

# Cape Fear Camera Club Competition Rules

January 19, 2012

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## **I. General Background**

### **A. Eligibility**

Cape Fear Camera Club members in good standing, i.e., having paid current dues, may submit entries to both the digital and print competitions.

### **B. Competitive Divisions**

The Club has six competitions each year, with the competition year running from September through the following June.

**Print Competitions:** There are two print competitions each competition year. Dates will be announced on the Club website.

**Digital Competitions:** There are four digital competitions each competition year. Dates will be announced on the Club website.

### **C. Competition Levels**

In order to provide fair competition and promote competition for all members, the Club offers two competition levels:

#### **Level B – Novice to Intermediate**

A member shall be considered a Level B photographer if:

1. The member is new to photography, or
2. The member has limited practical or technical experience, or
3. The member demonstrates abilities beyond the novice, but not as extensive as a Level A member

#### **Level A – Advanced**

A member shall be considered a Level A photographer if:

1. The member is a serious amateur or professional photographer who has demonstrated creativity and technical skills on a high level
2. The member may self-promote him/herself to Level A prior, and only prior, to the beginning of the competition year
3. The member has been promoted to Level A due to the total accumulation of competition points (see Procedures below)
4. The member wins the Level B gold ribbon at the end of the year competition of all the Level B ribbon winners for the competition year.

#### **Procedures for Determining Competition Levels**

1. Each new club member shall indicate at which level they plan to compete prior to their first competition. Placement may be reviewed by the Competition Committee.
2. Level B members will graduate to Level A after accumulating 300 points in regular club competitions. Graduating members will receive club recognition. (Members will also receive club recognition when reaching accumulated point milestones of 100, 200, 400, 500, 750 and 1,000 points.)
3. Current Level B members may elect to move to Level A at, and only at, the beginning of the competition year (September) by informing the Competition Committee. No approval is required.
4. Current Level A member who wish to move down to Level B must submit a written request to the Competition Committee at the beginning of the competition year (September), explaining why the move is requested.

## **D. Photo Restrictions**

### **1. Photo Categories**

Each entry in any photo competition (either a print or digital competition) shall be designated, by the entering member, in one of the two following photo categories:

**Open** – Any subject matter of the member's choice

**Assigned** – The subject matter assigned for that specific competition. The specific subject matter assigned for the specific competition will be published in the Club newsletters which may be found on the Club website.

### **2. Number of Photos Submitted**

Each Club member may submit a maximum of three (3) photos for any one competition. No more than two (2) of these photos may be of either photo category (Open or Assigned).

### **3. Participation**

Members submitting entries must be present at the competition and dues must be paid prior to the beginning of the competition. (Dues may be paid on the day of the competition.)

### **4. Photo Age**

All entered photos must have been taken within a two (2) calendar year period dating back to January 1 prior to the competition date. This restriction is set to encourage members to get out and take photographs.

Example:

Competition date – September 1, 2010

Acceptable dates – Pictures taken on or after January 1, 2008 (32 months in this example)

Unacceptable dates – December 31, 2007 and earlier

The photo submitted for competitions must contain Metadata (EXIF information) consistent with the photo age criteria. This will be verified by the Competition Committee prior to digital competitions and on digital copies of print competition winners submitted following the competitions.

### **5. Image Content**

All parts of the image must be that of the maker, i.e., No Stock Photography. The source of the image may be a digital camera, or any scanned photo, negative or 35mm slide.

### **6. Image Origination**

All images must originate as a photograph and can be modified as long as all elements are produced by the entrant.

### **7. Photo Enhancement**

All images may be enhanced digitally.

### **8. Eligibility of Ribbon Winners**

Entries that have received a ribbon in a previous print or digital competition are not eligible for future print or digital competitions.

## II. Judging/Scoring Guidelines

### A. Elements of Image Merit

Judges will evaluate each photograph using the following major criteria.

**Print Competition:** (1) Impact, (2) Composition and Interest, (3) Technical Quality, and (4) Presentation and Print Quality.

