

Thousand Oaks Photo Group
Print Contest Rules
(Revised June 2018)

1. **Digital** - Contest images must be taken with a digital camera and must be submitted as prints. Prints must be received on time at the entry table before 6:00pm on the day of the meeting or they will not be displayed and entered into the Print Contest, no exceptions.
2. **Members Only** - Only paid-up club members of the T.O. Photo Group may enter the Print Contest.
3. **Color** - Images may be in color or black and white.
4. **Categories** - There are two separate *categories* in the Print Contest, *Assigned Topic* and *Open*.

A. Assigned Topic Category -

I. Topic - *The subjects for the bimonthly Assigned Topic Print Categories will be announced in advance at the club meeting and on the club's website.*

II. Date of Image - *There are no restrictions on when the image was taken. However, members are encouraged to take images specifically for the assigned topic in order to advance their learning.*

III. Editing - *The intent of the Assigned Topic Print Category is to help club members learn to create an exceptional and natural looking image, with limited post-processing, which illustrates a specific assigned topic. In the Assigned Topic category, photographers should focus on the assigned topic using the photographer's traditional tools of composition, light, story and subject. The goal is to learn to create a "wow" image that appears natural or photo-realistic, and that doesn't "wow" you with its post-processing techniques. The photograph should take center stage, not the processing techniques. Strong post-processing techniques belong in the Open Print Category, which has no limits on the use of digital processing.*

I.I.a. What is Allowed: *Images in the Assigned Topic Print Category may have a limited amount of digital editing. Allowable post-processing for the Assigned Topic Print Category includes mild adjustments to:*

- *White balance*

- *Color balance*
- *Cropping*
- *Saturation*
- *Exposure – including levels and curves*
- *Minimal cloning to remove minor distractions such as dust spots, a leaf, a hot spot, a pole behind someone's head, etc.*
- *Black & White conversion*

a. **What is Not Allowed:** *Images in the Assigned Topic Print Category must be created from a single image (or exact multiple images differentiated by exposure). The entry should not be over-processed and should appear photo-realistic. The following techniques are not allowed in the Assigned Topic Print Category:*

- *Replacing the sky or objects/people within the image, or adding objects/people from other images, etc.*
- *Overlaying textures or multiple images*
- *A triptych or image composed of more than one image*
- *Composites or multiple layering of images*
- *Obvious use of artistic filters such as Topaz, Nik, Lucis, or HDR Tone Mapping*
- *Digital art*

IV. **Enforcement** - *Prints Not Meeting the Rules for the Assigned Topic Print Category: Prints (and digital images submitted for a judge's critique) not following the above editing rules may be moved from the "Assigned Topic" category to the "Open" category, at the sole discretion of the Print Committee and/or pre-determined members of the Photo Group.*

B. **Open Category** –

- i. **Topic** - There is no assigned topic in the Open category.
- ii. **Editing** - Images in the Open category may have an unlimited amount of editing or digital manipulation. This includes Digital Art. All elements in the image must be of the member's own making.
- iii. **Date of Image** - There are no restrictions on when the image was taken.

5. **Number of Images** - There is a maximum of **2 images** per member, per contest. Members may enter either one or two images in the Assigned Topic category or one or two images in the Open category. However, the ***maximum total number of images per contest is 2.***
6. **Mounting of Images** - The print submission for both categories may be any size up to a *maximum* physical outside dimension of 16" x 20". You must mount your printed image on Foam Core or in a mat, (*no double matting allowed*) but the outside of the mount or mat dimensions cannot be larger than a *maximum* of 16"x 20". There are no hard frames allowed such as wood, metal, etc., and prints may not be mounted behind glass, or wrapped in plastic sheet.
7. **Identification** - On all print submissions, the *Category*, (Assigned or Open), the *full name* of the photographer and *title* of the image must be written *on the back of the print*. For example, ***Open, Bob Smith, Lilies of the Field.***
8. **Descriptive Titles** - You may add a description or a title to the front of the print, but your Category and Name must only go on the back along with the title of the image.
9. **Judging** of the prints will be conducted by a professional photographer. A first place, second place and third place ribbon will be awarded in each category, (Assigned or Open).
The names of Ribbon Winners will be announced at an awards ceremony at the end of the evening, after the critique.
10. **Critiquing** - If you wish to have your image critiqued by a *professional photographer*, please email a digital file of your print image(s), in JPG format, to PhotoEntries@tophotogroup.org by *noon two days before the club meeting*. Late images will not be critiqued.
Only Print images for which you have submitted a Digital image will be Critiqued. If you enter two digital image files, you must specify with the number 1 and 2 after your name, which entry is your preferred image for critiquing, in case time limits preclude critiquing all of the images.

The judge will grade images per club's image scoring system and names of authors of images with score 8 or 9 will be announced.

Having your image critiqued is optional and is not required as part of entering the Print Contest. However, members are encouraged to participate in the anonymous critique process as it is one of the fastest ways to improve as a photographer.

- A. Resize** - Emailed images must be resized to a maximum of 1400 pixels wide and 1280 pixels tall (*neither dimension* may exceed those measurements).
See the article entitled, *Resizing Your Images for Contests* on our website.
- B. Rename** - Before emailing your digital image(s), you must *rename* the digital file with the correct category listed first (see below), then your Full Name and finally the Title of the image *in the file name*. You must place the number 1 and 2 after your name to indicate the primary and secondary picture for critiquing (in case of time constraints). For example: **Assigned_David Smith1_Sultry Sunset.jpg** Do NOT use ALL CAPS but DO use *spaces* and *underscores* for legibility and read-ability.
- C. Sending** – An email will be sent to confirm receipt of your images(s) or to notify you if corrections are needed in the sizing or naming of your digital file. If you do not receive a confirmatory email, presume that your images(s) were not received and contact the club for assistance. Enter early to be sure you have time to get your images entered with the correct naming conventions.

11. Eligibility - Any images not following these official Print Contest rules will be disqualified and ineligible to win a Merit Award or Ribbon for that evening's Print Contest. The decision of the Print Contest Coordinator and the elected leadership of the Photo Group will be final re: application of the Print Contest rules.

12. Print Contest Procedures

- A. There will be a table set up outside the meeting room where members should enter their prints at the beginning of the meeting (you must arrive before 6:00pm to enter).
- B. Be sure to write on the back of each print your Category (Assigned or Open), your Full Name and the Image Title.
For example: **Assigned, Bob Jones, Lovely Lady.**
- C. Judge's Merit Awards will be announced during the critiquing, and the final results of the judge's ribbon awards will be announced at the end of the meeting.
- D. If you have submitted a digital version of your print and subsequently are not able to enter that image in the Print Contest,

please notify us prior to the meeting by email at PhotoEntries@tophotogroup.org. The image will not be critiqued.

13. **Use of Images** - Generally members' names are announced at the club meeting only when they win an award, for example, First, Second or Third in the Print Contest, or if they win a Judge's Merit Award during the critiquing.
Any image entered in a club contest may be published in the club newsletter or on the club website.