

INFOCUS



SANDHILLS PHOTOGRAPHY CLUB

Editor: Alison Earl, communications@sandhillsphotoclub.org



VOL XXXXII, NUMBER 08

www.sandhillsphotoclub.org

AUGUST 2026

Next Meeting: AUGUST 10th – 7pm

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Star Ridge Outing
photographers



© David Powers

SONS OF LIBERTY OUTING



Phil Lewis

Greetings and welcome to the August edition of our newsletter. It's turning out to be a long dry summer. Our July outing to the Star Ridge Aquatic Center was successful despite the heat, in large part due to Susan Bailey's persuasive efforts to get them to open a little early for us. There were some great photos taken and you should take a few minutes to peruse the gallery of images on our website. Please join us on August 8th for an outing to the Sandhills Horticultural Gardens to take some insect pictures. Details are seen elsewhere in this newsletter. Our August Focus shift workshop had to be postponed due to unforeseen medical issues, but we have a workshop planned in September dealing with getting it right in camera and HDR photography to fill the gap.

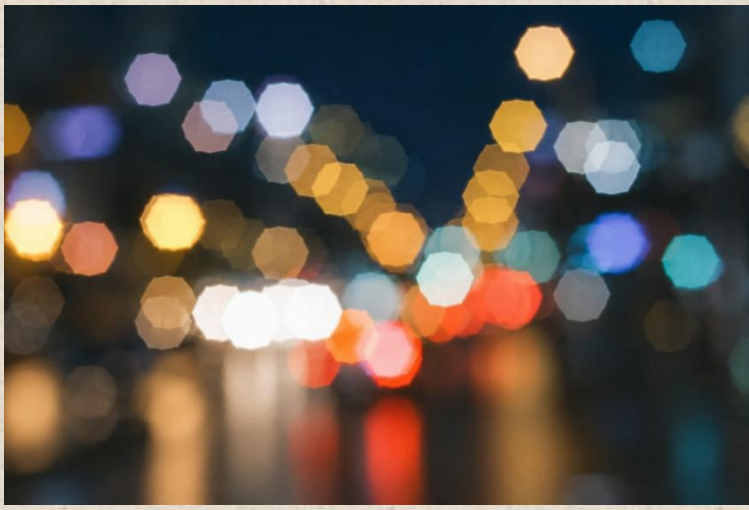
This month the topic is bokeh. First of all, how do you pronounce the word? According to the Merriam-Webster and Cambridge dictionaries, the pronunciation of the term in American English is boh-kay. The term is derived from the Japanese word for blur or haze (which is pronounced similarly to boh-ke where the ke is as in Kenneth with a very distinct and sharp delineation between the two syllables). It was first used by Japanese optical engineers to describe

the quality of the blur or boke-aji (ボケ味) produced by a particular lens and is tied to the Japanese aesthetic of subtlety and the pleasing effect of imperfection. According to the dictionary the first published use of the word in America was in 1997 in an article in *Photo* of the out of focus areas in an image. Bokeh is greatly affected by the construction of the lens. Lenses with wider maximum apertures (faster lenses) have a thinner depth of field at maximum aperture than lenses with narrower maximum apertures (slower lenses). This thin depth of field produces greater blur in the foreground and background. However, bokeh does not just refer to the amount of blur, but the quality of the blur which can be pleasing or displeasing. The quality of the blur is generally most clearly seen in reflected points of light in the blurred background or foreground of a picture. In general, the smoother and rounder these "bokeh balls" are, the

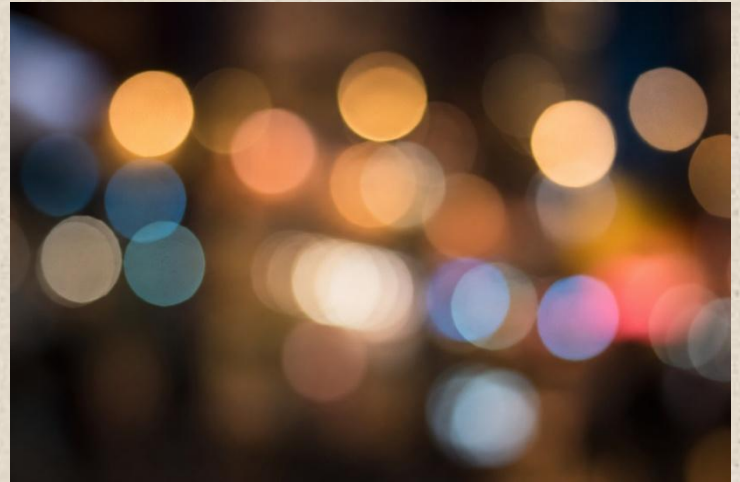
more pleasing the bokeh is. One feature of a lens that has a large effect on the bokeh is the number and shape of the diaphragm blades that form the aperture. Aperture blades are either straight or curved. The opening formed by straight blades becomes less circular as the aperture becomes smaller resulting in a polygon shape with the same number of sides as the number of aperture blades.