**Digital Competition:** (1) Impact, (2) Composition and Interest, and (3) Technical Quality.

During the competition the judge will comment, in specific terms, on each photograph--what they like and what can be improved--in one or more of the major criteria listed above. The following guidelines are an elaboration of the criteria listed above. Judges will use the following guidelines when making comments on the entry.

#### 1. Impact

- Creates a strong first impression.
- Commands one to look, holds the eye.
- Reflects strength in any of the elements listed below.

#### 2. Composition and Interest

- Has good placement of the subject matter.
- Reflects harmonious proportions.
- Good cropping adds to the composition.
- Uses dynamic symmetry for placement of most important objects.
- Has good rhythm from repetition, whether color, spaces, moods or divisions of the image.
- Objects or subject matter dominates.
- Subjects or objects grouped so one center of interest prevails
- Subject matter holds the eye without distraction.
- Strength and definition give the center of interest secondary points.

#### 3. Technical Quality

- Has good, strong contrast.
- Uses middle tones.
- Has good color balance.
- Captures expressions and artistic lighting.
- Makes strong, simple statements.
- Has good angles.
- Uses appropriate backgrounds.

#### 4. Presentation and Print Quality

- Presentation enhances the image.
- Mat or mount color enhances image.
- Uses daringly different presentation.
- Uses something dynamic or very traditional.
- Mounting creates strong initial impression.

**B. Competition Commentary**

The judge will make a brief live commentary on each entry. He/she shall use the “**Elements of Image Merit**” described in II.A. above when making comments on the entry.

**C. Scoring Guidelines**

The judge will use the following guidelines for scoring each photo.

5 Points: Technical defects or serious content problems.

6 Points: Acceptable without strong merit.

7 Points: Reasonably solid and interesting.

8 Points: Very Strong.

9 Points: Exceptional.

**D. Award of Ribbons**

For each competition, approximately the highest scoring 20% of entries will receive ribbons.

The judge(s) will be asked to pick one of the highest rated entries as “Best in Category.” This photograph will be awarded a **Gold ribbon**.

Among the remaining highest rated entries, a **Blue ribbon** will be awarded to the highest scoring images.

A **Red ribbon** will be awarded to the remainder of the 20%.

The points awarded by the judge(s) will be compiled throughout the year for each member toward club recognition.

**All ribbon winners will be eligible to complete in the end-of-year competition.**

### III. Print Competition Preparation and Presentation

#### A. General Requirements

1. All entries must meet the Photo Restrictions detailed in section I.D. above.
2. Images may be printed on an ink jet or other printer either on a home printer or through a commercial printer.
3. Prints must be unsigned on the front.
4. Prints must be mounted on photographic-type paper/rag or foam core, and may be matted. Mounting and matting must be with white, off-white or black materials. If matted, only single mats may be used. (See size of entries in III.B below).
5. Shrink-wrap, bags, glass or frames are not permitted.

#### B. Print Size Requirements

1. **Minimum print size => 8x10 or 10x8 inches (or equivalent square-inch area)**
2. **Maximum mount or print size => 16x20 or 20x16 inches**
  - Note that the print may be the full 16x20 or 20x16 inches if there is no matting
  - If the print is matted the mat must be no larger than 16x20 or 20x16 inches. In this case the print itself must meet the minimum size requirement in III.B.1 above.

#### C. Image Labeling

The following information must be located in the upper right corner on the back of the print (as viewed from the back of the print).

- Member's name
- Title of the print
- Designated category and member's level, e.g., A-Open, B-Open, A-Assigned or B-Assigned

#### D. Pre-Registration and Delivery of Prints

Entries must be pre-registered. The deadline, typically 3-4 days before the day of competition, will be specified on the Camera Club web site.

