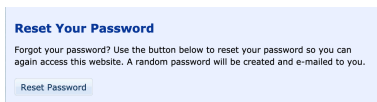


Gateway Camera Club Competition Guide for Judges

A. Website Judging Procedure

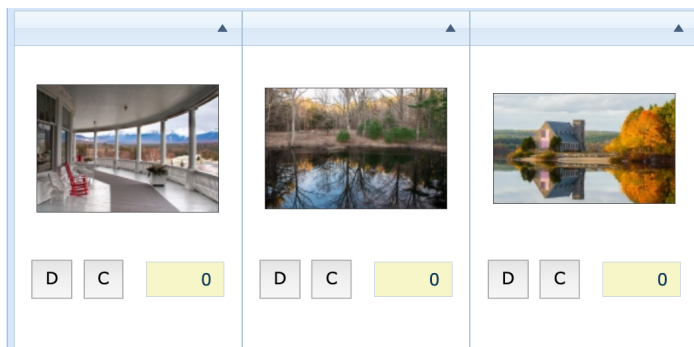
1. Judging is done via the website - <https://gatewaycameraclub.visualpursuits.com/default.aspx>
2. Log in using your email address and password
 - if you do not remember your password, click on **Reset Your Password**
 - within a few minutes, an email will be sent with your new password



3. On the main menu, select **Judging** then **Judging Queue for Website Judging**
 - check the box next to **“Display only competitions where I am a judge”** or find your competitions in the list
4. Click on **Select** to judge the first competition

| | | | |
|--------|----------|-----------------|-----------|
| Select | 2/9/2021 | Black and White | Themes |
| Select | 2/9/2021 | Creative | Creative |
| Select | 2/9/2021 | Nature | Nature |
| Select | 2/9/2021 | Pictorial | Pictorial |

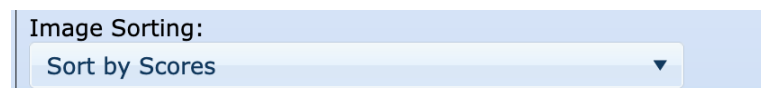
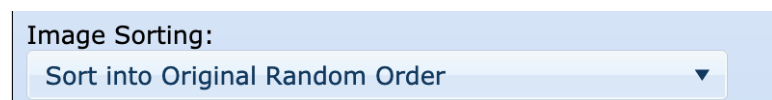
5. In **“Competition Level to Process”**, select the first class - B
6. You will now see thumbnails of all the images. You can click on each image to view a larger image.



D = disqualify (do not use)

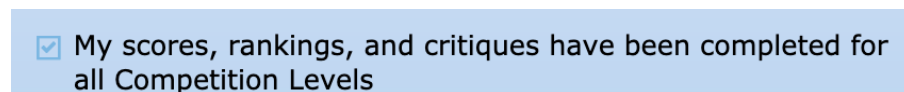
C = critique. You may enter comments if you desire. It is not a requirement but may be helpful for remembering your critiques. Only use the **Additional Comment** box.

Enter your **score** in the box. You may enter scores in thumbnail view or in larger view. (See below for scoring criteria). After some scores have been entered, you may sort by selecting **Sort by Scores** from the dropdown box in the thumbnail view. Sometimes the image sorting is finicky so you may have to select another sort option and then go back and select Sort by Scores.

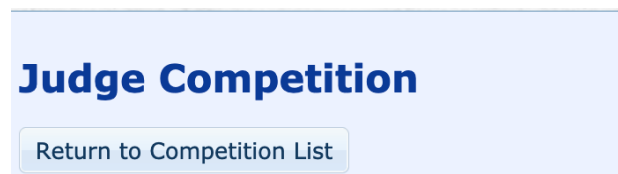


7. After you have finished with Class B, click on **Save Updates** and then select Class A from the **Levels Box**. Repeat the above steps, save and move on to Class AA.

8. When finished with all three classes, check the **“My scores, rankings and critiques have been completed for all Competition Levels”** box



9. Click the **“Return to Competition List”** at the top of the screen to move onto the next category



B. Guidelines

Competition Levels

Gateway competitions are conducted within levels or classes. There are three competition levels:

- B – Beginner
- A – Intermediate
- AA – Advanced

Competition Types

Our monthly competitions are grouped into four categories – Pictorial/Open, Creative/Altered Reality, Nature, and Themed. Images in each category are divided into and judged separately in the three expertise levels: B, A and AA.

