

“The Art of Life”

By Michael E Timmons
Master of Photography
Photographic Craftsman

The measure of a man’s life is determined by many factors. The things that he accomplished are by far the least of these. For a man who has accomplished many things and never touched the heart of others is like a sound that is made in the forest and never heard.

To see life is not to know life. To dream and never achieve is like walking in a circle; you will get some exercise but you will never reach your goal. I have been guilty of many sins in life and have been forgiven, in this I rest assured. However to never convey love or beauty to the lives of others cannot be forgiven.

Overlooking the waves crashing on the shore of Lake Huron, I ponder the questions that all of us ask ourselves at least once, if not many times, during the course of our lives. Who am I? What is my purpose here? Most important of all, what will my legacy be?

My journey began, many years ago in a world that up until now I had almost forgotten. It was spring in 1958 when I was brought into this world in New Orleans, Louisiana. My mother was a refugee from Germany, surviving the “Death March” at the end of World War II. My father, a shoe

salesman, was a veteran of the U.S. Navy during the war. They were barely surviving on substandard wages in a land that was on the brink of Nuclear War.

My parents divorced and my mother suffered a nervous breakdown. I was placed in foster care and eventually into a “children’s home” in St. Louis, Missouri. I was just a child, not able to comprehend what was happening to me. I remember being alone, afraid and separated from the family that I knew. There is not a lot more to remember during these days of confusion, save one, the death of President John F. Kennedy. Even though I was only five years old, I remember crying when the funeral procession was shown on television. The coffin draped in an American flag; the crowds, and the grown-ups around me, all crying. Later in life, I would come back to this memory for some reason. Perhaps it made me realize that, indeed, one person could make a difference in the world.

My mother recovered and soon I was back with my brother and younger sister and starting a new school. I was in the third grade and my life had taken a new path: I was grateful. I had already seen a side of life that, thankfully, most will never see. This experience, even though I was young, would serve to build the person that I would become. My mother did the best that could be expected of a single woman raising three children on her own in the 60’s. From her I would learn **determination**.

I remember being ten years old and seeing a television program on Alaska. I was mesmerized and thought how neat it would be to go there. How cool it would be to see the mountains, the snow, and the “Eskimos”.

These things seemed nearly impossible for a child of ten. I would spend most of my adult life dreaming this same dream.

High school presented me with a whole new set of experiences. I learned about girls and team sports. I learned about rejection and triumph, love and loss. I was being recruited by some prestigious colleges for scholarships in athletics. Life was good and the future looked bright until a fateful fall night in October of 1975. A career ending knee injury left me without a plan. With scholarships gone and dreams of an athletic career shattered, I learned about **disappointment**.

They say that fate plays a big part in what your life is all about and I guess, to some extent that is true; I also believe that you can take advantage of life's experiences and mold your own future, what happened next was pure fate. Nothing that I could have imagined in my head could prepare me for the twists and turns ahead.

I was 17 and had no plans for the future. My friends were all expecting to go off to college or the service and I was sitting in my room, my leg in a cast, crutches leaning against the wall, wondering how life could be so cruel. I was naïve, as many are at this age, that what had happened to me was so tragic. I went in to talk to my advisor, Mrs. Pope, at school; she would take me down a path that I had not expected. There was a program at our school that allowed seniors who had enough credits to graduate an opportunity to schedule a three hour block of time for alternative studies. One of the programs being offered was photography. I thought to myself, what an easy way to blow off half a day of school so I signed up.

My mom took me to a pawn shop in downtown St. Louis and bought me my first 35mm camera. It was a Miranda “Zenit E” and it cost \$50. This camera would teach me more about photography than I wanted to know at the time. It was fully manual in every respect, no bells or whistles. After focusing, you would have to adjust the aperture for a proper exposure, or the view finder was too dark. I learned a lot during that class about exposure, reciprocity, and the mechanics of photography. But it was in the darkroom that I learned the magic of photography. After seeing my first roll of film come out of the wash and my first print develop in the Dektol that I had mixed myself, I was hooked. For me it would begin a journey that would be filled with excitement and accomplishment.

I still had some decisions to make about my future. It was the spring of my senior year, 1976. I enlisted in the United States Air Force. I was excited about the promises that were made by the recruiter, training, advancement, college education. I went for my physical, filled with anticipation and excitement, only to be denied. My knee injury was so bad that they could not accept me. I was devastated, another disappointment. Back to square one.

