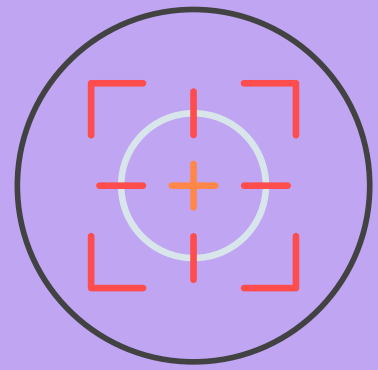


# THE VIEWFINDER



Newsletter Volume 26, July 2026

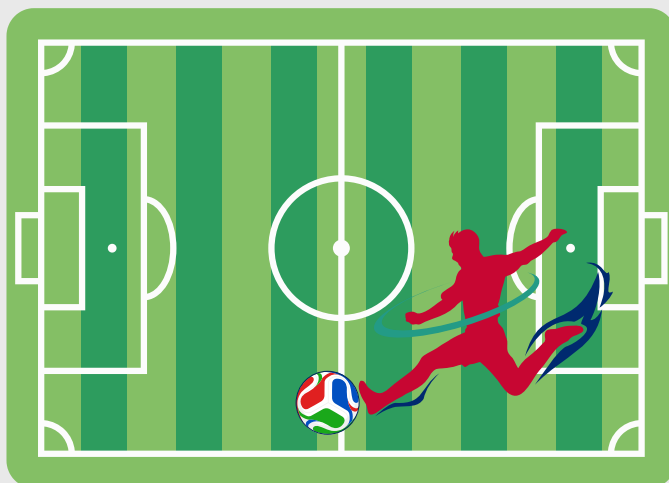
A note from the Editor - by Christiane Menelas

*Hello my friends,*

I don't know about you, but in our house we have had a serious case of soccer fever!! So far every team I have rooted for, has lost - not sure what that means, lol... Of course I really wanted Germany to do well, but that didn't happen, then I was cheering for Croatia, also a no! And most recently I really got behind Norway, because Erling Haaland is just all around adorable and a class act! But alas, they also went home... With only four teams left, may the best team win... just (not Argentina 🙏 lol).

As far as photography though - I was very envious of all the sportsphotographers lined up along the field, with their expensive lenses and cameras. How cool would it be to photograph such a big event?

No travel stories this month, but a **BIG** shoutout to everyone who is sending me great quotes, great stories, or just interesting stuff!! I really appreciate the input from everyone - Thank you!!



Happy clicking  
*Christiane*



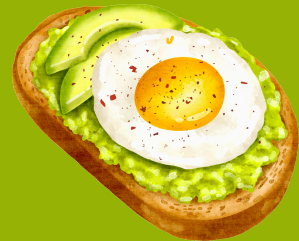
# Wednesday Morning GNBPC Breakfast

by Robby Grosman

How this club arrived at meeting for breakfast on hump day is a mystery to me. I guess Wednesday is as good a day as any. I've been sitting with this crew for nearly two years at these breakfasts. My, how time flies. It doesn't feel like a day more than 24 months. What to expect at breakfast? Well, we are a group of people who appreciate photography. At breakfast you'd think that the chatter is only about taking pictures. Good guess however, as it turns out it's much more than that. Many of us travel, so there is a lot of sharing about the places visited. Since we all have our own preferred photographic equipment we learn first hand how well said equipment serves each owner. That leads (sometimes) to lusting for new or better cameras, lenses, lighting equipment and etc.. We often learn from each other about new places to visit by land sea and air. We all have our unique desires.

From my own point of view, I see each member as an actor in a play. We have an unwritten assigned seat at Panera in New Braunfels. First come gets a choice or should I say preferred seat. I believe some members are plotting to place name plates on the seats. This should serve to eliminate any confusion and hard feelings.

Members routinely use digital cameras. I hear Nikon, Canon and Sony often mentioned in some conversations. Yet, we have one unique and very interesting member who uses her cell phone to capture interesting and beautiful photos. Then there are sub groups that have taken trips together to out of Texas locales. Four of our members recently travelled to Hawaii. A member returned with a broken camera and a cast on her shooting arm. One would imagine that it was the result of a fall from a cliff or an argument with a peer. Nope, it was a slip along the beach. She just kept on keeping on like a Timex. It is so much fun to share photos with one another. It is not only entertaining but it resembles a family gathering that enables us to learn more about one another.





