



## PHOTOGRAPHY

### Department 26—Open Show

Amount Offered: \$1,460.00

Entry Fee: \$1.00 per entry (2 entries per Class maximum)

\$1.00 per entry 250<sup>th</sup> USA Anniversary Peoples' Choice  
(1 entry per class maximum)

Challenge: \$1.25 per entry (2 entries per Class maximum)

Late Registration Fee : \$25.00 per entry (Approval REQUIRED)

Judging Time: Wednesday, August 5<sup>th</sup>, 2026, at 11:30 am

Location: Building E

Superintendent: Miki Myshkowec .....(847)417-9875

Email address.....mmyshkowec@gmail.com

### Rules and Regulations

**NEW THIS YEAR: Curfew Enforced – Quiet time and curfew is 12:00am midnight – 5:00am.**

**All exhibits are closed. This includes grandstands, midway, barns and campgrounds. Anyone under the age of 18 must be accompanied by an adult during these times.**

1. Entries must be filed with the fair office by 2:00 pm on July 19, 2026, or by midnight online. **LATE ENTRIES WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED. WE HIGHLY RECOMMEND THAT YOU REGISTER ONLINE!**
2. All exhibitors are required to purchase a weeklong exhibitor pass.
3. Home Arts General Rules apply.
4. Bring entries to **Building E on Sunday, August 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2026 between 12:00 pm and 7:00 pm.** Exhibitor's tags must be paper clipped to the upper right-hand corner of mounting. Exhibitors name must NOT appear on exhibit. Exhibitor tags will be given out when you drop off your photographs.
5. Photography exhibits will be released on the **SUNDAY of fair week between 7 pm and 8 pm OR MONDAY AFTER FAIR (AUGUST 10<sup>th</sup>) from 10 am-1 pm, exhibits may not be removed before that time.**
  - a. Ribbons and exhibits and photography premium checks will be available for pick up at these time slots only.
  - b. **Removal of photos is the responsibility of the exhibitor. The fair board and superintendent are not responsible for exhibits damaged or lost by the exhibitor.**
  - c. **All Exhibitors MUST bring their claim checks or an ID to check out and sign out their checks and ribbons.**
  - d. Any exhibits that remain unclaimed after 4pm on the Friday following the Fair will be donated or discarded.
6. All photographs must be taken by amateurs and entered under the name of the person who took them. Professional photographers are ONLY allowed to enter the challenge division. For this exhibit, if one of the following apply, you are considered professional: (1) Those who maintain a public studio, (2) Sells their work and/or advertises for business, (3) Derive more than 50% of their income from photography, (4) Have won two or more Best of Show (or similar) awards in a photography contest.
7. **Challenge Division:** there are 14 categories open to all levels of photographers. All entrants, please review your status as a photographer. If you are starting to sell your work and/or advertise yourself as a photographer or taking photographs (employed by and paid) for a photography studio, then please enter in our new Challenge Categories. It is not in our intention to exclude anyone from entering their work, but we want to make sure the competition is fair to all. **\*See special Instruction Challenge Division.**
8. Photographs are NOT to be altered by computer or any art media unless otherwise specified. Accepted forms: UV filter, polarized filter, soft filter, adding contrast, color corrections, and cropping. No color saturation and no HD may be used. For the **Challenge Division ONLY:** Photoshop or similar programs are allowed.
9. Finished prints MAY BE printed from a home computer or a Photo lab (i.e. Wal-Mart, Walgreens, Shutterfly) Matte finish is preferred over glossy due to glare.

