



# THE LAST FRAME

February 2005

St. Albert Photo Club's Monthly Newsletter

## Pixels To Prints Rather Than Film To Paper



Avonlea Photography Studio manager Heath Olson stands beside the company's digital special events photography kits.

medium format camera system, but today, this system, along with his four enlargers, is not worth much money with everyone switching to digital. Still, he feels medium format, especially medium format black-and white, still rocks!

### The Studio

When one enters the Avonlea Photography Studios they are welcomed by five 16X20 enlargements above the s front counter.

Four of these are digital, including one hand-coloured black and white print, which is one of Avonlea's "signature prints", photographed along the Bow River in Banff National Park.

As most of their weddings are conducted on location, this style of photography is displayed in the wall décor of the studio.

The cobblestone-floored studio is 5,000 square-feet with 6 different photo sets.

As far as lighting is concerned, Heath has gone away from multiple light set-ups to a one-light system, a large softbox on an old Bowens mono-light.

About two years ago while flipping through television channels, I stopped at A-Channel's Big Breakfast morning show.

They were featuring Dean Skoubis from Avonlea Photography Studios on location as he was simulating a studio wedding portrait and discussing the advantages of digital photography.

Dean felt this was the future of still photography, instant preview

coupled with on-location proofing.

On Tuesday, February 8, the St. Albert Photo Club had the opportunity to visit the Avonlea studio.

Heath Olson, head photographer at Avonlea, was our speaker and he talked about both Avonlea and his own background in photography.

Avonlea has been at their current location for three years, ever since the bankruptcy fiasco with Courtyard Studios and

the media frenzy it garnered.

Heath graduated from NAIT's Photographic Technology program 14 years ago when its program was exclusively film-based.

Prior to joining Avonlea, he worked at Carousel Photo Imaging and photographed about 40 weddings per year, but found it difficult to turn a profit shooting this number of weddings.

At this time he shot primarily with a Pentax 6X7

MARCH GUEST SPEAKER Critique	MARCH COMPETITION Fog and/or mist	TECH TIPS Exposure	APRIL GUEST SPEAKER TBA	APRIL COMPETITION Bridges
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The only other light he may use is a background light to eliminate a shadow, or a hairlight.

The studio sets are used primarily in winter and on rainy days. They are also used on summer days when intense heat draws people indoors.

As most clients prefer outdoor weddings in the summer, when inclement weather moves in, Avonlea can erect large tents in order to maintain that "outdoor look" in the background.

**Weddings**

Avonlea Photography Studio and its contract

photographers shot over 144 weddings in 2004, with an average sale of \$3500.

Most wedding clients book their weddings through Heath and their packages include colour and/or black and white photography with all the negatives or CD's (full-size TIFF files) and proofs included.

Heath was actually in the process of booking a wedding when we arrived.

Today, with many brides being computer-literate, they prefer digital.

People expect perfection with digital photography



Gone are the days of large format paper processors as Heath explains the size of a 52" unit. Avonlea is totally digital and all printing is jobbed out to Carousel.

and they expect retouching as part of the package.

With film, clients were billed extra for retouching.

**Special Events**

In addition to weddings and portraits, Avonlea is highly involved in special event photography.

They have a 5-year contract with all the malls in Edmonton to do their Santa photography.

This pays even better than their wedding work.

Last December they printed over 130,000 Santa photos for the 2004 Christmas season.

SEP Digital, (Special Events Photo), is that component of Avonlea that provides photography for special events such as conferences, sporting events and Golf Tournaments.

Their on-the-spot proofing ensures that everyone

takes home the perfect picture from each special event.

**Digital Photography**

Heath currently shoots with Kodak's 14-megapixel 14N digital camera.

With this camera, however, it is not recommended that you shoot above an ISO of 200 because "noise" becomes a major issue at this rating.

With the 14N, he also must use the Gaussian blur feature in Photoshop to reduce sharpness because this camera captures images a little too sharp.

With his latest investment in Canon's flagship digital camera, the full-frame EOS 1DS Mark II, the above limitations should no longer be an issue.

Heath shoots in RAW to create TIFF files, stored on 700mb CD ROM discs.



