The Keystone Salon of Photography 2026

The Keystone Salon of Photography 2026 is an annual regional projected digital photography competition among members of clubs in Western and Central Pennsylvania.

1) Only members of a participating club may enter images. The participating clubs are:

- ABC Photography Society - Altoona
- Greensburg Arts Center
- Lens Shooters
- New Kensington Camera Club
- Pittsburgh Photography Club
- State College Photo Club
- The Westmoreland Photographer's Society
- Washington Camera Club

2) All images must be taken with a camera by the same image maker. All parts of the image must be taken by the same image maker and not purchased nor fabricated by AI software.

3) Images are to be no larger than 1920 pixels on the longest side (vertical or horizontal), less than 5 MB, and in the sRGB color space.

Category Guidelines
The categories and their rules have been adopted from the Photographic Society of America (PSA) rules. The PSA provides a variety of services to local clubs, one of the most important is the standardization of rules that helps clubs to work together.

APPLICABLE TO ALL CATEGORIES

SUBJECT MATTER
The first fundamental rule that must be observed at all times, and that applies to all sections, is that ***the welfare of living creatures is more important than any photograph*.** This means that practices such as baiting of subjects with a living creature or removal of birds from nests, for the purpose of obtaining a photograph, are highly unethical, and such photographs are not allowed. Under no circumstances may a living creature be placed in a situation where it will be killed, injured or stressed for the purpose of obtaining a photograph. Images that show live creatures being fed to captive animals, birds or reptiles are not permitted under any circumstances. There are also concerns about the use of aerial photography, drones, helicopters, low flying aircraft. These should not cause any interference with other individuals or animals which causes a disturbance in their normal activity or disrupt the way any individuals or animals interact with their environment. Entrants must comply with all relevant laws and regulations associated with

aerial photography in the country in which the image was taken.

IMAGE CREATION, OWNERSHIP, AND ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI)
The second fundamental rule that must be observed at all times is that ***ALL elements of the work must be created and owned by the maker***. Images must originate as photographs made by the entrant. They may not incorporate images produced by anyone else (for example: clip art, software-provided replacement skies, or stock images). Images that originate from words or text rather than light capture(frequently called 'AI 'images) are NOT allowed.

CATEGORIES
1) Open Color
2) Open Monochrome
3) Altered Reality
4) Street Photography
5) Nature
6) Travel
Each category has different guidelines, please pay close attention as disqualifications can occur if conditions are not met.

Open Color
There are no limitations on subject matter or photographic techniques used for image capture or post processing. The images must be color, although partially toned or selective coloring of monochrome or B&W images are allowed. It is suggested, but not mandatory, that nature images be entered in the Nature category. Any images entered in the open category will be judged on pictorial value, not the nature story. Images of nature subjects that have been manipulated or modified outside of the editing guidelines allowed by the nature definition below should be entered in an Open category. Natural landscapes and seascapes may be entered in either Open or Nature.

Open Monochrome
There are no limitations on subject matter or photographic techniques used for image capture or post processing. An image is considered to be Monochrome only if it given the impression of having no color (i.e. contains only shades of grey which can include pure black and pure white) OR it gives the impression of being a greyscale image that has been toned in one color across the entire image. (For example, by sepia, red, gold, etc.) A greyscale or multi-colored image modified or giving the impression of having been modified by partial toning, multi-toning or by the inclusion of spot coloring does **not** meet the definition of monochrome and shall be classified as a Color work.

Altered Reality
Images in this category should be photographs that have been digitally altered, either by use of creative camera techniques or in post process using photo-editing software. The goal is to present photographic subject matter in a way that is unique, appealing and causes the viewer to marvel at the ingenuity of the image. All elements of the work must be created by the maker. Clip art is not allowed. The maker must not violate any copyrights.

Street Photography
Street photography is a record of everyday life in public places, with a long history dating back to the earliest photographers. It may, but it does not have to, include people to capture the moment. Street photography happens anywhere outside of private spaces: the street, the beach, the suburban park, a museum. Street photographs are about emotion, meaning, story, history, events, metaphor, symbolism, information. The image in the frame records the tapestry of life. The story-telling value of the image should receive priority over pictorial quality. Images may be monochrome or color. Images that misrepresent the truth, such as those from events or activities arranged specifically for photography, or of subjects directed or hired for photography, are not eligible.

Nature and Photo Travel Categories
These two categories have particular restrictions that need to be understood.

Editing Guidelines
Processing or editing must be limited to making the image look as close to the original scene as possible, except that conversion to grayscale monochrome is allowed.

Allowed editing techniques:
• Cropping, straightening and perspective correction.
• Removal or correction of elements added by the camera or lens, such as dust spots, noise, chromatic aberration and lens distortion.
• Global and selective adjustments such as brightness, hue, saturation and contrast to restore the appearance of the original scene.
• Complete conversion of color images to grayscale monochrome.
• Blending of multiple images of the same subject and combining them in camera or with software (exposure blending or focus stacking)
• Image stitching – combining multiple images with overlapping fields of view that are taken consecutively (panoramas)

Editing techniques that are NOT allowed:
• Removing, adding to, moving or changing any part of an image, except for cropping and straightening.
• Adding a vignette during processing.
• Blurring parts of the image during processing to hide elements in the original scene.
• Darkening parts of the image during processing to hide elements in the original scene.• All conversions other than to complete grayscale monochrome.
• Conversion of parts of an image to monochrome, or partial toning, desaturation or over-saturation of color

Content Guidelines for Nature
Nature photography records all branches of natural history except anthropology and archaeology. This includes all aspects of the physical world, both animate and inanimate, that

have not been made or modified by humans.

• Nature images must convey the truth of the scene that was photographed. A well-informed person should be able to identify the subject of the image and be satisfied that it has been presented honestly and that no unethical practices have been used to control the subject or capture the image. Images that directly or indirectly show any human activity that threatens the life or welfare of a living organism are not allowed.
• The most important part of a Nature image is the nature story it tells. High technical standards are expected, and the image must look natural.
• Objects created by humans, and evidence of human activity, are allowed in Nature images only when they are a necessary part of the Nature story.
• Photographs of human-created hybrid plants, cultivated plants, feral animals, domesticated animals, human-created hybrid animals and mounted or preserved zoological specimens are not allowed.
• Images taken with subjects under controlled conditions, such as zoos, are allowed.
• Controlling live subjects by chilling, anesthetic or any other method of restricting natural movement for the purpose of a photograph is not allowed.

Content Guidelines for Travel
A Travel image is a portrayal of the real world we live in, as it is found naturally.
• If the image is predominantly or exclusively a land-
, sea- or cityscape, these "scapes"
must include characteristic, distinctive and recognizable physical features, although it is not necessary that the image identify the exact location.
• Portraits or other close-ups of people or objects, in addition to meeting the above guidelines as applicable, must include elements depicting some of the surrounding environment to make it obvious that the image was not taken in a studio setting.
• Images from events or activities arranged for photography, or of subjects directed or hired for photography, are NOT allowed.
• Time exposures are allowed, if they do not dominate the image as a special effect (star trails, for example, are a dominating effect).
• Highly distorted images such as those produced by fisheye lenses are NOT allowed.