



Field Notes

Selling Equipment By John Pennoyer

Have you ever noticed how things seem to collect around the house? When my wife and I moved to our new house about 9 years ago, we had many garage sales to try and get rid of all the unwanted items that we felt we would never need again. We both promised not to collect any more stuff! Well just don't look in my garage! No matter how hard we try, "stuff" always seems to collect.

I have never been a collector of things, but sometimes it just seems to happen. After 25 years in photography, my collection of equipment was getting larger and larger. Most of the equipment is in excellent condition but it's just that I'm not using it. This is what happens when you buy new equipment and keep the old. So I took a long hard look and decided what I really used and what was just collecting dust. Now this causes me a lot of pain, but I figured if I haven't used it in 3 years chances are I will never use it. I consider all of my equipment to be of top notch quality (even though used) and in most cases the average photographer will have no use for it or be willing to pay the price. In years past I have tried to sell in the newspaper and even in the club newsletter with no luck. About 5 years ago I sold my Nikon 400mm lens on E-bay and I was surprised at the money that I got for it. With my switch to digital, I felt it was necessary to sell some more equipment that was not working very well with my digital system. Over the last 6 months I have sold about 9 pieces of equipment on EBay with excellent results. So if you have some equipment that you are thinking of updating, I thought that I would

list some of my EBay tips. I am not promoting EBay, for there are other auction houses out there or other means of selling your equipment, but this is the one that I have sold through. For me it has been the best outlet to sell my equipment. All told I have sold probably about 12 pieces of equipment. However, I have never bought anything through any auction house.

Preparation: Take a good photo of the equipment you are selling. Many times I will use two photos. for example when selling a 24mm lens take a photo of the lettering on the lens, which will help identify the item to the viewer and also a photo of the front glass element. Also be sure to research what similar items are presently selling for. Determine how much shipping will cost in US and in Canada if you are willing to sell in Canada.

Listing: Be honest on the description. If there is a nick on the body or scratch on the lens, put it in the description. I like to mention how long I have had the item. I always mention why I am selling. The type of condition, mint, excellent, good etc. should also be listed. Any details on the item is always appreciated and will eliminate many e-mails asking questions. Also mention what is included with the item. As an example, I just sold a 24m lens and I mentioned that it would include the end caps, original box and packing, and Nikon instructions. (I always keep my original boxes and packing that the components came in.) You would be surprised what value this will put on your items. Sometimes I will also mention how the item was used. I just sold a drop-in circular polarizer for my 500mm lens and I used a brief description on how it was used.

Reserve Price: I always put on a beginning bid and a reserve price. As an example Beginning bid: \$50.00 Reserve price: \$150.00

A bid must start at \$50.00 and you have no commitment until the reserve price of \$150.00 is met. If the final bid is \$125.00 you do not have to accept; however, if the bid is \$150.00 or higher you “must” accept the bid.

Payment: I only accept Money Orders or cashiers checks, but I am also in with Pay Pal. And for me the only way to accept payment is through Pay Pal. On my last four bids, I was paid through Pay Pal within 15 minutes of the closing of the bid. Pay Pal does charge about 6%. But for me it is worth it!

Shipping: Buyer always pays shipping. I advertise that I will ship in US and mention that any shipping to International areas will be more expensive (it really is.) As soon as you are paid, ship the item immediately and e-mail the buyer the carrier that was used and the tracking number.

Just a few other tips, with eBay the item will be on the auction for 7 days. It is important that you have access to your e-mail everyday. People that are interested in your item may send you an e-mail about something specific to the item. I always check my item on the auction every day just to see how it is doing. However keep in mind those individuals that are really interested may not put in a bid until the final closing minutes. I had one item that never had a bid for 6 days. But in the last hour 5 bids came in and I sold the item within \$15.00 of what I paid for it almost 5 years ago.

Since I switched to digital, one of the negatives is with the size of the sensor; your wide angle is no longer a wide angle. My 28mm lens is now a 42mm lens, this is not conducive for a wide angle image. However with my sales on eBay, I can now order my 12-24mm lens that I guarantee will not be collecting dust like the items that I sold on eBay.



