PHOTO ORGANIZING SYSTEM

- Your system should be INDEPENDENT of any editing software (editing softwares have catalog organzing systems built in)
- - once you organize your photos you can use ANY software and/or any operating system to view, organize, and edit your photos.
- Organizing photos is not haphazard - however, there is no right way to organize your photos. There must be a well developed system that is simple, and systematic so you can organize and find your photos when you need to.
- Your system should work for you from beginning to end, i.e. from moving the photos from your camera to folders, to editing the photos, to archiving the folders.
- I never work from the card - just make the proper folders from the start and put the card aside.   Once your photos from the card are copied to its proper folder you are ready to reformat your card for your next outing. I like to start with a clean card for every outing. That way I never have to search thru a memory card for single or multiple photos.
- Once you use your system just a few times it becomes second nature and you don't have to think about where these photos go, or that trips photos go, etc.

When I begin working with photos from the camera - **each and every time I shoot photos.** The very first thing always - make two folders on my **desktop - (you can put them anywhere - MyPictures folder on the PC will work fine)**

The most important thing you can do is have a good file naming system and use it every single time you have new photos to manage. Once you have a good system you can always find your photos fairly easy.

Make two folders - I put these two folders on my desktop.

- Example - folder #1 is
   06.15.2021 LittleCreveCoeur   After I have copied the photos to this folder from my memory card, I can take my card out of the computer and put it aside. Using this exact date format every time - my folders will be in exact order by the date I took them on your PC and/or on a portable hard drive that you'll use later.
- Immediately make a second folder. The Second folder is the one where the photos will go after they are edited
- **06.15.2021 Little CreveCoeur.edited**
- Now I can open **folder #1** look at these making a quick pass through to delete those that are obviously bad. Now I can go back through them and begin my processing workflow -

PROCESSING WORKFLOW

Edit and save the edited photos to the associated "edited" folder. Now you know what photos from a particular photo outing have been edited and which ones haven't. You never have to guess which ones I edited and which I didn't edit.

File naming - once you decide on your naming system it should not be changed - the naming must always be the same. Important to give this some thought - my way is not necessarily a good way for you.

My naming convention is: date - where I was or event - you might prefer Year - Month -Date - Just so its consistent is the main thing.

Example: 06.15.2021_Little CreveCoeurMarsh (**this exact date format every time**)

Always use the same date format - whatever you decide on. It is important and it should always come first so that your operating system will automatically sort your files according to the date...which is really nice!

ARCHIVING for future reference
This is why we have created empty folders for each year - 2022, 2021, 2020, 2019, and as far back as you have photos to organize - on a Portable Hard Drive

Now let's say I'm finished editing the 06.15.2021 photos from the Little Creve Coeur Marsh visit - Those two folders (my original photos from the camera in one folder and the edited ones in another folder) are on my desktop along with others from the last month or so.

I can see all my recent outings right in front of me on the desktop. Handy if I want to go back and review that outing for additional ones to edit, or photos to delete.

I keep my folders on my desktop for a month or two - sometimes I go back and clean-up some original photos folders, or review the ones I've edited.

After a month or so I just drag the desktop folders that I'm no longer going to work with to my Portable Hard Drive - where I have made the year folders. All of my folders automatically organize themselves by date - because I have named them to work this way - see above.

After I have copied the desktop folders to my Portable Hard Drive I delete the folders on my desktop.

I use a second Portable Hard Drive to archive photos past the last two or three years - just drag the older Year folders to the other Portable Hard Drive.