



## From the Editor, Arthurine

I want to thank Jim Gray for his contribution this month. He's actually on the f/stop committee which desires another thank you for adding depth to this effort.

So looking forward to next month's topic, I would like to make a special request for all those Postcards from New Mexico that will be created for the December assigned category. Please submit them to be published in the January f/stop. Since the f/stop is openly available on the Internet and does NOT have image protection like flash players, etc, I would need to have your permission to specifically allow publication.

What is a postcard? Postcards are rectangular pieces of thin cardboard which are used to send written messages. One of the most advantageous features of a postcard is its format. In opposition to television or radio ads, postcards always reach the hand of the audience, becoming, in this way, a personal belonging. If the postcard is nice and clever, the audience will keep it-this will mean that the postcard

will have a long-lasting life. This is exactly what makes these pieces much stronger than any other means of communication. Their format and material allow a striking and unforgettable design work.

Postcards can be considered distant relatives of the letter and of the photograph. And there lies its unique charm. As with letters, people like to communicate as much as they can to try and capture memories through photographs.

Effective postcard design can be realized even if you have little or no background in graphic design and all the design principles that go with it. Follow your instincts and create postcards that you can enjoy.

Here's some ideas from the Internet

[http://theoldentimes.com/nm\\_postcards.html](http://theoldentimes.com/nm_postcards.html)

Here's New Mexico Tourism monthly newsletter for ideas what may represent our enchanted state:

<http://www.newmexico.org/newsletters>

## December Assigned Category:

### Postcards from New Mexico

People find postcard design intriguing. While postcards design may not be complex, it's not that simple either. This variety and freedom found in postcards are what makes it as popular as ever.

Postcards are collectible items. They are treasured as souvenirs or keepsakes, are put on display in personal spaces be it in the home or in the office. What makes postcards such adorable objects? Let us sort through some of its characteristics and unveil what makes a great postcard design in the process.

- Graphic elements -- The postcard generally contains a picture or image on one side and writing space on the back. On the whole, however, it is the photograph or graphic design that gives it its character. Postcards call the audience's attention for it features a pure or almost pure eye-catching picture. If text is used, it should not be more important than the image.

A photograph's or image's appeal depends on many factors. It could be balanced and tight, it could be a

distinct style exhibited by a photographer or artist, and quite simply, it could be anything that just appeals to you or your target market's sensibility.

- Size -- The postcard comes just in the right size. It is slightly bigger than your stock photos but could very well fit in your small bag or maybe, you could even insert it inside the pages of a book and you have an instant bookmark. Its size makes it a handy, portable and easy to give out. They come in two conventional sizes: standard postcard (3.5" x 5.5") and continental postcard (4" x 6").

- Color -- Postcards come in all colors imaginable. With the right color combination, postcards could even make do without a photograph but a graphic design made up of fonts and other shapes imaginable. Added to this, a well-printed postcard can make colors appear brighter. This makes them more appealing and exciting.

# Using Adobe Camera Raw

by James L. Gray

**A**re you intimidated by Camera Raw? Do you wonder if you should be using raw? What is camera raw? It is the native format of the sensors in your camera. All digital cameras capture in raw. Most cameras can convert their raw files to jpegs. Some point and shoots can only output in jpeg, but believe me they capture in raw. Do you find that you are not very successful at converting from raw to another format like jpg or psd. If so, here are some instructions that could help you get started if you have Adobe Camera Raw available to you (it comes with Photoshop). I think these instructions are best suited to creating photos of vacations or family to share via e-mail or in slide shows. I would recommend doing the conversions a bit differently for competition photos. I will confess that a year and half ago I was rather frustrated by trying to learn the use of Adobe Camera Raw or the raw converter that came with my camera. Now I am convinced that doing your own conversion is the best way to go for all but run of the mill record shots.

**S**tart in Adobe Bridge. You can select more than one image. It may be faster that way. Right click and select edit in Camera Raw.

**1.** Start with the left icon (It looks sort of like the diaphragm of a lens).

**2. White balance.** The easiest thing to do is to use left eye dropper icon from above the image. Then click on an area that should be neutral nearly white (like white clouds), neutral gray, or neutral dark gray/black. If this does not get rid of color cast slide the Temperature and Tint sliders until the image looks good.