Good Shooting!

Field Trip Update

April 24th

Spring is coming! The prairie rainbow of color begins with the pasque flower. In addition to the flowers there is an excellent opportunity for a prairie sunset and several oak trees for silhouette or texture shots. We will caravan to River Terrace Scientific and Natural Area which is about 5 miles east of town. Any lens will work but macro capability is recommended. There is a short, steep hike from the car to the terrace and best photographs are on the hillside, sturdy shoes are recommended. Meet at the Cannon Valley Trailhead across the street from the grocery store in Cannon Falls at 6:30 PM for an evening of prairie and pasque flower photography. The shoot will be held rain or shine.

May 21st

8 AM at Schaefer Prairie, west of Glencoe, for small white lady slippers.

June 4th and 5th

Itasca State Park: cancelled.

July 16th

Roscoe Prairie for prairie flowers and sunset.

For further information contact Dale Bohlke at 612-384-8417 or dbohlke@mn.rr.com

A Day in the Snowy North Woods

**By
Ron Winch**

Light snow was falling as we slipped our mukluks into the snowshoe bindings and cinched them up tight. Sitting near by was a young Gray Jay watching our every move, probably hoping for a handout or a bit of leftover as it had come to expect from summer visitors.

Following an old cross-country ski trail, draped in two feet of soft new snow, we marveled at the quiet beauty of the northern forest in winter. It was a quiet day, no wind, and even the smallest twigs wore a blanket of snow – making for a winter wonderland. Every tree or bush we touched cascaded a cloud of snow crystals down upon us. Needless to say, parka hoods were drawn tight to keep snow from filtering past the fleece and down my back. Cameras, likewise, were zippered into a Kinesis camera pouch carried around the neck, keeping them snow free until needed to photograph a scene. Fleece mittens encased in gauntlet style corduroy overmitts kept our hands dry and warm as we gripped the cork handles of ski poles, used for balance. (Back in my younger days in Upper Michigan, ski poles with large baskets were used – use of poles was scorned by the “macho” outdoor types.)

Nylon wind pants shed snow readily and protect the lower body should the wind come up. Full length zippered legs make it easy to get into these – even when wearing boots or mukluks. We have been using Steger mukluks as our primary

could weather footgear and, I must say, our feet have never been more comfortable.

The raucous cry of a raven invites us to look up. On this dark snowy day, we see no detail, only a silhouette as it wings its way across the sky. A bit further on a mini cascade of snow reveals a Chickadee inspecting an alder shrub, hoping to glean a few insect eggs or even a dormant over wintering insect or two for an afternoon snack. The familiar “chickadee-de-de” muffles softly through the sound absorbing snowy woods.

As we round a bend in the trail we see on a knoll a clump of ghostly snow laden birches hardly discernable against the leaden sky. Plodding up the knoll we notice a Ruffed Grouse feeding on winter aspen buds. Being a cautious bird, it casts a quick glance our way before departing. Frigid nighttime temperatures will often find the grouse buried in fresh snow, using its insulating value to stay snug and warm as temperatures plummet and a northwest wind tortures most living things in the northern forest.

The staccato chatter of a red squirrel draws our attention; he is feeding on white pine seeds some 40 feet up in a majestic old white pine. We pause long enough to enjoy a snack of dried apricots and chocolate and then continue on the last mile to the lodge and hot chocolate.

It was another one of those days when the camera was just excess baggage – but no matter. Any photos that day may have been relegated to the round file or, at best, filed away where they would look the same next month or five years from now. Memories, on the other hand, may grow and become enhanced with time. And what can beat a day of snowshoeing in the snowy north woods with my best friend, my wife Toni.

Thanks to everyone who participated in the club exhibit. There were many great comments about how such a diverse group of people could come together and produce a great exhibit.

