

# inFocus

Newsletter of the Westchester Photographic Society

October 2023



**INSIDE:**  
Coming Up  
Competition Corner  
Competition 1A  
Drones



## Fall

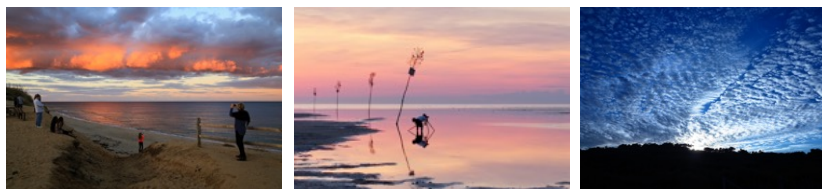
It's officially fall now, even though shops have had their Halloween, and in some cases Christmas(!) merchandise on display for a month or two now. On September 22 we had Competition 1a and our new season has kicked off. I saw some wonderful photos, and our judge, Steve Morton, had excellent commentary. As per Dennis's request, I hope more of you consider participating, so that we'll have enough people in the Beginner and Advanced color categories.

I was recently reading Annie Leibovitz's book, Pilgrimage, and this quote caught my eye:

"There were still no clouds the next morning. I mentioned this at breakfast and Jeanne [Adams] looked at me and said, 'Anne, Ansel would wait two or three weeks for clouds.' Then she said, 'You know, those old-time landscape photographers, if you look closely at their pictures you can see that they took clouds from one place and used them over and over again.' I cringed. That's something I do all the time in my digital portrait work. If I don't have the right sky, I'll add clouds. I was glad to hear about the early landscape photographers' borrowing clouds, but I felt strongly that for this picture, it had to be straight. I wasn't going to mess around. It had to be the real thing."

(Jeanne Adams was Ansel Adams' daughter-in-law.) What do you think about sky replacement? Do you do it? With modern software it is incredibly easy. It can be a controversial topic, along with many other sophisticated photo editing techniques, but one should remember, photographers have been doing these sorts of things since the beginning of photography. The tools and medium change, the desire to create with an artistic vision doesn't. (I'll set aside the issue of generative AI for today.)

Here are a few photos with dramatic skies from my archives. All have their original skies.



Care to share some of your sky photos here?

Till next time, may you always see beauty in your viewfinder.

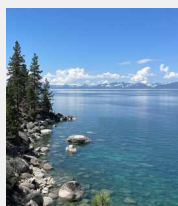
Fuat Baran, *President*

## COVER PHOTO

### TRANQUILITY

By *Andrea Duckworth*

Mother Nature provided the perfect frame around this beautiful view of Crystal Bay, Lake Tahoe, to the south and snow-capped peaks beyond.



## inFocus

Ron Carran, Editor  
Dick Budnik, Web Edition

### WPS Board of Directors

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**Competitions**  
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**Competition Catalog**  
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Jonathan Kaplan

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Ron Carran

**Field Trips**  
Jackie Ross

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Fuat Baran

**Social Media**  
Fuat Baran, Kenny Salstrom

**Hospitality Coordinators**  
Silvie Epperly

**Competition Evaluation**  
Dick Budnik, Lois Barker

newsletter: [infocus@wpsphoto.org](mailto:infocus@wpsphoto.org)  
[www.wpsphoto.org](http://www.wpsphoto.org)

**Westchester Photographic Society**  
Meets 12 months a year, on Friday evenings at 7:30 pm (excepting school holidays). **Meetings are virtual now until further notice. Start time is 7:30 pm.**



Member of



## FRIDAY EVENING PROGRAMS

**October**

- 6 Competition 1B (Theme: Stairs/Staircases)
- 13 Members' Critiques
- 20 Lori Lankford, "Intentional Camera Movement"
- 27 Competition 2A

