

2019 Photographer Biographies (as of 11/5/19)

Dennis Abriola

I am a retired electrician who was born and raised in Vineland, New Jersey. When I was a young boy, I remember loving the outdoors, always wanting to be outside experiencing nature, and being curious about the world around me.

I am always in awe by the natural beauty of the Pinelands, whether it is the reflections in the lakes and ponds or the flight of a bird sailing through the air. After shooting thousands upon thousands of pictures, it still brings me great joy and excitement to view the images for the first time, once again discovering the Pinelands.

Andrew Adams

For decades, I have passed through the Pinelands on my way to the Jersey Shore and have looked out my car window at the vast swath of cedars and pine trees that line the AC Expressway.

During those trips, I often thought about taking a few detours to explore because I was captivated by tales of the Jersey Devil and I found myself wondering about the ecology of the area, especially during blueberry season. At first, I was intimidated by the unimproved dirt roads and was afraid of angering locals for infringing on their land. Then one summer I was fed up with the traffic and the commercialized nature of the shore. Seeking some peace, I took a kayak trip through Wharton State Forrest, and I fell in love with the history, magnificence, & the friendly people of the Pines. I have since come to appreciate the Pines for much more than blueberries.

I've been using my camera to capture and share the same feeling of wonderment I experienced when I first paddled down the pine-shaded tea colored water of the Mullica. I have many people in my life who are unable to visit or who are unaware that such beauty exists. The Pines are my happy place; it's a magical place of peace and serenity sandwiched between two major centers of noise and stress. More people should be exposed to its wonders and recognize why it should be protected. That is why I chose to photograph the Pines.

People often ask me to explain my obsession with the New Jersey Pine Barrens... I respond I earn a living and lay my head in Philadelphia, but I live in the Pines.

Charles Aitken

Chuck is a retired Hospital Administrator who has been exploring the New Jersey Pinelands most of his life. He started exploring the many sand roads that crisscrossed the vast landscape in his VW bug at a young age and fell in love with its beauty. The varied landscape offered so many different photographic opportunities. Summers are spent at the Jersey shore.

He received his first SLR camera 45 years ago, but his passion didn't seem to ignite until he purchased his first digital camera 15 years ago.

His passion is photographing landscapes both in the Jersey Pinelands and at the Jersey shore. Summer mornings are spent photographing the many different shore birds that inhabit the marshland around North Wildwood and Stone Harbor NJ.

Janet Alter

I am an octogenarian, who finally has time to enjoy the beauty of God's creation. No longer do I have cupcakes to deliver for the class party, activities to plan for my Girl Scout Troop, children to pick up at school, deliver to dance class and get back in time for the P.T.A. meeting, etc., etc.

In a way, I see myself as a "Modern Day Grandma Moses". I certainly am not presumptuous enough to compare my abilities and or talent to hers. However, she also later in life decided to do her thing. There are many items still waiting to come to fruition on my bucket list. However, number one has always been to spend time enjoying nature, through the senses—hearing, feeling, seeing, smelling, etc. I still try to keep fulfilling this as often as possible. Although, I may not be able to venture as far. A great day consists of a walk in the Pinelands to enjoy nature.

This picture, Winter Day, was taken on a cold wintry day, after a snowfall. I can only imagine the birds had just emerged from their shelter to seek food. Do you think like me, they enjoy the beauty that the snow created?

Incidentally, have you ever noticed how very quiet it is after a snowfall? There is almost a feeling of reverence as you stand, camera in hand, and slowly peruse your surroundings.

Philip "Dutch" Bagley

Photography has become a way of expressing the thoughts, and feelings I have about the world around me. Those thoughts and feelings are expressed in my images of the light at dawn, the warm yellow gold of quiet sunsets and the magical starry nights. Photographic images take an instant in time and allow them to last forever.

Being from out of state, I originally thought the Pinelands was a just large tract of endless pine trees in the state of New Jersey. Then, recently, while exploring my photographic passion, I joined a tour group to visit selected Pinelands locations, which gave me a sense of how large an area it is, the diversity it contains and the hope that it would last through many lifetimes. I come back often to photograph there with the expectation of capturing images of subjects that I had not been aware of before: the quiet, raw, pristine, spaces containing reds, greens and browns, burbling brooks and rivers, along with flora and fauna. Things not seen or experienced in the inner city.

