



**MANASSAS WARRENTON
CAMERA CLUB**

www.mwcc-photo.org

**Competition Rules
September 2013**

Competition

The third Thursday of the month is Competition Night with the exception of December and May when the first Thursday is Competition Night. Club competitions are limited to active members in good standing in the Club. Both digital images and prints are included. The judging is performed by knowledgeable individuals, usually from outside the Club. These individuals are selected for their background in the field of photography and their ability to provide feedback to the entrants. An honorarium will be paid to judges at regular MWCC meetings. The currently authorized honorarium is an Amazon gift card in the amount of \$75.

Nine monthly competitions are held from September through May. Some competitions are limited to a specific subject, theme or type of photography, and some are open. Generally, the membership votes on the themes at least two years in advance. The Vice President for Competitions is responsible for establishing the schedule to include those themes per month through the club year. Competition themes for the current year are posted on the website and included in the newsletter.

Images submitted for a themed competition must adhere to the chosen theme. For example, an image for a nature theme must not show any buildings, fences, or roads; and, a reflection theme image must ensure that the reflection is obviously the subject and not just a landscape or cityscape that contains a reflection somewhere in it. Members compete in one of three (3) divisions of competition: novice, intermediate, or advanced.

Any questions regarding competition should be directed to the Vice President for Competitions.

Formal Rules of the Competition

1. Introduction

1.1 The purpose of competitions within the Manassas Warrenton Camera Club (MWCC) is to improve the photographic skills of the members and to allow them to display their creative work.

1.2 The Club's competition year is comprised of a series of monthly competitions starting in September and ending in May.

1.3 A Competition Committee will be formed to assist the Vice President in running the monthly competitions and carrying out all other matters as outlined in the Rules of Competition. The Vice President for Competitions serves as Chairperson of the Competition Committee.

1.4 The Rules of Competition as defined in this section are a formal structure of the Club. For the avoidance of doubt, items in italics can only be amended following prior notice of the changes being provided to the membership via email and/or the newsletter and a discussion and vote at a regular meeting of the Club or via electronic means. For an amendment to be accepted, a Quorum of the membership as defined in Article VI of the Constitution must take part in the vote with a majority voting in favor of the amendment. Other items in this section are of a more administrative nature and can be modified by the Board of Directors with appropriate consultation with the members.

Definitions:

"Print" is used in the following sections to refer to photos that are reproduced by a printer, i.e. color print or black and white print, and "Digital Image" is used to refer to photos that are projected digitally.

"Image" is used to refer to an entry into the Competition and can be either a Print or a Digital Image.

"Division" is used to refer to the level a photographer competes in, i.e., novice, intermediate or advanced.

"Class" is used to refer to the specific type of competition, currently color print, black and white print, and digital.

2. Eligibility

2.1 *Competitors must be members of the Manassas Warrenton Camera Club in good standing.*

2.2 *While there is no age restriction for the entries, photographers are encouraged to enter photographs that are indicative of their current work. The Competition Committee may establish special competitions for which the age restrictions are applied.*

2.3 *A print or digital image that has received a score of 7, 8 or 9 may never be resubmitted in another MWCC monthly competition. Digital Images with such a score will be placed on the Club Website Gallery to recognize the achievement. Digital copies of Prints that score 7, 8 or 9 will be placed on the Gallery if the member provides them to the Vice President for Competitions.*

2.4 *Anyone who receives a 4, 5, or 6 score for a print or digital image will be permitted to re-submit their image in another competition where the image fits the theme. Anyone receiving less than 4 will not be permitted to submit the image in any upcoming competition.*

2.5 *It is the competitor's responsibility to bring all questionable entries to the attention of the Vice President for Competitions PRIOR to the start of the competition. Failure to do so may result in the disqualification of the applicable entry.*

3. Competitions

3.1 *A competition will be held every month from September through May in each class. Competitions are generally held on the third Thursday of every month with the exception of December and May, when the competition is held on the first Thursday of the month to accommodate the annual holiday party which is held on the third Thursday of December and the End of the Year Banquet, which is held on the first Thursday of June.*

