

# THE LIPKA JOURNAL

A PHOTO EZINE WITH

PHOTOGRAPHS / STORIES / OBSERVATIONS

NUMBER 071 FEBRUARY 2026



# WELCOME TO THE LIPKA JOURNAL FEBRUARY 2026



This issue is about parks. Not the big National Parks we have in the USA, but local parks that are well, local. The first image suite is the second segment of a larger project ([A Magical Appearance](#), December 2025 Lipka Journal) documenting a park in my hometown. Once rural, our town has embraced a feature rich park designed with “something for everyone” in mind. The second suite is a municipal park in BaoTao, Inner Mongolia, PRC. The photos were made in winter when the temperatures were well below freezing. The final suite is McDowell Sonoran Preserve in Scottsdale, Arizona which has long hiking trails and shows the newcomers what Arizona was like before it became civilized.

Each park reflects the personality of its locale.



Grading on a Curve

## Grading on a Curve

The edges are rounded all around the park. Straight lines are minimal and curves abound. Curves are friendly and comforting, an antidote to the perpendicularity of modern life. The curves evolve to their ultimate state, the circle, to allow us to meditate on the nature of the perfect geometric form while we relax in an outdoor setting.

















## A Mostly True Story

Oh, what memories.

Uncle Billy came back from the war and climbed up the tree with a rope wrapped around him. He tied off the rope on a sturdy branch and then slid down the rope to the ground and then tied up our tire swing. We loved that swing. Everyone wanted to swing and spin after school.

We used to play in the barn around the old wagons and climbed into the hayloft to listen to the rain on the roof. Daddy covered up that old brick well so we wouldn't fall in.

That's all gone now. Daddy sold the land bit by bit. The town bought the last of it, but they couldn't buy our memories.

# A Stroll in the Park: Part I





## A Stroll in the Park: Part I

A stroll in the Park on a nice winter's day.

The Park is expansive, wide open and reflective of what the city wants to show off to the rest of the world. There are not many people here, because the temperature is far below zero in just about any temperature scale you wish to measure.

Open spaces are home to the once nomadic Mongols. They conquered most of the known world in the first millennium. Their park, in the middle of a large city, honors their culture and heritage.



党章中规定党员的义务：认真学习马克思列宁主义、毛泽东思想；  
学习党的基本知识和党的路线、方针、政策和决议；学习科学、文化和  
业务；坚持党和人民的利益高于一切；个人利益服从党和人民的利益；  
执行党的决定；服从组织分配；维护党的团结和统一等。

