



Volume 31, Issue 3  
February, 2019

# What is the Best Camera? Philosophy and Practice

By Charles Morris

Reprinted with permission of the author.

A common question: "What \*is\* the best camera?"

What is the best car? Is it easier to raise sheep or goats? Are there reasons that spotted owls are more important than humans?

It depends. The camera in your hand is way better than the one in the closet or in the bag safely out of sight in the trunk of the car. Those "safe" cameras are pretty useless as you see your grandbaby take its first steps, or your new puppy meets the cat for the first time. No matter what camera you have, no camera is a substitute for technique and those squidgy bits behind the eyes of the photographer.

Most of life's questions are either about need, want, or belief. In the case of cameras, in the case of amateurs, this "which is best?" question usually comes from people that have either an interest in photography, or have reached a point of frustration or dissatisfaction with whatever they already have. Why are you interested? What is your smart phone or current camera not doing that you think you want to accomplish? The answers to those questions are good starting points to the answer, or more often, guides to the next questions you might want to ask. All cameras are recording devices. They are the silent witness you drag along to repeat the truth of what you just saw and thought was worth recording for the benefit of the future. Freezing time is your new superpower thanks to a camera. All cameras are tools and either work in your hand at your command, or they intervene and make some of the choices about focus and exposure on your behalf. Do you want to control the camera, or do you want it to control you? "Good" cameras, as seen by accomplished amateurs and professionals, are the ones that work with you and just get

What is the Best Camera?	1
Volunteer!	3
ACC Photo Exhibit Schedule	4
The Best \$9.95 I Have Spent	5
Mort's Take	6
February Competition Results	7
Winning and HM Images	8
Winter-Spring Program Schedule	13
Officers and Committee Chairs	14
Map to ACC Meetings	15
The Birthday Corner	16

out of the way when you are trying to capture a moment.

If you have small children, or grandchildren and you want something that takes pictures of them in motion, then a smart phone or a compact point and shoot camera will lead to frustration. Lag time in the shutter, and slow follow-up shots are common. So your magic moment, blowing out candles, sticking the landing in gymnastics, that unfiltered look of joy as they open a gift or make a new discovery will be elusive. There are a handful of pocketable cameras that are responsive enough to do this job more often than not, but the typical answer is to get a "better" camera. A mirrorless camera system, like the Canon EOS-M or the Olympus OM-D series, or the Sony a6000 might be just as good for you as a \$6500 Nikon D5. More common choices would be whatever DSLR kit is on sale at Best Buy for under \$500, so a Canon T6, or a Nikon D3400 are pretty common and very flexible starting points into a wider world.

If you want to take pictures of skittish or dangerous wildlife, responsive is good, but the ability to add long telephoto lenses becomes more important. There are superzoom "bridge" cameras that now include high magnification lenses that come at a price point well below the cost of the tripod that a 600mm lens attached to a DSLR would require for that job otherwise. The DSLR might produce an image you can enlarge more without losing image quality, but the superzoom has a number of other uses and weighs a fraction of the "pro" kit. So which is better? The camera you can spend \$600 on and use all the time, or the kit that you have to invest as much in as a second car only to use it a few times a year? Don't let the mystique of "ultimate quality" get in the way of practical choices. The naysayers that preach "thou shalt use only SLR cameras and top notch fixed focal length lenses" probably have different goals, or just feel a need to make someone else feel inferior. While you are happily walking trails with a light camera taking whatever pictures please you at the time, those guys are lugging a 40

pound pack full of gear that is slow to deploy and will likely miss any opportunity of catching a rare bird that lands on a fence post next to them.

Do you dream of expansive vistas taking in panoramic views of the countryside? Low distortion wide angle lenses work better with larger sensors or larger film, so it may be that you need a full frame DSLR with a rectilinear wide angle lens, or maybe even a large format field camera with wide angle lens.