1. **All prints must be pre-registered** by sending an e-mail to the Print Chair ([print@capefearcameraclub.org](mailto:print@capefearcameraclub.org)) with the following information (for each print entered). Your Name, Print Title and Category & Level (A-Open, B-Open, A-Assigned, B-Assigned). Your e-mail will be acknowledged by the Print Chair. If you do not receive a reply within 48 hours, please e-mail the Print chair.
2. Members entering the print competition should **arrive early delivering their prints no later than 15 minutes before the competition judging begins**. Late arrivals may be accommodated up to the beginning of the competition at the discretion of the competition chair.

#### E. Delivery of Digital Copies of Print Competition Ribbon Winners

Members who are awarded ribbons at Print Competitions must deliver a digital copy of their print entry for verification of age (through review of the file's metadata) and for posting on the Club website. This digital copy must be sent to [digital@capefearcameraclub.org](mailto:digital@capefearcameraclub.org) no later than three (3) days after the competition. It must also be sized to meet the digital size requirements outlined in IV.B below.

The file submitted must meet the following naming convention:

Title - Name - Ribbon Color - Group.jpg

For example, if Joe Dokes, a member of the B competition group won a Blue Ribbon for his photo titled "A Good Catch" the correct file name would be:

A Good Catch - Joe Dokes - Blue - B.jpg

## IV. Digital Image Competition Preparation and Presentation

### A. General Requirements

1. All entries must meet the Photo Restrictions detailed in section I.D. above.

### B. Image Size Requirements

1. All digital images must fit inside a **1024 wide and 768 high pixel envelope**. This envelope matches the size of the projection screen when projected for the competition. If your image is wider than 1024 pixels wide OR taller than 768 pixels high it will not fit on the screen and will be rejected during the submission and approval process.
2. If your digital image does not fill the pixel envelope in at least one dimension, either 1024 pixels wide OR 768 pixels high, it will not fill the projection screen. The Competition Committee will return such image reminding the entrant to resize the image to fit just inside the 1024x768 pixel **envelope**.

### C. Image Naming Requirements

1. All image files must be in the jpg format, i.e., all files must have a .jpg file extension.
2. The software used by the Club to present and score the digital photos requires a specific file naming convention in order to work. All digital images shall meet the following naming convention.

The file name will be of the following form:

**ilm-xxxxf-c\$-Title.jpg**

Where:

- **ilm** is our club designation
- **xxxx** are the first four letters of your last name (lower case)
- **f** is the first letter of your first name (lower case)
- **c** is the category; use **a** for Assigned, **f** for Open (Unassigned or Free)
- **\$** is the entry number; use 1 for the first in a Category, 2 for the second
- **Title** is the name of the image (Use spaces between words.)

File Naming Example - for Jane Smith's second image, titled "Shore Birds", in the Open category, the correct file name would be:

ilm-smitj-f2-Shore Birds.jpg

### D. Submission of Digital Images

1. Digital images (files) must be submitted via e-mail, as **ATTACHMENTS**, to the digital coordinator ([photos@capefearcameraclub.org](mailto:photos@capefearcameraclub.org)) within the entry time window which will be noted in the Club newsletter, available at [www.capefearcameraclub.org](http://www.capefearcameraclub.org) . Generally this entry time window will be from the Friday, 11 days before the competition, up to midnight on the Saturday before the competition. Include in the body of the e-mail, your name, your competition level (A or B), and the total number of images you are submitting in each category, Assigned and Open.
2. You will be notified by return email of acceptance or rejection of your entries within 48 hours of your submittal. If you do not receive a response within this time period, please query the digital coordinator at [photos@capefearcameraclub.org](mailto:photos@capefearcameraclub.org) .

## **V. Club Use of Competition Winning Images**

1. Please note that by submitting images to any competition, either print or digital, you are providing the Club with the right to:
  - Post your ribbon winning image on the Club's website – [www.capefearcameraclub.org](http://www.capefearcameraclub.org) AND
  - Use your ribbon winning image to promote the Club and its activities, e.g., use your image as an attachment to a newspaper article promoting the Club or use your image on a poster to promote a Club event or exhibit.
2. In no case will any ribbon winning image be used by the Club for any commercial purpose.