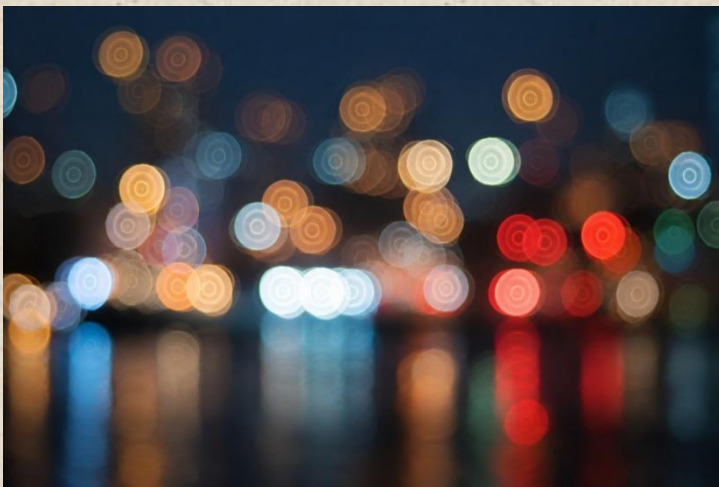
Curved aperture blades also form polygons with the same number of sides as the number of aperture blades but the opening stays rounder for a longer time and the effect on the aperture shape is more muted. Curved aperture blades are a little more difficult to produce so bargain lenses may have straight aperture blades, but this has become less common in the modern era, even in bargain lenses. Ironically, as we discussed earlier, the shape of the aperture blades also affects diffraction, so straight aperture blades are sometimes used in specialty lenses to increase the sharpness of diffraction spikes to enhance the spikes.



The shape of the opening produced by the aperture blades is one of the factors which influence the appearance of the bokeh balls and this effect is increased as the aperture becomes smaller. The following is an illustration of the effect of a five bladed aperture on the bokeh balls seen at f5.6.



The same lens at maximum aperture (f1.8) may produce these types of bokeh balls because the aperture blades are fully retracted and the lens opening is round.

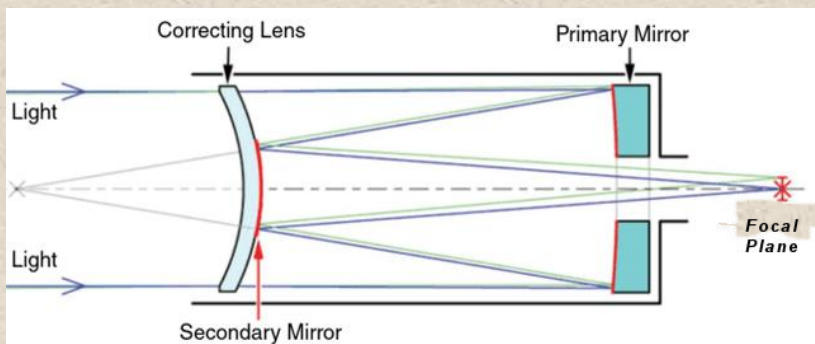


Other features of the construction of the lens can result in different effects on the bokeh of the lens. Aspherical lens elements are generally not produced by molding and polishing the shape of the element but are frequently produced by turning an element on a diamond lathe (Single Point Diamond Turning) because of the complicated shape of the element. In many cases the process leaves microscopic turning marks of concentric rings or spirals that are reflected in the bokeh balls. These are called "onion ring" effects and are generally

considered pretty unattractive.