Are you a coin or stamp collector whose only goal is to catalog every item in your collection for insurance records? A compact camera with a macro focus capability with lights around the lens will be much more convenient than a DSLR with a 60mm macro and an add-on ringlight. (Pentax/Ricoh WG-1 is great for this)

Are you a fisherman that wants to take pictures of your fish from a newly developed lake that does not allow you to keep the fish? Maybe a "lifeproof" camera that won't die if you drop it over the side of the boat is in order. Nikon W-300, Olympus TG-5 or Fuji XP130 on a leash could be the perfect camera. (A floating strap or "dummy cords" are valuable with waterproof cameras)

Do you have a dream of taking pictures of monuments and architecture that barely fit into the imagination? Is the distortion of a compact camera or a fixed axis lens on a DSLR forcing distorted perspectives on your vision? That enters a realm of specialty that begs for tilt and shift lenses that actually change shape to correct distortions and perspectives that plague more common setups. For this, you are definitely in the DSLR range at a minimum and might even consider a large format view camera with tilt, and rise and fall motions designed into the camera frame.

This is not a one size fits all endeavor. Most people eventually have more than one camera and a shelf full of accessories for various occasions. Cameras are still tools, and it is wise to analyze the need, and buy the tool that fits. Most importantly, arm yourself with knowledge and develop that into technique. The wrong gear

can often be overcome with the right technique, but the wrong technique, or lack thereof will always falter even with ideal equipment. Know your gear, read the manuals, play with the controls, practice. Know what practice works. If macro is your thing, then taking pictures of breadcrumbs on the dining room table is just as valid as traveling to the desert to take pictures of cactus needles. Get a feel for what focal length means and when you take a picture on the trail, you preset the zoom before the camera comes to your eye. Less fussing with controls saves time and makes successful shots more likely. Photography to capture the spontaneous favors those prepared for it.

In all pursuits, be content. You will miss a lot of shots. Forgive yourself those missed opportunities. Take joy in the shots you do get, and hone your craft and your vision. Spend wisely on things that will extend your craft, be patient. Save for the \$900 lens you need for those perfect dragonfly pictures and don't waste it on a dozen \$50 accessories that will only clutter and weight down your bag. Spend money and time on training. That might be books, or workshops, or video classes. Cultivate relationships with your community. Seek like-minded photographers with more experience than you and learn from them. As your skills and success multiply, be that mentor to others you wish you had growing into the craft.

---

## Volunteer!

By Ed Martin

You obviously have a passion for photography otherwise you wouldn't have joined the camera club. Well, take that passion further by volunteering to take pictures for the other groups in your circle.

The work challenges you to perfect the skills you know, learn new skills, and practice them and improve your processes and procedures. There is nothing like having to clone out the leash from 100 dog photos to teach you how to do it efficiently and effectively.

The two groups I volunteer most of my photography time for are the church I attend, Saint Simon's Episcopal, and The Buddy Foundation, a no-kill animal shelter, both in Arlington Heights. The photography for each is different and has expanded my skills greatly since I started.

I don't get a chance to take images of dogs resting in their own house with their heads on their owners laps. The dogs I take pics of

have just arrived in a new location stripped of their owners, possibly after having survived outside on their own and are trying to cope with a new shelter environment, a loving one I admit, but still frightening for them. They are all scared. Some show it visually which makes it very hard to provide a Happy Image. Others show it with aggression, I don't like those as I'm usually on my knees operating the camera just a few feet away from a large set of teeth.

The images I end up with come from a collaboration between me, the camera man, the walker/handler and the dog. All three are needed. The walkers know that they need to control the dog but not overly control it all the while holding the leash up for ease of cloning and keeping all of their body and shadow out of the picture. The dog's job is to position itself perfectly in the frame for a quick snap although they don't know that and I have not yet gained the skill to communicate those desires. What they do is walk around, sniff pee spots, look at the handler, the trees, other dogs, the clouds, and occasionally look at the stupid guy kneeling on the ground with a black thingy in front of his face, his right thumb on the focus button and his right finger on the shutter button... Then the squeak comes from the pink piggy in the left hand, the face turns, the eyes focus. Done. 25 images, maybe a good one.

The job continues as I thank the walker and dog for a great job done while all walk back into the building. Then I sit in front of the computer, load, sort, adjust, clone, crop the final images (square@ 500px and a 4x6), and email the resultant files to the volunteers that need them.

I do this nearly every time a new dog comes in, usually once a week. It is fun and satisfying and the learning exercise is tremendous.

Some dog images can be found by clicking on the pointer below. When you look at them keep in mind that these images are used to show the dog, not worrying about the environment, so they are cropped tight.

