**THE COACHELLA VALLEY DESERT CAMERA CLUB's
e-NEWSLETTER FOR DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHERS**

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FEBRUARY 2004

This month's *e-focus* takes over from where we left off last month. Joe Ramsey presents Part 2 of his wonderful exercise on how to turn day into night. And Stuart Lynn completes his two-part short (???) primer on layers for the Beginners' Page.

We launch a new lonelyhearts column for digigraphers: *Dear e-bby*. Thanks to readers who primed it with their questions. Keep them rolling in – email to efocus@cvdcc.org. We'll do our best to answer them!

Meline Pickus tells all about her Nikon 5700 in our monthly series, *Love Me, Love My Dig*. And Woody Kaplan contines to scour bargain basements in *Woody's Corner*.

For those wishing to compete in slide competitions, Stuart Lynn describes his experiences with two services for converting digital images to slides.

Remember to get up early to catch the morning light. And do so before Daylight Savings Time makes it pure torture! – *Ed*

Turning Day into Night - *Part 2*
by Joe Ramsey

In Part 1 we left the ghost town at Bodie under dark, starry skies. But now the forecast is for cloudy skies with 100% chance of rain. Just follow these directions using Photoshop and your image will encounter the same conditions.

Storm Clouds Arrive

Load the photo you used for Part 1 and reselect the sky. If you previously saved your Sky selection go to **Select**>Load Selection and pick it from the list. If not you will need to make a new selection then to avoid having to make the extra effort next time you work on this image go to **Select**>Save Selection, give it a name and click OK. Photoshop adds a new alpha channel with the selection and it's assigned name then saves it together with the image when the file is closed.

Fig 1: Open Your Image From Part 1

Next add a New Layer above the background layer using either the New Layer icon at the bottom of the Layers palette or select **Layers**>New>Layer from the drop down menu in the Option bar. To select the color range for our clouds set Foreground color in the Tool bar to a very dark, almost black, shade of blue. Then set background color to a light shade of gray-blue. If you can find suitable colors in your image pick those to get a blend that complements your image. My RGB settings in the Color Picker were

as follows: for Dark Blue R=20, G=48, B=92 and for Light Gray-Blue R=164, G=178, B=200.

With the sky selection active go to **Filters**>Render>Clouds. If you would like a different look to the clouds simply repeat your selection by going to Filter menu and clicking the top line which will show the last filter used, in this case "Clouds". You can also redo your clouds or any filter for that matter using keyboard shortcut Ctl/Cmd-F which repeats the most recently used filter. Each time you click a different random cloud arrangement appears using the same Foreground and Background colors that were picked. When your clouds look good add an

Fig 2: Add Storm Clouds

adjustment layer. Go to **Layer**>New Adjustment **Layer**>Levels (or Curves which I prefer) and adjust the brightness to get some serious looking clouds.

Here Comes the Rain

Making rain is a three step process. First, add a new layer at the top of your Layers Palette by choosing **Layer**>New>Layer. A New Layer window will pop up as shown in Figure 3. Change the Blend Mode to Hard Light and click the box to "Fill with Hard-Light-nuetral color (50% gray)". In Hard Light mode gray fill is not visible but provides pixels for the two filters we will use to

make rain. Click OK. Warning: If you use the New Layer icon at the bottom of the layers palette you will then have to Fill the layer with 50% gray from the Edit menu and change the Blend Mode located at the top of the layers palette
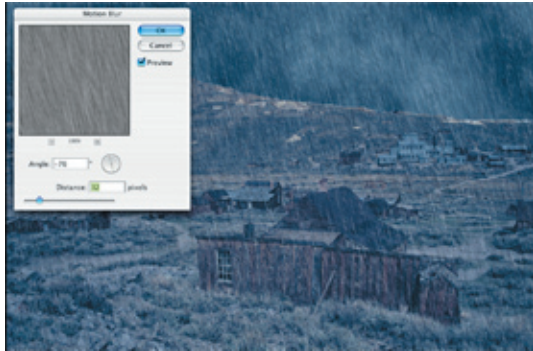

Fig 3: Adding The Rain

to Hard Light. Not only a couple of extra clicks but they are scattered all over as opposed to all choices being in a single window when you go to **Layer**>New>Layer as explained above.