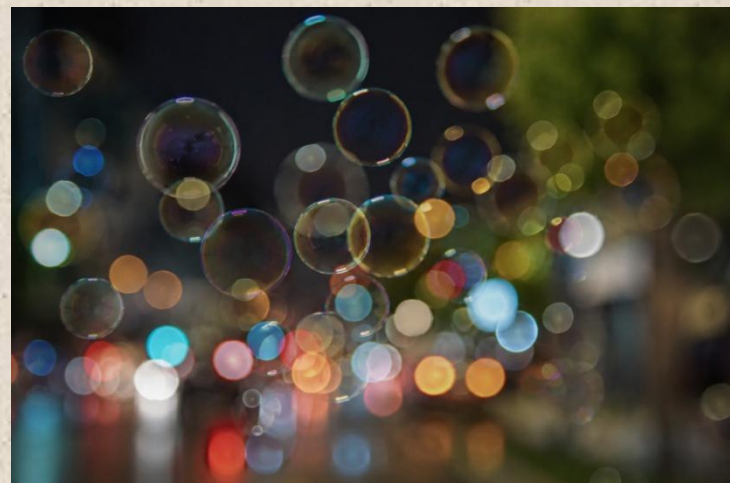
Another type of bokeh effect which is generally considered undesirable is "soap bubble" effect. This is caused by factors that cause the central part of the lens to transmit less light than the periphery. The construction of a

catadioptric (mirror) lens is famous for producing this type of effect. This is because these lenses are constructed like a Newtonia reflecting telescope with a



larger primary mirror reflecting to a smaller secondary mirror.

The secondary mirror and the central hole in the primary mirror make the central part of the image darker when the image is defocused. Aspherical lenses and lenses with under-corrected spherical aberration can produce this effect as well.



Bokeh is important in portrait photography where the background cannot detract from the subject of the portrait. Lenses made specifically for portrait work have large maximum apertures, a high number of curved aperture blades, and good correction of spherical aberration to produce smooth background blurring and smooth round bokeh balls. The below photos demonstrate the quality of the blur in a portrait taken with a Sigma 35mm/f1.4 lens. Left to right the aperture is f1.4, f7.1 and f16.



The depth of field difference and the effect it has on the bokeh is clearly illustrated.

The distance between the camera and the subject and the background also affects the bokeh. The following photos were all taken at f 1.4 and it can be seen that the closer the camera is to the subject the more pronounced the bokeh is.



Note that the bokeh balls the lens produces are more lemon shaped that round, primarily because the lens is not optimized for portrait photography.

Modern imaging programs offer a method of simulating bokeh for portrait photography. The below photo was taken at f16 and the only difference is that the image on the right has been manipulated by Luminar Neo to produce an AI simulated bokeh.



This feature can be useful when you don't have a wide aperture lens available. It can also have the side benefit of replacing an unattractive bokeh with a rounder more attractive bokeh. Bokeh is useful in other areas of photography as well. In any situation where the subject needs to be separated from the background, bokeh can be your friend.

August Outing
Sandhills Horticultural Gardens



When: Saturday, August 8, 9:00am-11:00

Meet: Ball Visitor Center – where our monthly meetings are held

What: BUGS! Our topic for the December competition is Bugs. The gardens are full of bees, butterflies, moths, crickets, beetles, this time of year. The main area is the Pollinator Garden right out front. This is totally accessible and full of possibilities. The other area is the Butterfly Garden which is easy to find. Of course there are bugs everywhere!

Lunch: 11:15 at **Roast** near ACE Hardware and the airport
370 Capital Dr, Southern Pines, NC 28327

www.roastnc.com

Equipment Suggestions:

Any lens
Tripod helpful
Knee pads
Folding stool
Polarizer helpful if sunny to subdue the glare on leaves
Diffuser to block sunlight off the plants
Sunscreen
Hat

RSVP: Please let me know if you plan to come and whether you want to go to lunch. Thank you!

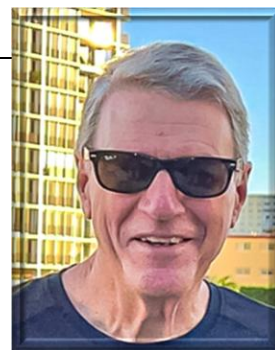
susanbaileyphoto@gmail.com



Our Street Photography Team Challenge will take place on **September 12th.**

Registration will begin Saturday, August 1st at 8am by emailing susanbaileyphoto@gmail.com. There are 21 openings.

This is the 3rd time we have done this event and it is very popular. Complete details have been sent by email.



Michael Sassano

PHOTO CONTEST
Buildings Through Time
Explore the Beauty and History of Architecture

From ancient structures to modern skyscrapers, capture the beauty and history of buildings.

