

# Madison PhotoPlus the Photo Summit ePHOTO Newsletter

October  
November  
2018



**“Photographs open doors into the past, but they also allow a look into the future.”**

**-Sally Mann**

## **The Best of Plans Sometimes Don't Work Out...**

After decades of not missing a deadline, a faulty computer caught up with our publication and there was no October issue. Armed with a new computer and software, we'll try to make up for the lost month.

## **Why Make Pictures?**

Why do we take photos at all? Why do we paint, sculpt or draw? Why write? Why do we design and build?

Because we can.

One way humans are different from all other animals is that, for whatever reasons, we choose to record our experiences and emotions. It may be for reliving the event or for fulfilling the need to communicate. It probably is both. As societies become more complex, it may well be not so much to choose, as to need.

There are lots of people who are frustrated by their inability to master an art. Whether it is painting, music, acting, photography or some other form of expression, few of us are exceptionally gifted. But we are still

interested. We go to see plays and concerts, read books, look at paintings, doodle, dance and hum a tune. We don't think about it, we just do it. We find all these various ways to express ourselves.

Expression is definitely a human trait. We express who we are, what we believe in, and how we feel. It is our persona and we communicate it to others as well as reinforce our own egos. While some expressions are obvious to all, some are very subtle and only receivable to a much smaller audience. No one, however, is expressionless.

If you are reading this article, you choose to send and/or receive such communication via photographs. It has been said that photography is the universal language - it's easy to take photos and even easier to receive them - with no translation necessary.

Viewing a photo taken by another person gives insight into the life and experiences of the photographer. The photographs we take, the photographs we are in and the photographs we give are truly the legacy we leave behind us.

The small number of superior photos taken by the world's best photographers communicate with the greatest number of viewers. Most of us fall short of that plateau. Some of us struggle to take a reasonable snapshot. All of us like looking at our own and other people's photos. Even though some photos make us sad, most make us smile and feel good inside.

Why go through all this tribute to photographic expression? Because during the next few weeks you can give the gift of your persona. So often we hear, "I don't know what to get so and so", that we overlook giving one of our fondest memories, something worth communicating. This year, consider giving a gift that transcends

time and distance - give a well printed and presented photograph you have taken. So often even a snapshot printed on better paper and placed in an attractive frame gives joy and smiles to the recipient.

Give part of yourself. It will be appreciated for a long, long time. And you'll be appreciated for your thoughtfulness in having given it...

## **Photo Hints**

Many of you use cameras with a built in flash and complain about the harsh lighting it produces. Diffusing the flash's light usually tames the harshness and produces softer illumination. To see if this makes a difference with your particular camera, put a single layer of Scotch Magic™ tape over the flash tube. Take a couple of photos with it and without it. You should see a greater than noticeable improvement. (You won't lose any sharpness, as you are covering the flash, not the lens.)

Be cautious, however, and remove the tape after a couple of photos as the heat given off by the flash could melt the tape and ruin your camera. If you think the improvement is worth it, consider getting a diffuser for your built in flash.



A decade or so ago, the most advanced digital cameras had about a 10 megapixel sensor and wrote .JPG files of 150 - 600 kilobytes. Cameras would take up to 3 photos per second. State of the art memory cards struggled to keep up with all the data being shoved down its electronic throat. Connect the camera's cable to your computer and in a few minutes your photos were downloaded.

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Cameras don't last forever, and before long a new one was purchased. The memory card fit, so why not use it. The replacement was a better camera. It had a better sensor - 11.5 megapixels and wrote larger photo files of 750 - 800 kilobytes. Surprisingly, the camera seemed to be slower and there was a delay in taking the next shot. Even the downloading seemed just a little bit slower. It was OK though, because the pictures were better. Why get a new memory card when the old one still worked. The camera was expensive enough.

A few years later a new camera arrived as a holiday gift. Guess what, the SD card still fit. Why buy a new one? Then the old photos disappeared and the message on the camera's screen said "CARD ERROR". Ouch!

To explain what happened, a little background information is necessary...

When a memory card is made, the manufacturer has no idea what device it will be put into.

Different devices write data differently. Even different cameras write data differently.

Just like ALL other memory storage devices, memory cards need to be told how the device writes data. This is called formatting.

All memory cards are programmed to accept (write) data at a certain rate and allow other devices to access that data (read) at a certain rate of speed.

Different devices export data to the memory card at different rates.

A 10 year old memory card wrote data at about 5x (X=150 kilobytes/second). That means that a 500KB file took about 3.5 seconds to write to the card. The read speed of the card, however, was about

25x - about 20% of the time needed to write the data. It was designed to write at the speed the data would have been sent by the camera. The next new camera down the line was designed to send data at around 50x and the file sizes were increased perhaps fourfold. It's no wonder the card couldn't keep up and the camera could not perform as designed.

There have been almost as many generations of memory cards as cameras. There are improvements with each camera generation, such as larger file sizes, more frames recorded each second (in some cases up to 240). In additions, some cameras have sensors resolving in excess of 40 megapixels of data. There comes a point when, for example, a camera takes a 5MB .JPG AND A 12MB RAW file simultaneously and needs to be ready to take the next photo a half second later. A 32MP card with a write speed of 80x just can't do it and the camera does the equivalent of "electronically choking".

The most important consideration to be drawn from this knowledge is that when getting a new camera after 18-24 months since the last one, buy a new - and fast enough - memory card with it. Continuing with the old card is like throwing away 20+% of the cost of the new camera.

*Enjoy Yourself  
Take Pictures  
It's FUN  
!*

## Rumor Mill and New Products

since the last issue, a plethora of new products, as well as rumors have evolved. Several interchangeable lens cameras and lenses have been introduced. None of the cameras were SLRs. We are still evaluating many of the newest products and will share our opinions during the next few weeks in the December Newsletter as well as comprehensive gift guides.

Speaking of gifts, fewer manufacturers are offering one day specials for Black Friday or cyber Monday. Most companies are stretching their sales for one week or longer.

## Gobble!

All of us wish all of you a happy and healthy Thanksgiving. We will be closed Thanksgiving so that each of us can enjoy our families and friends. See you next month!

By the way, both stores are now open Sundays from 11:00 to 4:00.

**Madison PhotoPlus**  
40 Main Street Madison NJ 07940  
voice 973-966-2900 fax 973-378-0016  
staff@madisonphoto.com  
www.madisonphoto.com

*Jerry, Joy,  
Rob, Chloe & Ryan*



**the Photo Summit**  
383 Springfield Ave. Summit NJ 07901  
voice 908-273-7427 fax 908-277-0218  
staff@photosummit.com  
www.photosummit.com  
*Bret, Lynne & Vanessa*