Daniel Bossett (Student)

Daniel Bossett has been interested in photography since before he can remember. Photography has always been a constant in his life and he has many fond memories of going out with his grandfather to take pictures at the beach or elsewhere. That interest has only grown over time as he has learned more of the technical side behind taking and editing a photograph to its best; as he recently taught compositional techniques to his fellow scouts for their Photography Merit Badge. Outside of photography, art has been an interest of his and he is currently curating an amateur art contest. He is excited to be exhibiting at the Pinelands contest once again and chose the Pinelands as his subject for its rich history as well as diverse flora and fauna. Nature had always been a focus of his work and the Pinelands is a beautiful reserve, harboring many different subjects.

Bob Boyd

I am a nature photographer living on the island of Brigantine. I developed my love of observing nature from living near the beaches and wetlands my whole life. I began to photograph local wildlife seriously in my own backyard. While I do not live in the Pines, I frequently visit the Edwin B. Forsythe National Wildlife Refuge, Brigantine Division where I am exposed to an endless cycle of wildlife and landscapes with each changing season.

Kyle Chelius

Kyle Chelius has worked for the federal government for 35 years, first as a naval architect and now as an environmental engineer, working to prevent lead poisoning in children. He also volunteers as a

naturalist at Edwin B. Forsythe National Wildlife Refuge and for N. J. Audubon's Cape May Bird Observatory. He thinks New Jersey is a beautiful state with the beaches and the mountains only a couple of hours apart. Photographing the Pinelands allows him to share the beauty of the wilds of New Jersey with others throughout the world via social media. He, his wonderful wife, Ruthanne, who encourages him go birding, and two of their four children live in the woods in South Harrison Township.

Amanda Czerniawski

After a youth spent in front of the camera, Amanda Czerniawski is now behind the lens to capture life unscripted and un-posed. Amanda seeks beauty in everyday moments, like a quiet afternoon stroll along the winding paths in the Pinelands. With camera in hand, Amanda finds beauty in the exploration

Ann Darlington

As a lover of nature and seeker of all things beautiful, my photographs attempt to capture and convey "That Moment of Wonder." A self-taught photographer, my images for the past several years are used by the D&R Greenway Land Trust and Friends of Abbott Marshlands and Pineland Preservation Alliance for the purpose of promoting the environment. Winner of *The People's Choice Award* 2010 for Burlington County Environmental Photo Contest. My images have also been exhibited at Ellarslie Museum and Grounds for Sculpture. *Lilies of the Lake* was taken at sunrise sitting on the bank of one of the lakes at Whitesbog Village waiting for the lilies to open.

Diane Emerson

Photography has always been a part of the artist's life. Diane grew up with a National Geographic Magazine on the coffee table and had a father and grandfather who always had their cameras handy. In high school, Diane was a member of the Citation's Staff and when she became an art teacher, she inherited the position of yearbook advisor.

The Pinelands are a part of Diane's roots. Her great grandfather was a cranberry grower in Hog Wallow. Her father spent his summers there, helped on the farm, fished and enjoyed exploring the pines. As a child, Diane would visit her dad's uncle who took over the farm when his father passed. She and her family would ice skate on the bogs in the winter, catch catfish in the summer.

The artist has been inspired by some very amazing photographers who have been recording the special beauty of this national treasure we call the Pinelands. Nature, especially leaves, have found a special place in Diane's ceramic and photography work. Their colors, textures and patterns are what keeps her coming back. Like little abstract paintings, they decorate the earth in the fall. "Nature's Gift's" if you will. Not always a happy occurrence for those who have to rake!

Diane, a retired Pemberton Township High School art teacher, lives in Medford, NJ, volunteers as Co Exhibit Chair at the Medford Art Center and works as a ceramic tile artist and photographer.

Aleja Estronza

I am a Jersey Girl, born and raised. I have a background in both web and digital design, which is what I do full-time when I'm not behind my camera. I moved to the Pinelands over 25 years ago and love everything about it. Especially the smell of the pine trees in the summer. I am mostly a nature photographer, concentrating a lot on the sky but am also known to do portraits, on occasion, as well as run a photography meetup group, Jersey Girls Photo Adventures. To me, there is nothing more beautiful than a stormy or cloud-filled sky. Photography is a way for me to share the beauty around us that people may not pay attention to.