During this time I was photographing my friends at school. Mostly sports action shots, but my nights were filled with still life shots being set up in my basement. Using various backgrounds and crude lights, I would photograph flowers, bottles, boxes, anything was fair game. Photographing landscapes and scenics would teach me about patterns of light, shading, and composition. I dreamed of becoming Ansel Adams, photographing the world around me. Sharing these images with my

teachers and advisor would bring much encouragement. From them I would gain **confidence**.

I have always believed that we are a product of our life experiences; it is these experiences that make us who we are. Some of these are within our control and others are not. In the following months I would learn in the real world about these character building events in life.

I enrolled and was accepted in college the following fall at Central Missouri State University. They had a photography program and again I was excited to gain knowledge in my new chosen path. I graduated from high school and went to Arkansas to spend the summer with my father. We had not been close as I was growing up, mostly summer visits and an occasional holiday. The visits were always stressful and emotional. My plans were to spend the summer and then go off to college. It would never happen. In late summer, I suffered my first heart attack. It was a shock to everyone in my family. It was one of those heart attacks that you hear about with young athletes collapsing on the field or court. I was in denial about the severity and it would be 30 years later before I would learn about the damage that was truly done.

My father was in poor health and I decided to delay my college experience for a year, then two. As it turns out, it was a decision well made. During this time we became the father and son you hear about. We would spend our days golfing, and getting to know one another. My father taught me the importance of what you do in life. How a man is measured and how your word is your bond. He was old school and instilled in me the importance of doing what you say you will do. My

father died at the age of 52, after a series of heart attacks and strokes. I miss him deeply. From him I learned about **reputation**.

During this time I met and married my first wife Debbie. Over the next twenty one years we raised three wonderful children. We would build a home, work and grow. As a new husband and father, I needed to get a job. There were no photography related jobs to be had so I took on a variety of different occupations. I installed car stereos, television antennas, managed an electronics store and delivered pizzas. I did a little photography on the side, but never for pay. I did what needed to be done to survive.

In October of 1979, I went to work as a law enforcement officer. Starting out as a radio operator, I soon went to the Law Enforcement Training Academy and graduated at the top of my class. I began as a road deputy and soon advanced to become the youngest criminal investigator in the state of Arkansas. It was during the first year that I would have another brush with death; a bullet came into my car and lodged into the cowl to the left of my head, missing me by inches. Once again, I was lucky to be alive. The second time in three years that my life was nearly cut short.

Four years later, the fire was still burning in my heart for photography. By chance I met someone who shared my interest in creating images. Randy Dunham was a uniform shop owner and had some scenic images on his wall. This led to a conversation and the formation of a partnership. In the coming months we would start a business and begin photographing portraits and weddings. We would move the clothing racks at night and do our appointments; we would learn and grow together.

I learned about and joined the Professional Photographers of America in 1983, and the Arkansas Professional Photographers Association soon after. I also became a member of the Professional Photographers of the Ozarks. I was hungry to learn and experience all that photography had to offer. I entered my first print competition and it was a disaster. Not a print over 74 and some much lower.

At the next print competition I met someone who would teach and mentor me. This would change my life and photography forever. I would listen and learn, as we spent the next five hours going from print to print in the display. He showed me what was good and what was bad about every print. It was a marathon, and we still fondly refer to this as print class 101.

Dave Swoboda is, and was at that time, a very giving person. He was honest, sometimes brutal, but always encouraging. He shared with me things that I could have never learned on my own. I am eternally grateful. He taught me things about my photography that have helped me when times were bad, profited me when times were good, and still help me in these uncertain times. It was Dave who taught me to find the “inner Image” in every print. That part of the image that had the redeeming values to do well and last. He fueled my passion for print competition and for life. Everything that I have accomplished in print competition I owe to Dave. He changed my life forever. He taught me the value of **excellence**.

It was shortly after this that I met Frank Kristian. I studied his work and bought his book on composition. He taught me the concept of “How much is too little, how little is too much”. He instilled in me the value of

“positive and negative space”, and most of all the importance of composition. It was after reading his book several times and attending his program for the third time that it began to sink in. I saw him a few years later at Winona School in Chicago, and didn’t recognize him because he was so ill. He died soon afterwards and I remember upon hearing the news, I wept. He was a great man and a great influence on the photographer that I would become. From Frank I learned the value of **composition**.

I settled into the business of photography and the business grew fast. Armed with the knowledge that I had gained through the various associations, I would prosper. Through my involvement in the community, I was asked to teach photography at the local community college. I was apprehensive at first but accepted the challenge. It would prove to be one of the best learning experiences of my life.