10. Photographs may be taken with any type of camera.
11. Please check carefully when putting prints in OTHER categories. Prints entered in “other” MUST NOT qualify for any other Division listed, or they will be disqualified.
12. Each print may ONLY appear in one Class (**photo may not appear in Home Arts Department**) and must not have been previously entered in the McHenry County Fair. Superintendents reserve the right and will disqualify ANY “suspicious” prints without any exception or discussion. NOTE: this includes images which have been changed slightly, cropped differently or is similar in concept.
13. When choosing your photographs, please keep in mind this is a family orientated event and any photograph deemed not to be in keeping with that nature, may be disqualified and not displayed.
14. COLOR AND BLACK AND WHITE PRINTS:
  - a. Finished print size should be 8 x 10. Prints are to be mounted on a 10 x 12 WHITE POSTER BOARD (No mat Board is allowed). Creating a 1-inch border on all 4 sides. This will allow the print to be displayed properly.
  - b. Mounting with Scotch wrinkle free stick, liquid glue adhesive, or Scotch PERMANENT double-sided arts and craft tape works well. DO NOT use Elmers school glue sticks. No other mounting materials or frames are allowed. (**\*\*EXCEPTION 2026 ONLY \*\* 250<sup>th</sup> USA Anniversary People’s Choice see instructions in category**)
  - c. Please ensure photos are mounted properly. The fair is not responsible for photos that fall off due to improper mounting.
  - d. No photo corners are allowed.
  - e. A matte finish is preferred over glossy due to the glare.
  - f. **NO Captions are allowed in any category. There should be no printing on the front of the poster board.**
  - g. Please remove dates on front of photos.
15. NOTES ON JUDGING:
  - a. This department has “open judging.” Exhibitors may watch the process; however, exhibitors may NOT disturb the process or speak to the Judge(s) or the Superintendent(s) during this time. Any infraction of this rule will disqualify ALL photography exhibits entered by the exhibitor.
  - b. Judges’ decisions are final. In the event of indecision between Judges, the Superintendents reserve the rights to step in as an additional Judge for a final decision.
  - c. Entries will be judged solely in competition and in comparison, with each other.
  - d. Photographs will be judged on **Composition** (arrangement, balance), **Technical Quality** (focus, exposure, sharpness, detail in shadows/highlights), **Impact/Creativity** (emotional pull, originality), and **Storytelling**, with emphasis on clean presentation and adherence to specific rules for cropping, mounting, and editing, as judges look for a strong, well-executed image that tells a story.
  - e. If the photo has obvious edits or filters, is excessively grainy or blurry, does not fit the category, or does not follow printing and mounting rules set forth, it will not place.
16. Superintendents reserve the rights to disqualify any exhibits that do not qualify for a specific category, photographs in bad taste (i.e. nudes or suggestive photographs) and/or do not abide by any of the Photography Rules and Regulations.
17. Entries will be judged solely in competition and in comparison, with each other.
18. The McHenry County Fair Association, for the safety of those attending the Fair (including the rider), prohibits the use of bicycles, scooters, skateboards, hoverboards, and similar wheeled riding items of the Fairgrounds, during the Annual Fair, including set-up and take-down.

**Open Color Print/Open Black and White Print Premiums** First-\$5; Second-\$4; Third-\$3; Forth-ribbon

**Challenge Premiums** First-\$8; Second-\$5; Third-ribbon; Forth-ribbon

**250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of USA People’s Choice Premiums** First-\$5; Second-\$4; Third-\$3; Forth-ribbon

**Best of Show:** (One per Division. Each first place within a division will compete for this award): Rosette

Division	Class	
<b>COLOR PRINTS</b>		
<b>A</b> McHenry County	<b>01</b> Kids on the Farm <b>02</b> Barns <b>03</b> Farm Scene <b>04 2026 Fair Theme:</b> Stars, Stripes & Country Nights	<b>05</b> Farm Animals <b>06</b> Tractors <b>07</b> Farm Traditions <b>08</b> Everyday Farm Life <b>09</b> Fun at McHenry County Fair
<b>B</b> Everyday Living	<b>01</b> Individual Child 0-3 Years <b>02</b> Individual Child 4 years and up <b>03</b> Children – 2 or more <b>04</b> Child(ren) and Adult(s) <b>05</b> Senior People <b>06</b> Portrait (posed subject) <b>07</b> Kids and their pets <b>08 Sports</b> <b>09</b> At Play	<b>10</b> Humorous <b>11</b> Images at Home (Your favorite things Inside or around your home) <b>12</b> Red, White, & Blue <b>13</b> Things you Find on the Sidewalk <b>14</b> Hometown-Shoot like a Tourist <b>15</b> Street Photography (Everyday life in Public Places) <b>16</b> Military/Patriotic <b>17</b> Holidays - NON-Patriotic <b>18</b> Food
<b>C</b> Scenic	<b>01</b> Landscapes (No Sea/Ocean) <b>02</b> Seascapes/Ocean Scape <b>03</b> City Scape <b>04</b> Down by the Water <b>05</b> Winter <b>06</b> Fall <b>07</b> Spring	<b>08</b> Summer <b>09</b> Sunrise/Sunset WITH water (must include water in photo) <b>10</b> Sunrise/Sunset NO water (must include other object in photo – NO water) <b>11</b> Places to Escape <b>12</b> National Parks <b>13</b> Waterfalls <b>14</b> Fog/Mist
<b>D</b> Nature	<b>01</b> Trees <b>02</b> A Walk in the Woods <b>03</b> Weather (all kinds of weather, clouds, rain, etc....) <b>04</b> Floral - Single Flower	<b>05</b> Floral–2 or More Blooms <b>06</b> Plants (NO flowers, trees, or fungi/mushrooms) <b>07</b> Fungi/Mushrooms <b>09</b> Rocks
<b>E</b> Animals/Birds/Insects	<b>01</b> Butterflies <b>02</b> Domestic Dog(s) <b>03</b> Domestic Cat(s) <b>04</b> Horse(s) <b>05</b> Waterfowl <b>06</b> Marine Life	<b>07</b> Wildlife (no birds) <b>08</b> Zoo Animals <b>09</b> Baby Animals <b>10</b> Frogs <b>11</b> Insects (not butterflies) <b>12</b> Birds