**3.** You can try clicking Auto. If you get a great photo you might be done except for sharpening. It does not work for me very

often.

**4. Exposure.** If the image is too bright slide to the left. If the image is too dark slide to the right. Watch the histogram and try to sort of center the histogram (that will not always be the best thing). Try to keep the black triangles in the upper left and right of the histogram from turning white.

**5. Recovery.** If and only if there are blown out highlights (shown in red on the image) slide this to the right to get rid of most or even all blown out areas. This usually won't work on bright yellow flowers.

**6. Fill light.** Do not use on most photos. Use if there are some dark areas that need detail and the photo looks exposed right overall. Normally use just a little bit. (For competition photos or photos you plan to spend more time on, Shadows and Highlights in Photoshop is a far better choice.)

**7. Blacks. *Really important.*** Use on most photos. Slide to the right until the histogram just barely touches the left side.

**8. Skip to Clarity.** Slide to the right until the image looks good. (This changes the local contrast rather than the contrast of the whole image. I think that using this sparingly for competition photos is probably best.)

**9.** Skip up to Contrast. Usually slide to the right until the image looks good.

**10. Vibrance.** Slide to the right until the image looks good. (There are a small number of photos that seem to look better if you slide to the left.) Sometimes after doing this you may want to tweak the white balance.

**11. Brightness.** You may not want to use this. It works kind of like

Exposure, but does not blow out high lights or block up shadows as bad, but may reduce the contrast.

**12. Saturation.** Use rarely and very little.

**13.** Click the two triangle icon for sharpening. Then double click the magnifying glass above the image. You can use the mitt above the image to move to the part of the image you want displayed.

**14.** Usually set the Radius to about 1.4 for handheld photos. If the image is actually blurry, but worth keeping, set the Radius to about 2.8. If the image already looks very sharp set the Radius to about .8.

**15.** Set the Amount to around 90, but use what looks good. (For competition photos this is way too much sharpening to use at this stage. For images you plan to submit for competition or you plan to print large, it is much better to do most of your sharpening as the last step before printing.)

**16.** Detail you do not need to use.

**17.** Usually set Masking to about 20. It is often hard to see any difference from setting masking. But, sometimes it is quite apparent. If you need more masking the photo will look crunchy. Masking will usually take away the crunchy look. If it doesn't, reduce the Amount.

**18. Noise Reduction/  
Luminance.** If the image is noisy, sliding this to the right can help a lot. Note that the Amount slider will tend to make noise look worse. This can take it away. Do not bother with this if the image does not seem noisy.

**19. Noise Reduction/  
Color.** It seems that my Sony Camera does not need this.


**20.** When you are done, click Save Image in lower left.

**21.** You will get the Save Options popup. Be sure to use Format JPEG. Quality should be set to Maximum for the image with no real flaws. Use Low for the mediocre photos that you want to save for sentimental reasons. In between photos can have an in between quality. Do not use the other options. Click save in the upper right of the Popup. (For competition photos, do not do this. Open them in Photoshop to finish them.)

**22.** When done saving all of the image you opened, Click Done in the lower right.

**23.** If there are some you want to delete, you can just click the trash can above the image and it will be deleted when you Click Done in ACR. This will only get rid of the raw image.

**24.** (This step is only needed if you have your camera set to save both jpeg and raw.) When ACR saves jpegs it gives them a new name, so you still have to delete the old, not so good jpegs that correspond to the images you fixed or deleted.



I find that these steps almost always result in a better looking image than the one created by the camera. I also find that you can recover photos that look so bad straight from the camera that they look like obvious throw-aways. However, there is no recovery from really blurry photos or photos with really bad composition.

## Mentorship Small Groups for Fall, 2008

The Mentorship Committee offers various small groups or workshops that meet at times other than the regular club meetings. Often these are often associated with a short field trip to practice the techniques or concepts from the workshop. **Unless otherwise noted, all sessions will be held in the upstairs Parlor of Immanuel Presbyterian Church, where the Club normal meets.**

▪ **October 25, November 29 (Saturdays): “Photoshop Elements Small Group”**

If you are new or relatively new to photo editing, this is a great place for you to learn the ropes. If you would like to participate in the Photoshop Elements Class, please email Bob Martin directly at: [amelcc@yahoo.com](mailto:amelcc@yahoo.com). We have lost the use of Computer Corner’s class room as previously advertised.

