



Poly at the SD County Fair

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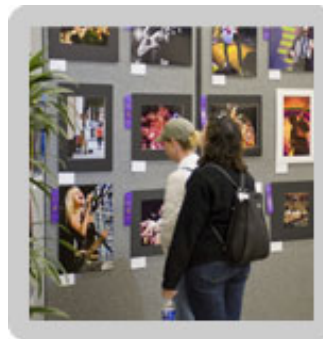
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Poly Members Put Up Impressive Numbers at this Year's County Fair!

As most of you already know, the first round of judging for the Photography Exhibition of the San Diego County Fair is now complete; and the accepted images that will hang in the Photo Section of the Fairgrounds have been selected.



The judges will next select the prize winning and honorable mention awards from prints of the digital images that have been accepted. The results of this second-round judging will be posted on the Fair web site on June 10.

In spite of a few hiccups in the notification software, all of those whose images were accepted have been notified via email. As we should always expect, when a complex new computer software system is used in the real world for the first time, we will again prove that all the simulation and testing that we can conceive will not eliminate all

the problems. So there were some frantic, late night sessions for the software developers. All we saw were some "Ignore previous message" emails.

Even though we don't know all the statistics for the competition or the results of the second round yet, I could not resist trying to find out how Poly members did so far. So I did a quick scan and count of the list of accepted entries, and collected the following data.

- Poly members have a total of 85 images that will hang in the exhibition.
- Those images are divided among 15 Poly members.
- Byron Aughenbaugh leads our group with 14 images.
- Judy Olesen is a close second with 10.

If you want to see the details or the complete results, go to the Fair web site at www.sdfair.com/entry

Finally, when you go to the Fair this year, make sure you stop in the East Grandstand and see the biggest (and best) Photo Exhibition West of the Rockies.



Poly Coming Events

June 4: Competition. The Project Competition subject is “*Bugs*.”

Our Judge for April is Gene Nocon.

Gene is a world-famous photographer and printer who now makes his home in San Diego.

His darkroom experience includes 15 years in London printing for Europe's top photographers, and he was the personal photographic advisor to HRH Prince Andrew, and Linda McCartney. One of England's best black and white printers; Gene has won the title ILFORD Printer of the Year. He was made a Fellow of the Royal Photographic Society (FRPS), founded the RPS Distinction Panel for Photographic Printers, and served as its first Chairman. Gene is the inventor of the NOCON™ Photographic Timer, and the author of the books “*Photographic Printing*” and “*Nocon on Photography*”.

Here’s how Gene describes his current activities, “Digital has changed the community of photography. There is no ‘hub’ - no center of activity. The photolab is no more. Digital photographers have no place to go. They pretty much work in isolation. There is no distribution of knowledge. There is no. . . I won’t go on.

I love digital. It has renewed my interest in photography and has advanced my ideas about print making. But that’s because I transferred my aesthetics and reformulated my techniques to work in the digital medium. I’m as comfortable working with ‘Photoshop’ as I was working in the darkroom. And it is with those same aesthetics that I continue my work.

What digital has done is to make possible the activity that was once the responsibility of the photolab - the end product of our industry: the print. Young photographers are lured by the idea that they can print their own photographs, often not very successfully (without the darkroom in their background). The point is that Photoshop, to the uninitiated, is like trying to use a calculator without any fundamental understanding of math.”

June 17–19: Outing to: Joshua Tree National Park. Hosts: Shelly Britton & Judy Olesen. Contact Shelly or Judy for additional details.

June 12: Photo Shootout at the Del Mar Fair, organized at Poly by Alan Haynes.

4:30 pm to 7:30 pm, Sunday June 12.

Online pre-registration is required. Deadline for June 12 was Sunday, May 29 at 5:00 pm, so I hope that all of you who are interested have listened to Alan and have registered.

If you missed this deadline, there is a second shootout, with Fred Greaves, on June 25, with a registration deadline of June 11 at 5:00 pm.

Entry cost is **\$10.00** for each pre-registration and must be paid with a credit card at the time of **online** registration. **Fees are non-refundable.** All pre-registered participants will receive a Fair pass at Will Call (O’Brien Gate) on the day of the contest. Free parking is available at Horsepark, one mile east on Via de la Valle.

Go to the Exhibition of Photography Department (2nd floor east grandstand). Check in no later than 4:15pm on the day of the contest, with your digital camera.

At that time, the theme of the shoot will be announced and instructions given. After the time allotted (two hours), participants will return to the Exhibition of Photography Department and download **one image** of their choice from their camera memory card. **NO DIGITAL ALTERATIONS or CROPPING!** Exhibitors will create the images to be submitted in-camera, which includes any in-camera adjustments.

NO TRIPODS will be allowed. Tripods can be a trip hazard; but monopods are allowed.

All images will be compiled into a slide show. Participants will vote for their favorite images, with the top three vote recipients placing first through third.

Ribbons and prizes will be awarded for first through third place, and George’s Camera will donate the prizes.

