

# MadisonPhotoPlus the Photo Summit **e-Photo Newsletter**

January, 2006

## **Taking a Moment to check the Rear View Mirror**

2005 was certainly a year of change in the world of photography. We lost more than a few old friends:

Agfa	Yashica
Kodak b/w paper	Carousel projectors
Carousel trays	Bronica
Kodachrome processing by Kodak	
Advanced Photo System cameras	
Ilford (who subsequently was taken over and is back in business)	
Smiling faces on passport photos ...	

... the list goes on. These are some of the casualties of the "digital revolution". Many of these we will live without, some more invisibly than others. The last, on this list, however, might be with us forever. A new U.S. Passport can no longer show a smiling face.

Ever wonder what happens to the second picture you hand in when applying for a passport? It used to sit in the Passport Office in Philadelphia (for Passports issued in the Northeast). Now it is in many databases accessed in airports, seaports, etc. around the world. As travelers walk through the concourses at airports, for example, cameras are constantly scanning them looking out for terrorists and other undesirables. When people are hustling to their flights, rest rooms, etc. they are not smiling. The databases need to hold pictures of what you look like in such a situation, not how you'd like to look. This went into effect September 1, 2005.

## **Consumer Electronics Show (Harbinger of Hype)**

Each January the electronics industry holds the Consumer Electronics Show (CES) in Las Vegas, Nevada. Major and minor companies show their wares and try to get us all to buy new things (whether we need them or not). The larger manufacturers from the CE world (SONY, HP, Epson, Hitachi, etc.) show us the newest gizmos and gadgets their engineers could design and manufacture. Some are so useless that marketing companies were hired just to try to create demand for a needless product. Over the next few weeks we will all be bombarded with hype beyond belief.

Try to remember that hype = sewage. Just because it is made doesn't mean it is desirable. In terms of cameras, if you have a camera that delivers pictures when you want them, then don't buy a new one; use the one you've got. Try to wear it out. No camera is better than one you own and know how to use (assuming it works). Put that several hundred dollars into taking, enjoying and sharing pictures

## **Reading the Fine Print**

A couple walked into our Madison location with their new digital camera in need of a memory card. When asked what camera they had, the husband produced the camera in its box, a Bell & Howell camera, model "10 Mega Pixels". "How many pictures will it take on a memory card?", he asked.

"I don't know how the camera shoots and stores its images. Can I see the instruction book, please? Then I can answer your question."

"Sure", the man said.

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After checking out the specifications, the “10 Mega Pixels” camera had only 3.1 megapixels. (It then interpolated the image to *simulate* a 10MP image.) It was time to level with the customer and tell him how he was duped. It turns out he bought the camera online, believing it was truly a 10 MP camera. He did not understand that a digital zoom is not an optical zoom, and would further deteriorate his images. He paid \$399.95 plus shipping for this camera. He just didn’t know any better. His wife was very patient through all the discussion. We told them what they needed to know to try to get their money back. It was sad.

Neither Jazz Corp. (owners of the Bell & Howell trade name for photographic products) nor the online e-tailer committed fraud, or lied to the consumer. They were certainly deceptive, but they never lied. The model name was in itself deceptive, but never claimed to have a chip resolving 10 megapixels of data. The seller displayed the material he was given by Bell & Howell / Jazz. You can view the product at the following URL: <https://www.thpsales.com/store/viewItem.asp?idProduct=1126>. (We do not know from which e-tailer the camera was purchased, and we don’t care. This e-tailer was found by searching for the camera by model name.)  
Caveat Emptor.

## **What you Don’t See Helps What You Get**

In the December, 2005 issue, there was a discussion about the formulation of lenses for digital cameras (vs. film cameras). There are now filters made for these newly formulated lenses. These are multi-coated differently than previous filters, and blackened at the edges. The rims are thinner with a new, anti-reflective coating. The net result is a filter which is almost perfectly reflectionless and optically flat.

Come in and watch one visually disappear. The bad news - they cost more. The good news - better photos.

## **Outdoor Winter Photography**

Frequently during the winter we are graced with beautiful snow - a great background for picture taking. Getting the proper exposure on snow and ice is tricky with automatic cameras, but not impossible. The exposure systems in these cameras are fooled by the excess reflectivity of the water making up the snow or ice. Because the metering systems compensate for the assumed brightness of the snow, it results in underexposure of the less reflective items in the scene (such as people, homes, pets, etc.).

The solutions to the problem differ depending upon the camera to subject distance. If the subject is within flash range, use the flash. It will fill in the underexposed areas without affecting the brighter areas.

If the subject is beyond the flash’s range, you must force the camera to overexpose - something it doesn’t want to do. Many cameras have an override on the exposure system, typically marked as + or -. The cameras must be taken off full program (sometimes indicated by a green rectangle) and put onto either auto or manual exposure. Set the camera to either +1.5 or +2.0 to get good exposures of your wintry scenes.

Remember to put the camera back to “0” or full program when you are done.

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## **Basic Picture Taking Workshop**

We have received numerous requests to repeat our workshop about basic digital photography. The Better Imaging Photo School (BIPS) will hold the program again on Wednesday evening, February 15. As usual, subscribers to this newsletter have the first opportunity to enroll. The following page will have more information.

That's it for another month. We wish you and your family a happy and healthy 2006. Keep taking pictures!

Lynne & Jerry

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Paul Drajem

Confused about digital?  
Got a new digital camera?  
Want help?  
Don't worry!

# B.I.P.S.

## The Better Imaging Photo School

Madison PhotoPlus and the Photo Summit are proud to continue our series of photographic workshops and field trips to instruct the beginner and inspire the more advanced photo-grapher.

Our next workshop, scheduled for **February 15<sup>th</sup>**, is geared towards basic digital photography with still cameras. Topics will include camera handling, icons, downloading, CD burning, archiving, printing, e-mailing pictures and other digital photography issues.

The cost of the workshop will be \$30,  
payable in advance not later than 2 days before the session.\*

It will be held at **Madison PhotoPlus** in Madison, and will start at 7:00pm. Seating is limited to 18 students. Bring your questions and your camera!



\*Failure to attend will result in loss of payment. No refunds will be available.