3.2 *Competitions canceled due to inclement weather will be rescheduled.*

3.3 *Competition themes will be established prior to the start of the competition year. Theme definitions will be published in the first newsletter of each Club year and will be available on the Club website.*

3.4 *A maximum of two images may be entered by each competitor in each class subject to an overall maximum of four (4) images in a single competition event. This number may be reduced for a specific competition at the discretion of the Vice President for Competitions.*

3.5 *Entries will not be accepted after the cut-off time established by the Vice President for Competitions. This time will be determined prior to the beginning of the competition year and included in the monthly newsletters.*

3.6 *The Club is a member of the Photographic Society of America (PSA) and submits entries, as a Club, to their regional and national competitions. The Club will appoint a volunteer to select and submit images that obtained a score of 7 or higher in the previous*

competition year into the PSA competitions. Members who submit images to the Club Competition agree to allow their images to be used for this purpose unless they advise the VP Competitions in writing of their wish not to support the PSA competitions with their images.

General Notes to Member:

Members are required to remain silent during the competition to ensure that the judge is not influenced by a member's comments. This requirement is to be maintained even if the judge asks a direct or rhetorical question. The judge will be reminded that members are not to speak during the critique or the judging process. The judge's score and critique are final. We will not second guess or change the judge's score.

4. Divisions

4.1 Individuals compete in one of three (3) divisions. New members to the Club or members entering competition for the first time are encouraged to consult with the Vice President for Competitions, or other Club officer, to determine which division is appropriate to their talents and experience level.

*4.1.1 **Novice Division** - Any individual new to photography who is learning basic photographic principles and concepts such as metering, composition, mastering the camera's manual operation.*

*4.1.2 **Intermediate Division** - Any individual who has competed in the Novice Division the previous year or who has mastered the basic photographic skills and is at a skill level above that expected of a novice.*

*4.1.3 **Advanced Division** - Any individual who has been named Photographer of the Year at the Intermediate Level or who has demonstrated photographic skills that consistently maintain an exemplar quality.*

4.2 An individual can be promoted under the following conditions:

4.2.1 An individual who has competed in the Novice Division is automatically advanced to the Intermediate Division upon being named as Photographer of the Year in one or more classes. The competition committee will review the work of all other novices and in conjunction with the novice determine if the novice shall be promoted to the Intermediate Division or remain in the Novice Division for another year.

4.2.2 An individual named Photographer of the Year in the Intermediate Division is automatically promoted to the Advanced Division effective the following year.

4.2.3 Any individual may voluntarily move up a division level at any time within the Club year; however, once the move has been made, the individual cannot move back down a division without an appeal to and approval by the Competition Committee. In the event of a

mid-year self promotion (or voluntary promotion), an individual may retain one-half (1/2) of their points earned prior to the promotion. Said points are not to exceed the points earned by the highest scorer in the next higher division to which the transfer culminates.

4.2.4 *The Competition Committee may determine, at any time within the Club year, that the quality of an individual's work supports promoting that individual to the next higher division level. If such promotion occurs, one-half (1/2) of the points earned while competing in the lower division shall be carried to the next higher division. Said points are not to exceed the points earned by the highest scorer in the division to which the transfer culminates. No such promotion shall occur after the fifth competition of the year.*

5. Classes

5.1 *Entries can be submitted in one or more of three (3) classes.*

5.1.1 **Color Prints Class** - *All color and monochromatic prints, including those printed by the photographer or a commercial lab.*

5.1.2 **Black and White Print Class** - *All black and white images, including those printed by the photographer or a commercial lab.*

5.1.3 **Digital Class** - *Images captured by any method currently available, to include but not limited to film or digital cameras. This class includes color, black and white, monochromatic, grayscale, sepia toned or any other style.*

6. Print Format

6.1 *The longest edge of the visible portion of the image must be between 6 inches and 16 inches.*

6.2 *In the case of panoramic prints, the matted dimensions shall not exceed 12 inches on the shortest side and 40 inches on the longest side.*