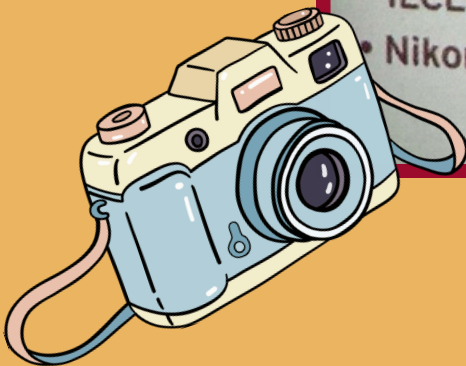
# Submitted by Suki

## TRIED AND TRUE

### TOP 10 WORKHORSE CAMERAS

There are the hottest new cameras, and then there are the reliable workhorses that photographers use most. According to Aftershoot workflow-based data analysis, the following camera bodies are the top 10 most used by professional photographers for paid sessions. This is what they have in common: dependable autofocus in mixed conditions, good performance in low light, and compatibility with a broad array of lenses.

- Canon EOS R6 Mark II
- Sony Alpha 7 IV ILCE-7M4
- Canon EOS R6
- Sony Alpha 7 III ILCE-7M3
- Canon EOS R5
- Nikon Z 6II
- Canon EOS 5D Mark IV
- Nikon Z8
- Sony Alpha 7R V ILCE-7RM5
- Nikon D750







# Member Spotlight

## *Victor Watson*

*By Barbara Beversdorf*

### **How did photography first weave its way into your life?**

Photography first became part of my life when I was a teenager. I earned the Boy Scouts photography merit badge in 1972, which gave me my first real taste of what a camera could do. At that age, photography felt like a mix of discovery, patience, and problem-solving. I did not know then how large a role it would eventually play in my professional and personal life.

Later, photography became closely tied to my law-enforcement career. I entered law enforcement in 1978 and served for 34 years before retiring in 2012. During that time, photography shifted from something I enjoyed to something with real purpose and responsibility. A photograph could document a scene, preserve facts, support an investigation, and sometimes explain what words alone could not.

### **What's something from your background that unexpectedly made you a better photographer?**

My law-enforcement background probably had the greatest impact. Crime-scene and forensic photography require you to slow down, observe carefully, and photograph with purpose. You learn quickly that every image should answer a question: What is important here? What needs to be shown clearly? What needs context? Which details matter?



That mindset still shapes how I photograph today. Whether I am working with a student, shooting in the studio, photographing an event, or walking around with a camera, I tend to focus on the story the photograph needs to tell. Law enforcement taught me discipline, accuracy, attention to detail, and the importance of getting it right in camera whenever possible.

**When working professionally, what was the most memorable assignment you ever shot — the one that still sticks with you?**

Many of the most memorable assignments from my law-enforcement career are not the kind of things I would describe in detail, but they have stayed with me. The assignments that still stick with me are the ones where photography served a serious purpose. In those situations, the camera was not there to make something pretty. It was there to document, preserve, and communicate facts. That experience gave me deep respect for photography as a visual record. It also taught me that photographers have a responsibility to be honest about what they see. Even today, I carry that lesson with me.

**You teach both youth and adults. What's one thing kids pick up faster than grown-ups, and one thing adults tend to do better?**

Kids tend to pick up creative experimentation more quickly. They are usually less afraid of making mistakes. If you give them a camera or a phone and a simple idea, they will try it. They will move around, change angles, get low, shoot high, and experiment without worrying too much about whether they are doing it "correctly."

Adults often do better with patience and purpose once they understand the concept. They may take a little longer to let go of Auto Mode or old habits, but once the light bulb comes on, they are often very deliberate. They want to understand why something works, not just that it does.

## **What's a moment in teaching when you saw a student “get it” and it reminded you why you love sharing this craft?**

One of my favorite moments as an instructor is when a student finally grasps exposure in a practical way. I have seen students enter class frustrated because their camera feels too complicated. After working through aperture, shutter speed, ISO, and light, they suddenly realize they are no longer guessing. They are making decisions.