Through the next few years, Randy and I would expand our business and relocate twice. Each new studio was larger and more impressive than the previous storefront. After buying Randy out, the studio moved to Main Street, the busiest area of town. This historical location was Mountain Home’s first schoolhouse, built in the 1800’s. It was indeed a showplace with two camera rooms and an outdoor shooting area. I would market to 1000 seniors within a sixty mile radius and photograph about 500 of them every year. But my passion to become an artist remained. Photographing landscapes and scenics was my release from the pressures of everyday life.

I would study and pass the certification exam from Professional Photographers of America and begin the first leg of my journey to a

Masters Degree. I soon began speaking and sharing my knowledge on a grander scale, I become proficient at print competition, earning my Craftsman Degree in Orlando, Florida, and my Master's degree in Nashville, Tennessee. I attended the judge's workshop at Winona in Chicago, Illinois. I met a whole new set of friends. It was here that I met Don Emmerich, someone who would again influence me without knowing it. Sitting next to him in the back of the room, he put many things into perspective for me: the importance of what we do, the skill set required to accomplish our goals, how the technical aspects of what we do matter. He also shared with me the concept that one's accomplishments do not create the sum of a man. From Don I learned the value of **education**.

It was then that I would team up with Gary Meek and Arnie Burton and share photography with others by teaching a certification class for several years in Arkansas. Each of us had the technical knowledge and experience to help others achieve their goals. It was one of the most rewarding experiences of my life. These two men taught me the value of **sharing**.

I then met Bruce Smith and Fred Hinegardner, two unique individuals who would leave an impression on me. My creativity would be unleashed in part by their influence. I remember a program they gave at Heart of America one night that transformed me.

Bruce was instrumental in getting me approved as an International Juror, sending my form overnight from his hospital bed. I remember when Bruce passed, again I wept. I had the honor of attending "his" convention and judging after he had died. There was a print of his daughter sitting on his lap in the competition, I was overcome with

emotion and had to leave the judging. I have that print hanging in my artist's space to this day, along with a portrait of Bruce by Fred Hinegardner, two of my most cherished possessions. Bruce taught me about the **frailty of life**.

I spent a day studying with Fred. I have jokingly said that I spent a week with Fred one afternoon. He shared with me his inner most thoughts about some of his most thought provoking works. He showed me hundreds of drawings that he had created for one of his pieces. Then he showed me the one he selected, one of his earlier drawings. I asked him why he had drawn the others after that one. He said, "Sometimes you have to go beyond what you have done to realize that what you did was good enough". It was a revelation to me, and a profound statement of fact. Fred taught me the value of an **artist's heart**.

There have been many others over the course of my career that I have learned from. Photographers, both famous and unknown, who have molded me, and taught me about my craft. I would come to value the friendships too, people who would become lifelong friends because of my involvement with photography. Far too many to mention, with the exception of four, Dave Huntsman, Rod Brown, Jim Frieze and, years later, Andrew Jenkins. I would share with these friends things about myself that no one else would ever know. I would come to love these men as brothers, both in and out of photography. They taught me the value of **friendship**.

It was fall of 1995; I was distracted from my photography. I guess that you could say I was burned out a little bit and needed a change. Allen Edwards worked as an entertainer in Branson, Missouri, and was

looking for a front man to emcee his shows. We had become good friends through photography; he was a client and we shared a law enforcement background. The studio was in capable hands which enabled me to experience this new adventure in life.

Allen was well received in the entertainment business and he enjoyed it. I remember being back stage one night, thousands of people in the audience, wondering what I was doing there. It had been over a year, I had just returned from judging in Atlanta when it dawned on me; the entertainment business was not my dream, not my passion and certainly not my future. I quit and returned to what I loved doing most, photography.

I returned with fervor, recapturing the love that I had and rebuilding a business that I had neglected for too long. It was a challenge and I put my heart and soul into it. We were rolling again, sales were climbing and the future looked bright. Things were going well, in photography at least.

But life was about to turn me upside down again, blindsiding me and leaving me in a state of turmoil. In all of this success my wife Debbie and I had slowly drifted apart. She had her own business and I was deeply involved in mine. We no longer shared the same focus or devotion to our relationship. It was my fault, but by the time we both realized what was happening, it was too late. Explaining divorce to our children was the hardest thing I have ever done in my life.