**November**

- 3 Arik Gorban, "Street Photography"
- 10 Competition 2B (Theme: Necropolis: City of the Dead)
- 17 George Preoteasa, "Night Sky Time-Lapse Photography"
- 24 No Meeting: Thanksgiving

**December**

- 1 Competition 3A
- 8 Guido van de Water, "Playing with Light"
- 15 Members Showcases
- 22 No Meeting: Christmas
- 29 No Meeting: New Years

**January**

- 5 Competition 3B (Theme: Backlit)
- 12 TBD
- 19 Process Our Stock Photos
- 26 Competition 4A

**February**

- 2 TBD
- 9 Members' Critiques
- 16 Competition 4B
- 23 TBD

**March**

- 1 TBD
- 8 Competition 5A
- 15 TBD
- 22 TBD
- 29 No Meeting: Easter

Check the WPS website ([wpsphoto.org](http://wpsphoto.org)) for recent changes.

**Contact Information**

Your comments and suggestions are always welcome and should be addressed as follows: If concerning the WPS Newsletter, In Focus, address comments to the editor at [infocus@wpsphoto.org](mailto:infocus@wpsphoto.org). If concerning our website, address comments to our webmaster, Dick Budnik, at [webmaster@wpsphoto.org](mailto:webmaster@wpsphoto.org). All other comments should be addressed to our President.

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## COMING UP

**Lori Lankford on October 20****Capturing one-of-a-kind images using the technique of Intentional Camera Movement**

In this session, photographer Lori Lankford will share her passion for creative photography and using the technique of intentional camera movement. Lori will share inspirational images, technical tips for shooting with this style, and how to edit.

**Bio**

*Lori Lankford is an established nature photographer, digital artist, and instructor. Lori is known for her creative approach to photography—stunning flower portraits, abstract nature scenes, and creative close-ups. Lori has photographed many of the top gardens across the country and had images exhibited in local and national gallery exhibits, as well as in printed publications.*

*Lori has a love for teaching and sharing her passion for creative nature photography. She leads workshops in the Maryland/Virginia/DC area. You can learn more about Lori on her website, [www.lorilankford.com](http://www.lorilankford.com).*

**VIET NAM & CAMBODIA***JEWELS OF THE ORIENT**DENNIS THORNTON*

OSSINING PUBLIC LIBRARY

**OCTOBER 1-30, RECEPTION - SUN, OCT. 8th 2-4 PM**

53 CROTON AVE., OSSINING, N.Y. 10563

WWW.OSSININGLIBRARY.ORG OR CALL 914-941-2416

## AREA MUSEUMS/GALLERIES

**Metropolitan Museum**  
([www.metmuseum.org](http://www.metmuseum.org))  
Met Collection

**Museum of Modern Art**  
([www.moma.org](http://www.moma.org))  
New Photography 2023  
Ongoing

**International Center for Photography**  
([www.icp.org](http://www.icp.org))  
Many new exhibitions  
through Jan 8, 2024

**New York Historical Society**  
([nyhistory.org](http://nyhistory.org))  
Many Exhibits

**New York Photography Diary**  
(<https://ny-photography-diary.com/exhibitions/current-exhibitions/>)  
Many Exhibits

**Museum of the City of New York**  
([mcny.org](http://mcny.org))  
Many Exhibits

## WPS GROUP EXHIBITS

**Cancer Treatment and Wellness Center  
Northern Westchester Hospital**  
*What a Wonderful World! Oh Yeah!*  
April 4-September 26

## WPS FIELD TRIPS

<https://www.wpsphoto.org/members-field-trips>

**More Photo Opportunities  
in the Field Trip area.**  
Stay tuned for more  
information on these  
upcoming trips!

## AVAILABLE

**Epson P800 17-inch Printer**  
with some spare inks  
Available

[ron@wpsphoto.org](mailto:ron@wpsphoto.org)

## SEMINARS/WORKSHOPS

Please log on to websites  
to see the entire schedules.  
Many events are available online.  
Also see last page.