That moment is hard to beat. You can see it on their face. The camera stops feeling intimidating and becomes a tool they can control. That is why I enjoy teaching. It is not just about helping someone take a better photograph. It is about helping them gain confidence.

## **Is there a piece of gear or technique you rely on that people might not expect?**

The technique I rely on most is slowing down. That may sound simple, but it is one of the most useful tools a photographer has. Before pressing the shutter, I try to ask myself what the subject is, where the light is coming from, what belongs in the frame, and what to leave out.

When it comes to gear, I am a strong believer in knowing the camera you have. I have worked with many camera makes and models over the years, and I tell students that the best camera is the one they understand well enough to use with confidence. A more expensive camera does not automatically make a better photographer. Better decisions make a better photographer.

## **How has your style or approach changed over the years?**

Early on, I was very focused on the technical side of photography, especially because of my professional background. Focus, exposure, sharpness, documentation, and accuracy were critical. Those things still matter to me, but over the years I have come to appreciate the creative side more and more. Now I think more about impact, story, emotion, and what the image communicates to the viewer. I still believe in getting the technical foundation right, but I also believe a photograph should make someone pause, look more closely, or feel something.

**I know you shoot all camera makes and models. Do you have a favorite and why?**

I do not have a single favorite camera brand. I have used and taught with many different systems, and each has its strengths. What matters most to me is whether the photographer understands the camera well enough to use it without the camera getting in the way.

That perspective has been helpful for teaching. Students come in with Canon, Nikon, Sony, Fuji, Olympus, cell phones, and sometimes older cameras. My job is not to make them switch brands. It is to help them understand exposure, focus, light, composition, and timing using the camera they already have.

**What's a photo you've taken that means more to you now than it did when you pressed the shutter?**

The photographs that mean more to me over time are often the personal ones. When you take a photograph, you may think you are simply recording a moment. Years later, that same image can become even more meaningful because the people, places, or circumstances have changed.

That is one of photography's quiet powers. A photograph can gain meaning with age. It can become a memory, a piece of family history, or a reminder of a season of life that cannot be repeated.

**If you could give one piece of advice to photographers who want to grow — whether they're 12 or 72 — what would it be?**

Learn your camera, but do not stop there. Learn to see. Pay attention to light, backgrounds, gesture, expression, timing, and the edges of the frame. Do not be afraid to make mistakes, as they are part of learning.

I would also tell photographers to keep shooting with purpose. Ask yourself why you are taking the photograph and what you want the viewer to notice.

Photography is a lifelong craft. Whether you are 12 or 72, there is always something new to learn, which is part of what makes it so rewarding.



## **A little more about Victor**

After retiring from law enforcement in 2012, I opened Schertz Photography School & Studio. Today, I teach photography classes, lead workshops and photo walks, work with youth and adult photographers, and continue to enjoy helping people become more confident with their cameras.

For the past five years, I have also been involved with the youth photography showcase program, which has grown into the Texas Youth Photography Showcase. That work has been especially meaningful to me because it gives young photographers a place to be seen, encouraged, and challenged. I believe strongly that students need opportunities not only to take pictures but also to have their work respected and displayed as real photography.

I am also a judge for the PSA Club Judging Program and have had the opportunity to judge images for other photography clubs. That work has helped me grow as a photographer and instructor by requiring me to look closely, comment thoughtfully, and offer feedback that is both honest and encouraging.

I have been involved with local photography clubs for many years and strongly believe in the value of clubs like the Greater New Braunfels Photography Club. A good photography club provides a place to learn, share, ask questions, receive encouragement, and be inspired by others' work. Some of the best learning in photography happens when photographers spend time together.

Please enjoy some of  
Victor's favorite pictures.