<p>St. Albert Photo Club Vol:4 Issue:5 PUBLISHED MONTHLY September - June</p>	<p><u>PRESIDENT</u> Derald Lobay</p>	<p><u>SECRETARY</u> Rhonda Klaszus <u>TREASURER</u> Allen Skoreyko</p>	<p><u>PROGRAMME DIRECTOR'S</u> Derald Lobay Doug Poon</p>	<p><u>CLUB CONTACT</u> Doug Poon (780) 973-7035 dougpoon@shaw.ca</p>
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Avonlea Studio's "signature print" photographed along the Bow river in Banff.

Shooting RAW files gives you the opportunity for professional quality results.

If you shot a JPEG image and it is 1-1/2 stops either under or overexposed, the image is pretty much unusable.

If this exposure error was captured as a RAW file, it can be recovered in a photo imaging software.

Two software programs he uses on a regular basis are Fuji's Hyper Utility, and Kodak's DCS software when working with



Club members pose on one of the sets at Avonlea Photography Studio. The studio has several sets.

the 14N.

He uses external hard drives with his computer since they are much more stable, plus he needs the computer for all it can be.

Their enlargements are printed at Carousel Photo

Imaging for photographic quality prints.

Almost everything not captured digitally (film and prints) is scanned; and every image that leaves Avonlea is in some form digitized.

**Article-Derald Lobay**

## For Sale

**Dan Riedlhuber**  
office - 488-4923  
cell - 940-6623

Pentax LX with drive and 300mm f2.8 lens in metal case for \$1800 obo.

**Louise Stewart**  
458-6185

Minolta XTSI auto focus camera with date back & built in flash & strap - motor drive needs repair (est of \$125 to fix) - manual & original box available. \$25.00

Minolta Maxxum 7000i auto focus camera body - don't have original

manual but have a book on Minolta cameras that includes details of operating this camera. \$175.00

Minolta 28 - 80mm AF zoom lens (f 3.5-5.6) - 62mm lens diameter \$50.00

Minolta 70 - 210mm AF zoom lens (f 4.5-5.6) - 49mm lens diameter \$75.00

Tokina 20 - 35mm AF zoom lens (f3.5-4.5) (Minolta AF mount) with 72mm Sky 1-A Filter \$75.00

Minolta Remote Flash

cord & connector (for XTsi) \$50.00  
Minolta RC-1000 shutter release cord (for Xtsi) \$40.00

Minolta Program 3500xi Flash \$75.00

Lowepro - 1W Padded Lens Case to fit 70 - 210mm lens \$3.00

Cokin P-Series Adaptor Ring - 49mm \$2.50

Canon Sky 1A Filter - 49mm \$2.50

Hoya Circular Polarizer Filter - 49mm \$8.00

Hoya Intensifier Filter - 49mm \$8.00  
Izumar FL-B Filter - 49mm \$3.00

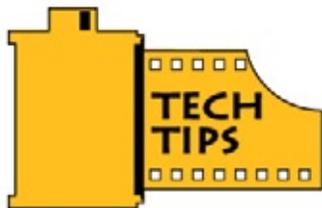
**Bill Brennan**  
469-9441

Omega 4x5 enlarger with 3 lenses, neg carriers \$1000. obo

LPL 6x4.5 with one lens and neg carrier \$400 obo.

Ilford 16" print dryer \$250 obo

(4) Pentax 6x7 bodies  
Pentax 55mm, 90 mm, 105mm, 135mm, 300 mm lenses.



## Autofocus

One ingredient of sharp images is focusing the camera carefully. Back in the ancient days of photography, a decade or so ago, focusing a camera meant laboriously twisting the lens barrel until the image in the viewfinder was in sharp focus. Autofocus (AF) technology today has made focusing as painless as pressing a button; still, to increase your percentage of sharp pictures, keep a few things in mind before you press it.



All autofocus systems, for example, require that you place your subject at the center of the viewfinder, because that's where the focusing sensors are. What if you decide to get a little artistic by putting your subject, say, a tad off-center? No problem; AF systems have a focus-lock feature (usually activated by partially depressing the shutter button) that lets you focus with your subject in the center, lock focus, then recompose to put it where you want it.