Contact Alan or go to www.sdfair.com/entry for any additional details.

What is it?

Do you remember the picture at right from last month? I didn't hear from any of you, so I guess you didn't figure it out. It's the **World's First Operating Digital Camera!!** For you who are digital camera enthusiasts, this bit of trivia should be required knowledge.

It didn't have very impressive specs, but it was a true digital camera. It was created in 1975. The lens came from a Super 8 movie camera. Picture information was recorded on a digital tape cassette data recorder. (You can see it on the right side in the picture.) It was powered by 16 Ni-Cad batteries, had a CCD imaging array, and used an A-D converter from a digital voltmeter along with some purpose-designed circuitry.

Here are its specs:

- Weight = 8 pounds
- Resolution = 0.01 mega-pixels
- Image = Black & White only
- Response time = 23 seconds

It's a good thing that we've come a long way since then; as this picture shows, (even if it was repackaged) not many photographers would like to carry this thing around very long.



The last part of the question asked who developed and/or built it.

It was created by Steve Sasson, who is regarded as the inventor of the digital camera. He was an engineer for the Eastman Kodak Company. How's that for irony? The biggest purveyor of film in the country is responsible for the invention of the digital camera (which ultimately wiped out their film business). Their management probably thought (as conservative management often does) that "*it was an interesting trick that would never amount to anything.*"

To see the image, the data was read from the tape through special interface circuitry, to a desktop minicomputer, and the picture was displayed on a television set.

Now, here's a more contemporary question for next month. What was the first DSLR (not "point-and-shoot") camera actually marketed to photographers; and which company built and sold it?

Send your answers to the usual email address (jmildice@mac.com) and put DSLR in the subject line.

Editor's Corner

I'm kind of annoyed with Nikon . . . and Cannon too . . . and all the rest of them; that's right, the digital camera manufacturers.

We just got back from a short trip on which we shot mostly typical Southwestern landscapes. I used my new Nikon. It worked perfectly, felt good in my hands, and was easy to operate.

Now that I have loaded my pictures into my computer and reviewed them, I see that image quality, exposure measurement, and focus accuracy are noticeably improved, when compared to the results from my four year old Nikon DSLR. So now I also believe that when I get into a more detailed evaluation of other promised technical issues listed in the specs (such as improved noise performance, dynamic range, ISO range, etc.) they will also prove to be valuable.

In this digital age, it's still true that "*It's the photographer that makes the picture,*" but now there's an evaluation to perform about how much an improved camera can help him/her.

In the "old" days of photography, I bought a Nikon F and some lenses, used them for years and years, and sometimes upgraded a few components for better performance in particular



situations. It was so solid that I could still be using it now (if I chose to use film).

The trouble with digital cameras is that no matter how great your current camera is, the model that comes out in just a few years will be better (often much better).

We've come to expect that computers and software have lives of a couple of years before they start to show their age and the next upgrade is released. And, most of us are willing to skip a cycle of two before we decide it's time to upgrade.

Now it looks like camera manufacturers are also working to about a two-year "refresh" cycle for the camera bodies at the various levels in their lines. So the issue is not one of upgrading to a more "professional" model, but upgrading for better technical image-making capability.

In the end, it's up to each of us to decide when an improvement or upgrade is appropriate. But my biggest annoyance is that those improvements are always real and often significant, so they are hard to ignore.

Also, I don't know which is harder on my checkbook, the cost of the periodic improvements that I "*can't do without*" or the cost of the film I used to buy (but don't need now).

President's Column

By Jean Eichenlaub

During the past few months I've decided someone should do a photographic project documenting health workers in the modern hospital. Not the marketing smiling faces; but, the folks focused on their work. I have vague memories of seeing such images from the early 1920s hospitals and do not remember the photographer.

Fortunately club activities have proceeded without me. Thank you all who arrange and honcho the workshops, trips and judges. Over the past year I've had many requests/enquires about

activities for those just switching to digital images. It appears many of the current members and prospective members want activities focused on understanding how to get the digital beast to operate. Recently Judy forwarded an email to me, the writer lamented not having the simplicity of her film camera.

The 2nd Thursday Huddle, instigated by Donna Wolf, had about a dozen people attend at least one session. Unfortunately, I haven't been able to organize anything this month, or in the near future. Perhaps in the fall it will be possible to get something going again.

Meanwhile, have fun shooting.

Be Careful Out There!

By Clark Winsor

“Hill Street Blues” ran on television from 1981 to 1987. Many of you may remember the police drama filmed in New York City. Each program would begin with the duty officer giving out assignments for the shift going on duty. The last thing the duty officer said was, “Be careful out there.” These are words we all should live by; and when we don't the possibility for making mistakes becomes a real likelihood. So what does this have to do with photography and Poly? Well, let me tell you a little story.

In May of this year, Jo and I spent ten days in Hawaii on the lovely island of Maui. We stayed in a condo resort so we could have our own kitchen and laundry facilities in the unit.