**Hunts**  
<https://edu.huntsphoto.com>

**B&H**  
<http://www.bhphotovideo.com/find/EventSpace.jsp>

**Adorama**  
<http://www.adorama.com/alc/events>

## SPECIAL INCENTIVES

### A MEMBERS-ONLY DEAL!

Susan Magnano has offered special  
pricing on many of her workshops.

If you are a WPS member,  
click [HERE](#).

## WPS EXHIBITS

The NWH Cancer Center is pleased to offer an exhibition of the  
Westchester Photographic Society titled:

### What a Wonderful World! Oh Yeah!

Begins September 27, 2023



From the song Louis Armstrong made famous ... "I see trees of green, red roses too.  
I see them bloom for me and you. And I think to myself what a wonderful world.  
I see skies of blue and clouds of white. The bright blessed day, the dark sacred night.  
And I think to myself, what a wonderful world."

Northern Westchester Hospital Cancer Center, 400 Main St, Mt Kisco, NY 10549  
Telephone (914) 666-1200

Note: Photos are available unframed at a reduced price. Some photos are available in other sizes.  
To arrange a purchase of any picture in the exhibit, contact Arnold Breisblatt via email at [abreis@aol.com](mailto:abreis@aol.com)

## FALL 2023 EXHIBITS

Northern Westchester Hospital

**Theme: What a Wonderful  
World! Oh Yeah!**

**Drop off:** Sep 27  
(runs for 6 months)

Greenburgh Public Library

**Theme: I Came, I Saw,  
I Took the Picture**

**Drop off:** Oct. 18 at 9:30am  
**Pick-up:** Nov. 30 at 10am

Ossining Public Library

**Theme: Do You See What  
I See? A Photographer's  
Perspective**

**Drop off:** Nov. 2 at 10am  
**Pick-up:** Nov. 29 at 1pm

For more information contact  
Arnold Breisblatt at [abreis@aol.com](mailto:abreis@aol.com).



# The Competition Corner

By Dennis Thornton



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## Where We're At—An Appeal for Participation

The 2023-24 Competition season has started. I hope that everyone will enjoy seeing the images submitted by your fellow members.

Competitions provide the best mechanism for improving your photographic skills. First, you actively capture an image. Then you work that image to its best level for presentation. Last, you have the benefit of receiving feedback from a qualified judge. You are improving your skill sets for capture, processing and presentation.

For decades our Color Digital category has had a three-tier system: B=Beginner, A=Advanced and Salon. This tiered format provides the maximum opportunity for members to compete with others at their current skill level.

Color Digital is the most participated in category. It is representative of the widest breadth of skill levels. It is gratifying for novice competitors to have an image recognized for its merit. This provides both appropriate feedback and encouragement for further participation.

As people benefit from such external validation, it is desirable to try and maintain the three-tier system.

By contrast, in non-tiered, categories (Black & White and Open Mind) there is a tendency for a select group to garnish the majority of the awards. While their work is good and deserving of recognition that system does not necessarily lend encouragement to those who are starting off on the journey of the love of photography.

The reality is that our membership has been shrinking. Consequently, there are fewer people participating in competitions. With fewer members participating in the Color B & A groups several things happen. First, it's not much of a competition if only 2-3 members complete the full complement of entries. This challenges our system of advancement, which is based upon an individual doing well in a lower group and thus becoming eligible for promotion to a higher level.

So, we have a dilemma. Is it legitimate to advance people if there are insufficient numbers to constitute a real quorum? Second, with limitations to the promotion protocol, it's not fair to those who put in the effort and have submitted all twelve images for the year. Acknowledgement for their ac-

complishment is held back by the lack of participation by others. Third, we can't advance people, out of one group, if there is insufficient residual to constitute a quorum and/or there is an insufficient number of new member replacements.

The bottom line is that we find ourselves in uncharted territory. The three-tiered system may provide the most opportunity for the largest number of people to receive recognition, but it cannot be sustained without greater participation.