6.3 *All prints must be mounted on a backing at least 1/16 inch thick to ensure that the photograph is adequately supported and protected. Over mats may be used without color restrictions. Mounts and mats shall not exceed 20 inches along the longest side. Prints may not be framed. No multiple print images in the same mat are allowed unless the theme of that competition specifically calls for such entries.*

6.4 *Prints must have the maker's name and print title on the back with an arrow indicating the top of the print. Prints that do not display the correct information may be removed from the competition at the discretion of the Vice President for Competitions.*

6.5 *Print images are brought the night of competition and must be signed in before 7:30 p.m. to be eligible. A sign-in form is provided for each type of print, and for each division of competitor.*

6.6 The Club encourages each photographer to make the best quality image possible, including the production of the highest quality prints to be entered into competition. The print quality will not be a separate item of judging; however, it will be considered as part of the overall impact of the photograph.

6.7 Members submitting prints to the competition should also upload a digital copy of the image to the club competition website as described in section 7 below. This digital copy will be stored on the website and used solely for score keeping and reporting of the assigned score back to the Member. It shall not be used for judging purposes. This digital copy, which can be an original digital file or a scanned file, should be uploaded by midnight on the day of the competition.

7. Digital Images Format

7.1 All digital images will be submitted as jpeg files with a file extension of .jpg.

7.2 The maximum size for an image will be 1400 pixels wide by 1050 pixels high. Note that vertical format digital images must still adhere to the 1050 pixel height maximum. This pixel size limit is set by the projector currently used by the Club for competitions and best results will be obtained by scaling digital images to these maximum dimensions prior to upload.

7.3 The digital image file name will consist of the maker's first and last name, the month (completely spelled out), year, division and an image title. All items will be separated by a space. For example: John Smith September 2011 Novice Image Title.jpg.

7.4 Digital images should be submitted in the color space normally used in your image editor (i.e., Adobe RGB 1998, sRGB). Digital images should NOT be converted to the projector ICC profile as this is done at projection time by the projection system.

7.4.1 For competitors who wish to "soft proof" their digital image prior to submission, the most current projector ICC profile is available for download from the Club website. This is NOT a necessary step.

7.5 The Club uses a competition website to manage all images submitted to a competition. This site is www.mwcc.photoclubservices.com and all Members are provided with a user name and password to the site. Digital image files for the competition must be submitted via the site by midnight on the Monday preceding the competition in order to be entered into judging.

7.6 As explained in section 6.7, digital copies of Print images should also be submitted to the competition website, using the same pixel dimensions as Digital images, by midnight on the Competition day. These copies are used for scoring purposes and are not used for judging.

8. Awards

8.1 Monthly Awards

Prints and Digital Images: During each monthly competition, the judge will award points to each print and digital image using the following criteria:

9 POINTS: The image is of the very highest quality; equal to the best you have seen. You feel that it should win a medal in major competition. This score is awarded only rarely in MWCC competitions

8 POINTS: The image is exceptional: unique and worthy of special recognition. You should feel excited about the image.

7 POINTS: The image is very strong. Handling is a notch above competent, and the image rewards contemplation.

6 POINTS: The image is reasonably solid, creating at least a little interest. Technical aspects and image content all competently handled. This is generally the average score for competitions.

5 POINTS: The image is acceptable in most respects but does not create any significant interest.

4 POINTS: The image may not have significant technical defects or serious shortcomings in image content. However, it may have minor technical defects, and the content (composition, lighting, etc.) is not well handled.

3 POINTS: The image either has significant technical defects, serious shortcomings in image content, or some combination of these problems. Because most of the photographers who compete in our competitions have at least some photographic experience, we hope that this score and lower scores are rarely awarded.

2 POINTS: The image shows serious technical defects: gross under or over exposure, very poor focus or significant (and clearly unintended) camera movement, or similar problems.

8.2 End of Year Awards:

8.2.1 Photographer of The Year - At the end of the competition year, the Club will recognize the Photographer of the Year in the Novice, Intermediate and Advanced Division by class. These awards will be made to the competitors with the highest point totals in each class during the competition year. Points are not transferable between classes. In addition, to be eligible for Photographer of the Year, the competitor must have entered at least five of the monthly competitions within a given class.