Bob Ferguson

I consider myself a conservationist, environmentalist, and amateur naturalist with a strong focus on reptiles and amphibians. I've always appreciated the outdoors, but was enamored with reptiles since I was young. When I had my first son, I started spending more time in natural settings with him. I didn't want him growing up in front of a TV, as is main source of enrichment. It was then that I found my calling and reconnected with that feeling I had when I was younger. Being outdoors, hoping to come across a snake or even a toad, ignited a treasure-hunt mentality in me.

I spent two years as VP and an additional two years as President of the Northeast Chapter of the North American Field Herping Association. I donated data to MARA - Maryland's herp atlas. I donated 1000's of data points to the powers that be in New Jersey. I currently serve as a county coordinator for PA's Herp Atlas (PARS), representing beautiful Carbon County.

All that said, the New Jersey Pine Barrens have intrigued me the most of all. The habitat, the colors, the smells, the Northern and Southern-affinity flora and fauna colliding together in harmony; the place is mysteriously beautiful. Locating animals is frustratingly intoxicating, but tremendously rewarding. The bottom line is I'm addicted to the Pinelands and could wax poetic for days...

I have forever been a believer of **conservation through education**, even before I really grasped the idea. I've also always been a share-junkie. The two fit together perfectly. I live to share my experiences with the world. I live to bring people closer to nature. I, of course, live to be in nature, myself! I want to bring the natural world to people's computer screens and household walls, in hopes that it motivates them to get out and enjoy it themselves.

This is a critical time in our history here on Earth. The world has changed many times over, but never on such a grand scale has it changed directly by the human species. We are at a turning point and the future looks bleak for a high percentage of our species. I've always felt that if you aren't part of the solution, you are part of the problem. Photography is one way to make a difference and get people excited about the natural world around them. Here is the truth: "People protect what they love." - Jacques-Yves Cousteau

Marsea Fiorentino (Student)

I love to take photos because my photos give me inspiration for making movies and writing stories. The plants, animals, and locations in the Pinelands are great subjects for my work. I try to make stories as well written as possible and photos help me do that. I want to make stories about good life lessons and help to preserve nature and for people to have peace."

Marcy is 11 years old, makes movies, and writes stories every day. She has taken art studio courses at the Philadelphia Museum of Art, The Clay Studio, the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, and The Artery. One of her films, "Goblin Girl", was accepted into several film festivals. She is the youngest filmmaker to have her film screened at the nation's oldest movie theater. Marcy has been awarded grants from Dr. Jane Goodall's Roots & Shoots program for kids, and with those grants has directed a youth filmmaker environmental film festival held at the Garden State Discovery Museum and made movies to educate the public about the importance of rescuing horseshoe crabs on the Delaware Bay.

"Thank you Pinelands Preservation for displaying my photos and for helping preserve the environment."

Gregory Fischer

Gregory Fischer is a graduate student at Stockton University studying environmental science. When he isn't at Stockton, he enjoys hiking, birding, herping, and exploring everything nature has to offer. His photography mostly focuses on wildlife; he believes that photographing and sharing images of Earth's

creatures in their natural habitats is one of the best ways to get people interested in conservation. The New Jersey Pinelands are home to hundreds of animal species in a diverse region full of forests, wetlands, and coastal areas, and as such, serves as an excellent backdrop for wildlife photography. He is happy to be back at the Pinelands Photography Exhibition and hopes you enjoy everyone's amazing artwork.

Carl Geisler

My interest in photography started around age 10 when my parents gave me a Brownie Hawkeye. Since then I often have the feeling that I view my world through a viewfinder, first the distorted optical arc on the Brownie, then square, then rectangle, different formats until the current day electrical viewfinders. Over time, I learnt that often the best view was either right under my nose or behind me.

I have lived in NJ since 1981. All I knew of the Pinelands was the fastest route from the shore to home. That is until the Princeton Photography Club, to which I belong, decided to create an exhibit to educate the community about the Pinelands.

My eyes and mind were opened to a land I knew little about. I read John McPhee's book, *The Pine Barrens* and was fascinated. The landscape the photo club visited didn't appear much changed from 1968 when his book was published. But as I learnt, much had changed, not all for the better. Yet, what I saw was mostly beautiful; a land with unusual trees and bushes and flora that only existed in the Pinelands. My photo "Abandoned" illustrates what is left to be reclaimed by nature when a manmade industry ceases to be relevant.