# Appendix A:

## Print Preparation

### I. Printing – General Comments

- A. Your images may be printed commercially.
1. Over the internet – There are many potential resources. One service which is liked by a number of members is through MPIX.com. Many other possibilities can be found by searching for photo printing services online.
  2. Local printing – There are a number of local printing services that may be utilized, some better than others. Just to mention a few:
    - Costco
    - Dock Street Printing
    - Murray Art & Frame (in Leland)

There are many others and this list is not an endorsement by the Club.

- B. Your images may be printed on your own printer.
1. There are many ink jet printers available (HP, Epson, Canon, etc.) which do an excellent job.
  2. The key to a quality homemade print is to calibrate your monitor to make sure it is accurately showing the individual colors and then to calibrate your printer to make sure it prints colors and brightness exactly as seen on your calibrated computer monitor. Calibration systems are available from a number of vendors. A couple that members have used with success are the Spyder 3 and the ColorMunki. There are others but the key is that the printer must be calibrated in addition to the monitor.

### II. Matting and Mounting

There are number of ways to mat and mount your pictures. Following are excerpts from two of our members detailing how they go about matting the photo and then mounting the matted photo to the backing board.

#### Method 1

##### Supplies Needed:

Tape - Either acid free scotch tape, artist tape or linen tape for attaching the photo to the mat. Double-sided acid free tape to mount the matted photo to the back mounting board. You could also use professional mounting tape, but that is a permanent tape. The others may be peeled apart to reuse the matting on other photographs.

Window Mat - A window mat for the front of your photograph.

Backing Board - A backing that is the size of the outer dimension of your window mat. This can be another piece of mat board or a piece of foam core.

### **Adhering the Photo to the Window Mat:**

Using 2 pieces of the acid free scotch/artist/linen tape, tape the top of your photo to the back of the window mat. Do not tape all 4 edges because over time, the image and the mat expand and contract differently and you will end up with buckling.

When you are mounting the window mat/photo to the backing board, do not use only a top hinge taping. This will not be secure.

### **Adhering the Matted Photo to the Backing Board:**

Place double stick tape onto your foam core or mat backing board. Use approximately 8 pieces - 3 down each longer side, one in the center of each shorter side. You can use the acid free scotch tape on the back of your window mat in exactly the same pattern so that when you stick these two pieces together, the tapes match up. This will allow you to peel the two pieces apart after the competition and reuse the mat for another photo later on.

## **Method 2**

This method uses a slightly varied application which results in a more permanent mounting.

### **Securing the Photograph to the Mat:**

Use Scotch single sided, acid free scrapbooking tape. Use this tape only to hinge mount the photo to the back of the mat. Use three pieces in an "I" formation on each side of the top of the photo. (You can also use a third "I" in the middle of the top of a larger photo if desired.) The mat opening should allow the photo at least 1/4" overlap on all four sides. The photo should hang loosely from the top.

### **Securing the Matted Photo to the Backing Board:**

Glue the matted photo to the backing board with acid free photo glue. Be careful not to apply the glue anywhere near the photo. The photo must hang freely, secured only by the tape hinges at the top of the photo. For glue pattern: use a line of glue along top of mat, a line along bottom of mat and 3 dots down each side, evenly spaced.

Carefully marry the mat to the backboard without sliding the two pieces together as not to buckle the photo.

### **Supplies:**

- Scotch scrapbooking tape - single sided, acid free, document safe
- UHU stic (photo glue stick)
- Mat board or foam core board for backing, but never the self-stick stuff

Supplies are available locally at A.C. Moore or Michael's.