This is a straightforward appeal to those who have participated in either Color Digital Groups B or A, but have not submitted the full complement of images for the year. We need your help. If you would like to maintain the structure as it is then we need you to work a little harder and submit twelve (12) images over the course of the year.

This is a straightforward appeal to all those members who have not competed. You have images available that you can submit. If you value WPS, then everyone needs to chip in and participate.

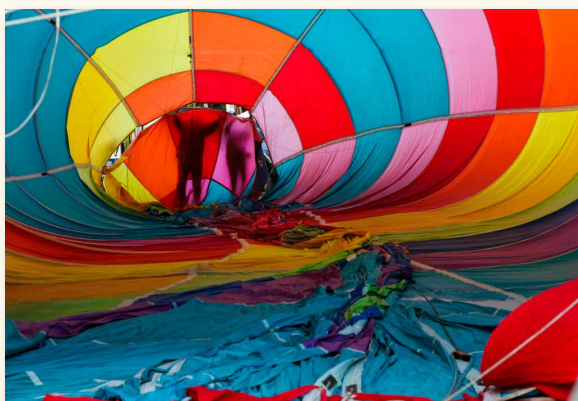
The purpose of submitting images is not just to receive a high score. Submit images to help encourage yourself to be more productive. Submit images to learn to evaluate your images more critically. Submit images for the purpose of working to improve your post-processing skills. Submit images to push back on your inertia of inactivity. Submit images to break through the barrier of anticipated embarrassment that ALL competitors experience when their image comes up and is not received as favorably as you might like. The satisfaction of accomplishment only comes from the doing.

This is an appeal and an opportunity. I am asking each of you to push yourself. Not only for your sake, but for the sake of your club. This is a critical time. More active interest and participation, in all aspects of club activities, is imperative.

If you have questions, need some guidelines for submitting your images and/or would like assistance selecting and preparing images for submission, contact me and I will do my best to assist you.

