



THE LIPKA JOURNAL

A PHOTO EZINE WITH

PHOTOGRAPHS / STORIES / OBSERVATIONS

NUMBER 072 MARCH 2026

WELCOME TO THE LIPKA JOURNAL MARCH 2026



When you look through this issue of The Lipka Journal you see something new. The oddity is that most of these new images are not chronologically new to me.

The Prodigal Images mysteriously surfaced after being MIA for about twenty years. The images of the doors in Charleston are not quite that old but have finally come together as a project. There are many reasons projects take a long time to resolve themselves. Loss of primary materials, priorities, technical issues and most assuredly a lack of understanding of the deeper meanings of the images often serve to delay the completion of projects. That's my story and I'm sticking to it.

The lilies are quite new, captured this past summer. When I photographed The Downtown Park, the lilies reigned supreme. At least those images are new for both of us.

Remember, when you see something for the first time, it's the first time for you.

Prodigal Images



Prodigal Images

It is time to rejoice because lost negatives have been found. I am serving up a slight visual feast to celebrate their return. Every once in a while, some half-finished, or maybe a few preliminary sketches (or negatives) for a project reappear to us after (an apparently) long absence. Sometimes we smile at their return to our possession, and sometime, (like in this case), we scratch our heads and wonder whatever were we going to do with these images.

The answer, this time, at least is to share them with you as part of The Lipka Journal.











A Mostly True Story

I'd been suffering through a week's winter weather in Inner Mongolia (-30F on a routine basis) and spent a day in the hotel trying to get warmed up. I photographed some fireworks outside the hotel and later asked about them. Turns out fireworks were the conclusion of a wedding ceremony.

On the following day I returned to the exhibition hall and came across a photographic tribute to the PRC's nuclear weapons program. Photographs of valiant comrades and dramatic photographs of mushroom clouds celebrated the results of the PRC's nuclear weapons program. Marital and Martial fireworks were an amusing counterpoint and a good lesson in proper spelling.



First Impression



First Impression

We don't get a chance to make a second first impression. The first impression is the one that counts no matter what anyone will tell you. It's even more important when visitors enter your home. Having someone come into your home, your safe space, is a matter of great trust. Naturally, you want visitors to have the best impression of your house, and that starts when visitors walk up to your front door.









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Can't wreck it. Can't fix it.

Prologue: A photo and six words.

