed E Powell
Meeting room setup	Everyone
Membership recruitment	Richard Russ
	Penni Powell, Bob Mihelic, Rosie Brancacio, Alan Upshaw, Greg Doudna
Field trips	
Name Tags	Nyla James

“Photography helps people to see

Berenice Abbott