Dennis Thornton  
WPS Competition Chair  
dennist@wpsphoto.org

DIGITAL COLOR B



**Jim Dwyer, First**  
*Balloon Art*



**Barbara Pollack, Second**  
*Purple Iris Face*



**Serge Migdal, Third**  
*Indian Guide*



**Mitchell Druck, HM**  
*Rainy Day*

DIGITAL COLOR A



**Jackie Ross, First**  
*Osprey with Fish*



**Arnold Breisblatt, Second**  
*Pink Bagonia with Leaf*



**Ron Carran, Third**  
*Old Bench*



**Arnold Breisblatt, HM**  
*Embracing the Flow*

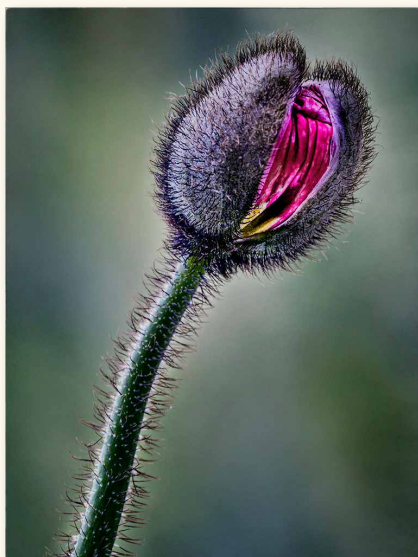
DIGITAL COLOR SALON



**Richard Micklish, First**  
*NYC Reflections*



**Richard Micklish, Second**  
*Leaf Color Change*



**Anastasia Tompkins, Second**  
*Poppy Bud*



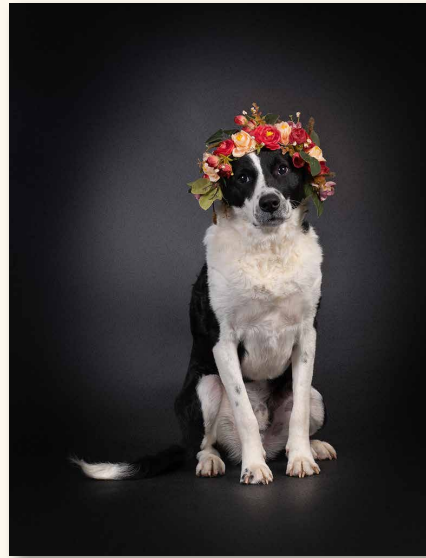
**Carlotta Grenier, Third**  
*A Double Wing Stretch*



DIGITAL COLOR SALON



**Carolyn Colella, Third**  
*Circus Tent*



**Liza Margulies, HM**  
*Inscrutable*

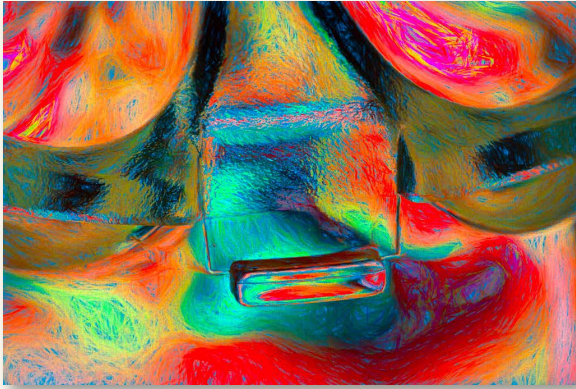


**Anastasia Tompkins, HM**  
*Narnia*

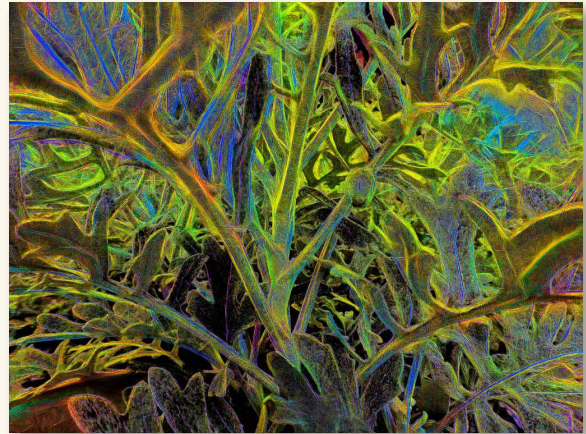


**Barbara Kapetanakes, HM**  
*Out of Your Gourd*

DIGITAL OPEN MIND



**Dennis Thornton, First**  
*Self-Agency of Man's Creation*



**Arnold Breisblatt, Second**  
*On the Planet Pandora*



**Anastasia Tompkins, Third**  
*Belize Graffiti Man*



**Mitchell Druck, HM**  
*Butterfly Gaze*

# It's 2023 and Drones Are Continuing to Take Off



By Scott Benowitz

## (Part 1)

A device which was once found only in science fiction stories and in spy movies back in the 1960's and the 1970's is now available for sale in nearly all camera stores and in most electronics shops. For photographers who are interested in low altitude aerial photography, drones are a device that will enable you to capture images which would previously have been notably difficult or impossible. Drones are commonly used for people to capture video footage, but you can take still images with drones as well. As of September 2023, drones are still quite expensive, but most products will eventually become less expensive, and it's not unrealistic to expect that at some point within the next few years, drones may become more affordable.

Drones are becoming increasingly popular. I'm seeing more people using them every time that I travel out of the U.S. The technologies are rapidly evolving, and I expect that a wide variety of new features will likely become available within the next few years. There are quite a few companies which manufacture drones. I'm not going to discuss specific models or specific manufacturers—rather, in this article I'm going to talk about some of the various features which are available, which I encourage you to be thinking about when you decide whether you want to purchase a drone, and which models will suit your interests as a photographer.