The themed categories this year are as follows:

September=Black and White
October=Long Exposure
November=Wood (natural or processed)
January=Portrait of an Old Person
February=Black and White
March=Long Exposure
April=Single Flower (cultivated or Wild)
May=Shadow.

No one is required to submit an image into one of the Themed categories.

Criteria applicable to themed categories.

Long Exposure. In order to qualify as a “Long Exposure” there is no minimum amount of time that the shutter must remain open. Most “Long Exposure” images range from several seconds to several minutes in duration, although given the subject, a long exposure could be one second or less (e.g., lightning). However, an image will not qualify as a “Long Exposure” image unless it somehow shows the effect of passing time, whether it is, for example, smoother waters, streaky clouds, ghost images, or light trails.

Black and white. There is more than one definition of black and white. For our competitions, a black and white image may consist exclusively of black and white or may include shades of gray tone (grayscale) that may range from dark (black) to light (white). A black and white image is a monochrome image, but not all monochrome images qualify as black and white. A monochrome image may contain a color tone or shades or hues of color other than black, gray or white such as yellow/red (sepia). An image will not qualify as a black and white image if it contains tones, shades or hues of color other than black, gray or white.

Portrait of an Old Person. The portrait of an old person may be a frontal or profile, need not be in color, may be indoor or out of doors, may be with or without flash or artificial light, and may be a full or partial body image (“head shot”). The judgment of whether a person qualifies as “old” is left up to the maker, but young people dressed up to look like old people do not qualify.

Wood. Wood is a common element in our world and a frequent element in our images. “Wood” includes that which occurs naturally such as trees and parts of trees, dead or alive, and wood in its many cut and/or processed forms such as wood used in homes, barns, ships, boats, bridges, and other structures and decorations. To qualify in this category, wood need not be in color, but must be the dominant, though not the exclusive element in the image. Because wood is such a common element in our world, the most important consideration in scoring this category, second only to technical

competency, is whether the image presents a distinctive, fresh and unusual depiction or arrangement of wood, as opposed to a commonplace image of wood.

Single Flower. A “single flower” includes any flower, whether cultivated or wild, in an outdoor garden or indoors, cut or uncut, and with or without a flash. To qualify in this category, the flower need not be in color, but must be the dominant, though not the exclusive element in the image.

Shadow(s). “Shadow” here refers to a dark area or shape produced by an object or person coming between a light source and a surface. To qualify in this category, the image need not be in color, but the shadow or shadows must be the dominant, though not the exclusive element in the image.

In the themed categories, just as in the Pictorial and Creative categories, members may use any post-processing techniques or software applications so long as the image begins as a photograph and otherwise meets any other specific criteria for the category in questions.

Originality

All work, including photographic and any digital or other type of manipulation, **MUST** be solely the work of the competitor. Commercial software and pre-set filters can be used to add post-processing effects to your images. Clip-art and reproductions of another artist's creative work can be incorporated into your images provided that the end result is an original work of your creation. The Competition Committee will make the final judgement on any question about whether an image submitted into competition is your original work, and its decision is final. Individual judges are free to weigh the use of clip-art and reproductions of another artist's creative work in scoring an image.

Category Specific Rules

Categories have their own specific rules and guidelines, with Nature being the most formal and restrictive:

Creative/Altered Reality: Creative/Altered Reality Images must represent altered reality, meaning they are noticeably different from a scene viewed through a camera lens. An image does not qualify in this category simply because the maker has applied a filter to the original image, cropped it, rendered it black and white, or adjusted the exposure. Images should display imaginative skill and originality. The intent is to encourage members to learn photo manipulation and post-processing tools and techniques. Members are **STRONGLY** encouraged to modify their techniques throughout the year and **NOT** to routinely use the same techniques or use the same software add-ons, plug-ins, filters or actions developed by others for multiple competitions. Judges are instructed to evaluate entries based on their overall photographic impact, not the amount of manipulation required to achieve the effect.

Creative images must have been obviously manipulated or modified during or after exposure with experimental, digital, in camera, or darkroom techniques. Composite or merged multiple images and collages are acceptable for creativity even if each component is not altered reality as long as the end image is clearly not a single image and represents altered reality.

This category is NOT meant for images whose sole creativity is infrared, monochrome, High Dynamic Range (HDR), or use of wide angle or fish-eye lenses or long exposure. Techniques such as panning/zooming or unique staging ALONE are NOT considered creative UNLESS they are used to create an abstract effect. This category is about altering a normal photographic image in a creative way, rather than taking a photograph of quirky or creative subjects.

