



Photography in a Snap:

Better Composition

By Pam Arevalo

Names Around Town Photography

In my opinion, one of the most valuable things you can learn to help take your photos to the next level is how to compose your photos. Although I have briefly touched on composition in the past, I feel it is a subject worthy of having its own column.

Keep it simple - Simplify your photo as much as possible, remove unwanted elements and be aware of the background. A photo with too much going on won't grab the viewers attention and keep it. If the eye wanders around the picture trying to look at all the elements that are there, it will lose its effectiveness. Make sure your subject is the most prominent feature of the photo. If you are taking a portrait, the eyes should be the most prominent.

Get in Close - 'Fill the frame' with your subject. (Note: Try not to cut off the edges of the subject unless of course you are focusing on a specific area of your subject.) Filling the frame helps to make the subject of your photo unmistakable and helps to remove those unwanted distractions from the background.

Rule of Thirds - The most talked about 'rule' is the Rule of Thirds. This is much simpler than you would think. Imagine your frame with imaginary lines forming a tic-tac-toe board, dividing it into 1/3 sections from top to bottom and from left to right. This rule is helpful when composing shots with horizontal and vertical lines. Landscapes are the perfect example for this rule. Placing your horizon along one of the horizontal lines will make your photo have more impact. If you want the sky to be more prominent place the horizon on the bottom 1/3 if you want the sky to be less prominent place the horizon on the upper 1/3. Getting the idea?

Golden Section - Applying the Rule of Thirds to your frame, find all four of the intersections of your tic-tac-toe board. They are your 'sweet spots' so to speak. When the center focal point of your subject is placed on or near one of these spots, your photo will seem to have more impact and be more appealing. Using these four areas will keep you in the rule of thirds as well.

Framing your shot - A nice way to add depth and impact to your shot is to frame it with something in the photo. For example, using a tree branch to one side of your photo, or taking a photo through an archway leaving the archway as the frame. Take a shot through a window, using it as a frame. This takes practice but the results are well worth the effort.

Leading Lines - By using leading lines, you can bring the viewer into your photograph. Strong lines, like roads and footpaths as well as other items, like a row of trees, flowers or buildings can draw a viewer in. Placing these kind of items along the rule of thirds or on a diagonal are great places to start while experimenting with leading lines.

Remember, that although following these rules will vastly improve your photography, rules were made to be broken. The creative side of me prefers to think of them as guidelines, rather than hard and fast rules. You don't have to follow every rule, every time. Experimentation can lead to many wonderful photographs.

Familiarizing yourself with some basic rules of composition can help you understand why you like a photo and how to achieve similar results in your own work. For examples of good composition, visit our online art galleries at www.NamesAroundTown.com. Pam can be reached for comments or questions at email@namesaroundtown.com. To check availability of Names Around Town Photography for your special event or portrait needs, please call (563) 332-4415.

Names Around Town

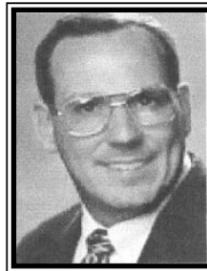
Artistic Photography

www.NamesAroundTown.com

Ken and Pam Arevalo

Bettendorf, Iowa

563-332-4415



By Dan Dolan

Dan Dolan Homes

Why "cookie-cutter" housing no longer cuts it for today's retiring seniors—and others who want to "age in place"

I remember my grandparents when they were looking for a replacement for the family home in which they had raised their family just outside New York City. All that was available was a smaller and lower quality version of the home they lived in. Three stairs from the garage to the kitchen. Traditional tub in the master bath. Or maybe a narrow shower substitute. 8-foot ceilings. Narrow hallways throughout. And seldom a light in the front hall closet --to cut construction costs.

And everywhere they looked, the same homes. Pretty much all the same size, the same price range. In fact, until recently, we in the Quad Cities may have been guilty of a sameness in cookie-cutter retirement homes. But I'm glad to report, no more. A casual glance at the Sunday real estate section shows the wide range of availabilities in retirement housing throughout the Quad Cities. A range of prices, locations, amenities and quality to meet every buyer's needs.

What's changed? A number of things largely related to changes in the buyers themselves and in their needs. And, fortunately, a responsive builder community with a desire to give consumers what they want. And a light in the front hall closet

By way of illustrating the range of custom retirement homes being offered, one need look no further than the several Dan Dolan Homes ads in Sunday's real estate section. Potential buyers will find an assortment of town homes to please wide-ranging tastes for homes at prices from \$169,900 to over \$300,000. We offer town homes with 2,3 or more bedrooms; with 2 or 3 baths; 2 or 3-car garages; finished basements (or not); river views, park-like views; granite counter tops, soaring vaulted ceilings, patios, decks, covered and screened porches. Even free-standing homes where there's no next-door neighbor. And at locations from Blue Grass to Davenport to LeClaire.

Buyers will also find the exclusive insulated concrete "Dan Dolan Silent Wall™" between units. And stepless entry, step-in showers, full basements (even under the 4-season room), wider doorways, sidewalks, public streets, lawn care and snow removal. Why do we do it? Today's buyers insist on it. For instance, the retired schoolteacher comfortable in our 1270 square foot town home doesn't seek lower quality. Her wants are simply for a smaller home but with quality features and amenities like the Kohler cast iron kitchen sink; a TV/telephone/computer outlet in every room; Pella windows and quality Merillat kitchen and bath cabinets to name a few.

And, oh yes, there's a light in the front hall closet. All our homes have one. We don't cut corners. Should you choose to visit us at any of our locations on the weekend, be sure to check for it. If you cannot visit us on weekends and would prefer to visit any of our homes at your convenience or if you have any questions, give me a call at 570-1460. Or call Don Gibeault at 650-8007.

Supportive Living Program Benefits Seniors of All Incomes!

A program established several years ago here in Illinois is benefiting older adults who may need some help to maintain their independence.

Called Supportive Living, the program provides older adults with a great alternative to living in a nursing home or to struggling alone at home. It is for seniors who need help with medications and with such

activities as bathing, grooming, dressing, meal preparation and housekeeping.

The program is open to all adults 65 years of age and older, regardless of their financial resources. Those on Medicaid or who only receive Social Security can qualify.

Call 309-582-1132 for more information.



You're Invited

Join us for a free informational program on Supportive Living and on the Heritage Woods of Aledo and Heritage Woods of Moline supportive living communities.

The program will be held on Thursday, April 12, at the Holiday Inn at Moline Airport, 6902 27th St. in Moline. Your choice of times-- as programs will be held at 2 p.m. and again at 6:30 p.m.