August 3, 1998, I met the person I had needed my whole life, Tina. I just didn't know it. We were at the PPA convention in New Orleans,

Louisiana, strangely enough, my birthplace. We had met before and I had felt a strange feeling in my very being, I had resisted it and moved on, or so I thought. We talked throughout the entire night, about photography, life and things that friends talk about. I was leaving the next day and as I left in the taxi to the airport, I had tears in my eyes.

We were together again in Las Vegas in January of 1999. We spent the days shooting in the desert, on the Vegas Strip and Red Rock Canyon. We could stand in the same spot and see things entirely different. We were together in Gatlinburg, Tennessee, later that same year and again the photography was magical, I was smitten and I knew that there was no turning back for me. I realized that I had fallen in love with her. There were so many obstacles to overcome, and the wake of destruction would bring a heavy toll on the both of us.

Tina opened up a whole new existence for me. We became good friends and confidants. Spending hours on the phone, we fell in love. It was not intended, but it happened. Because of her I began writing poetry and short stories, entering an entirely new creative phase of my life. I had always enjoyed the beauty of my surroundings but they now took on an entirely new focus. I began to become an encourager, sending out daily words of inspiration to people of all vocations. This list grew to over 2000 people over the course of one year. It was an amazing experience for me.

In July of 2000, I dissolved my business and moved to Michigan to be with Tina. We embarked on a journey that seemed comfortable to me. She understood my creative needs and made my lifelong desire to be an artist a reality. Soon after our wedding in 2003, she took over all of the

portrait work in our studio, allowing me to concentrate on the art of photography and scenics that had burned into my soul so many years ago.

Moving to Michigan introduced me to an entirely new world of friends. I have had the opportunity to meet and become friends with some wonderful people. One of these is Helen Yancy. I had known Helen years before and had even served on a committee with her in the past. In the short time that we have been friends, I have learned valuable lessons from her. One of these lessons is honesty. I have come to respect her for her years of dedicated service and the way she deals with people. Her knowledge and reputation are without blemish. Helen taught me the value of **integrity**.

In May of 2004 we opened a storefront Art Gallery in Frankenmuth, Michigan. Gallery 143 was the realization of a lifelong dream for me and a new endeavor for Tina. We had the Gallery in the front of the building and the studio in the back. We began selling fine art to businesses, corporations and individuals. Little did we know that this would become a major boost to our income and save us in dying economic times. We have since closed the Gallery to better service our corporate clients, cut our overhead, and allow us to travel more. This was a start to a whole new way of business and life. We are now working out of our home, teaching all over the world, and more secure in our decisions.

On the occasion of my 50th birthday, Tina surprised me with a trip and cruise to Alaska. Nineteen days in the state that I had dreamt about for the last 40 years. It was a childhood dream about to come true. It took me back to the age of ten and the excitement that I had at that time. It was all that I had imagined and more. My age made it that much

better, as I could appreciate the beauty that surrounded me. The entire time I didn't want to sleep, I wept at times at the surreal beauty that was around me. I was mature enough to enjoy it and was adept in my craft enough to record it. I held Tina at the end of the trip and jokingly told her that I could die happy now, my biggest dream had become a reality. Little did I know what life had planned for me.

I have always loved judging and it was following the International Judging in 2008 that I nearly died again. Less than three weeks after returning from Alaska. I was having dinner with Tina and friends in Daytona Beach, Florida, when I began to feel ill. After dinner, I returned to the hotel and felt somewhat better. After flying home, Tina had to rush me to the hospital with heart attack symptoms. The doctor was talking to her on the phone and he didn't think I would survive. I had emergency surgery to fix an electrical problem with my heart. The doctor told me that by the symptoms I described in Florida, I should have died that night. This same heart problem is probably what took my father's life at such a young age. Again I was lucky to be alive. I needed to make amends with those that I had wronged. I no longer had the capacity to hate or hold a grudge. I remembered Bruce Smith, and the life lesson that he had taught me. It rang true in my heart. I will not forget again. It was at this point in my life that I learned the value of friendships, but more importantly, the concept of **forgiveness**.

I have always loved nature photography and it has been my passion all of my adult life. I was sidetracked in the early years with portraiture and making a living. It wasn't until I had the proper support that I was able to realize my photography goals. I now create art that sells and

encourages. I teach what I have learned to others in hopes that they can reach those same goals and dreams. I know that the great Creator has something planned for my future, based on the number of times that He has spared my life.

