

Where did the summer go? It seemed only a blink and it's almost fall. Soon the foliage will start to change colors and then Halloween and then Before we get carried away, let's take a brief look at what some of the photo companies have in store for us. Let's start with Kodak (a reasonably recognizable name): Kodak will begin printing your photos digitally using Digital Ice® technology instead of optically. What this means is that there should be no dust spots, scratches, and other such blemishes that occasionally mar prints. Redeye should become a thing of the past. This should also improve overall color balance and contrast. This is for printing from conventional negatives – not for digital cameras. We are told this should be fully operational by the end of the month.

Canon has announced what will be the blockbuster product of the season – the Digital Rebel. For the first time, a digital SLR with lens will be available for less than \$1000. Canon has already stated that availability will be on an allocated basis, making them extremely hard to get. Konica has completed its purchase of Minolta, and cameras previously under the Konica name will be serviced by Minolta on a worldwide basis. All future camera introductions will be under the Minolta name, and all business machines will be under the Konica name.

Pentax will ship its *istD digital SLR camera later this month. It is exciting in that it will accept and use ANY and all Pentax lenses for the last 40 years, including thread mount lenses! Here's a company that thinks of the consumers and creates a product that does not require your discovery that everything you already own is obsolete. Kudos to Pentax! Pentax will also have a class 7 waterproof pocket sized 3.2 megapixel digital camera. This will be safe to take to the beach and into the water, as well as safe to ski with. Olympus will also start to ship their E-1 professional digital SLR system. This will be the first camera system designed exclusively for digital photography. Every component feels great in the hand. The E-1 is designed and manufactured to stand up to professional use, yet be easy enough for most people to use without reading a 200+ page manual.

As photography is becoming more and more digital, many customers keep using film for its quality and versatility. There is no reason to give up the equipment already owned and feel forced to "go digital". Almost 1 out of 5 rolls processed during August included a Picture CD. This small extra investment has lots of benefits, including getting reprints on demand and the capability for immediate e-mail use. A long term drawback is also overcome – the ability to crop (print only part of an image) on 4"x6" or smaller prints without spending a fortune on custom printing. Also, each time you print from the CD, you can get the same color you did on previous prints. Even if you don't own or use a computer regularly, there are still other advantages of having a Picture CD. Ask us the next time you bring in a roll to be processed.

Congratulations to Eric Kazmirek of our Madison PhotoPlus staff. Eric passed his final International Certified Photographic Consultant exam last month, giving the stores 8 CPCs. Only 10% of applicants pass their final exam, so this is quite an achievement for our staff. Remember, this knowledge base works for you every time you enter or contact our stores.

A new web magazine on photography appears to have great information and photo galleries. <http://www.photographyblog.com/> is a British site worth looking at when you get a chance. It's designed for amateur photographers and isn't loaded with advertisers trying just to sell, sell, sell.

Sheila Jett-Wickman is a Madison PhotoPlus customer who recently purchased a new digital camera from us. She was so excited with her pictures that she e-mailed a couple of them the next day. Here they are (with her permission, of course)



Thanks, Sheila!

Before you know it, the holidays will be upon us. Start thinking about yours now. There will be new designs and borders available this year. Everything should be up and running by September 15th.

Brief store news:

Our in store photo printing from memory cards has exceeded our expectations. In the Photo Summit, there is sometimes what we consider too long a wait to access the machine. We will be installing a second 4"x6" printer and terminal by late September for your convenience. In Madison PhotoPlus there are already 4 input stations, so the wait time is negligible. Both locations can burn a CD from your memory card's image in minutes while you wait.

With all the computer virus news of late, remember that when you store your digital images on your hard drive you are risking their existence. A worm like the Blaster or SoBigF variety that invaded millions of computers late last month (and will continue until September 9th, at least) will only be an inconvenience, while a more malicious worm (like LoveLetters or lovsan) will permanently ruin every picture file anywhere in your computer. You MUST burn a CD or DVD.

Have a great September! Please visit www.madisonphoto.com or www.photosummit.com and see our latest photo contest winners.