Look for:

- ✓ Architectural styles & historic details
- ✓ Interesting materials & textures
- ✓ Sunrise & sunset lighting
- ✓ Wide Angle & Telephoto Shots

Photo Ideas

Dramatic Lighting

Lens Choices

Sunrise & Sunset Scenes

Wide Angle Views

Creative Shadows & Highlights

Telephoto Details

Capture the Beauty, Craft the Story.
Submit Your Best Architectural Photo!

📷 Wide Angle | 📷 Telephoto | 📷 Sunrise & Sunset

Architecture

Entries Open
9/12/2026

Entries Close
9/19/2026

Results Event
10/12/2023

(OCT) Architecture - Explore the beauty and history of buildings, from ancient structures to modern skyscrapers. Look for interesting details, such as architectural styles, materials, or historical significance. Consider photographing buildings in different lighting conditions, such as sunrise or sunset, to create dramatic shadows and highlights. Try using a wide-angle lens to capture the overall scene or a telephoto lens to focus on specific details.

Judge: Chris Richman www.chrisrichmanphotography.com

SPC Competitions: Michael Sassano, Jerry Kozel, Dee Williams

Tip of the Month – LANA REBERT



This month's **Tip of the Month** comes from **Lana Rebert**. If you have a tip to share, please send it to me at ombudsman@sandhillsphtoclub.org.

Most of us are used to grabbing our cameras and going off to search for exciting things to capture. But it's hot for many of us; so, how about staying inside for an afternoon or evening and make some art. Yes, this creative exercise of "making" vs "finding" uses a different part of your brain. This challenge is to show you that magic can be found in the most unexpected place.

Discover the magic hidden in your junk drawer. Everyone has a junk drawer filled with all sorts of things....extra keys, paperclips, pens, batteries, spare change, rubber bands and who knows what trinkets you tossed in and forgotten. These are artful creations waiting to be made. Have fun with this & maybe you will end up with a clean junk drawer!



WORKSHOPS – CAL RICE

The third workshop of the year will be **September 26 at 9:00** in our usual meeting room. Cal Rice and Phil Lewis will lead it on the topic "**GETTING THE BEST IMAGE - IN THE CAMERA**".

With all the automation these days it is easy to "point and shoot" and get a very acceptable picture. However, there are times where an understanding of the basics is helpful. We will share a number of actual situations where knowledge of the basics has made photographing easier or even possible.



Cal Rice

For example:

- How do you determine the exposure for a full moon (or half a moon)
- What are the types of light meters and when does the one in the camera not work?
- Where should you focus on scenic photos, and how do you do that?

In a few weeks there will be an email to all members with more details. Attendance will be limited to 12 attendees so sign up promptly when the sign-up period starts. If there are more who are interested, we will repeat the program in the afternoon.



SANDHILLS PHOTOGRAPHY CLUB'S WEBSITE

WWW.SANDHILLSPHOTOCLUB.ORG



Website Notes for August 2026:

This month's featured member's website is by [Mike Sassano](#). Click his name to view his gallery/website or the link to his gallery/website is on our website homepage.

Club Directory

You may view the club directory at: [Club Directory](#). If you would like to have your photo added to the directory, or change the one in the gallery, just send a favorite to me at [John German](#). I will add it to the gallery. If you need the password, please email me and I will provide it. It is included in Alison's Upcoming Events announcement sent along with the club newsletter. The Club Directory and the Member's Only page passwords are the same.

Member Galleries

***Members who would like a personal gallery** should let me know at website@sandhillsphotoclub.org, and I will send an upload link for their use.*

*See the website "Member Galleries" page for instructions on sizing, etc. **This link will continue to work but if you wish to change images, I must delete the old ones. You can upload at will. If you have lost your link, just let me know and I will resend it to you.***

Member Websites

***If you have a personal website**, please let me know and I can provide a link on the "Member's Galleries" page for you. Please view the member's websites & galleries on this tab on the club website.*

PS: Please email any errors that you may notice on the website. I will correct them as soon as possible. website@sandhillsphotoclub.org

[Click here for RIVER HOTEL](#)