The future is filled with the promise of more travel, teaching, and adventure. I am sure that more lessons are yet to be learned and I hope that as I mature even more, I will be humble in my opinions and true to my heart. I will endeavor to create more images, to share more knowledge and to lend a helping hand to my friends and students. I will not sit back and enjoy past accomplishments, or dwell on them. I will evolve as I have in the past and I will embrace the changes that will surely come. I hope to repay the lessons that I have learned, by teaching and sharing with others. I cannot think of a better way to repay the kindnesses that have been shown to me.

To many people, photography is a means to an end, a job so to speak. To me it is so much more. It is an existence, a way of life. I believe that the art of photography is part of my very being. I know that I didn't always feel that way, that there were other vocations in my life. But the truth is, after seeing that first roll of film and that first print, I changed. No matter how far I drifted away, or tried to ignore the feelings inside me, photography brought me back.

We, as photographers, change the world. Our images have impact on almost every aspect of life. Some tragic and some sad, some bring us joy and others fear. From photojournalism to fine art, we capture life in a fraction of a second, and bring into being a moment in time that most would miss, except for the camera.

Photography has been my one constant through the years. The creative outlet that it affords me is the very keeper of my sanity. Without it, I would be adrift in the cold waters of the mundane. Was it chance or was it fate that brought me into this career? Perhaps it was divine intervention, I really don't know. What I do know is that I am happy to be an artist, a manipulator of light and a creator of images.

I have heard it said that if you "find something that you love, you won't have to work a day in your life". I don't know about that because there is plenty of hard work in this profession. What I do know, is that the toils of this profession help to create joy and happiness for others. It can bring laughter or sorrow, it can inspire or deter, but regardless of the facts, it provokes thought and interpretation by the viewer.

But there has to be more, doesn't there? If not, why is there a longing in my soul to do more and to create new images? If I have attained all that I desired so many years ago, why is there still emptiness inside of me? Why do I feel the urge to continue to learn and grow in this profession? Why don't I just quit?

That is the beauty of what we do as photographers. We are never satisfied with what we have already done; the next image that we create is bound to be better than the last one.

I remember using all the colors in the crayon box when I was a child. I look at photography this way. We are and have always been a creative species. We were, after all, designed by the great Creator. It is in our nature, our souls and our hearts. Somewhere along the line it was programmed out of us. Probably in early childhood when we were taught

that all flowers are red and the grass is always green. There is a song by Harry Chapin that reflects this same thought process. I sometimes play it in my classes. It is called “Roses are Red”.

We have to encourage ourselves to get back in touch with this inner child in some way, to release the creative energy that resides inside our minds. We must at some point leave the security of our world and delve into the unknown, the uncharted waters of our souls. We must learn to “be” who we really are. If not, we will suffer the anxiety of a tortured existence. How can we achieve this new level of consciousness? I believe we can do this by releasing our inhibitions and trying new things. Conquer our fears and head into a direction of chance and risk.

We need to evolve to survive, and we must create to live. How easy this seems to be, yet many will not risk the security of their current way of doing things to get there. It’s not really that hard, but it does take faith. In the course of my life I have been in desperate situations on more than one occasion. God has always provided in these times of desperation.

What we do as artists in our lives helps to define us. The deeds that we do and the images that we create will become our legacy. Our collection of images will show how we used the talents that we were given in life and if we used those talents for good purpose. We have an obligation, be it only self imposed, to record life as we see it, and share this vision with those who cannot or will not see it for themselves.

It is never known when a man is to die, but I do know this, I have many images yet to create, many stories yet to tell and many lives yet to

touch. I will evolve as I have in the past and I will embrace the changes that will surely come.

I have found the answers to some of my earlier questions. Who am I? I am an artist; a creator of images that I hope inspires others. I am a collection of my experiences, my friendships and my failures. Why am I here? To be an encourager to those that I meet, to help others reach their goals in life and photography. I am here to share love, happiness and joy, with my friends, mentors, and students. What will my legacy be? That has yet to be determined. It is my sincere desire to leave behind my interpretation of the world around me by sharing the beauty of what I see and bringing these images to others who may not be able to experience that moment in time for themselves. I want to leave this earth a little better and more beautiful than it was when I got here.

As I reflect on the things that I have written, I realize that every life is a work of art. For as much as a musician plays his instrument, a singer uses his voice or a sculptor creates with his hands, so has God created these experiences for me. Carefully, He painted with His brush the canvas of my life, stroke by loving stroke. It is not my will, but His that has brought me to this point in my life. So I ask all of you who read this, take time to reflect on your own path, knowing that all things have purpose, and we are all a product of our own experiences. Then perhaps you too can enjoy the **“Art of Life”**.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael E. Timmons, M.Photog, Cr.