Judges are instructed to evaluate, critique and score entries for their overall photographic impact, not for the amount of manipulation required to achieve the effect.

Nature: Gateway follows rules excerpted from the Photographic Society of America (PSA) as follows:

“Nature photography is restricted to the use of the photographic process to depict all branches of natural history, except anthropology and archaeology, in such a fashion that a well-informed person will be able to identify the subject material and certify its honest presentation. The story-telling value of a photograph must be weighed more than the pictorial quality while maintaining high technical quality. Human elements shall not be present, except where those human elements are integral parts of the nature story such as nature subjects, like barn owls or storks, adapted to an environment modified by humans, or where those human elements are in situations depicting natural forces, like hurricanes or tidal waves. Scientific bands, scientific tags or radio collars on wild animals are permissible. Photographs of human-created hybrid plants, cultivated plants, feral animals, domestic animals, or mounted specimens are ineligible, as is any form of manipulation that alters the truth of the photographic statement.

“No techniques that add, relocate, replace, or remove pictorial elements except by cropping are permitted. Techniques that enhance the presentation of the photograph without changing the nature story or the pictorial content, or without altering the content of the original scene, are permitted including HDR, focus stacking and dodging/burning. Techniques that remove elements added by the camera, such as dust spots, digital noise, and film scratches, are allowed. Stitched images are not permitted. All allowed adjustments must appear natural. Color images can be converted to grey-scale monochrome. Infrared images, either direct-captures or derivations, are not allowed.”

This definition of “Nature Image” may include landscapes, geologic formations, weather phenomena, and extant organisms as the primary subject matter. This includes images taken with the subjects in controlled conditions, such as zoos, game farms, botanical gardens, aquariums and any enclosure where the subjects are totally dependent on man for food. Also, wildlife is not limited to animals, birds and insects. Marine subjects and botanical subjects (including fungi and algae) taken in the wild are suitable wildlife subjects, as are carcasses of extant species.

Nature images must not show evidence of manipulation or contain any evidence of “the hand of man” (no cages, fences, streets, buildings, boats, vehicles, telephone wires, etc.).

In scoring Nature images, although high technical quality is weighed heavily, the story-telling value of the photograph is the most important consideration in the determination of the score, followed by whether the story is presented in a fresh and distinctive way.

Gateway slightly modifies the PSA definition to allow more leniency in some areas. Feral and domestic animals, human-created hybrid and cultivated plants and flowers are allowed as long as they appear to

be in the wild (i.e., there is no evidence that they are in a cultivated or captive setting) or they are incidental to the nature story (as in a bee pollinating a cultivated flower or a bird in the wild sitting on an animal that may or may not be domesticated).

Nature images that do not meet these rules and restrictions or which have been modified or manipulated beyond what is allowed are, however, allowed in Pictorial/Open category.

Pictorial/Open: Anything goes, including Nature or Creative/Altered Reality images. Although these rules permit members to submit three images that all qualify as Nature images or Creative images, by submitting one of them in the Pictorial/Open category, and one or two in one or both of the other categories, members are strongly encouraged to experiment with different photographic and post-processing methods, take advantage of image study nights and other learning opportunities, such as program night and field trips and select some images for competition that represent subjects or techniques outside their comfort zone.

Since some of our members may have limited experience with PSA nature rules, judges are instructed to give images that do not follow these rules a score of 18 rather than disqualifying the entries. A low score given in this case is meant to remind you to become more familiar with these rules without too severe a penalty.

Guidelines for Judges

Gateway follows New England Camera Club Council's (NECCC's) Information for Judges, which states that, "Scoring one type of subject (for example, nature) higher than others or failing to give credit to one type of photograph, for example, creative photographs, because you don't personally shoot or care for such photographs does a disservice to the competitors." All types of images, therefore, are meant to be judged equally. Judges should not score an image based on their personal likes or dislikes for any particular type of image.

Judges in our regular monthly competitions are asked to provide no more than 30 seconds of constructive criticism and score each image on its own merits. The main objective is to provide the photographer with some concrete ideas about how the image could be improved. Five factors should be considered in arriving at the score for each image:

- **Impact:** Interest, emotion, immediacy, drama, appeal
- **Originality:** Creativity, style, unusual perspective, uniqueness
- **Technical quality:** Focus, depth-of-field, exposure, framing, lighting, contrast, shadows, highlights, detail, use of color – white balance, hue, saturation
- **Composition:** Storytelling, center of interest, leading lines, curves, use of color, lack of distracting elements, simplicity
- **Relationship to theme:** Only for competitions with assigned topics

Judges are provided with Gateway's judging guidelines ahead of time, explaining our categories, levels, rules, scoring and expectations for feedback. Among other guidance, judges are encouraged to reward creativity and new forms of individual expression among our members, to go beyond the well-known

rules of photography, to share what “grabs them” in an image and to score images on their own merit relative to the competition level.

