

THE FOCAL POINT

April
2004

Volume 1
Issue 2

Sharing Our Passion for Photography

The Newsletter of the Linn Area Photo Club

From the President

I was recently asked “Do you have insurance on your camera equipment?” I replied, “Yes, don’t you?”

I would venture to guess that since you are reading *The Focal Point*, that you are asking yourself, “Why are you talking about insurance, I thought this was a newsletter about photography.” This is about protecting your camera equipment with insurance.

Why do I have insurance on my camera equipment? Basically, good camera equipment is not cheap. If I had to replace all my equipment at once, could I afford it? Why should I settle for acquiring only a fraction of the equipment I now own? What would I purchase first? Would I quit photography and start a cheaper hobby?

If these options do not sound appealing, consider purchasing insurance for your camera equipment. If you have your camera equipment insured, be sure and check the coverage and exclusions of your policy to make sure you have the coverage you need. If you lost all your equipment tomorrow, would your insurance company pay for the replacement value of your equipment? Would you face exclusions if you receive photography-related income? Understanding your level of coverage today could save you from being unable to shoot pictures tomorrow.

What type of policy do I need?

For the amateur photographer there are essentially two ways to insure photographic equipment—specifically cameras. The first option is available under the unscheduled personal property of your homeowners or renters insurance policy. Usually this is written on a replacement cost basis subject to the exclusions of the homeowner policy (dropping, breakage, etc.). The second way to insure would be to specifically schedule the camera equipment on a scheduled property form. When this is done you can usually purchase broader coverage's that can include breakage, dropping, misplaced or lost items coverage. There is of course an additional premium for this coverage.

Both methods include replacement coverage, but the schedule property method insures that in the event of a loss, you might be able to

April Meeting

The next LAPC meeting will be held:

Sunday, April 18th at 4:00PM
Nelson Electric Board Room
[618 14th Ave SW](#)
Cedar Rapids, Iowa

Featuring a slideshow “PSA Tops in Photography” displaying top contributions from leading exhibitors.

upgrade your equipment. As soon as you have replaced the camera equipment, be sure to update your policy. As always, call your insurance agent for more information.

Bob Lancaster
President
Linn Area Photo Club

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From the Editor

Our newsletter needs your help! We are looking for photographs that you would like to have critiqued (i.e., friendly helpful critiquing) by other readers. Simply send your images to the following address. We will add them to the newsletter (marked as anonymous if you prefer), and our readers can submit their thoughts and suggestions and we will forward them straight to you.

Also, remember to send any news, reviews of products, or anything you would like to share with the group.

Send or e-mail your submissions to:

Attention: Focal Point Ideas
P.O. Box 8660
Cedar Rapids, IA 52408
<mailto:TheFocalPoint2004@hotmail.com>

Bob Murphy
Newsletter Editor
Linn Area Photo Club

Club Officers

<i>Executive Board</i>	<i>Committee Chairs</i>
President Bob Lancaster 390-4231	Membership Bev Witmer
Vice-President Jim Zelle 373-8749	Public Relations Pat Birkett-Roby 365-9273
Treasurer Pam Wild 373-3241	Activities Karen Hobbs
Secretary Open	Newsletter Editor Bob Murphy 849-1884
Web Master Jim Zelle 373-8749	

Industry News

Nikon D70

I briefly mentioned last month, Nikon's latest product the D70 now available. Comparable to Canon's 300D (a.k.a., Canon Digital Rebel), the Nikon (body only) also falls under \$1000. What makes this product interesting is the extensive feature list that makes it comparable to the more expensive D100.

Features include:

- 6.1 Megapixel Sensor
- 3 frames per second and a Dynamic Buffer that allows up to 144 shots in a sequence
- Up to 1/8000 second shutter speed
- 1/500 second sync speed for flash
- Automatic Modes for Portrait, Landscape, Close-up, Sports, Night Portrait, Night Landscape, Auto.
- Immediate Startup
- 3D Color Matrix Meter
- Extensive White Balance Control

For an initial product preview, including 20 second sounds bites that compare the frames per second speed between the Nikon D70 and the Canon 300D, visit <http://www.dpreview.com/articles/nikond70/>. Also see, <http://www.nikonusa.com/template.php?cat=1&grp=2&productNr=25214> or <http://www.nikonslr.com/home.php?exit=exit2&prod=d70> for Nikon's product information..

EOS-1D Mark II, 8.2 Megapixel, Interchangeable Lens, Professional, SLR, Digital Camera

Another camera soon to hit the market (April) is Canon's latest digital camera, the EOS-1D mark II. This 8.2 Megapixel will cost you over four times as the cost of the Nikon D70 mentioned above. For that extra money, you'll get the following features:

- 8.5 frames per second and a buffer up to 40 frames before slowing down
- Supports SD (secure digital) memory in addition to Compact Flash – You can set it to write to one or the other, or both at the same time for instant backup
- 1/8000 second maximum shutter speed
- 1/250 second sync speed for flash
- USB and FireWire connectivity
- 10 Settings for white balance, white balance bracketing (+/-3 stops), white balance correction (+/- 9 stops)
- 36-bit RGB Color Depth

See dpreview's preview of the EOS-1D Mark II at <http://www.dpreview.com/articles/canoneos1dmkii/> and Canon's product information at <http://web.canon.jp/Imaging/eos1dm2/html/menu.html>.