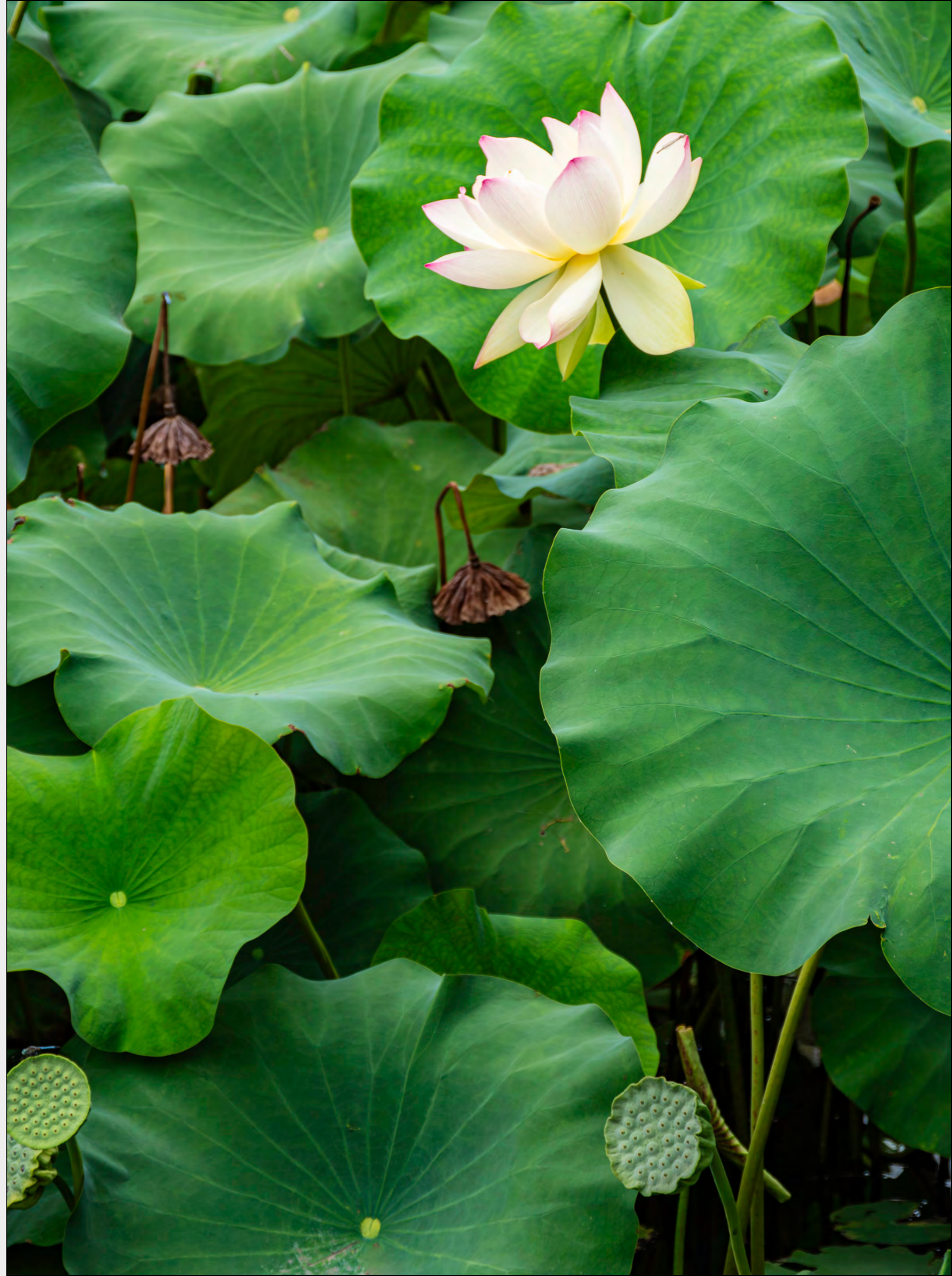


Lilies Reign

Lilies Reign

The American Water Lily rules the waves of its pond. They stand above the water heads held high, the royalty of the pond. Some, of course, bend over, but only to admire their reflection. Their blossoms shall not touch the water, being held without complaint by their attending leaves. They are imperturbable reigning over the pond.

At least until the first frost.