Shawn Glass

As a child, I spent many hours playing in the woods of South Jersey, reading nature books and picking up whatever bugs and "critters" I could find. As a young adult, for some time I assumed that New Jersey had less to offer in terms of biodiversity than most of the country (and the world.) How wrong I was!

I began exploring the Pines in earnest about 5 years ago and haven't looked back. Each time I encounter one of the many unique plants or animals fostered by this environment is exciting. I started taking photos of them, both to re-live those moments for myself, and to share them with others. I want people who live here to know that they don't have to watch a TV program or travel across the world to see beautiful landscapes and amazing creatures. They are right in our "backyard" if we take the time to find and appreciate them.

Another photographer I respect said simply, "I fell in love with it, because it makes me stop a little longer when I see something interesting or beautiful." I thought that was a great way to convey the appeal and why, as a hobby, it is so fulfilling. I hope to 'stop a little longer' in the Pine Barrens for many years to come.

Amy Golden

I am a family dentist, but in my spare time, I love to photograph the Pinelands. As a Trustee and Ambassador of the Friends of the Black Run Preserve, photography gives me the opportunity to display the unique beauty of the Pinelands and to promote its preservation.

Rafal Goraczniak

Edward Abbey once said, "A man on foot, on horseback or on a bicycle will see more, feel more, enjoy more in one mile than the motorized tourists can in a hundred miles."

For me, photography does exactly this thing. The camera is like a break that helps me slow down to engage more deeply with where I am in space and time. From the Pine Barrens of New Jersey to the high desert of the Colorado Plateau, I find inspiration in what is often overlooked the simple things that are hidden in an intimate landscape. In my work, I strive to create unique but realistic images with a surreal twist; photographs that offer visual metaphors for thoughts and feelings, rather than simply record the reality surrounding me.

Frank Grasso

I was living up in north Jersey when I first read "The Pine Barrens" by John McPhee and pictured that it was a mysterious strange almost dangerous place. When I retired and moved down to Barnegat 19 years ago and started hiking, kayaking, and bicycling through the Pinelands I realized what a historic, fascinating, unspoiled area the Pinelands are.

Since I always took pictures as a hobby, I found the diversity of life here afforded a wealth of opportunity to photograph nature in all its amazing diversity.

I think it's important to capture and display images that show how beautiful our natural world is. I hope that the photographs that everyone takes of this environment encourages our society to make sure it will always be protected.

Henry Hegeman

I bought my first camera in the early 1970's. While working in the construction industry as a design draftsman, I quickly discovered that photography helped me balance my creative desires against the rigid world of precision and order.

Around 1976 I began writing and selling articles to the outdoor press to make some extra money. Working on a part-time basis, for the next 35 years or so I sold articles to regional and national publications and my photos have appeared in magazines, books, and on calendars. I am a past exhibitor at the Easton Waterfowl Festival in Easton, Maryland.

Around the time I bought my first camera, my wife and I purchased our first home in Pemberton Township, where I met and became good friends with Len Little of New Lisbon. Len considered Whitesbog and the surrounding area his second home, taught at Pemberton High School, and worked during the summer months as a naturalist for the then-named Lebanon State Forest. It was through this friendship with Len that I began learning about the history and ecology of the Pine Barrens and stopped seeing them as just a bunch of woods. I was even more inspired to photograph and learn about the Pinelands after reading the Pine Barrens article published in National Geographic Magazine in 1974.

Since then, I have spent the intervening years traveling the dirt roads of the Pinelands photographing, learning, and enjoying the solitude and beauty of the New Jersey Pine Barrens.

Ray Hennessy

Starting in 2007 my fascination with nature photography began. In the years since, wildlife photography with a focus on birds has gone from a very passionate hobby of mine to become my career. I spend much of my free time in natural areas searching for birds and any other wildlife that comes along. I concentrate on using creative natural lighting and interesting compositions to capture unique images of common and rare wildlife. My favorite style is a more scenic photo that includes some of the habitat wildlife lives in. I also enjoy passing along the knowledge and experience that I have gathered over the years to other photographers who are eager to learn.

I live in southern New Jersey so taking photos in the Pinelands happens naturally quite often just based on the habitat of the birds I enjoy photographing. The wide-open marsh space that I photographed this Osprey in is one of the most beautiful locations I visit in New Jersey. With all the dead snags dotting the skyline in a wide-open sea of vibrant green marsh grasses, it's a sight to see. Osprey are quite common in this area and having a goal to photograph one silhouetted inside the sun made the Pinelands an obvious location choice to make this photo happen.