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/26988996@N08/albums/72157639915002564>

Each year I create a 16x20 print of the dogs whose pictures have been taken by myself and other volunteer photographers in the previous year. This project allows me to push my Photoshop skills further. The file this year for 2018 contained 273 layers, 135 head shots, 135 names, white background, year, and logo. That takes a good deal of time to do, but it is fun to do, and the result ends in a framed

image in the shelter kitchen/meeting room for all to see.

At St Simon's I have been part of a team taking pictures more than 20 years. Many of the photos taken there are used in various church publications. Some of the photo projects take many months to complete, such as documenting construction work, and some are as fleeting as the moment of Christening. Both broad and intimate photos are satisfying in that they are used by other teams of volunteers to enhance important publications and for slide shows.

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/26988996@N08/40482710304/in/album-72157665338605327/>

This volunteer work hones photography skills. Composition in the camera becomes quicker, camera settings second nature and post processing improves. The ability to “SEE” a composition is quicker. You take thousands of photos annually in these endeavors. All are appraised and each teaches a lesson. Lots to learn. Lots...

Use your skills and passions for the benefit of many by volunteering your photo skills. It's a fun and satisfying learning exercise.

## The ACC Photo Exhibit Schedule

<b>MONTH</b>	<b>VENUE</b>	<b>THEME</b>
<b>March</b>	<b>Arlington Hts. Library - Case</b>	Spring
<b>April</b>	<b>Mt Prospect Library - 3 Cases</b>	Flowers (anything with flowers)
<b>May</b>	<b>Prospect Hts Library - Lg Wall &amp; Cases</b>	Water (anything that is or includes water)
<b>June</b>	No Exhibit	Summer Break
<b>July</b>	No Exhibit	Summer Break
<b>August</b>	No Exhibit	Summer Break
<b>Sept</b>	<b>Schaumburg Lib - TBD</b>	Travel

# The Best \$9.99 I Have Spent on Photography Self-Study

By Mike Garber

My son in law is a pretty good photographer. However, he is one that is constantly looking for new ideas and techniques. He follows a number of photographic sites.

He started sending me links to YouTube clips from Tony Northrup. I found a number of the videos to be quite interesting and some useful. So I subscribed to the Tony Northrup YouTube channel. What is shown is not always relevant to my interests. They cover techniques, of photography and also equipment reviews.

I found there was enough very useful videos, I thought I would try their book, which is advertised on their YouTube videos. The book is title Stunning Digital Photography. It is written by Tony and his wife Chelsea. I bought the digital version, which is a pdf, for the \$9.99 I mentioned.

I found the book to be excellent. It covers both basic and advanced topics. The most useful feature is that every chapter has a link to a YouTube video with more detail and explanation of the topics. I found it was a great review and also learned a good number of new techniques. The explanations and examples are very well done. If any updates are made to the book after your purchase, you automatically get the updates.

With the book, you also get access to their Facebook page. They offer that you can upload images and they will review and offer suggestions for free.

I recently purchased a new mirrorless camera. The configuration for settings are quite complex; there are over 150 settings. I found a chapter in the book that linked to YouTube video that explained and gave suggestions for setting for my camera. His site covers most of the popular cameras. That video was more than worth the price of the book.

Since I had a good experience with the Photography book, I decide to try their Lightroom book. It works the same way and I downloaded the pdf book, with links to videos. I recently upgraded Lightroom from version 5 to the cc subscription version. I was aware that Adobe had made a number of improvements, but did not know where they were in the modules or how or why to used them. The Northrup book did a good job of helping me learn the new version.

Since I am now with the Adobe CC model, I get Photoshop, which I have never used. Northrup offers a Photoshop book also, which I may buy once I am ready and have a reason to try Photoshop.

In summary, if you are looking for a good self-study program to help improved your photography; I strongly recommend looking in to Tony Northrup's YouTube videos and his books.