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Professional Biography

Michael E. Timmons owns and operates Gallery 143 in Vassar, Michigan. Gallery 143 is a Fine Art Gallery offering photographic works of art. The Gallery clients include several NASCAR Teams, Hendricks Motor Sports, Drury Inns, PGA players, and McDonalds Restaurants, in addition to banks, hotels, businesses and doctor's offices, along with private collectors.

Michael Timmons is a published poet, writer, artist, and photographer. He has been involved in the arts for over 25 years. Michael has lectured across the United States, at local, state and regional conventions. He has presented programs several times at the Professional Photographers of America International Convention. Michael is also an approved PPA International Juror and a PPA Jury Chairman in Training.

Michael is a past president of the Arkansas Professional Photographers Association, has served on the Portrait Group for Professional Photographers of America, including Chairman of the committee, and has also served PPA as a member of the Photographic Exhibitions Committee. Michael is the current Vice Chairman of PEC for PPA. Michael also served on the board of directors of the Professional Photographers of the Ozarks. Michael has received the Arkansas Distinguished Service Award, the Michigan Service Award and the coveted "National Award", from the Professional Photographers of America.

Education

1963-1966	Grade School	Evangelical Children's Home
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1967-1970	Grade School	Robinwood Elementary
1971-1973	Junior High School	Florissant Junior High
1974-1976	High School	McLuer North High School
1980-1987	Advanced Training Academy	Law Enforcement Training

Experience

1979-1989 **Baxter County Sheriff’s Office** Mountain Home, Ar.

Served in various positions within the department, including radio operator, road deputy, and criminal investigator. Appointed as the youngest criminal investigator in the state of Arkansas and achieved rank of Lieutenant after only three years. Responsibilities included supervision of more than thirty officers, radio operators and jailors. Supervisor duties included department budgeting, scheduling, and education. Lead officer in the investigation and prosecution of all major crimes. This included property crimes, personal crimes and crimes against the state. Was responsible for all crime scene photography and certified as an “expert” in all state, district, civil and criminal courts. Was a charter member, “Arkansas Drug Education Task Force”.

1983-2000 **Michael’s Portraits** Mountain Home, Arkansas

Responsibilities included all aspects of studio operations, including photography, payroll, sales, and order fulfillment.

2000- 2003 **The Portrait Gallery** Frankenmuth and Vassar, Michigan.

Responsibilities included portrait sessions, computer enhancements and order fulfillment.

2003 to the present **Gallery 143**
Michigan

Frankenmuth and Vassar,

Currently involved in all aspects of the fine art photography business, including, order fulfillment, computer enhancements, large format printing, mounting and matting.

Accomplishments;

Member Professional Photographers of America

Member American Society of Photographers

Member Professional Photographers of Michigan

Member Mid-Michigan Professional Photographers

Recipient of the PPA “National Award”

Certified Professional Photographer (Past)

Photographic Craftsman

Master of Photography

Recipient of the “Imaging Excellence Award”

Recipient of the “Imaging Excellence Bar”

Approved International Juror

PPA Jury Chairman in Training

Two time Arkansas “Photographer of the Year”

Three time Michigan “Photographer of the Year”

Six time PPA “Photographer of the Year”, including “Diamond Level”

Mid East States PPA “Photographer of the Year”

Past President, Arkansas Professional Photographers

Past Chairman and committee member, Portrait Group, PPA

Past Member of the Photographic Exhibitions Committee, PPA
Current Vice Chairman, Photographic Exhibitions Committee, PPA
Past PPA Councilor for Arkansas (Seven Years)
Current Print Chairman, Mid East States PPA
Current Board Member, Mid East States PPA
Current PPA Councilor for Michigan
Two time "Epcot" selectee
Image selected for "International Photography Hall of Fame"
Image Selected for Photokina, Cologne Germany
Two Time winner ASP "State Elite Award"
ASP "Regional Medallion" winner
Sixteen time winner of the "Kodak Gallery Award"
Twelve time winner of the "Fuji Masterpiece Award"
30 PPA "Loan Collection" images
Three 100 print scores in competition
Professional Photographers of the Ozarks, former board member.
Arkansas Photographic Fellowship
Arkansas Service Award
Michigan Service Award
Served on the Governor of Arkansas' Drug Education Task Force