Victor has an undeniable passion for teaching the youth

















1 of 250

*They felt it was worth standing for...*

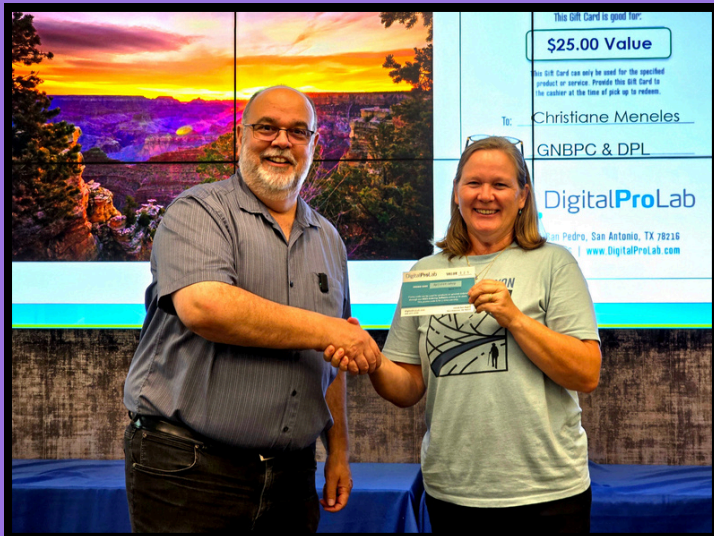
Victor Top Watson





# RECOGNITIONS

**The winning image in our monthly competition for the category “Golden Hour” goes to Christiane Menelas, for the image titled “A Golden Symphony”**



*Congratulations!*

Our second place winners this month are  
Ed Zukowski with “The Gathering”,  
and Suzanne (Suki) Daunt with “Serenity at Dawn”



*Congratulations!*





A BIG shoutout  
to our fellow photographer  
*Sharlana Dillard*

aside from being a clubmember at GNBPC, Sharlana is also active in the Benton Downs Photography Club and has done very well this year!

Images are judged by three judges during a live zoom call. During our first year joining, there were many times, when we (Sharlana, Jackies, Tiffany, and myself), couldn't get a merit worthy score of 80 points or above. We learned a lot about keylines and presentations, and took in all the critiques. And this year Sharlana has stepped up her game, put what she learned into action, and earned a ribbon or two almost every month!!



*Congratulations*



*By Sharlana Dillard*

# SOUTH LUANGWA NATIONAL PARK

**Photographer** Philip Lee Harvey

This was taken at the end of the last day of an eight-day shoot in South Luangwa National Park. I photographed everything I'd hoped for during the week, and as we were driving back from a rather successful day with a pride of lions I spotted this scene not five minutes from camp. I hadn't packed away my kit just in case something turned up and was able to quickly capture this moment before it passed. This elephant was blowing dust and dirt over itself to protect its skin from the sun and to get rid of pesky flies and insects. The image is in black and white as it allowed me to emphasise the contrast and make the stream of dust really stand out. To get the same contrast in a colour image would have required there to have been sun backlighting the elephant; the daylight at the time was not ideal.

## **Camera set up**

Canon EOS-1D X; focal length 280mm; ISO speed 800; F stop f/4.5; exposure time 1/250 sec; exposure bias 0 step

## **Travel details**

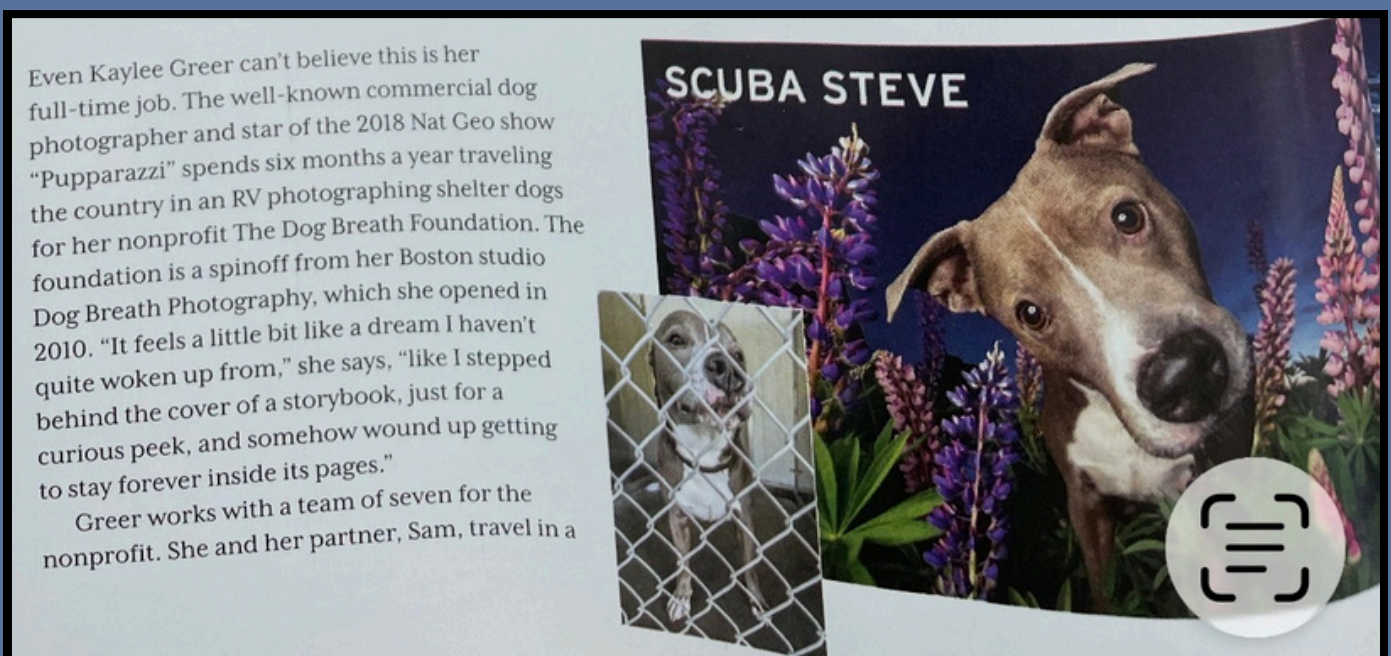
Many people reach South Luangwa by air. Mfuwe Airport is about 20km (12 miles) southeast of Mfuwe Gate and served by Proflight Zambia, with daily flights from Lusaka's international airport.