8.2.2 The Top Ten per Cent Prints and Top Ten per Cent Digital Images - A judge who has not participated in any of the current year's competition will select the top ten per cent of prints and the top ten percent of digital images of the year. The Vice President for Competitions will be responsible for selecting the judge.

All print and digital images that receive a 7, 8 or 9 will be considered for this award. The Vice President for Competitions will provide these to the judge. There will be no distinction with respect to divisions when these images are judged.

8.2.3 Print of the Year and Digital Image of the Year - A judge who has not participated in any of the current year's competition will select the Print of the Year and Digital Image of the Year.

8.2.4 The Competition Committee may recognize other photographers from time to time based upon the merit, quality, and consistency of their photographic work.

9. Judging

9.1 Judges may be selected from the Alliance Camera Clubs, other area camera clubs, as well as from local professional photographers, and photo educators based upon their knowledge and skill as photographers and their experience critiquing others' work. For special subject competitions, an effort will be made to find a judge with a background in the subject to be judged. The Vice President for Competitions is responsible for selecting judges.

9.2 Judges will judge all images based upon the emotional impact of the image and the ability of the photographer to execute the specified monthly theme. While cropping and composition affect the overall impact of the image, the use of "text book" composition is not an item of judging but is considered as part of the overall impact of the image.

9.3 Club members may be selected to judge a competition should circumstances require it. Members who judge a competition may not compete during the remainder of that Club year, and any points earned to date will be forfeited.

9.4 Feedback on judges will be solicited throughout the year by providing random surveys to members. All responses will be anonymous. Results of the surveys will be considered by the Board Members in recommending the selection of judges for subsequent competitions.

Judging Photographs - Most Important Elements

Reprinted from "Professional Photographer," January 1992

Judging photography is a subjective act, with personal preferences supported by a Judge's knowledge. Attempting to discern a particular judge's personal preferences is futile. It is possible, however, to codify the standards judges use to formulate their opinions. The Photographic Exhibit Committee established the 12 critical elements of a merit-quality photograph. These elements are endorsed by the committee for use by International Print Competition Judges. In order of importance these elements, with brief definitions, are:

- 1. Impact:** Invokes a first-impression opinion from a judge. It is the aspect of the photograph that holds a judge's attention and commands him to look further. Impact stands at the top of this list because of its umbrella coverage; many other elements have the opportunity to create impact.
- 2. Creativity:** Photographer's invention and design skills at work. It is the element that transfers imagination and feeling from the creator to the viewer, lifting the photograph into the realm of art.
- 3. Style:** Distinguishes one photo from another in a manner that is real, not contrived. It expresses a photographer's individuality.
- 4. Composition:** Divides a photograph into a successful arrangement of subject matter. It creates a harmonious rhythm in the photograph through symmetry and repetition.
- 5. Print Presentation:** Addresses the choices made in cropping, matting, and mounting that enhance a photograph. It dares a photographer to be different in either a dynamic or traditional format.
- 6. Color Balance:** Weighs the use of complementary colors (dark against light, strong against weak) and how these are incorporated into the subject matter of the photograph.
- 7. Center of Interest:** Leads the viewer's eyes through a photograph without unnecessary distraction. It identifies a dominant component that gives strength and definition to a photograph. The center of interest should always be the focal point of, and supported by, secondary objects.
- 8. Lighting:** Illuminates the characteristics, mood and statement of the subject matter. The correct quality of light stems from proper exposure.
- 9. Subject Matter:** Is the appropriateness of the subject for the total interpretation of the photograph.
- 10. Print Quality:** Comprises the levels of contrast, color, lighting, angles, and other elements that make a statement for the photo.
- 11. Technique:** Is the foundation of photography which intermingles with a photographer's knowledge of art principles. It takes abstract ideas and makes them concrete.
- 12. Storytelling:** Achieves the photo's narrative purpose. It builds an emotional response that challenges a viewer's imagination.