▪ **November 12 (Wednesday): 7:00 – 8:30 pm: “Casual Photo Critique”**

(NOTE: This workshop is on a WEDNESDAY evening) LeRoy Perea will present the second in his series of critique sessions designed to help give feedback to club members who would like to hear constructive comments regarding their photos. Last month we had a great group of participants who gained helpful insight from LeRoy and the other workshop participants. To take part in this workshop, please e-mail Dianne Gray at [Dianne@gray.org](mailto:Dianne@gray.org). Either digital images or print photos are welcome. In addition to those who will bring photos for discussion, the entire club membership is invited to participate in the discussion. No reservation is required for club members who wish to attend but not receive photo critique.

▪ **November 13 (Non-Club Thursday): 6:30 – 9:00 pm “Matting and Mounting Workshop”**

Don Davis will once again present a Matting and Mounting Workshop for club members who would like to learn about adhesive techniques for mounting photos, and efficient mat cutting techniques. Don will demonstrate using everything from the most simple manual mat cutter to a sophisticated unit that allows one to quickly measure and cut mats precisely. Individuals who already own mat cutting devices are encouraged to bring their tools with them to the workshop. There will be opportunities for participants to practice the techniques presented in this informative session. To participate in this workshop, please email Dianne Gray at [Dianne@gray.org](mailto:Dianne@gray.org).

▪ **December 11 (Non-Club Thursday): 7:00 – 8:30 pm: “Casual Photo Critique”**

This will be the final photo critique session of the fall that led by LeRoy Perea. These monthly sessions will help you learn to view your photos and those of others with a more experienced eye. The sessions will be very casual and non-threatening. Audience participation will be encouraged. The session is open to all club members, however those who wish to bring their prints or digital images for review will be asked to sign up.

▪ **December 13 (Saturday): 6:00 pm – 8:30 pm “Holiday Lights at Night Field Trip”**

Club member Denise Carlson will be presenting the Pre-Meeting Seminar on Thursday, December 3. Her Seminar topic will be techniques for shooting luminaries and other holiday lights (think “River of Lights.”). The December 13 workshop will be a follow-up field trip for participants to practice the techniques learned from the seminar. Participation will not be limited to those present at the seminar on Thursday before the club meeting.

The Mentorship committee will keep you posted of other exciting Mentorship events as they become finalized. Please don’t hesitate to volunteer to present a Seminar or Small Group Workshop if you have expertise in an area that you are eager to share with our members. Also, if you would like to see a Seminar or Small Group Workshop presented, please notify Rhonda at [fleming27858@yahoo.com](mailto:fleming27858@yahoo.com).

Hurray! The new projector has arrived.  
The colors and image brightness should be vastly improved.



Parrots by Arthurine Pierson

## The f/Stop is your club newsletter!

The f/stop is a monthly newsletter published by the Enchanted Lens Camera Club. The publication is made available electronically via the Internet.

*How to submit articles?* On the archival f/Stop page on the ELCC website, there is a submit button. Since the medium is electronic, there is little or no limitation on length. The main guidelines are to make sure there are no copyright violations and the articles are educational. No commercial advertisements.

*When is the deadline?* In order to have the newsletter available by the first meeting of the month, the deadline for submitting articles will be the last Thursday of the previous month. Of course, the earlier the submission the better.

*What format do the articles need to be?* No real restrictions are in place. The f/Stop will be published using Adobe® InDesign which is very flexible in reading all data types. We will get back to you if we need any other information.

*May I submit photographs?* Attachments (again almost any format) are welcome especially color images. The printed version will still be in black and white. The on-line version will be in full 300 dpi color.

*Should I sign up for refreshments?* Oh, this has nothing to do with the newsletter. Since this frequently asked question section will be in every newsletter, I thought it would be nice to mention. The hospitality committee wants to keep the refreshment tradition going!

Disclaimer: The staff (sounds official, huh?) of the f/Stop has no obligations to use any photo or text submitted although we will make every effort to publish member contributions on a timely and professional manner. We do highly solicit input from the members.