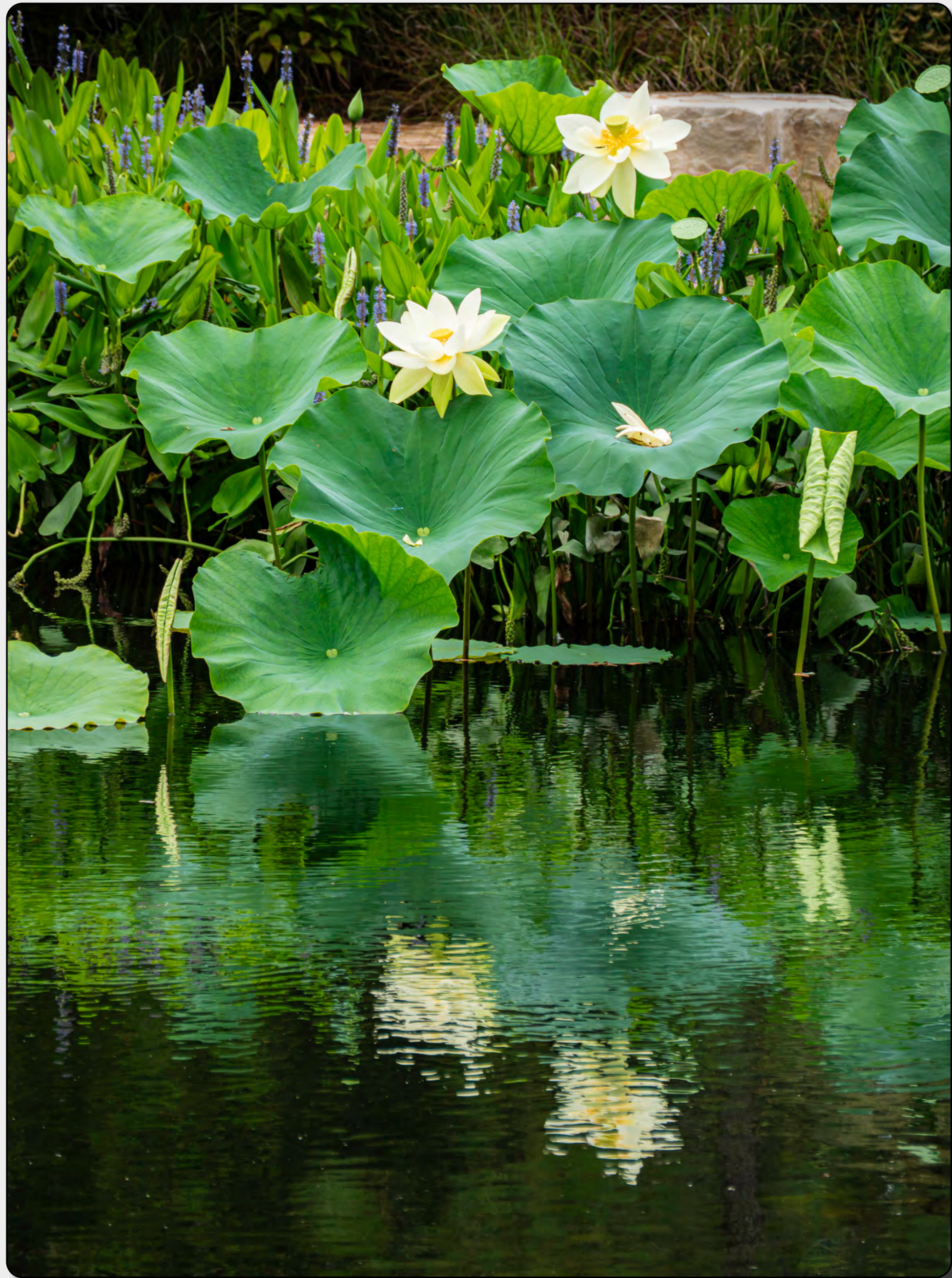














Postcards from the Creative Journey



Dear Darren and Samantha,

Used to be when I saw a compositional element that detracted from a scene, I had to walk up, pick up the offending beer can and remove it from the scene. Now we leave the beer can in situ and snap away. "We'll fix it in post," we say and later make the distractions disappear as if they were never there.

Digital editing has become so powerful that we are not that far away from having to twitch our nose to make the perfect photograph.

Our ancestors would have called that witchcraft.

Adobe calls it "enhance."

JOE



Darrin & Samantha

1164 Morning Glory Circle

Westport, CT

A FEW WORDS AT THE END OF THE JOURNAL



Prodigal Images

This image suite is a surprise. I was going through some old files and found a 5x7 office envelope. I opened it and these six negatives fell out. I don't remember them, I have no idea why they were in an envelope or what I was going to do with them. These negatives could have been part of, [Sense of the Seasons](#), (a four part project) and I don't think they ever made it into the project.

We get to rejoice over the return of the prodigal negatives and have a visual feast with their return.



First Impression

Yes, I know I am fascinated by doors. I have lots of door photographs. The fun part about doors in Charleston, SC is many houses in the old part of town have false front doors. The story is about houses that were taxed by their frontage on the road. To reduce their taxes, the houses were designed with the short side facing the road. The front door opened onto the veranda and the real front door was where one would expect it to be.



Lilies Reign

I am continuing to have fun creating small projects in the Downtown Park in Cary, North Carolina. There are several water features in the park and the American Water Lilies reign supreme in the water features.

Previous projects from The Downtown Park are:

[December 2025, A Magical Appearance](#)

[February 2026, Grading on a Curve](#)

Before I'm finished, I might have four or five projects from this location.



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 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.

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Joe Lipka

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Web site: www.joelipkaphoto.com

Instagram: www.instagram.com/dailyphoto7375

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