In order to permit maximum time for constructive criticism of competition images, judges are required to pre-judge and score the images prior to sharing the score and critique with members. Pre-judging involves providing the judge with a secure logon to the Gateway website that allows the judge to see the images one at a time, without the image title or identification of the maker, duplicating as closely as possible the viewing experience the judge would have if judging “live” in front of the members.

Scoring. Each image will receive a point score between 18 and 30. There is no required scoring curve that must be followed, but consistency in scoring is essential. A score of 18-21 should be the range for an image of below average quality; 22-25 should be the range for an image of average quality; 26-29 should be the range for an image of superior quality; and 30 should be reserved for an image of exceptional quality that stands out among others in its class and category. In any class and category, it is within the judge’s discretion whether to score any image as a 30, and whether to score more than one image as a 30.

All scores awarded by the judge are considered to be final. If an image is disqualified after the deadline for the competition in which it was submitted has closed, the image will receive a score of 0. The Competition Committee will make every effort to work with members to avoid a disqualification. Mistakes in overall scoring, issues associated with errors in projecting or misplacing of images, and disputes over whether an image is ineligible or should be disqualified will be resolved by the Competition Committee whose decision is final.

When images are pre-judged, the judge has the discretion to change the score during competition if he or she feels the image conveys something different when viewed through the projector on a large screen.

Scores for each competition as well as cumulative scores for the season will be published on the club website. At the end of the season, the competitors with the highest cumulative score in each class (B, A, and AA) will receive an appropriate award at the annual awards ceremony

C. Competition Night Procedures

At the start of Competition Night, the judge and members are publicly reminded of the club’s judging guidelines so that everyone present can share the same expectations for how the competition is meant to be conducted and the judge has a final opportunity to ask any clarifying questions on our expectations and rules.

The categories may rotate each month, so that Creative/Altered Reality, for example, will be first one month, then second the next and third the next, and so on. Within each category, B level images are judged first, then A and finally AA.

Each image in that category and level is projected for scoring. With the typical number of images submitted, and under two hours to review them and judge them, that leaves roughly 30 seconds or less for the judge to provide a critique and score an image.

Members are expected to respect the judge's comments as constructive feedback offered in good faith and are asked not to disrupt the competition with comments or questions unless invited to by the judge.

The intent is to treat the judge as an honored guest and to conduct the competition as a distinguished if informal event. It is also important to maintain decorum in order to get through all the images in the time allowed. To this end, it is important for members to silence their cell phones and other devices and to otherwise remain as quiet as possible so as not to disrupt, delay judging or interfere with other members hearing the judge's commentary and critique.

Awards

Ribbons are awarded for those receiving the highest score (Blue), the second highest score (Red) and the third highest score (Yellow) within each category and competition level. In the case of ties, multiple ribbons will be awarded for that score.

After competition is completed, usually the next day, ribbon awards are noted in the ICM software on the club's competition computer, which is again synchronized through the Internet so that results appear on the club website. Ribbons may be claimed at any meeting. Ribbon winners also will be recognized at the next Competition Night.

Image of the Year

All digital images that have won Blue, Red, or Yellow ribbons in Gateway digital competitions during the season will be eligible for the Image-of-the-Year (IOY) Competition. This competition is usually held the week after the last monthly competition of the season on the third Tuesday in May.

All images that have been awarded a ribbon in monthly competitions to that point in the season will automatically be submitted for Image of the Year, unless specifically requested otherwise by the maker. It is the member's responsibility to verify before the IOY Competition date that all of his or her qualifying images are included in the competition. No make-ups or late submissions after the completion date will be allowed for images inadvertently omitted from consideration.

The competition will be conducted as an In/Out tournament with three judges to determine a winner in each class and category. Two out of the three judges must declare an image "in" for it to continue through multiple rounds of judging.

A certificate recognizing an Image-of-the-Year award will normally be presented to each recipient at the annual awards ceremony, which is customarily held at the last meeting of the year in mid-June.