## **Photo tip**

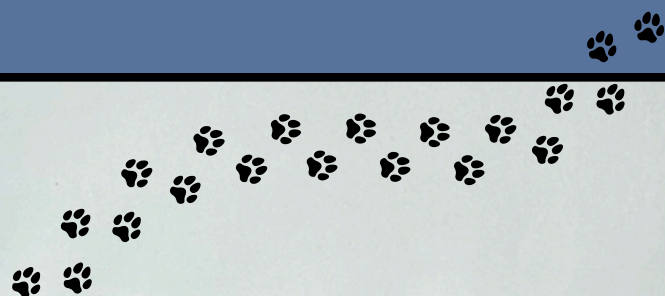
Always be ready. Camera on (some take 3-4 seconds to power up) and settings adjusted. I always have two cameras on, each with a different lens, and exposures set on both so that I can react instantly.



# Fun article out of PPA Magazine, submitted by Suki







Learn more about  
pet photography  
on PhotoVision.



IS ALL ABOUT THE WIND IN THEIR FUR, THE SUN  
IN THEIR BACKS, AND BEING IMMERSED IN THE  
WORLD THAT DOGS' WILD HEARTS WERE MADE FOR."



34-foot RV and handle photography, while two other teammates travel in a 25-foot Airstream and handle videography. Three others work remotely: a video editor, an audio editor, and a project manager who oversees logistics, scheduling, and communications with shelters. Brands like Freshpet, Frame.io, Pro Prints, Kuma Outdoor Gear, and Camp Bow Wow, among others, help fund the nonprofit's work.

The foundation's objective is simple: take shelter dogs out for three-day epic adventures, create photos and videos of them in nature around America, and promote that content to the world. In addition, they provide a workshop for shelter employees on how to make better, more soulful photographs of the animals in their care. Canon, one of the nonprofit's partners, also gifts each shelter a mirrorless camera and a lens: either a Canon R10 with the RF-S18-45mm lens or a Canon RP with the RF50mm lens, according to Greer.

Choosing the 14 shelters to visit each year is difficult, Greer admits. The foundation receives so many applications annually that it "slams us in the heart," she says. The team reviews each to determine which shelters would benefit most. "Some shelters barely have websites, let alone decent—or any—photos of their adoptable dogs," Greer explains.