Tom Jenkins

I discovered photography when I was in grade school, making contact prints from negatives taken by my father. This grew into a passion that continued through high school, where I was a yearbook photographer. Eventually the camera took a back seat to career and other things in life.

I never really lost interest, however, and when I picked up a digital camera a few years ago, and realized I had a darkroom in my computer, my enthusiasm returned. Since then, I've mostly photographed birds, but in recent years I've discovered the unique stark beauty of the Pinelands that for me, at least, is very challenging to capture in a photograph.

You can see my photos at www.flickr/photos/tjenkins

Bob Novak

Bob Novak is a nature and landscape artist photographer, who was born and raised in southern Union County, NJ. His photographic origins began with an early '60s Kodak Brownie camera gift, for the taking of family and vacation pictures. As Bob advanced to a 35mm camera in the early '70s, he developed a greater preference for outdoors images, that were influenced by the photography of Eliot Porter and writings of Henry David Thoreau.

Creating this imagery seemed to change with time, and Bob evolved to digital photography in late 2002, with its greater ability to make adjustments at the photo site, and experiment, in processing, and printing. His photographs have covered a wide range of animals, plants, and sceneries, to man-made artifacts and architecture; along with an occasional unusual view of the commonplace. It is the nature of modern digital technology that all photos receive a degree of processing before they are printed. Some images are only slightly adjusted, while others have additional enhancements, using various techniques to create unique prints.

Bob has resided in Howell, NJ for the past 35 years, from which quick trips to different areas of the state, especially the vast realm of the Pinelands, the nation's first National Reserve, made easy the attempts to portray the uniqueness, individuality, and history, found within this often urban state.

Lynn Padwee

I strive to combine my love of nature and my passion for travel through strikingly colorful photographs of the places I visit and their landscapes, flora and fauna.

Photographing in the Pinelands has made me very aware of how fragile our environment is and how we must respect, protect, and treasure it. If I can make one person more aware of this, then I feel that I've gained a true sense of accomplishment with my craft.

I have been seriously interested in photography since 2012 when I joined the Cranbury Digital Camera Club (CDCC), bought my first digital camera and took my first photography class to improve my camera skills. Since then, I've attended many conferences, taken many workshops and traveled extensively just to photograph.

The greatest influence in my life is my brother, Michael Padwee, who is an excellent photographer in his own right. Most of all, I've made many lasting friendships taking photos, as well as learning a great deal from others.

Elizabeth Pineiro-Doyle

Photography is important to me because it is my voice. It allows me to express myself in ways that words cannot. As the saying goes, "a picture is worth a thousand words" and for me, a picture is all that is needed. Through my lens, I can share the beauty I see, wherever I see it, with the world. Words alone cannot do justice in describing the perfect angle or lighting; words alone cannot explain the effect in a shot; and words alone cannot describe a mood being captured. To me, a photograph breathes life into words.

I picked the Pinelands as a subject for my art because the Pinelands is where I most often seek refuge in times of joy and times of heartache. It has come to be my sanctuary, my safe space to step back from the chaos of everyday life in order to decompress and reflect, to mourn and to dream. There is nothing quite like basking in the Earth's natural splendors, no matter how big or small. The Pinelands invite one and all, with arms wide open, to enter and seek comfort along its trails and pathways, seeking nothing in return except for gratitude and respect.

Joe Sarao

Having been raised in the Pine Barrens, it has always had a special place in my heart. As a kid, I hunted, fished and explored the local area and to me it was the greatest thing in the world. I am grateful to come from an area that the outdoors was such a big part of growing up.

I have been doing photography since a very young age. My first memories of photography were of my Uncle taking pictures of me with his Polaroid. This led to me getting a Polaroid Swinger for my 9th birthday and my first 35mm film camera as a teen. After working in the early days of the casino industry for several years, I decided to pursue my dreams of becoming a professional and attended the Art Institute of Philadelphia. Although journalist photography was my passion, after graduation in 1990, I ended up in the commercial world as a lab tech and eventually a shooter in a catalog house. After a few years of shooting small product advertising photos it became a boring and I lost the love of photography, so I left the business.

