

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

March, 2005

If photography is the study (or science) of light, why is there an expectation of bright, vibrant colors when shooting in low light?

Sorry to start this with such a tough question, but there seems to be a rumor that photography in the dark can be as good as photography in bright areas. Poppycock!

Say you've been invited to someone's home for a 9:00 P.M. dinner party. You've never been there before, and you're driving yourself. You know the address, that the house is red, and has a long driveway. You drive down the street and all the homes are set back from the road, and are all dark. There are no house numbers to be seen anywhere. After cruising the street for awhile, you take out your cell phone and call your host, who replies, "It's the one with the yellow mailbox". You now find the house with ease. Why?

Correct! While driving down the street again, you were able to find the right mailbox because your car's headlights allowed you to see the color. In other words, **no light - no color**. When shooting film, as picture areas become more under exposed, colors become more muted, duller, muddier, and the pictures appear more grainy. With digitally recorded images, software in the camera tries to guess what the colors should be on the basis of colors in areas of the scene where illumination levels are higher, allowing the viewer to "autosuggest" the colors that should be there. This process is called interpolation, and is mathematical in nature. Depending upon the programming, the recorded scene can be an accurate representation of reality, or the reality the programmers would have like to have been accurate! Whoever said, "The camera never lies.", would probably like to recant those words today.

U.S Photo Show Report PMA 2005

Lynne and Jerry spent several days in Orlando during mid February at the annual national photo convention and show. In addition to many courses, workshops, etc., the trade show always gives peeks at what the future of picture taking will be. This is not an advertising forum, so individual products will not be discussed.

Many new evolutionary digital cameras, lenses and accessories were shown. There were 4 new 35mm compact cameras, 0 new 35mm SLR cameras, and 0 new Advanced Photo System cameras shown. There were over 150 new models of digital compact cameras and several new digital SLRs being introduced for just the first half of 2005. No new films were introduced. This was to be expected.

What you might not expect is how it will affect you. For one thing, it means that less and less film will be sold. This means that fewer and fewer rolls will be processed and printed. Small businesses that do nothing but process film will close. The volume necessary to allow larger processing labs to stay in business will decrease. More and more will close.* In order to stay in the film and print processing business, prices will undoubtedly increase - probably dramatically during the next few years. Specialized processing services will become harder to find and take longer. The competition between laboratories to achieve higher quality standards will disappear (it already has). Fewer and fewer people will be exposed to superior quality pictures because they just won't be readily available. We will take another long stride down the path of becoming just a "it's good enough" society.

The industry is moving away from 1 hour and even same day processing. Many "same day" labs are

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now becoming "overnight processing" labs, and more and more are heading for 2 or 3 day service. Pictures and enlargements from digital files will be available in seconds. Anything involving film will take days.

Another trend observed is the evolution of batteries. Even batteries like the lowly AA cell is getting reformulated to give much greater service life. New Oxy-Alkaline and Oxy-Nickel technology will allow batteries to function about 4 times as long as present day batteries. Expect these new batteries to demand premium prices to start, and eventually replace alkaline batteries at about the same price. This transition will probably take less than a decade.

Europe has replaced North America as the largest camera marketplace. This means more product will be shipped there than here. As more of our increasing debt is being bought in Euros, prices will have to go up in the U.S. In view of the fact that most camera companies did not entertain their dealers with parties, dinners, etc. at the convention, it could be said that they are not enjoying the profitability they once did. Another clue that they will either (a) raise prices, (b) cut manufacturing quality, or both.

We've Got Class

There are still 2-3 seats open for our March 15th class entitled **"OK. Now I Have a Digital Camera. What do I do?"** If you would like to attend, please call either store TODAY!

At the end of 2004, Fishkin Brothers, one of New Jersey's most prestigious camera stores elected to close their doors forever. We are sad to see them go. We are fortunate, however, to have Steve Schwartz (with over a quarter century's experience) join our staff in Summit. Please welcome him when you're in Summit next time.

Hopefully by next month's newsletter, spring will arrive and we can discuss how to capture those spring flowers in your cameras.

Have a great March!

Lynne & Jerry

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*As most of you are aware, Eastman Kodak closed their Fair Lawn, NJ lab because of insufficient volume of work. On March 1, 2005, Kodak notified all their dealers that they would no longer pick up and deliver photofinishing orders from customers without a substantial service charge. Customers are also being coaxed to send in orders via DHL (a non U.S. company) at an additional cost approaching \$9.00. This would raise retail prices by at least that dollar value. This type of price increase is unconscionable. Fuji is poised to announce a similar program.