

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

JUNE, 2005

Consumers

The current issue of Consumers' Reports magazine features a lengthy series of articles about digital photography. Although we applaud the Consumer Union on their unbiased reports, there is more to the topic than what they present.

The readers know nothing about the authors of the articles. They could be engineers, chemists, freelance writers, educators, or professional photographers. They could also be TV repairmen, students, cab drivers, cooks, or whatever. They could be staff writers for C.U. who one day weigh cans of sliced beets, the next day test cameras. We just don't know.

Whatever their background, they test products for a very limited time. They may or may not have access to the instruction manuals or other guides packed with the products. We will never know what decisions were reached by experience, logic or assumption. Each tester must have personal, built-in biases (we all do). Is the tester right or left eyed, for example; right or left handed, an eyeglass wearer, etc., ad nauseum. They are, just like the rest of us, hopefully, human.

In order to be scientifically objective, C.U. must have a set of criteria used to test the products and services they evaluate. These objective evaluations are still subject to personal considerations, especially in areas such as color, contrast and sharpness.

There have been many occasions where the testers have evaluated the same product under two different brand names or model numbers and given them markedly different ratings. Several of the models in different articles are long discontinued products, but they seem not to know it.

In the recent issue, one brand of inkjet printers using only 4 different color dye based inks is superior in results to a printer from another manufacturer using 6 colors of pigment based inks. Sorry, C.U., but the laws of physics override some personal judgements. Perhaps one unit was defective, perhaps one was not used as directed, perhaps the same paper was used in both printers (a major mistake). Again, we'll never know.

How Many Pictures Can My Memory Card Hold (chapter 93)

Many of you seem to be confused about the relationship between digital camera resolution and image size vs. uncompressed file size. Let's see if this helps...

The image size is based on the number of pixels that make up the image. An image that measures 2700x1800 pixels (horizontal x vertical) would multiply out to 4,860,000 pixels (also expressed as 4.86 megapixels). The file size for this image is another thing altogether. Each pixel requires 24 bit of data (at 8 bits per color for .JPG files in RGB color measurement). There are 8 bits to a byte, so each pixel requires 3 bytes of file size. So, let's multiply the 4,860,000 by 3 to get 14,580,000 total bytes. At roughly 1,000,000 bytes per megabyte, this is a 14.5 megabyte file size.

This not quite 5 megaPIXEL file requires almost 15 megaBYTES of storage space on your camera's memory card. That super large 256MB card you bought last year isn't so large any more: It can only hold about 18 pictures! Armed with this information you can now get an idea of how many pictures fit on a given size memory card in your camera.

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2

Photo Workshops

Our Lighting workshop was sold out last month, and the response so far has been better than even we anticipated, so after breaking for the summer the **Better Imaging Photo School (BIPS)** will continue in the fall. As of now, we are planning programs on

>Sports Photography

>Basic SLR Photography

>Beginning Digital Photography

>Close-up Photography

>Home Digital Printing

Please let us know if any of these topics interest you, and if there are other programs you might want to suggest.

Meade telescope has offered to send a specialist to our Madison location for a telescope and astrophotography session and if you express enough interest we will make it happen. Please email us and let us know.

Camera Trend

Some of you may have overheard the rumor that the world's economy is not the strongest it could be. This affects camera manufacturers like any other business. In order to lower manufacturing costs, many companies are eliminating the viewfinder systems from their compact digital cameras. This is touted as a consumer benefit, but it really isn't. Using the camera's "peephole" offers several advantages, including

> concentrating on the subject, because nothing else is visible when you use the finder. When you use the LCD panel, you see the camera, buttons, hands, the sky or ceiling, and many more distracting things.

>No matter how big the LCD screen is on the camera, it is still hard to see outdoors.

>If you wear sunglasses with polarized lenses, you may not be able to see the LCD panel AT ALL.

>It is easier to hold the camera steady when using the viewfinder.

>It is easier to hold the camera level when using the viewfinder.

>If the LCD panel on the camera is turned off while shooting with the viewfinder, it is fair to expect that your battery will take up to 2-3 times more pictures (on a set of AA or on a charge).

The camera companies' marketing and advertising departments are doing their best to make these manufacturing cost reductions look like the target of your greatest fantasies, but they are delivering less product to you while charging you more!

Your Pictures - On Display

You may not know it, but you've take many digital pictures which are worthy of being displayed online. Please visit <http://www.takegreatpictures.com/articles/default.asp?aid=396> and find out how you can have your photos displayed (and it's FREE)!

Vacationing?

BEFORE you leave on vacation, bring in your cameras for a free checkup. Travel with the peace of mind that comes from knowing that an expert has checked your camera out, and that everything is working properly.

Kudos!

Congratulations to John Thoma of the Photo Summit for completing his International Certified Photographic Consultant program. This is the culmination of years of experience and a grueling examination. Our stores now boast 8 CPCs!

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As the weather gets hotter, remember that heat drains the energy out of batteries just like it does with people. Keep extra batteries handy and as cool as possible and charged (if rechargeable).

That's it for another month. Thank you for your continued support as well as taking your time to improve your pictures. Keep on shooting, and we hope to see you soon.

Lynne & Jerry

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