In 2013, I was stricken with a very aggressive form of leukemia, which required a transplant and forced me to retire from my job as member of the International Alliance of Theatrical and Stage Employees Local 52 in NYC where I worked in the Grip Department. Today, cancer free, I have been traveling the last year and a half the backroads of America taking photos of our beautiful country with the hopes of showing that all is not bad in this land we live in. Photography and my art have been very instrumental in helping me recover from the years of cancer treatment and the damage it does on a person's mind and body. Can you think of a better way of enjoying retirement than being in nature and taking pictures? I can't.

You can see more of my work on my website, oldpineyphotography.com and follow me on Instagram and Facebook at oldpineyphotography.

Jeff Sayre

Jeff brings a fresh perspective to nature photography. As Jeff describes it, "the beauty of nature is God's greeting card. I find great joy in capturing this beauty and sharing it with others." While Jeff shoots a

wide variety of nature subjects – landscapes, plants, animals, and birds in both color and black and white – his special passion has been shore birds.

My entries, “Confrontation” and “Sandpiper Wingstretch” were shot on Island Beach State Park. Lighting early one morning was perfect. Using a 150 – 500 MM lens, my Nikon captured this intimate action and little else. I have loved Island Beach State Park. Early morning is my favorite time to enjoy the peace and serenity of this beautiful place.

Says Jeff, “I am fascinated by the beauty and behavior of shorebirds, particularly herons, egrets, terns and sandpipers. I am awed by the exquisite complexity, yet remarkable simplicity of these birds. I invite others to enjoy nature’s beauty through my photographs. The world around us reveals the on-going beauty of God’s creation.”

David Seals

David Seals took an interest in photography 10 years ago. His primary concentration has been landscape photography. As a middle school band director and professional trumpet player, his life is quite loud at times. He finds landscape photography to be his peace and quiet. David has served as photographer in residence at the Canaan Valley Wildlife Refuge in West Virginia. His photos have been published in West Virginia, Wild and Wonderful (cover), the Canaan Valley Wildlife Refuge calendar (2014-2018), and New Jersey Lifestyle Magazine. He is a member of the Stay Focused Photo Club.

Christina Stadelmeier

“When we try to pick out anything by itself, we find it hitched to everything else in the universe.” by John Muir

Since I was four years old, I've been making art. The medium of photography has allowed me to share my vision of the world, captured in fractions of a second. The magical illusion of a 3-D space on a 2-D surface continues to fascinate me at the age of seventy-two! I have been approaching color photography from a fine art perspective since 1975. It came naturally to me since earning an MFA in painting: CUNY, Queens College 1971 and a BFA in painting w/sculpture & printmaking from Philadelphia College of Art in 1969.

As a member of the Princeton Photography Club, I have been working on a Pinelands photo project in conjunction with the Pinelands Preservation Alliance. The project is both an enlightening and educational experience! It brings me back to past experiences in the Pinelands as a Girl Scout; paddling down the peaceful winding narrows of the Rancocas Creek and hearing the echoes of birds singing. Where the creek widened it revealed vistas of the beautiful yellow “American Lotus” blossoms dancing above the water in the blowing breeze. These flowers are now endangered, along with threatened and/or endangered birds, reptiles, amphibians, mammals and invertebrates.

The three photographs in the exhibition are my personal exploration into the patterns found in nature. I hope they create an emotional connection for you the viewer and that “we” become *“hitched to everything else in the universe”*.

Matthew Tarquinio

Matthew was raised in Cumberland County, New Jersey. As a child, he spent a majority of his time exploring the outdoors. At the age of 12, he started using photography to capture the flora and fauna he came across while exploring the beautiful, natural landscape that Southern New Jersey has to offer. Matt recently earned a BFA from Stockton University and his long-term goal is to be a full-time

photographer. From the dense forest of the Pine Barrens to the beautiful beaches of Cape May, Matt's goal is to capture as much of the area's natural wonders as he possibly can.

Doug Testa

I am an enthusiast photographer and beginning photograph again, now that I have more time to explore the curiosity in me. I have been a resident of New Jersey for more than 45 years and am experiencing the allure of New Jersey for the first time. My interest in photography is my way of capturing the "present" which is so exciting to me. I have traveled extensively for both work and pleasure, and only now see the beauty of the locations at home here in New Jersey.