With this new layer active go to Filter>Noise>Add Noise. Any setting from 25 to 40 percent works well. Check Gaussian and Monochromatic. Click OK.
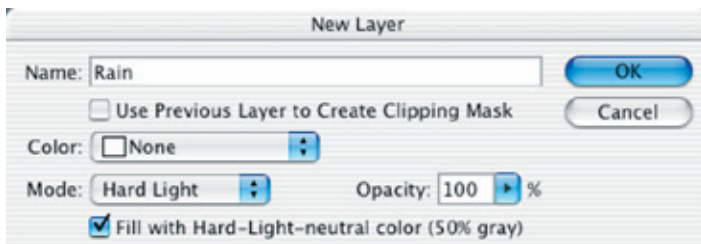

Fig 4: Add Motion Blur To The Rain

For the final step to make rain go to **Filter**>Blur>Motion Blur. I used settings as shown in Figure 4. With Preview checked you can vary your settings to something suitable for your image before clicking OK.

You will see that Photoshop does not handle Motion Blur well when it reaches the edges of your image. The effect is more intense and can be very obvious in some images. In this Ghost Town image since Motion Blur was applied vertically only the upper and lower edges appear to be affected. To eliminate the problem go back

in the History Palette to the state just prior to adding the new 50% gray Hard Light layer. Go to **Image**>Canvas Size and add 0.5 inches to the height . Be sure that Relative is checked and click OK. Now add the new 50% gray Hard Light layer and the two filters to get rain. When that is done go back to Image>Canvas Size and enter -0.5 inches to the height with Relative checked. When you click OK a warning will pop up indicating that the image will be smaller but that is OK because we are only removing the edges that were just added. Click Proceed. Your image should now be back to it's starting size with a rain effect that is evenly distributed without distracting edges.

Turn On the Lights

It's looking serious. Someone has probably vturned on a light in that miners cabin by now and we can too. Click on the Background layer in the Layers Palette to activate it. Make a Selection of the cabin window and place it on another layer. With the selection active hit Ctrl/Cmd-C then Ctrl/Cmd-V or use **Edit**>Copy, **Edit**>Paste. The window selection is put on a separate layer immediately above the background layer. However, for the next step to be most effective drag this layer above the two Background Adjustment Layers, i.e., it should be the third layer above the Background. If you don't do this the Background Adjustment Layers will also affect the Window light.

To turn the light on, add a Hue/Saturation adjustment layer. Go **Layer**>New Adjustment **Layer**>Hue/Saturation. When the New Layer window pops up be sure to click "Use previous layer to create clipping mask" so that only the
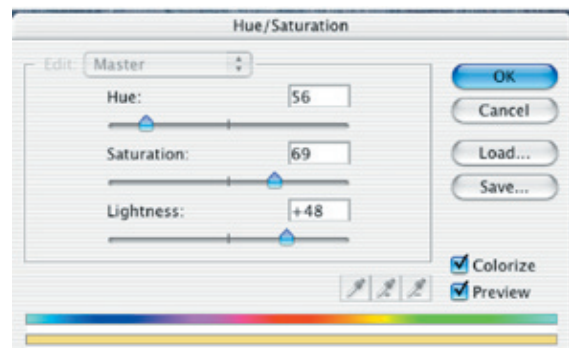

Fig 5: Turning On The Light

Window layer is affected. I used settings of Hue=56, Saturation=69 and Lightness=+48 as shown in Figure 5 then clicked OK to apply the settings.Figure 6 shows the final Layers palette resulting from this Ghost Town rainmaking project.