<b>F Structures</b>	<b>01</b> Architecture <b>02</b> Bridges <b>03</b> Windows, Doors, Doorways <b>04</b> Statue(s)	<b>05</b> Lighthouses <b>06</b> Building Long Forgotten <b>07</b> Churches <b>08</b> Fences
<b>G The Art of Seeing</b>	<b>01</b> Reflections <b>02</b> Silhouette(s) <b>03</b> Leading Lines <b>04</b> Patterns <b>05</b> Textures <b>06</b> Still Life/Non-Living Creatures	<b>07</b> Shadows <b>08</b> Framing <b>09</b> Geometric Shapes <b>10</b> Worms' eye view (change your perspective shoot from worm/ant eye view) <b>11</b> Eagle eye view (change your perspective shoot from Eagle eye view)
<b>H All Other Categories</b>	<b>01</b> Planes, Trains & Autos <b>02</b> Signs <b>03</b> Water Drops <b>04</b> Night Scene <b>05</b> Bubbles	<b>06</b> Dark & Moody <b>07</b> Live Performances <b>08</b> Long Exposure (Fireworks, light trails, etc....) <b>09</b> Other (does not qualify for any other class)
<b>BLACK AND WHITE PRINTS</b>		
<b>M Black and White Prints</b>	<b>01</b> People <b>02</b> Animals <b>03</b> Architecture (buildings, doors, windows, etc....) <b>04</b> Plant Life (flowers, plants, trees...) <b>05</b> Cemeteries (headstones, statues, crypts, etc....)	<b>06</b> Reflections <b>07</b> Shadows <b>08</b> Leading Lines <b>09</b> Other (does NOT qualify for ANY other B&W category)
<b>N Challenge Division -</b> Open to all level of Photographers. Photoshop/similar programs are allowed. 8"X10" unless specified, black and white or color allowed.	<b>01</b> Post Card Worthy (any image you would put on a post card) <b>02</b> Photo of the Day (any subject – no rules) <b>03</b> Black and White (Any Subject) <b>04</b> Travel <b>05</b> People <b>06</b> Portraits <b>07</b> Macro	<b>08</b> Backlight <b>09</b> Seasons <b>10</b> Golden Hour <b>11</b> Animals <b>12</b> Still Life <b>13</b> Character Study <b>14</b> It's All About the Light (NO Sunrise/set)

<p><b>N</b> Challenge Division Cont....</p>	<p><b>15</b> Scenic (landscape/seascape/cityscape)</p> <p><b>16</b> In Between</p> <p><b>17</b> Full Frame – One subject matter filling the full frame</p> <p><b>18</b> Nine Elements of Photography – Must show ALL of the following: Light, Textures, Pattern, Shadow, Color, Line, Size, Shape, Depth.</p>	<p><b>19</b> Digital Manipulation Art (MUST be digitally manipulated to create Art - 3X5 of Original must be attached ON BACK with explanation of changes)</p> <p><b>20</b> Other (does NOT qualify for any other challenge category)</p>
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**Open People's Choice 250th Anniversary Celebration of the USA**

<p><b>O.</b> 250th USA Anniversary - People's Choice</p>	<p><b>This photo should honor and represent the 250th anniversary United States of America.</b></p> <p><b>Winner photos will be determined by votes taken from the patrons of the fair from Tuesday through Sunday at Noon. Superintendent count of votes in final.</b></p> <p>Rules:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) All general Photography rules above apply EXCEPT Rule #7 (Challenge division rules) &amp; #14 (mounting instructions.)</li> <li>2) Only <b>ONE</b> submission per person</li> <li>3) Mounting &amp; Printing Instructions: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Print <b>MUST</b> be 8X10</li> <li>b. Color OR Black &amp; White allowed</li> <li>c. Finished prints <b>MAY BE</b> printed from a home computer or a photo lab (i.e. Wal-Mart, Walgreen's, Shutterfly.)</li> <li>d. <b>MUST</b> be framed in plain black frame <b>NO LARGER</b> than 8x10</li> <li>e. <b>MUST</b> be a wire on back of frame to hang</li> </ol> </li> </ol>
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