# Mort's Take

By Mort Lerman

This is a different take because after 60 years of photography, I tried a new way to use my camera. I've just returned from Poland this balmy January. I was there on assignment to photograph a University of Wisconsin "Study Abroad" program along with 10 students and my fiancé Helen (she is a professor and this was her third program in Poland). We traveled to three different cities. The balmy winter weather of 25 to 28 degrees (F) and winds of 15 to 25 miles per hour froze my hands and face. Using a camera without wearing gloves was out of the question, so I made my APS-C camera a "point and shoot" using manual mode and still wore gloves. I used the back focus button, and set the AF to AI Servo (focused once and let the camera focus itself). When outdoors in daylight, I set camera in manual mode to 1/200<sup>th</sup> and f8.0 and Auto Iso up to 12,800 and left it there. While shooting indoors without flash, I set the shutter to 1/60<sup>th</sup> and lens open to f4.5 and Auto Iso still at 12,800 and kept shooting. No further changes were made. When in the Wieliczka Salt Mine, 130 meters below surface, it was dark and the only thing I changed was the shutter to 1/10<sup>th</sup> of a second

and braced myself as best I could. The amazing thing I learned was that nearly all the images were properly exposed and identically exposed. Auto ISO works.

Noise did not bother me because I was able to remove it, even when at ISO 12,800. Also, for many years I was accustomed to shooting with B&W Tri-X film, which always produced some noise (grain), and it didn't bother me or the pros who even pushed it to ASA 2,000. Digitally, I use several ways to remove noise:

1. DeNoise 6.0 repeated on 2 layers or more.
2. Blur noise on what isn't important in the image.
3. Blur and use several different ways to sharpen the image to "MY" satisfaction.

This was a write and tell (rather than a show and tell), as I'm still learning and trying new ways. Whether I will ever devote my photography to landscape, animal and flower photography, is doubtful. I still like street photography where emotion can be part of the image. It is difficult to have emotion in landscapes, animals and flowers, but it's possible. However, I just don't see it very often.

That's It, that's My Take.

# February, 2019 Competition Results

## Small Monochrome

Mort Lerman, "The Alamo", AW-23, Small Monochrome Print of the Month  
Paula Matzek, "Shadows & Light", AW-22  
Bob Reynolds, "A Cell with a View", HM-22  
Reinhard Schwind, "Smoke Stacks", HM-23

## Large Monochrome

Patrick Grady, "Bridal Veil Falls", AW-25, Large Monochrome Print of the Month  
Mike Garber, "Desert Cyprus", HM-25

## Small Color

Mike Garber, "Owlette", AW-25, Small Color Print of the Month  
Nancy St. Clair, "Fall Day", AW-23  
Nancy St. Clair, "Winter Falls", HM-23  
Bob Reynolds, "Green & Scaly", HM-25

## Large Color

Kathy Grady, "Ephemeral Pond", AW-27, Large Color Print of the Month  
Judy King, "Orange Against Blue", AW-25  
Patty Colabuono, "Wood Nymph", AW-24  
Bob Reynolds, "Deer on a Ridge", HM-23  
Nancy St. Clair, "Great Sailing Day", HM-23  
Mort Lerman, "Fish Harbor Morning", HM-24

## Color DPI

Bill Heider, "First Date", AW-25, Color DPI Image of the Month  
John Chwalek, "Fall Color", AW-24  
Joanne Barsanti, "Under the Pier", HM-24  
Ken Olsen, "Hawk Portrait", HM-24

## Mono DPI

Bob Reynolds, "Farm in the Valley", AW-23, Mono DPI Image of the Month  
Joanne Barsanti, "Taking Off", HM-21  
John Chwalek, "Streets & Avenues", HM-21