Most AF cameras offer two focusing modes: single-shot and continuous. If your subject is one that sits still (like a landscape or a very good dog), the single-shot mode is better, because it will not fire the shutter until it finds sharp focus. If you're trying to snag a moving target (like a race horse or a not-so-patient dog), switch to the continuous mode, and the camera will continuously refocus until the instant of exposure. In this mode, however, the shutter will fire whether or not your subject is sharp.

Most point-and-shoot cam-

eras use an "active" AF system that bounces an infrared light beam off subjects, while most SLR cameras use a "passive" system that focuses by measuring subject contrast to determine subject distance. The advantage of active systems is that you can use them in virtual darkness as they provide their own focusing light; their disadvantage is that they are not as precise.

Passive systems are more accurate but require a certain level of contrast to focus and may have trouble focusing on subjects of low contrast, such as a white wall or a foggy harbor, forcing you to resort to a manual-focus mode.

## Correct Exposure

Getting correct exposure with most simple auto-exposure cameras is easy: press the shutter button and the camera does the rest. More technologically evolved (i.e., expensive) cameras often provide a choice of several exposure and metering modes. Having to maneuver through a labyrinth of optional modes may seem somewhat antiautomatic at first, but in reality they enable you to become the master of, rather than a slave to, automation.

Exposure modes. A choice of different exposure modes enables you to manipulate the camera's selection of shutter speeds and apertures to match a particular type of subject: you can tell it to pick a fast shutter speed because you're photographing a race horse, for instance. Generally, the more costly the camera, the more modes you'll have to choose from, but these are the most common options:

In Program Mode, you accept the role of technological slave and the camera selects both the shutter speed and the aperture for you. It is often called the green mode because it's frequently marked by a green "P" on the mode-selector dial. The camera will choose a shutter speed that is safe enough for hand holding and an aperture that will provide a moderate amount

of depth of field. It's ideal for shooting relatively stationary subjects (like a tall ship sitting at anchor) that don't require either a very fast (or slow) shutter speed or excessive (or excessively shallow) depth of field.

In shutter-priority mode you choose the shutter speed and the camera selects an appropriate corresponding aperture. If you want to blur the water rushing over a waterfall, for example, you can select a very slow shutter speed and the camera will choose the correct aperture. Conversely, if you want to halt a bounding terrier in mid stride, you can pick a fast shutter speed and, again, the camera will select an appropriate aperture.

The aperture priority mode, as you've no doubt guessed, lets you pick the aperture, while the camera selects the matching shutter speed. This is the mode to choose when you want to manipulate depth of field. For example, you could set a small aperture for extensive depth of field (in a landscape, for example) or a large one when you want to limit depth (as in a portrait).



Metering modes allow you to control what part of a scene the meter will take its reading from--an extremely useful capability when it comes to getting good exposure in difficult lighting situations.

Averaging meters, as their name implies, simply average all of the bright and dark areas in a scene to provide an "average" exposure. If the range of brights and darks in a scene is modest, averaging meters provide good exposure. Problems arise when a scene contains particularly large areas of either bright or dark subject matter, which can fool the metering system. Most averaging meters overcome

this handicap by also using a center-weighted design that gives added emphasis to the centre section of the viewfinder, which is, not coincidentally, where most of us put the important subject matter. If you aim the centre section at this important part of your subject, excluding dark or bright areas, the meter can calculate a more accurate setting.

Spot meters, a more sophisticated version of centre-weighted meters, take their readings from an even smaller section of the viewfinder--often just a few degrees of the total view. Spot meters are an ideal solution in situations where you want to meter a very small area of one tone against a large area of brightness or shadow--a person's face surrounded by bright sky, for example.

Matrix metering or evaluative systems, by far the most sophisticated type of metering wizardry, are eerily accurate even in the most confounding situations. They work by dividing the viewing area into a series of key zones and taking separate readings from each area. This information is then fed into a computer chip that has been programmed with hundreds of thousands of potential lighting combinations; the meter then makes an educated guess at what the important parts of your scene are and exposes accordingly.