Deb Castle

**S
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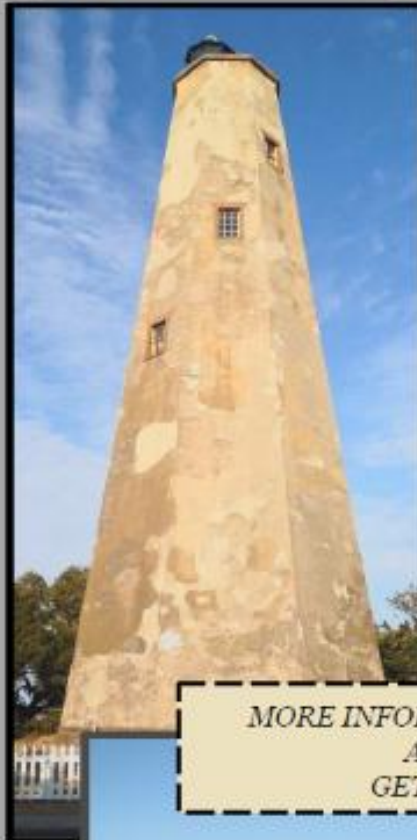
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*MORE INFORMATION COMING AS
ACTIVITIES
GET FINALIZED.*

When?
**OCT. 21
to
OCT. 23
2026**



Rooms available for
Tuesday, Oct. 20 (optional)
Wednesday, Oct. 21
Thursday, Oct. 22

**River Hotel of
Southport**

706 E Moore St, Southport,
NC 28461
910-294-6070

BY PHONE

Be sure to mention
Sandhills Photography
Club Group

ONLINE at

[RIVER HOTEL](#)



August Membership

Apologies for missing the July meeting due to an unexpected medical emergency. It was quite ironic to be admitted to hospital and getting feedback from the monthly meeting too on Monday night! I think we have a backup plan in place for August!



 If you come to August meeting in person, there's an opportunity to win donated photographic door prizes!

Welcome New Members Suzanne Priest and Michelle Merringer.
We hope to see you both in August at the meeting or on Zoom!

SPC 2026 Membership	
Individual	80
Honorary Members	3
Family	13
Family +1	13
Student	1
Total Members	110

August – finally, the end in sight. As a former summer fan, I was not prepared for the long spell of record highs, coupled with high humidity and drought conditions. We have a week of rain now and I am most happy for the farms and gardens in NC. Feeling a little relief in temperatures which is so enjoyable. I must confess to running through the splash pan in Cary Park while capturing the children frolicking in slow motion in July. It was quite cathartic. Only my remote transmitter was damaged in the process.

I know I'm not the only one hoping for a pleasant day for **Street Photography in August**. I'm sure many of you saw me using my lens cloth to dab at 'perspiration' on the Aquatic Gardens trip in mid-July – and it was 0900!

I hope you've caught the night photography spirit! This month has the usual star trails, Milky Way and meteor shower options but something special is the **solar eclipse on August 12!** If you're lucky enough to be in Spain or Iceland, you'll get totality effect of total darkness. If you're local it's still an opportunity to practice shooting the eclipse with PROTECTION! This is serious and can damage your eyes and more importantly (wink) your camera!

Although I've experimented with neutral density for long exposures of late, they are not adequate protection. A **solar filter** is required and they're reasonable. Order yours now to be prepared.

'To prevent eye damage and to view/photograph a solar eclipse safely : All filters should be ISO 12312-2 standard certified. Purchase from a reputable astronomy dealer or company (i.e. Celestron, Lunt Solar Systems, Astrozap, Agena Astro, etc.).'

Read further on 'how to shoot a solar eclipse' from AstroBackyard at [How to Photograph a Solar Eclipse | Equipment + Camera Settings](#)



If you attend meetings regularly, please volunteer with us to greet your fellow members. As you may have noticed twice this year, we need more help.

Finally, we have two great members in the interview queue, you will get to know them better in September. Again, mea culpa.

Hope many of you will volunteer to be in the following months' highlights.

If you have any questions, concerns or ideas, please share at membership@sandhillsphtoclub.org .