As many of you know, I own a Nikon D200 and four Nikon lenses. I keep my photo equipment in a fairly large backpack with wheels. It just fits in a overhead bin on an airplane. It is very heavy when full of my gear. It also doesn't work very well when going for walks on sandy beaches. To solve this problem, I borrowed an idea from Buzz. He carries his lenses in their original cases and hooks them on a web belt. You may have seen me do this too. It works pretty well. When I swap lenses, I remove one lens from the camera, and replace it with another. Then I put the removed lens into the vacated lens case. It's best for me to be sitting down when I do this. It's not a perfect system and I don't necessarily recommend it, it's just the system I use.

On the day in question, I swapped lenses in the car, and taking only one lens with me, I left the other lenses and cases in the trunk. When the session was over, I put the camera with its lens in the trunk, and drove back to the condo.

Once back at the condo complex, I put the camera around my neck, picked up the web belt and started walking from the parking lot to our unit. About ten steps into the walk, my Nikon 17-55 F/2.8 G-AFS Ed-IF DX lens crashed to the sidewalk. The sun shield hit the cement first with such force that it rolled about 10 feet in front of where I was standing. The lens cap rolled a foot or so and stopped when it hit the grass. As for the lens, I was sure I had just kissed 1200 bucks goodbye.

With heart in my throat, I bent down and picked the lens up. I was expecting to see cracked glass and broken internal workings. But, when I picked it up, it had nothing wrong with it other than a very small chip on the Tiffen 77mm UV Protector lens. There was no damage to the Nikon lens, nothing, not a mark. You would never know it was dropped. The lens shade was damaged just enough so that I will need to replace it. I can still lock it on the lens but about 1/2 of the plastic that locks the shield to the lens was broken and laying on the sidewalk. But that's it. A little plastic broke off the lens shade.

Nikon makes really rugged lenses and cameras. The lens fell about four feet, straight down to the cement sidewalk. It really crashed when it hit the sidewalk. I was very lucky. My mistake was not zipping up the lens case when I swapped lenses, and then I didn't put the web belt back on, I just carried it. I made a couple of really stupid mistakes, and the lens just followed gravity, rolled out of the case that was turned upside down and fell to the ground. I didn't follow the Hill Street Blues advice, but I was lucky to have tough hardware that hit “just right.” It could have been a lot worse.

So always remember,
“**Be Careful Out There.**”

Quote of the Month

“I believe that twelve significant images in one year is a pretty good output”

Ansel Adams

In the Bag

By Stan Bell

One of the most important elements we carry in our bags is our memory cards. I found this out recently when I bought some Centon 32 GB SDHC memory cards.



They were very inexpensive and I thought the 32 GB would be just the thing for capturing videos on my SLR. I could also shoot forever with RAW shots (over 900) and back them up in the camera using the second slot that my camera has.

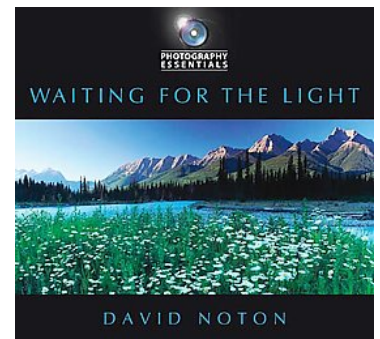
I've used Centon CF cards for quite a while, so I thought the SD card

would also be ok. Boy was I wrong. I bought four cards and all of them failed. At first, I thought the camera couldn't handle 32 GB cards, but Fujifilm 32 GB cards work just fine. This shows that this is one area not to be cheap on. It's like buying expired film back in the day, not so long ago. You can save a little, but you're taking your photographic life in hand. My pictures are just too important to take the chance. No more Centon for me. Only hi-class cards for me from now on!

If you're in the mood for a really good read, get Photography Essentials "Waiting for the Light," by David Noton. (David & Charles Ltd. 2008). This is one of the most inspiring books I have read in a long time. Noton, one of the best landscapers in the world, has put together a breathtaking collection of his very best award-winning work and it will make you go WOW.

Not only do you get to see his pictures, he gives a commentary and a walkthrough of each

picture displayed from around the world. Quite an insight. It almost made me want to fly to exotic locations, get up at O-dark-thirty, and sit in the cold. Almost!



I love panoramas, and am sorry that I had to miss the workshop on the subject. I understand it was very good. One item that helps me get more keepers is a simple spirit level. I just pop it on top of the camera in the flash hot shoe, level the tripod, level the camera with the level, then shoot. I see them on line for less than \$4.00.) I've seen some very nice (read expensive) ones, but this simple one works just fine for me and takes very little space in my bag. Make sure that you get the two axis double bubble.



By the way, sometimes I just hand hold the camera and take an impromptu panno. They may not be great, but they can be fun. Make sure you shoot everything in manual, leave a lot of room above and below the subject and leave a lot of overlap between shots. Photoshop will do the rest. Below is an example from my son's graduation from his five-year junior college career.

Do you use off camera flash? Next month I'll show a neat way to get that studio look on the run. Till next time, what's in your bag?