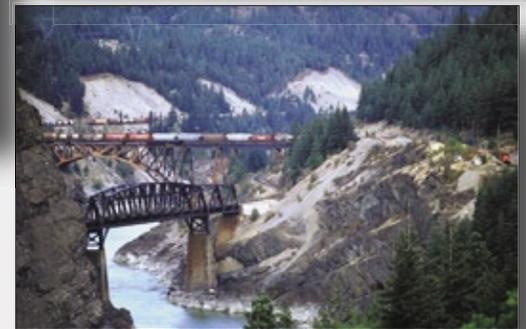
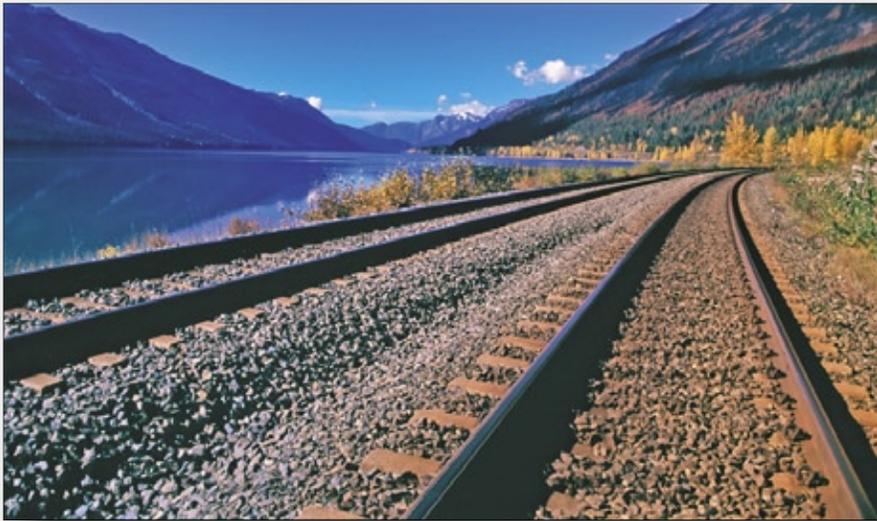
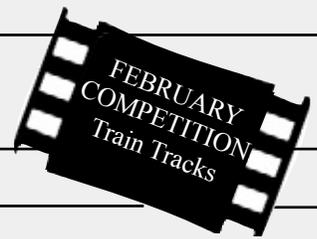
## Club Point Standings

As of February

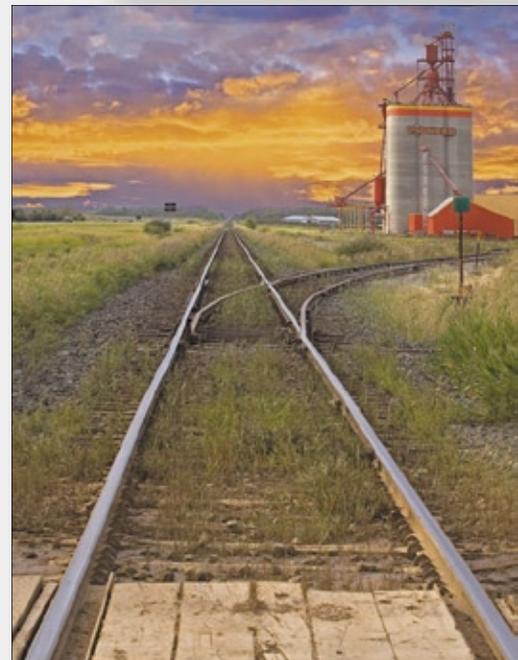
Sieg Koslowski	14
Allen Skoreyko	14
Derald Lobay	10
Al Popil	4
Gary George	3
Mark Williams	3

# THE LAST FRAME

CLUB MEMBERS WINNING MONTHLY PICTURES



Above, 1st Place Slide - Allen Skoreyko, above top, 2nd Place Slide - Allen Skoreyko, right, 3rd Place Slide - Derald Lobay



Above, 1st Place Print - Mark Williams, above right, 2nd Place Print - Allen Skoreyko, right, 3rd Place Print - Allen Skoreyko