## Appendix B

### Digital Image Preparation

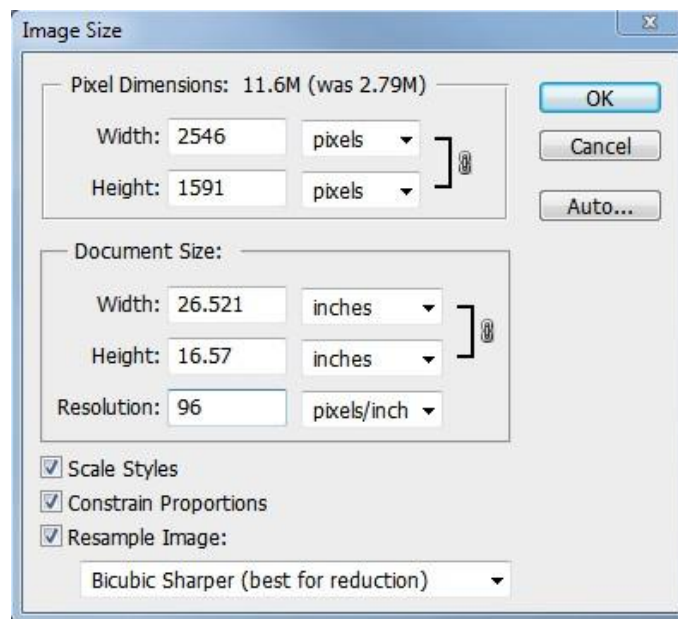
Following is a description of the steps to prepare a digital image for submission using Photoshop CS5. Although not described here, preparation in Lightroom 3 and Photoshop Elements 3 should follow a similar process.

#### Photoshop CS5 Digital Image Preparation

If you want to save the original image, you must make a duplicate to use for resizing, and submitting. These instructions remain the same for every digital image you submit in the Open or Assigned categories.

1. Open your photo in Photoshop. Once you have completed whatever editing you may want to do, Select < **Image**> from the top menu and then select <**Image Size...**> from the dropdown list. This will open the **Image Size** menu box below.

#### EXAMPLE OF IMAGE SIZING:



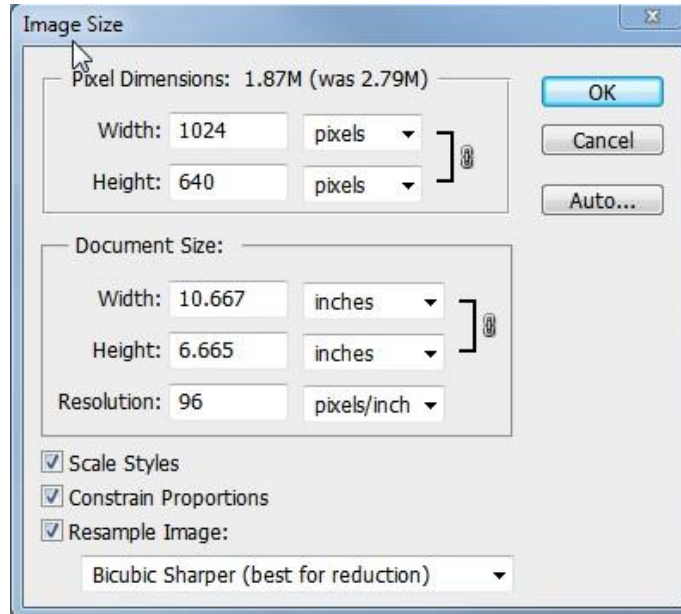
2. Make sure all three check boxes at the bottom (**Scale Styles**, **Constrain Proportions** and **Resample Image**) are checked.

3. Make sure that **Bicubic Sharper (best for reduction)** is selected in the bottom **Resample Image:** box.

4. Type in either 1024 pixels in the **Pixel Dimensions: Width** box or alternately 768 pixels in the **Pixel Dimensions: Height** box, depending on whether your photo is a landscape or portrait size photo. Check that the pixel dimensions fall within the 1024x768 envelope while one or the other dimension is maxed out at either 1024 horizontally or 768 vertically. Once this is confirmed click OK to complete the resizing.

