

President's Statement: September 2023-24

Thank you for being a member of the Villages Camera Club. I've always felt that photographers see the world differently than anyone else. We constantly look for the art in our everyday lives, exploring light and shadow and then capturing the story to share with others. That shared experience makes us a community unlike any other. We are photographers.

As we embark on the '23-24 camera club year let's remember what we're here for: Our bylaws state "The purpose of our Club is to promote an interest in photography, develop friendships, and to help one another improve our photographic skills." What a fabulous goal. So, let's talk about how we do this.

"Promote the interest in photography": How do we understand our art better? One way we do it is by having monthly competitions, they are the best way to improve your photography. You compete against people at your own skill level and a judge will give you tips on how to improve. It's fun and easy. This year's educational programs will include sessions on Artificial Intelligence in imaging, portrait and pet photography, smartphone photography, bird/wildlife photography, sports photography, and a session where you can show off what you're working on, AND, we'll meet in person on most occasions. We'll also monitor other clubs and when they have a great program and it's open to other clubs we'll notify you.

"Develop friendships": The past few years have made this difficult a difficult goal. Hard to develop friendships when nobody is seeing each other. As mentioned above we're changing that this year. When we can get local speakers we will have live programs – that's our goal for most of our educational get-togethers. If our speaker is too far away, and too good to miss, we'll do Zoom. We are also working on outings, like to Point Reyes, and to the FotoClave photography conference in February so we can learn together.

"Help one another improve our photographic skills": Traditionally we do this through competition and workshops, but each one of us can learn more from one another. New to photography? Find a mentor. New to competition, ask one of our master photographers to help. Some of our members have won awards at the regional and national level and they love to teach what they know. Ask questions, attend workshops and put some of your prized images into our club competition. Believe me – you will become a better photographer.

Our leadership board is working hard to make this a meaningful and fun club and I truly look forward to this year as your club president.

Rich James, President
The Villages Camera Club