Bob Murphy
Newsletter Editor
Linn Area Photo Club

Review : GIMP 2.0

the GIMP Version 2.0 for Windows

A fellow co-worker asked me if I'd heard of GIMP. He quickly sensed the confusion in my expression and decided to explain before I attempted to answer. He said that GIMP is an acronym for GNU Image Manipulation Program. Still looking lost, he went on to say it's a **free** software application comparable to Photoshop (\$600). Now, he had my interest.

GIMP is exactly that. A freely distributable software application for image processing that runs on Unix, Windows, and the Mac. For a complete understanding of the product, check out <http://www.gimp.org>. Also, check the latest announcement regarding the GIMP at <http://www.dpreview.com>.

For this month, I would like to discuss the somewhat cryptic installation process for the Windows release of the GIMP. Next month, I'll discuss the features included with the base installation, some of the add-ons and how it all compares to PhotoShop.

Before you Begin

Before you begin downloading, make sure your system meets the requirements specified on the website:

"The GIMP 1.2 should run on Windows 95/98/ME/NT4/2000/XP. It is recommended to use an NT-based version of Windows (NT4, 2000 or XP) for GIMP 2.0. The amount of memory can be an important factor, especially if you intend to work on large images. A minimum of 64 MB of RAM is recommended, but several GB do not hurt."

Disclaimer... during my installation, I stuck with the default options. This may not work for you depending on your system... for example if your C drive is full (although it only takes about 50MB). I suggest reading each option and deciding on your own the best path.

Note also, that the files you download will be in ZIP format. Whether you can work with ZIP files or not depends on your operating system or whether or not you have a program like WinZIP (available at <http://www.winzip.com>).

Downloads

As with most "open source" products, the downloads and the installations can be a bit rough. Much of the time the process is geared towards programmers who want to modify the product and build the application from the source code. Fortunately, others are out there that make the process somewhat easier.

In this case, you'll need to download two files. Specifically, **GTK + 2 for Windows** (the run-time toolkit; file: gtk+-2.2.4-20040124-setup.zip) and the **GIMP 2.0** (file: gimp-2.0.0-i586-setup.zip) Both are available at <http://www2.arnes.si/~sopjimo/gimp/stable.html>. I recommend using the HTTP downloads (for the GTK: <http://www.gashalot.com/files/gimp-win32/gtk+-2.2.4-20040124-setup.zip> and for the GIMP: <http://www.gashalot.com/files/gimp-win32/gimp-2.0.0-i586-setup.zip>)

Installing the GTK

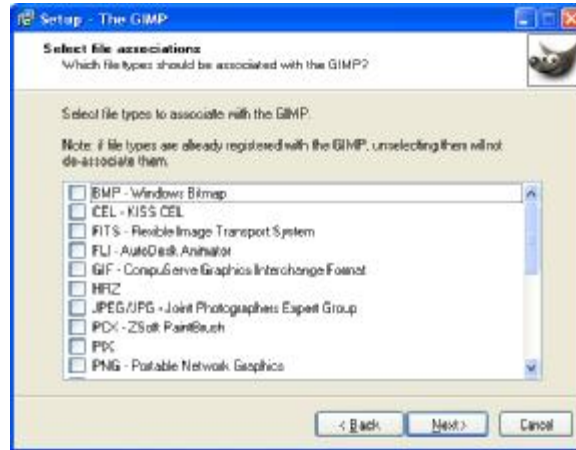
After downloading, you'll have two compressed ZIP files. Open the GTK file (i.e., gtk+-2.2.4-20040124-setup.zip) and then click on the program to install the GTK+2 runtime environment.

If you've installed programs before, much of this looks familiar. Read and follow along through the installation process.

Installing the GIMP

Click on the second downloaded file (i.e., gimp-2.0.0-i586-setup.zip) and execute the installation program. During the Gimp install you'll be asked if you want to associate file extensions with the

GIMP product. Essentially this means that if you click on a file with the checked extension (e.g., JPG), then Windows opens GIMP and loads your selected file. If you don't have any other photo editing or viewing software that you currently use, I suggest selecting at least JPG and TIFF.



You will also be directed to download and install GhostScript. You'll only need that if you intend to read PostScript files.

Read and follow through the remaining steps.

Starting the Gimp

Once you finish the installation, the application opens. The program prompts you with some technical setup questions. Again, I recommend selecting the defaults.

Eventually, you will get to the GIMP's tip of the day. Congratulations, you have it installed! Look through some of the tips and close the window when you are ready to actually try it out.