## A Brief History of Aerial Drones

As I mentioned, drones had been a fixture in spy movies as far back as the 1960's, and there is a reason for this. Drones were originally designed as a military technology, created for reconnaissance and intelligence gathering. Today, in 2023, most of the militaries throughout the world use drones for intelligence gathering, and law enforcement agencies also use them for a variety of purposes (e.g., gathering evidence on suspected criminals, looking for criminal activity in areas where there are large crowds, etc.).

As photographers, we'll be using drones for artistic purposes. The drones that we use as photographers are not nearly as advanced as the ones which government intelligence agencies throughout the world use. The drones that photographers use fly at much lower altitudes, lenses are not designed

to capture images from very high altitudes and the propellers and propulsion mechanisms are far simpler. Still, the basic concept is quite similar. Drones are intended to capture images remotely from altitudes, locations, positions and angles where it is not possible for humans to place ourselves. If you're looking for new ideas for subject matter for your photos, I highly encourage you to go to a camera shop or to an electronics store and start looking at some of the newest models of drones that are now available.

## Can You Insert Your Own Cameras into Drones?

As of 2023, almost all of the drones which are marketed for photographers use integrated cameras. There are some models of drones in which the internal cameras have multiple lenses, which will enable you to use a variety of photographic techniques from high vantage points. You can practice everything from close-up photography through capturing vast panoramas and vistas using anamorphic lenses.

As of 2023, commercial grade drones used by cinematic companies for filming video footage for movies, television shows and commercials are configured for the operators to install third-party cameras. The technologies are evolving rapidly every year, and it would not surprise me if by the late 2020's or the early 2030's, there will be models of drones which are marketed to photographers which will be configured for photographers to install their own cameras into them.

## What Can You Do with a Drone? Some Ideas for Low Altitude Aerial Photography

The reason that drones are rapidly becoming popular among photographers—from beginners through professionals—is that drones enable you to see views that were previously not possible unless you enjoy walking on the rooftops of buildings or climbing up to the tops of trees.

For those who are interested in nature photography, you can see views in treetops and forest canopies. Drones enable you to take close-up photos of birds nesting, bats, insects, certain species of lizards and snakes, as well as every species of plants, mosses, lichens and fungi which grow at heights up to 400 feet (or the maximum allowable altitude for flying drones in other countries).

For those who are interested in urban photography and cityscapes when you travel to some cities throughout the world, you'll now be able to see views of city streets, buildings, cars, buses, trains, and parks which previously were only possible if you could get permission from property owners to walk on the rooftops of buildings.

Aside from reaching heights which were not possible until recently, the other primary advantage of drones is that most models have a feature which enables you to adjust the angle of the lens to capture views in all directions. You're not confined to taking photos from a straight, head-on view. You can capture images while looking upwards, looking downwards and an entire 360° panorama in all directions.

There are also small models available which some photographers enjoy using in indoor settings. For example, some architects, engineers and contractors who work on large buildings, such as arenas, stadiums, shopping malls and office buildings which have atriums, sometimes use drones to take video footage of these projects as they are progressing through the various stages of the construction process. They can then use the footage for reference for other projects that they'll be working on.

If you are interested in architectural photography, it might be possible to get permission from the property management companies to take (very low altitude) aerial photography in some indoor settings. Drones enable images of the interiors of historic and modern buildings that were previously only possible by climbing ladders or scaffolding. People who enjoy exploring abandoned buildings and abandoned subway stations sometimes use drones to enhance traditional photos of these locations. It is also possible to use drones to capture some very interesting images inside of caves, but bear in mind that many caves are located within national parks, national forests, state parks, state forests, etc., and the rules about where drone usage is permissible vary. If you do intend to use a drone in an indoor location, bear in mind that you will have less of a range than when you're using a drone in outdoor locations; drones will only function for as long as the drone unit can communicate with the transmitter/receiver unit, and you will encounter obstacles such as walls that can block the signals which you're attempting to send to the drone.