Though their circumstances may be sad, the shelter dog subjects enjoy experiences planned around their greatest joys. "If they love water, then we are going to the most beautiful lake or river to swim in. If they love fetch, we are going to explore a wide-open field with plenty of tennis balls," Greer adds. "It's all about the wind in their fur, the sun on their backs, and being immersed in the world that dogs' wild hearts were made for." •

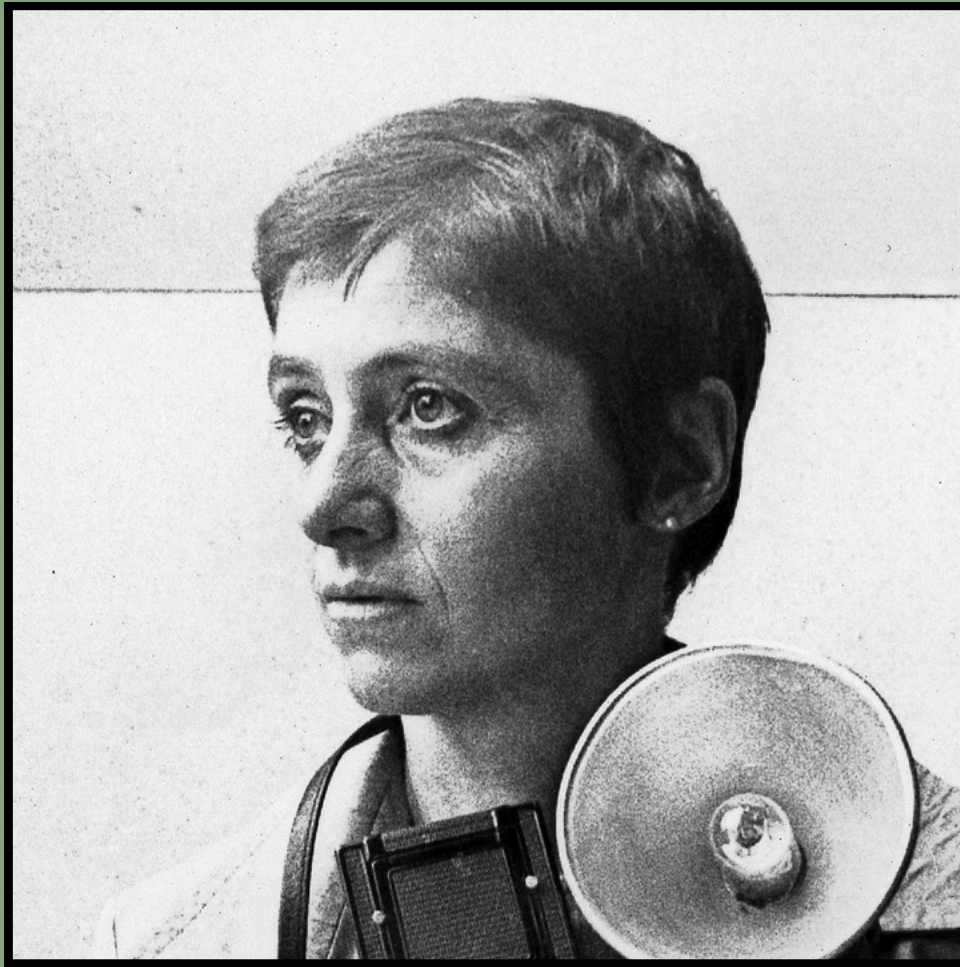


*Diane Arbus*

## Exploring the Icons Behind the Lens



*Diane Arbus (1923–1971), here pictured with her husband Allen Arbus, is one of the most original and influential artists of the twentieth century. Her depictions of couples, children, female impersonators, nudists, strippers, New York City pedestrians, suburban families, circus performers, and celebrities, among others, span the breadth of the postwar American social sphere and constitute a diverse and singularly compelling portrait of humanity.*



(1923-1971)

### *Who Was Diane Arbus?*

*An artistic youth, Diane Arbus learned photography from her husband, actor Allan Arbus. Together, they found success with fashion work, but Diane soon branched out on her own. Her raw, unusual images of the people she saw while living in New York created a unique and interesting portrayal of the city. She committed suicide in New York City in 1971.*

### *Early Life*

*Born Diane Nemerov on March 14, 1923, in New York City, Arbus was one of the most distinctive photographers of the 20th century, known for her eerie portraits and off-beat subjects. Her artistic talents emerged at a young age, having created interesting drawings and paintings while in high school. In 1941, she married Allan Arbus, an American actor who fostered her artistic talent by teaching her photography.*