And there you have it - how to turn a daylight photo of a Ghost town into a dark stormy night with rain pouring down and light shining from a lone window in that forlorn miner's cabin. If not for the beginning photo I wouldn't need a camera at all!
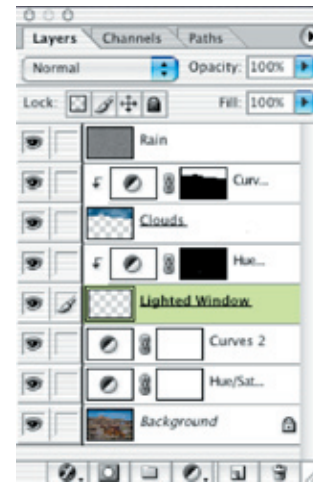

Fig 6: All The Layers Revealed

Fig 7: The Final Image:
Ghost Town On A Stormy Night!

the dipsig page

by Joe Ramsey

Tuesday, February 17 DIPSIG Meeting: Selections and More!

Learn to Slice and Dice the Safe Way. No Bandaids Required.

If you are looking ahead in our club Competition Schedule you know that the Special Project for March is Collages. This month in DIPSIG we'll get an early start on that project. We know, of course, that collages can be made using traditional darkroom printing techniques and even in-camera – but for the best techniques that make it easy to assemble stunning collages, Photoshop can't be beat. Heading up our program, Stuart Lynn will discuss "How to Slice and Dice Your Photos Into New Creations". We're expecting a thorough review and demonstration of techniques that are useful for making award winning collages.

Stuart's discussion will be followed with a practice session using images from 50 Fast Digital Photo Techniques, Technique 24, "Creating a Photomontage". Practice CD's will be available for use at the meeting or if you have the book and accompanying CD bring those to the meeting. The practice images are all jpg files which are usable in any version of Photoshop. If you prefer you can use your own photos. You should bring 5 or 6 images that you can use.

Open Discussion

We will follow the break with an open discussion period where you can ask for assistance regarding any perplexing questions or problems you may have encountered, offer suggestions for future topics or improved meetings, bring up points you want to make, or just about anything you would like to discuss provided it is Photoshop and/or photography related.

It's not required, but you will get more out of the meeting if you are able to bring laptops and power cords!

Report on January DIPSIG Meeting
by Jerry Dupree

Stuart Lynn presented a talk on "selections". He explained how to use the "lasso" tool to isolate or mask a portion of an image to lighten, darken, or adjust one part of a picture, or to select one item of a picture to move it to another. Selections can also be made with the magnetic lasso, the magic wand, or the marqee tools (rectangular, oval, variable, or fixed) to isolate parts of a picture. He also showed how to add to, subtract from, or transform selections; and the importance of saving selections for re-use later.

Stuart described the use of brushes (appropriately fixing their size, opacity, or fuzziness) as tools for modifying selections, particularly in the "Channels" view in Photoshop. He also demonstrated the use of more sophisticated tools, such as selecting by color range, and selecting similar areas, for addressing more complex situations such as separating off the sky when foliage is present.

He emphasized the importance of precise selections, particularly when dealing with boundaries between areas, such as between sky and foreground. He showed how to create smooth transitions by feathering selections or blurring boundaries.

By using the "multiply" function, you can intensify a picture, and then control it by adjusting the opacity (see this issue: *A Short (?) Primer on Layers: Part 2"*); and use layer masking to define areas of intensification.

Guidelines for submitting images to the Newsletters were also discussed by Joe Ramsey and Stuart. See this issue: *"Submitting Winning Competition Images for Website Posting"*. Some attendees also presented their "homework" on "Turning Day Into Night" based on Joe Ramsey's talk at the November 2003 DIPSIG meeting.

From Digital to Slides: New Horizons!
by Stuart Lynn

You use a digital camera but would like to submit slides into our slide competitions? This article describes outside services that will do the conversion work for you. This opens rich new opportunities for you to share your best images with other Club members and listen to what the judges have to say.