While the National Parks Service in the U.S. has banned the use of drones in all of the national parks, it is permissible to fly drones in some of the state parks and the state forests in some states. Drones are prohibited in New York City, and in the U.S. it is illegal to operate a drone within 5 miles of an airport.

### **Can You Use Drones When it's Raining?**

As of September 2023, most of the models of drones which are presently available are not waterproof, but there are a handful of models which are waterproof, so there are some models of drones which can take aerial photos in rainy weather. Most drones will not fly well in heavy rain, but there are some models of drones which are designed specifically for use in all weather conditions.

### **Can You Use Drones at Night?**

Some of the models of drones which are presently on the market include built-in flashes, so you can use them for nighttime photography. If this is a feature which is important to you, be sure that the models that you're contemplating purchasing include a built-in flash. Drones do allow for a lot of opportunities for night-time photography which would previously have not been possible. This includes wildlife as well as urban photography. Drones enable you to photograph species of birds, bats and insects in forest canopies at nighttime, and you can also take individual images as well as video footage of city streets and cityscapes at nighttime if you're traveling in cities in which the use of drones is permitted.

### **How Do Drones Work?**

If you've watched people using aerial drones when you've been walking along footpaths in parks, don't worry. The process of learning to operate aerial drones is not as complicated as it may initially seem. Drones have an "auto return" or a "return to home" feature which enables them to automatically return to the position that you're flying them from. In addition to being very maneuverable and agile, drones also have a "hover" or a "hover-in-place" feature that enables you to keep the drone in a single position for as long as you want. In addition to capturing images from numerous angles, you can also keep your

drones suspended in a single spot, and you can take photos of birds, animals, humans, etc. as they move through a location over a period of several minutes or hours.

Drones are available in a variety of sizes ranging from ones that are small enough to fit inside of your hand to those that exceed 36" in length when fully assembled. While specific features vary between brands, for the most part, smaller drones will be more agile than larger ones, allowing them to be used in more confined spaces. Larger drones, however, will enable you to use a wider variety of lenses. If you're planning on using a drone indoors, you'll want to purchase a smaller model. If you are planning on doing aerial photography which involves effects that you can only get using a variety of complex lenses then, you'll likely want to purchase one of the larger models.

Drones are available with configurations of 4, 6 or 8 sets of rotor blades. The internal circuitry in drones is designed so that the sets of blades will automatically balance each other. You won't need to worry about learning how the internal circuitry or the individual sets of rotor blades operate. You will only need to practice flying your drone, so that you can steer it clear of obstacles to prevent crashing into trees, buildings, vehicles, pedestrians and bicyclists.

When you're using a drone, you'll see the images that the camera is capturing on a remote monitor. This will enable you to practice how to capture the images that you want to show your viewers.

The range that a drone can fly will vary between different manufacturers and different models. Think about the locations where you think that you'll want to be using a drone, and think about distance that you think that you'll want to be flying a drone when you're comparing different models. While there are some exceptions, in general, the more expensive drones will usually have a longer range in which they can receive the instructions that the operator is sending to them via the transmitter unit.

### Memory/Storage

As of March 2023, almost all models of drones which are being sold that have internal cameras which use SD (Secure Digital) cards for storage. I suspect that the product design teams and software engineers are presently working on designing models that use other means of storing video footage