I have been interested in photography for more than 30 years and have just begun my venture into the exploration of image capture and development. I enjoy capturing images of the people I meet while I am here in New Jersey or out and about. People are such good subjects in so many ways. Their expressive body language and facial character makes me stop to capture those aspects in a photography.

Landscape and travel photography also hold my interest. Since I travel so much, travel photography is a given for me, and of course the people I see in my travels. Recently I have become interested in the beauty of the landscapes here in New Jersey. The experiences I have had with landscape photography have pushed me in the direction of looking into more New Jersey locations to photograph. The Pine Barrens was my first venture. I found it remarkably different from anything I've seen before ... for so many reasons.

Rick Vizzi

My interest in the pinelands and photography go all the way back to my childhood in the early sixties. I spent most of my non-school, non-baseball, hours in the woods and swamps of Gravelly Run and Timber Creek in Chews Landing. There is a small "pine barrens fringe area" there where the plants and animals were (are) the same as the pinelands "proper"-- pitch pines, Scrub and Blackjack Oak, Beach Heather, Prickly Pear cactus, Fence Lizards, Milk snakes (and then Corn Snakes) in addition to quail and pheasant and deer. This "piney" part of the woods was fascinating and I spent countless hours there, and we even camped back there.

My older brother spent time there too and when he and his Boy Scout buddies got their driver's licenses they went down to Wharton Tract (what it was called) and camped and hiked and he took me with them. At the same time, I had been taking pictures since I was 10 years old, so the "Pines" was my first photographic "frontier". From there was California and the West. Being out West gave me perspective on the value of the Pinelands to NJ and the East.

Gerald Wilders

Gerald is an award-winning professional photographer in Toms River, New Jersey. He graduated from Stockton University with a Degree in Marine Science. Through his work with the Department of Environmental Protection and the Barnegat Bay Partnership, he has had the opportunity to study the vast flora and fauna of the New Jersey Pine Barrens. This year he was exploring the Pine Barrens to look for the swamp pink plant. While doing this, he was able to experience a variety of wildlife like the great horned owl and tree frogs in their natural habitat. There are numerous locations that people are unable to explore in the Pine Barrens due to parasitic insects and unsafe and treacherous terrain. He uses his photographs to bring people to these unreachable areas that are close to their homes. The Pine Barrens is a natural habitat that needs protection and he hopes his photographs aid in this process.

Patricia Worley

Patricia S. Worley is a fine art photographer, workshop instructor, Co-organizer of Medford ArtWalk and Co-Director of the Medford Arts Center and former resident artist and curator of the Hansen Warner Building Gallery for nine years. So to say the least, she is entrenched in the photography and art community in South Jersey. At any given time, her work can be seen in libraries, office buildings, art galleries and healthcare facilities.

Pat's passion is in teaching photography. She gives group and private lessons in Photoshop and the fundamentals of photography; and leads small groups on photography workshops to exciting destinations across the country and Africa. She believes the experience of photography is as important as the end result.

Primarily a nature and wildlife photographer, Pat travels extensively throughout the United States, Africa, and Europe capturing award winning images of the people she meets and places she goes. She has 14 solo and small group exhibits to her name and has curated over 20 additional exhibitions since 2010.

Her work hangs in various AtlantiCare locations, Penn Presbyterian for Advanced Care, Medford Lakes Municipal Offices and private collections. Her work is for sale at the Medford Arts Center, Lakes Office Supply, Medford Lakes Colony, The Painted Turtle, and the largest selection is found on her website. She earned a Bachelor of Arts in Communications, specializing in film, television and photography from Seton Hall University.

Pat's vision is simple. Take the ordinary and make it extraordinary.

Very simply, I want the viewer to feel as if he or she could just step through the frame of my photographs and become a part of the scene. I work to transform this 2-dimensional art form into a 3-dimensional experience. The subject and message of my images only enhance the viewer's emotional connection to my photography.

Alicia Zavacky (Student)

My name is Alicia Zavacky, and I am 9 years old. Photography is important to me because I can express my feelings in one picture. Photography is fun, because you can take something, whatever you want, and show your own view of it. Take a leaf - someone can see it as just a leaf, but you see it as something way different.

I picked Pinelands as my subject, because of the forests. Forests are beautiful - they have wildlife and plants. But Pinelands is also community - beautiful people and buildings and places. I wanted to show how everything in the Pinelands is unique.