Slides also still dominate most competitive "Salons" organized under the auspices of the Photographic Society of America (PSA). Although prints are becoming more commonplace, they are cumbersome to mail. And digital files are not acceptable.

So if you want to compete in our Club slide or competitions or in most PSA salons, you need to convert your digital images to slides. Even slide photographers nowadays often scan their slides and apply allowed adjustments digitally before converting them back to slides. There are essentially two ways to do this: (1) photograph images projected on your computer monitor; or (2) use a film recorder to do the conversion.

Method (1) is tricky (particularly with older curved monitors) and can lead to degraded images unless done right. However, many PSA competitors (including a former President of the PSA) have successfully used this method for years. It's cheap, and you can do it yourself.

Film recorders as used in Method (2), on the other hand, are expensive. Also, they are not being widely produced any more (or, at least, not updated for newer computers). This is because the former commercial market for making presentation slides from Powerpoint has collapsed in the face of direct digital projection (like we use at DIPSIG). And the demands of competitive photography are a drop in the bucket by comparison.

Fortunately, you do not need to own your own film recorder. I have tested two operators who provide commercial services (and I am sure there are more) on a per slide basis. The two that I have tested are:

- *Slides.com* (http://www.slides.com) is a truly commercial service. You send them your digital images across the Internet[1], they make the slides using their own film recorder and ship them back to you according to what shipping method/speed you want to pay for.

- *Ellis Zacharias* (http://homepage.mac.com/elliszacharias48/) known to everyone as "*Zach*", is a long time, retired PSA member and distinguished competitor for many years. You mail him your digital files on a CD or Zip Disk, he processes the files, and mails back your slides by USPS Priority Mail. He advertises in the PSA Journal and has been doing this for six years now.

Both services are good, but I prefer to use Zach. His service (today) is less convenient than *slidesv.com* because you have to mail your files to him instead of shipping them over the Internet. This takes extra time and trouble. He tells me, however, that he is investigating the possibility of offering an Internet service.[2]

Why then do I give Zach the slight nod? For the following reasons:

1. Both services offer quality results with little to choose between them on normal images, but my images from *slides.com* were somewhat over-saturated in relation to the original images and had a yellow cast – whereas Zach's were truer to the original colors. However, since I used no color profiles to calibrate my output, this may be more accidental than substantive.

2. Zach understands the needs of PSA competitions and of photographers. If he sees a slide that is way off in, say, brightness or contrast, he will also send you a *second* slide made at a much different setting. That way you can tell Zach where between the two extremes you would like him to print your slide, and he will make a third slide to taste. You are only charged for the final result.

3. You only pay Zach for the slides for which you are satisfied with the result. If you do not like the job he does on a particular slide, you do not pay.

4. In fact, Zach only asks you to pay *after* you have received your slides. No credit card payments in advance. He is totally trusting of photographers because they have never failed to pay (except on the very rare occasions where his policy has allowed them to deduct the cost of unsatisfactory results).

5. His prices are generally a $1 less per slide or per duplicate than *slides.com*, and he does not add to the shipping charges. Zach charges $3 per slide and $2 per duplicate. However, on the negative side, until and unless he develops an Internet transfer process, you must consider the additional cost of shipping your CD to him – which could tip the scales the other way if you are in a hurry!

Now in the interests of full disclosure, I have to tell you that Zach uses a Mac! And those who know me well recognize that that fact of itself puts Zach way in the lead! Not only that, but using Apple's whiz iSight technology, Zach and I have videochatted over the Internet about his service, photography, and other stuff! It's cool when you can put a face to your service provider instead of having to plough through pushbutton menus to talk to some unknown technical support person off in Cyberspace!

(Footnotes)
[1] Using one of the oldest Internet protocols called FTP or File Transfer Protocol. Actually, you do not need to know how to speak FTP because *slides.com* makes it easy for you. You install a piece of software called "slides-draganddrop" that appears as a colored square on your desktop. You simply drag your file over the square, and the file is automatically shipped to slides.com.