MNPC March 2005 Salon Scores - Judges: Mariann Cyr and Mike Prokosch

10

Blesener, Rod	Gray Owl in Snow
Cleveland, Ron	Pelican Flight
Morgan, Jeff	Heron & Fish
Samuelson, Tom	Pressure Ridge

9

Dykstra, John	Flying Owl
Galambos, Ted	Minnehaha Autumn
Kessler, Charles	Ducks and Sea Smoke
McDonough, Jean	Bull Elk at Sunrise
Morgan, Jeff	Egret and Fish
Perez, Dave	Canada Goose with Tongue Out
Scholljegerdes, Florence	White Violet and Bud

8

Aronson, Jim	Wild Phlox
Baker, Eric	Great Gray
Blesener, Rod	Gray Owl in Flight
Burkstrand, Michelle	Sunrise From Shore 29
Dykstra, John	Great Gray Owl
Ellenbecker, Dave	Trillium Group
Fleury, Cynthia	Maligne River
Gladitsch, Marilyn	Indian Paintbrushes #16
Gladitsch, Marilyn	New Ferns in Moss
Graves, Rick	Frozen Sunset Reflection
Graves, Rick	Red Morning Glory #5
Harlow, Jerry	Mallard Hen
Mallon, Jim	Grass Over Sumac
McDonough, Jean	Five Bison in Morning Mist
Moen, Aaron	Fall Colors
Mueller, Torsten	Aurora
Pennoyer, John	Adult Bald Eagle Catching Fish
Pennoyer, John	Trumpeters Taking Off
Snowden, Curt	San Juan Mts., CO
Vichich, Dave	Butterfly

Karai Exhibit

The City of Blaine will host an exhibit of photographs by Vijay Karai and photographs, Sketches and Batik by his wife, Jay. The exhibit will run the month of April. In all there will be 32 exhibits. If you happen to be in the neighborhood of 109 and Radisson in Blaine, stop by and see them. Or if you want to catch Vijay and Jay on opening night, please visit between 5 and 7 PM on April 4th (Monday). Congratulations Vijay and Jay!!

Vijay can be reached at:
Vijay Karai
Moneygram International
952-591-3164
Vkarai@moneygram.com

Election Update

As this newsletter goes to press, Larry Duke is planning a nominating committee meeting to be held on April 7 to identify and contact potential officers for the next year. Please give strong consideration to volunteering for a position. The club needs quality leadership going forward.

2005 TCACCC Interclub Competition

Results from the 2005 TCACCC Interclub competition are in and our folks did very well. Minnesota Nature Photography Club took first place in the Nature category.

In the Monochrome Print category, Jeff Morgan took the Print of the Year honors with "Cromer Wave". The Minnesota Nature Photography Club came in third in that category with 125 points (the Minneapolis Photographic Society came in first with 130 points.)

In the Color Print category, Jean McDonough was Runner-up Print of the Year with "Horses at

Sunset No. 2". The Minnesota Nature Photography Club took first place in this category with 129 points.

Congratulations to Jeff and Jean and all the MNPC members who submitted work for the competition.

Items for May's Newsletter:

I will once again be out of town in early May. Please have any articles or other items to me by April 28th at the latest. I apologize for the condensed schedule but our travel plans dictate the need.

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Editor: Don Nadreau, 763-377-4589,
dnadreau@usfamily.net
124 Ardmore Dr.
Golden Valley, MN 55422

President: Tom Samuelson 952-472-2235
thsamuel@citolink.com

Vice Pres.:

Treasurer: Jim Duncan 651-459-3558
Jduncan001@comcast.net

Meetings are held on the third Wednesday of the month, September through May. Set-up and social time with light refreshments begins at 6:30 pm. The nature slide salon starts at 7:00 pm and a program follows the salon. Meetings are held at:

**Visitor Center, Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge,
3815 East 80th Street
Bloomington, MN**

April Meeting:

The April meeting is scheduled for Wednesday 4/20/2005.

For your consideration:

For the digital folks in the group, a clean sensor is a must for optimal photos. A source I use for cleaning the sensor (plus a discussion of how to do the cleaning) can be found at

http://www.pbase.com/copperhill/ccd_cleaning

Give it a look.

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