# Some of the Winners and HMs from the February Competition

## Prints



Paula Matzek, "Shadows & Light", AW-22



Bob Reynolds, "A Cell with a View", HM-22



Reinhard Schwind, "Smoke Stacks", HM-23



Patrick Grady, "Bridal Veil Falls", AW-25,  
Large Monochrome Print of the Month



Mike Garber, "Desert Cyprus", HM-25



Mike Garber, "Owlette", AW-25,  
Small Color Print of the Month



Bob Reynolds, "Green & Scaly", HM-25



Kathy Grady, "Ephemeral Pond", AW-27,  
Large Color Print of the Month



Judy King, "Orange Against Blue", AW-25



Patty Colabuono, "Wood Nymph", AW-24



Bob Reynolds, "Deer on a Ridge", HM-23



Bill Heider, "First Date", AW-25,  
Color DPI Image of the Month



John Chwalek, "Fall Color", AW-24

## DPI Images



Joanne Barsanti, "Under the Pier", HM-24



Ken Olsen, "Hawk Portrait", HM-24



Bob Reynolds, "Farm in the Valley", AW-23,  
Mono DPI Image of the Month



Joanne Barsanti, "Taking Off", HM-21



John Chwalek, "Streets & Avenues", HM-21

# Winter-Spring Program Schedule

9/5/2018 Bob Armbruster

9/19/2018 Judging - Bill Brown

10/3/2018 Competition

10/17/2018 Critique session

11/7/2018 Tom Snitzer mirrorless and other things

11/21/2018 No meeting

12/5/2018 Competition

12/19/2018 Will Clay

1/2/2019 Creative images

1/16/2019 Owls in the wild - Emma England 2/6/2019 Competition

2/20/2019 Critique session

3/6/2019 "Behind the Scenes with Joanne Barsanti"

3/20/2019 Bob Benson - Luminar software

4/3/2019 Competition

4/17/2019 Workshop

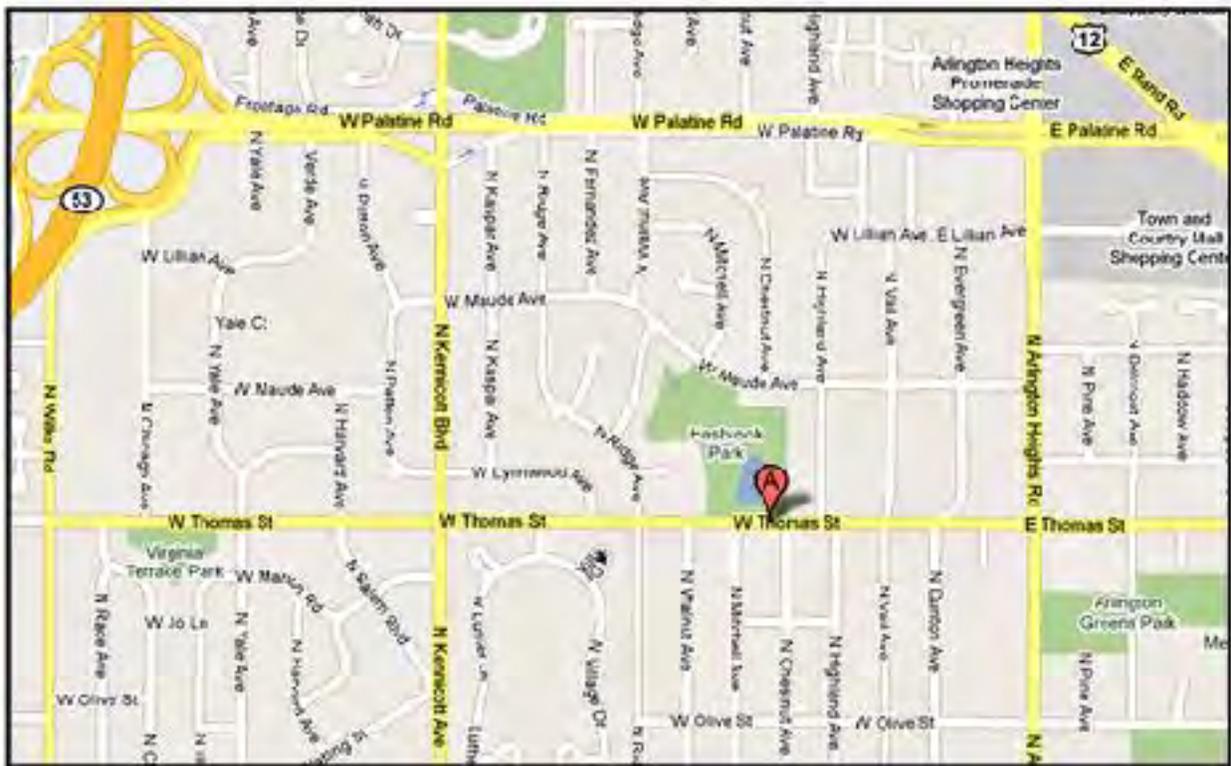
5/1/2019 Jim Klepac - Photographing animals at the zoo