Summary

If you are familiar with PhotoShop, you'll recognize some of the same menu options and features, however the interface is clearly different. Better or worse is your call. I have seen numerous newsgroup threads about the product and how it compares to PhotoShop. From these, I concluded they are very close in comparison, and where GIMP falls short, there are free add-ons to help... plus the product is FREE!

Again, next month I'll discuss some of the GIMP's features, how to operate the interface, and some of the free add-ons you can download. Please send me any of your experiences with the product.

Bob Murphy
Newsletter Editor
Linn Area Photo Club

Upcoming Events

April

Foto Swap Meet

Hosted by Central Iowa Camera Club
Marshalltown, Iowa
Sunday, April 18th 2004
10:00 AM to 3:00 PM
Admission \$3.00
Best Western Regency Inn
Highway 30 Exit #185 North to Junction Highway 14 & Iowa Ave

May

Nature Photography Seminar

Timothy Edberg
Saturday, May 22nd 2004
Iowa City

The Seminar is an eight-hour presentation featuring demonstrations, show-and-tell, slide shows, and Q&A. The event covers the aesthetic tools and technical nuts and bolts necessary to elevate your photography to the realm of visually stunning personal expression. We start with the basics of camera choice and exposure and proceed through composition, how to seek and modify the best of natural light, filters, field techniques, closeups, and how to print and frame your photographs.

Every Seminar attendee will receive a detailed list of equipment suppliers and other resources, a complete set of Seminar notes, and a chance to win door prizes. Coffee will be provided. The Seminars may be paid for with personal check, Visa, MasterCard, or American Express. The fee is \$80, or \$70 with early registration. The first 20 to sign up will receive a free roll of Fujichrome Velvia 100 slide film.

Visit <http://www.edbergphoto.com> for complete details.

September

Iowa City Camera Club Hosts the
[N4C 2004 Convention](#)

N4C 2004 Convention

The Iowa City Camera Club invites you to the 48th Annual Convention of the North Central Camera Club Council
September 24, 25, 26 2004

Holiday Inn Amana Colonies
I-80 Exit 225
319 668-1175
800 633-9244 or email : hiamana@cedar-rapids.net

Sleepy Hollow RV park and Campground is nearby (319) 828-4900

Website: <http://www.mark-ila.com/ic002.htm>

LAPC Nature Photo Exhibit

Indian Creek Nature Center

The Minutes

Minutes of the Executive Committee meeting of the Linn Area Photo Club

Minutes March 14, 2004 Linn Area Photo Club

Approved February minutes.

No one volunteered for Secretary position.

Appendix to By-Laws was approved with descriptions of chairperson duties.

Approved LAPC brochure.

Bob Murphy and Jim Zelle said the membership database might be ready in the next 30 days.

Jim will send out email of the N4C newsletter, our club joining is on hold for now.

Sheryl Bequeaith will work on LAPC logo and have something for the April meeting.

Announcement of Field trips/Activities

March 20th Rue Seminar in Peoria.

March 27th Weldon Lee seminar at UNI.

Trillium photo shoot on either March 28th or April 4th, depending on weather.

April 18th, Foto Swap Meet sponsored by Central Iowa Camera Club in Marshalltown.

Indian Creek exhibit in the fall.

Website development is continuing. www.linnareaphotoclub.org is registered; hardware for server is being built.

Bob Murphy discussed the newsletter. Remember, anyone can send in an image to be critique in the newsletter. Also, anyone with a unique "trick" is asked to forward it to Jim for publication.

Viewed "This is PSA!" slide show. Discussion on club or individual membership for contest will be discussed in detail at the next meeting.

Karen Hobbs and Bob discussed the LAPC Monthly theme contest. In summary, each month we will select as a group, our favorite image within a predetermined photographic theme. Points will be awarded for 1st, 2nd and 3rd place as well as a point for participating in the contest.

2004 Photography Themes

April	-	Clouds
May	-	New birth
June	-	Wildflowers
July	-	Barns
August -		Sunrise/sunset
September	-	Children
October	-	Architecture
November	-	Storyboard
December	-	Fall colors

Bob review what information he was received about the CRLibrary photo contest:

Theme - Cityscape, 8x12" mounted, not mat, starts approximately 4/19; entries will be posted 5/14 or 5/17.

Jim Messina and Dennis Schlicht will give a butterfly photography seminar on 5/18 at 6:30pm at Beems.

Winners announced on 5/22, mini-workshops will be held also on 5/22.

Bob reviewed B+N exhibit footnotes.

The next meeting will be April 18th at 4:00pm and the May meeting will be on the 16th at 2:00pm.

Submitted by Bob Lancaster, President LAPC 3/14/04.

Membership Application

Please visit www.users.qwest.net/~jzelle/about/2004app.pdf for the Linn Area Club Membership Application.

**Linn Area Photo Club
P.O. Box 8660
Cedar Rapids, IA 52408**