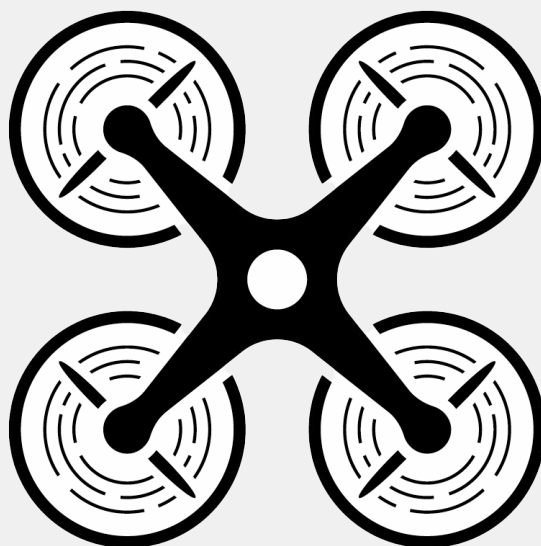
and still images. Perhaps there may be models available that will enable you to send images and video footage directly into cloud-based storage systems within the next few years.

### Batteries

We need to pay close attention to the batteries that drones use. Most drones use rechargeable lithium ion batteries, so you'll need to purchase compatible battery chargers. There are quite a variety of batteries which are available now, and some batteries hold a charge for much longer than others. When you're comparison shopping and reading about various models of drones, be certain to inquire about how long the batteries will last before they'll need to be recharged.

When you purchase a drone, you will need to purchase two sets of batteries because the batteries that are used in the transmitter/receiver and remote control units are not the same kinds of batteries that are used in the drone unit itself.

The transmitter/receiver and remote control units tend to use less power than the drones, so they can last for a few hours before you'll need to recharge their batteries. By contrast, drones operate with a series of small motors, so they use much more power. The output (voltage) that is required will vary between different models of drones. The batteries that are most commonly used in drones will usually enable you to operate for approximately 15 to 25 minutes before recharging, so you will probably need to purchase several extra sets of batteries. You can use batteries which are made by different manufacturers with your drones; if you are intending to use replacement batteries



which are manufactured by a brand that you're not familiar with, I recommend that you read some product reviews about the batteries that you're considering purchasing to ensure that the batteries are safe. There's no shortage of companies which sell aftermarket batteries online, some of which may be counterfeit or poorly made and pose fire risks.

For overseas travel, most battery chargers will function properly with a travel AC adapter. There are also adapters available which will enable you to connect battery chargers to ports in your cars and computers.

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Watch for Part 2 soon.

# *A Birthday Message*



Elinor Stecker-Orel, Member of the Westchester Photographic Society, Assistant Dean of the NY Institute of Photography. Former Senior Editor of Popular Photography Magazine. Author of 8 books, numerous articles on Photoshop, Color and Black/White Photography. Her photos are in the collections of many Museums, Hospitals, Galleries, etc.

Died, at the age of 92 ... of Covid 19, in January, 2022. Below is my Happy Birthday message from her very-close friend and fellow WPS member, Jane Castorina Gordon.

## **Elinor Stecker-Orel ... WOMAN OF THE HOUR**

by Jane Castorina Gordon

There she stands Pretty as a picture ... This woman here before us  
and we are so adoring ... It's hard for her to ignore us.

I revere this lady superstar ... Approach her? It took a while,  
I felt those regal qualities ... of brilliance, dignity, and style.

Elinor, my friend ... a woman who's made more than a dent ...  
Under the quite specific heading of Intoxicating, legendary talent.

What are these special gifts during spring, summer, fall and winter,  
They're intuitive genius & photographs that OOOOZE from her  
printer.

The fuse was lit when she was born ... a magical formula whirred ...  
When Elinor met with camera ... a creative EXPLOSION occurred.

There was an undetectable force ... an almost animal passion,  
Surfacing from these photos in quite a hypnotic fashion.

We had a super-close connection ... a mentor if you will,  
No one came close in the photo field to her incredibly magical skill.

I know that we all loved her ... in my mind it is certainly so true,  
She has been my inspiration of the great things a WOMAN can do.

This is a personal writing of what women NEED to see ...  
And because I am a woman ... she has a special connection to me.

## inFocus

The Newsletter of the  
Westchester Photographic Society

Ron Carran, editor

P.O. Box 405, Ossining, NY 10562

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