Mary

OUTINGS: Drums of Liberty

out & about

Images by:

David Powers	JoAnn Sluder
John German	Neva Scheve
Phil Lewis	Steve Sorsch
Susan Bailey	unknown



Neva Scheve



© David Powers

David Powers



John German



Susan Bailey

Susan Bailey



Phil Lewis



JoAnn Sluder



Steve Sorsch



Basket Weaver - Unknown



John German



Phil Lewis



David Powers

**OUTINGS:
Star Ridge**

out
& about

Images by:

Neva Scheve	Sue Lyons
Jacques Wood	Dee Williams
Phil Lewis	Jean Antholzner
John German	Josh Simpson
Susan Bailey	



Jacques Wood

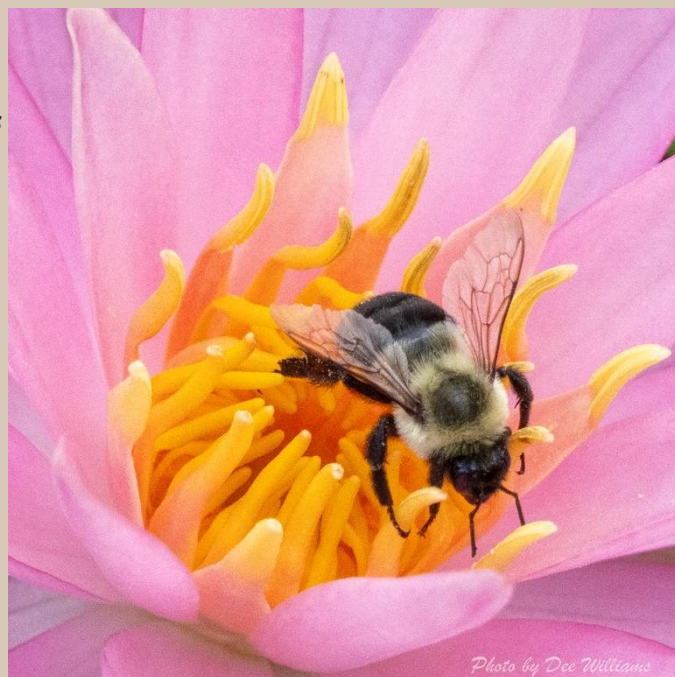


Josh Simpson



Neva Scheve

Dee Williams



Phil Lewis





Josh Simpson

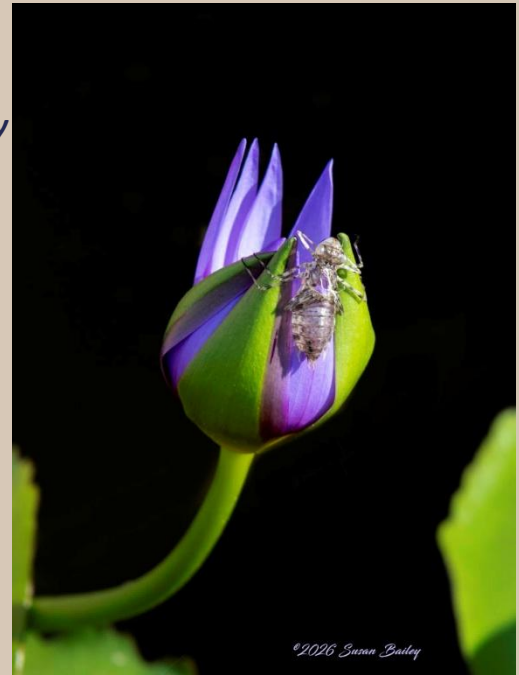


Sue Lyons



Dee Williams

Susan Bailey



John German



Jean Antholzner





Website: www.sandhillsphotoclub.org
Newsletter: communications@sandhillsphotoclub.org

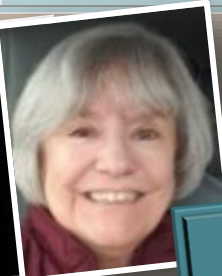


2025 SANDHILLS PHOTOGRAPHY CLUB BOARD AND CHAIRS

TITLE	NAME	EMAILS
President	Phil Lewis	president@sandhillsphotoclub.org
Vice President	Jean Antholzner	vicepresident@sandhillsphotoclub.org
Secretary	Bob Mobsby	secretary@sandhillsphotoclub.org
Treasurer	Steve Bonsall	treasurer@sandhillsphotoclub.org
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Exhibitions	Shari Dutton	exhibitions@sandhillsphotoclub.org
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Ombudsman	Neva Scheve	ombudsman@sandhillsphotoclub.org
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Web	John German	website@sandhillsphotoclub.org
Workshops	Cal Rice	workshops@sandhillsphotoclub.org

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EDITOR Alison Earl with
any questions, concerns,
ideas, submissions
(including images), etc. @
communications@sandhillsphotoclub.org

Alison Earl



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