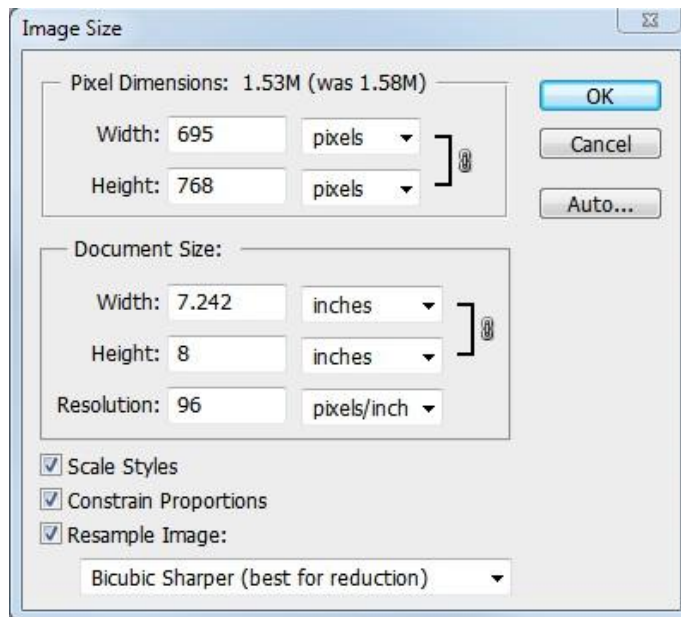
Below is an example of a correct setting for resizing a landscape shaped photo. (Note that the Width is maxed out at 1024 pixels while the height dimension falls within the height maximum of 768 pixels.)

**Example of Correct Sizing Input for a Landscape Shaped Photo:**



Below is an example of a correct setting for resizing a portrait shaped photo. (Note that the Height is maxed out at 768 pixels while the Width dimension falls within the Width maximum of 1024 pixels.)

**Example of Correct Sizing Input for a Portrait Shaped Photo:**

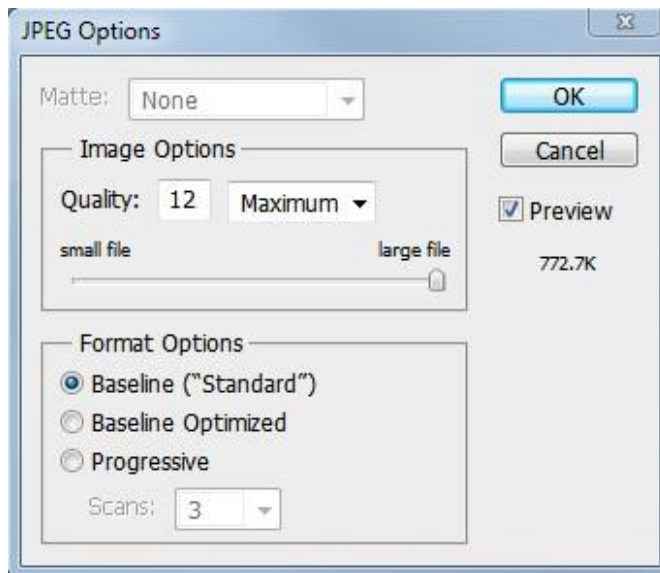


NOTE: Ignore any/all information in the *Document Size* box. This information only applies when you want to print. It does not apply when you change pixel dimensions for a digital image.

NOTE: Be aware that images with a vertical (portrait) orientation must still not exceed 768 pixels high, and thus, the horizontal will be much less than 1024 pixels wide. This does not affect quality of projection.

5. Save your photo as a .jpg as follows: Select < **File**> from the top menu and then select <**Save As**> from the dropdown list. In the **Format** box Select <**JPEG (\*.JPG,\*.JPEG, \*.JPE)**> Type in the name of the file in accordance with Section IV.C. of the Rules. Click **Save**. This will open the **JPEG Options** box below.

**Example of JPEG Options during Saving:**



Note that the 350KB maximum file size limit has been dropped, so your file may be any size. As such, to maximize the quality of the resulting photo, you may choose to select the highest **Quality** under **Image Options**. Usually a Quality of 9 or 10 is sufficient but 12 (the maximum Quality possible) will assure the absolute best quality given the pixel envelope restrictions.

Under **Format Options**, choose **Baseline (“Standard”)**.

Click OK to complete the file saving action. You are now ready to forward the photo for the competition.