### *Unique Photography*

*Working with her husband, Arbus started out in advertising and fashion photography. She and Allan became quite a successful team, with photographs appearing in such magazines as Vogue. In the late 1950s, she began to focus on her own photography. To further her art,*

*Arbus studied with photographer Lisette Model around this time.*

*During her wanderings around New York City, Arbus began to pursue taking photographs of people she found. She visited seedy hotels, public parks, a morgue and other various locales. These unusual images had a raw quality, and several of them found their way into the July 1960 issue of Esquire magazine. These photographs proved to be a spring board for future work.*

*By the mid-1960s, Arbus had become a well-established photographer, participating in shows at the Museum of Modern Art in New York City, among other places. She was known for going to great lengths to get the shots she wanted. She became friends with many other famous photographers, including Richard Avedon and Walker Evans.*

*While professionally continuing to thrive in the late 1960s, Arbus had some personal challenges. Her marriage ended in 1969, and she later struggled with depression. She committed suicide in her New York City apartment on July 26, 1971. Her work remains a subject of intense interest, and her life was the basis of the 2006 film Fur, starring Nicole Kidman as Arbus.*

### **QUOTES:**

**A photograph is a secret about a secret. The more it tells you the less you know.**



**Love involves a peculiar unfathomable combination of understanding and misunderstanding.**



Young man in curls





Diane Arbus and her "freaks"





#### CITATION INFORMATION

Article Title: Diane Arbus Biography

Author: Biography.com Editors

Website Name: The Biography.com website

Url: <https://www.biography.com/artists/diane-arbus>

Access Date:

Publisher: A&E; Television Networks

Last Updated: April 6, 2021

Original Published Date: April 2, 2014



# ANNOUNCEMENTS

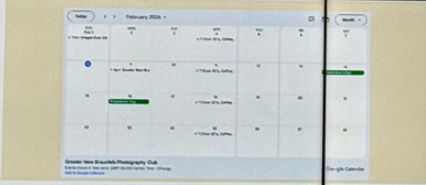
We had two new members join at our last club meeting:

**A big welcome to  
Marlys Stahl  
and  
Adam Mauldin**



**IT'S NOT TOO LATE TO JOIN FOTOSEPTIEMBRE:**

|                                                                                                                       |  |  |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|--|
| Theme is "My Favorite Photo"                                                                                          |  |  |
| Install Monday August 31, starting at 8 am                                                                            |  |  |
| Artist Reception Sunday September 20, 1 pm to 4 pm                                                                    |  |  |
| Take Down is Monday October 5, starting at 8 am                                                                       |  |  |
| So far we have commitments from 17 people!                                                                            |  |  |
| Exhibit Not Available: September 7, 16, 17, and 25<br>Viewing Hours: Mon – Fri, 10 am – 5 pm; Sat & Sun, 10 am – 4 pm |  |  |

| 2026 Upcoming Events for Photographers                                                                                                            |                                                                                                         |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>Upcoming Events</p>                                           | <p>July and August - Lightning Shots!</p> <p>July 18 - Gruene Market Days 10 am</p>                     |
|  <p>Find events on our website or in our monthly newsletter!</p> | <p>August 7 - Art Haus</p> <p>Sept 19 - NB Meet the Trucks 9 am</p> <p>December 7 - Christmas Party</p> |
|                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                         |

| <u>New Braunfels Art League - Upcoming Shows - Open to All</u> |  |  |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|--|--|
| 2D Big and Bold - Submissions Mon. July 27                     |  |  |
| The Art of Photography - Submissions Wed. September 9          |  |  |
| ARToberfest - Submissions Wed. October 15                      |  |  |
| <u>San Marcos Art League</u>                                   |  |  |
| Photography Show - Submissions by July 31                      |  |  |

|                                                                                                       |  |  |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|--|
| Next month's meeting - Back to the Westside Branch - August 10                                        |  |  |
| Interested in Drama or Ballet photography? - see Frank                                                |  |  |
| Victor is looking for somebody to take over the Youth Photography Tournament - see Victor for details |  |  |
|                                                                                                       |  |  |



*Please join us for our social after the monthly  
club meeting.*

*We meet at La Cosecha Mexican Table in New  
Braunfels.*

*The address is: 505 Business IH 35 N, New  
Braunfels, TX 78130*