建设局宣



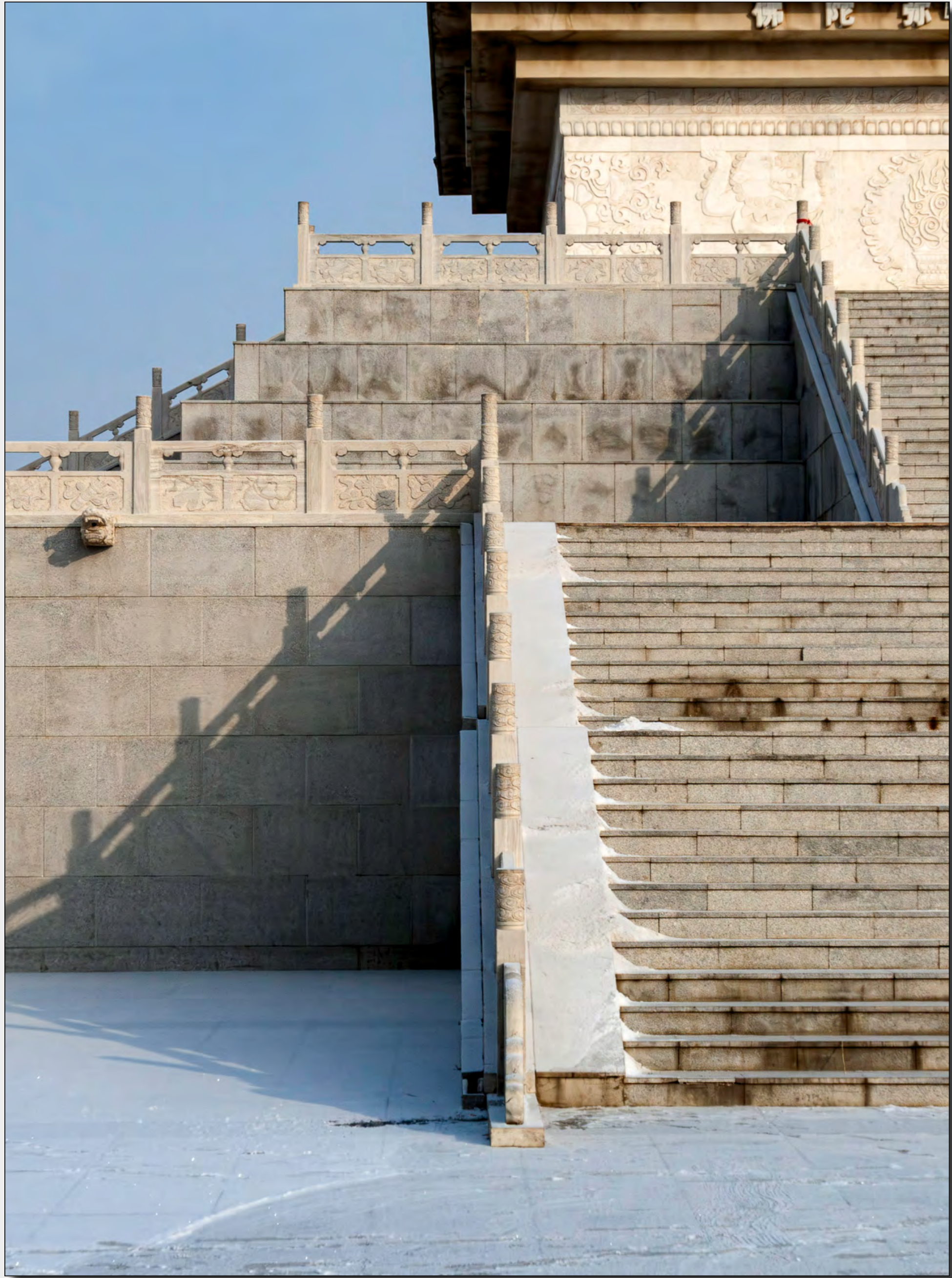






南无阿彌陀佛

1984







That message melted in the sun.

Prologue: A photo and six words.

# A Stroll in the Park: Part II



## A Stroll in the Park: Part II

A stroll in the Park on a nice winter's day.

The Park is on the edge of the Sonoran Desert, in a suburb of Phoenix, Arizona. Desert land, for sure, and the nice winter day is pleasant shirt sleeve weather. The heritage of Phoenix is visible looking east, the future of Phoenix is to the west.

We fight to preserve our culture and to make sure that future generations know what the land was like well before they came and civilized the desert.



















## Postcards from the Creative Journey



Wallace,

Art is an iterative process. Out in the real world, we jockey for position on where to place the camera. We move around and explore variations on where to stand, and more variations on exposure. We move some more to “create options” at the time of exposure. When it comes to processing, we try color, monochrome, tints, toning, contrast, and cropping. We can employ artificial intelligence to control content to modify what we captured in the field. Eventually after a whole bunch of trial and error, we come up with an image that realizes our vision.

The days of making a few snaps and trusting the local drugstore to get our pictures “to come out” is gone forever.

**JOE**



Wallace & Grommet

62 West Wallaby Street

Wigan, WQ7 3FU

# A FEW WORDS AT THE END OF THE JOURNAL



## Grading on a Curve

My town acquired some open land still (surprisingly) vacant in the middle of our "downtown." Of course we named it The Downtown Park. Among other things, it has water features, playgrounds, a dog walk, an amphitheater and other distractions. It has something for everyone. And that's what I have begun photographing, the ultimate goal is (yet) another photographic project about Academy Street.



## A Stroll in the Park: Part I

I have a list of projects I can work on for The Lipka Journal. I went away back into the Lipka Archives and remembered spending a morning walking around a City Park in BaoTao, Inner Mongolia on a frozen morning. I thought that was very different from my simple photos of The Downtown Park. Why not add the two together?



## A Stroll in the Park: Part II

Finally, we complete the trifecta with photographs from the MacDowell Sonoran Desert Preserve. I had some airline credits to use, so my wife and I decided to spend a week in Phoenix, Arizona. I wondered why the rental car was so expensive and we had trouble getting a hotel room. We had unwittingly scheduled our trip concurrent with a PGA golf tournament and the Super Bowl. We were able to avoid most of the crowds and make time for a stroll in the park.



Joe Lipka has shared his vision since he began photographing.

In the last forty years, his photographs have appeared in over one hundred and twenty-five juried exhibitions, and twenty five solo exhibitions. His images have been published in *LensWork*, *Black & White Photography* (UK) and *F-Stop Magazines*. His recent book project, *Mostly True Stories*, was featured as a LensWork Bonus Edition Publication in February 2024.

His website [www.joelipkaphoto.com](http://www.joelipkaphoto.com) has continuously evolved since it was launched in 2004. His blog *Postcards from the Creative Journey*, published weekly since 2010, is now part of *The Lipka Journal*.

His newest blog, *The Daily Photograph*, has migrated to Instagram. Don't forget to follow him on this new platform linked below.

## The Lipka Journal, Number 071, February, 2026

*Joe Lipka*

© 2026 Joe Lipka Photography

Web site: [www.joelipkaphoto.com](http://www.joelipkaphoto.com)

Instagram: [www.instagram.com/dailyphoto7375](https://www.instagram.com/dailyphoto7375)

**The contents of this computer media are copyrighted materials**

*Please note that this computer file has been provided as a consumer product for the private and non-commercial use of the purchaser only. Its' contents are copyrighted in its entirety and may not be duplicated by any means without the consent of Joe Lipka or his heirs. Each article, portfolio and photographic image is copyrighted by the author and may not be duplicated for any purpose or by any means without his consent*

*All Rights Reserved.*