5/15/2019 Park Challenge

6/5/2019 End of year fun competition

## OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS 2018-2019

<b>Larry Arends &amp; Cindy Kuffel</b>	<b>Co-Presidents</b>	<a href="mailto:president@arlingtoncameraclub.org">president@arlingtoncameraclub.org</a>
<b>Bob Reynolds</b>	<b>V.P. Programs &amp; Workshops</b>	<a href="mailto:vpprograms@arlingtoncameraclub.org">vpprograms@arlingtoncameraclub.org</a>
<b>Janis Williams, Carol Arnolde</b>	<b>V.P. Competition</b>	<a href="mailto:vpcompetition@arlingtoncameraclub.org">vpcompetition@arlingtoncameraclub.org</a>
<b>Judie Reynolds</b>	<b>Treasurer</b>	<a href="mailto:treasurer@arlingtoncameraclub.org">treasurer@arlingtoncameraclub.org</a>
<b>Becki Hagberg-Cohen</b>	<b>DPI ACC</b>	<a href="mailto:dpi@arlingtoncameraclub.org">dpi@arlingtoncameraclub.org</a>
<b>Ed Martin &amp; Bill Bible</b>	<b>DPI CACCA</b>	<a href="mailto:dpi@arlingtoncameraclub.org">dpi@arlingtoncameraclub.org</a>
<b>Larry Brady</b>	<b>Chief Judge</b>	<a href="mailto:chiefjudge@arlingtoncameraclub.org">chiefjudge@arlingtoncameraclub.org</a>
<b>Susan Paasch</b>	<b>PSA Representative</b>	<a href="mailto:psarep@arlingtoncameraclub.org">psarep@arlingtoncameraclub.org</a>
<b>Rich Milburn</b>	<b>Newsletter</b>	<a href="mailto:newsletter@arlingtoncameraclub.org">newsletter@arlingtoncameraclub.org</a>
<b>Judy King</b>	<b>Publicity</b>	<a href="mailto:publicity@arlingtoncameraclub.org">publicity@arlingtoncameraclub.org</a>
<b>Bill Kruser</b>	<b>Community Activities</b>	<a href="mailto:community@arlingtoncameraclub.org">community@arlingtoncameraclub.org</a>
<b>Lance Lagoni &amp; Patty Colabuono</b>	<b>CACCA Representative</b>	<a href="mailto:caccarep@arlingtoncameraclub.org">caccarep@arlingtoncameraclub.org</a>
<b>Norm Plummer &amp; John Kinyon</b>	<b>Webmaster</b>	<a href="mailto:webmaster@arlingtoncameraclub.org">webmaster@arlingtoncameraclub.org</a>
<b>Pat Coleman</b>	<b>Photographic Displays</b>	<a href="mailto:photodisplay@arlingtoncameraclub.org">photodisplay@arlingtoncameraclub.org</a>
<b>Mike Garber</b>	<b>Membership Chair</b>	<a href="mailto:membership@arlingtoncameraclub.org">membership@arlingtoncameraclub.org</a>
<b>Jim Nordin</b>	<b>Setup &amp; Take Down</b>	<a href="mailto:PFH704@aol.com">PFH704@aol.com</a>
<b>Bill Heider</b>	<b>Field Trips &amp; Outings</b>	<a href="mailto:BillHeiderACCOuttings@gmail.com">BillHeiderACCOuttings@gmail.com</a>
<b>Carol Arnolde</b>	<b>Corporate Secretary</b>	<a href="mailto:pcarnolde@sbcglobal.net">pcarnolde@sbcglobal.net</a>
<b>Susan Paasch</b>	<b>Hospitality</b>	



***ACC meets at the Christian Church of Arlington Heights, 333 W. Thomas Avenue, three blocks west of Arlington Heights Road, across from Hasbrook Park on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of the month at 7:30 p.m.***



***Chicago  
Area  
Camera  
Clubs  
Association***

# The **Happy Birthday** Corner

Happy Birthday to our  
March, April and May  
Members!!



## **March**

**Lance Ligoni**

**Norm Plummer**

**Jim Nordin**

## **April**

**Judie Reynolds**

**John Coens**

**Patty Colabuono**

## **May**

**Pat Coleman**

**Mort Lerman**