[2] This entails installing what is known as an FTP server (see previous footnote). Sending large files as email attachments is not practical for Zach because it would swamp his ISP service capability.

Straightening Yourself Out
(in Photoshop only)!

O.K…..you downloaded your carefully composed image to your computer and discovered that you had forgotten Guideline No. 1: keep your horizon line horizontal (strange that they have the same word origin!). Unless, of course, you *really* intended for it to be crooked!

Thanks to Jerry Dupree who a couple of years ago at a DISPIG meeting pointed out this quick way to straighten images. I've used it ever since. The same technique can be used on verticals, too, such as for straightening toppling buildings (but don't use it on the "Leaning Tower of Pisa"!).

Unfortunately, it does not work in Photoshop Elements. Another reason to upgrade to the full Photoshop if you can afford it.

With your crooked image open in Photoshop, select the *Measure* tool (found hidden behind the *Eyedropper* tool on your *Tools* palette – it does not exist in Photoshop Elements). Drag a line along or parallel to the horizon line (or an edge of a building that is supposed to be vertical). Be careful to make sure that the line is truly parallel to the horizon line – if not, just draw the line over (the old one will disappear).
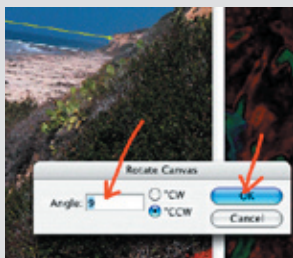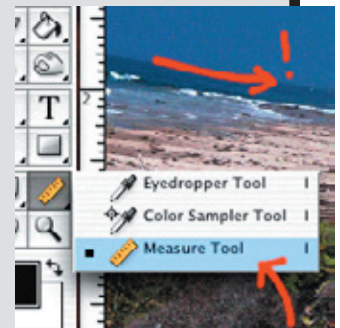
Now go to **Image**>*Rotate Canvas*>*Arbitrary*. A dialog box will come up displaying the angle of your proposed rotation. Trust it! Just hit the OK button.
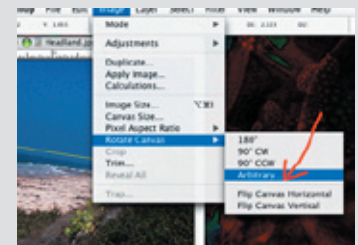
Wonder of wonders! Your image rotates so the horizon line is now horizontal. Just crop out the corners caused by the rotation (the penalty you pay for not having taken more care when you took the original photo….grinch, grinch). No one will ever know the difference!

A Short (?) Primer on Layers: *Part 2*
by Stuart Lynn

(Note: this article is written for users of Photoshop Elements. Users of Photoshop will have no difficulty, I am sure, adapting the concepts. – Ed)

This is the second part of a two-part primer on layers for beginners. The first part appeared in January 2004 e-focus. It's a pretty good idea to read the first part before reading this second part!

In this second part, we cover three subjects: (1) a little more on blending layers (2) more on *Adjustment* and *Fill Layers*; and (3) an introduction to *Layer Styles*.

More on Blending Layers

I just want to re-emphasize two of the most important blending modes: *Multiply* and *Screen*. They act in essentially opposite ways: *Multiply* intensifies whereas *Screen* (guess what) de-intensifies.

In essence, *Multiply* can be used to darken images but in a particular way: it darkens the darks more than it darkens the lights! In many ways, it acts like a polarizing filter acts in the camera on cloudy skies.

Screen, on the other hand, lightens areas, but it lightens lights more than it lightens darks. It is useful for bringing out detail in shadows (except that Photoshop CS now has a niftier tool for doing just that!).

Let's see how it works. Carefully select the sky in one of your images (see next month's *e-focus* for how to make careful selections). Copy your selected sky to a new layer right above the original layer. Now, using the pulldown menu to the top left of your *Layers* palette, select *Multiply* as the blending mode. Note how the sky darkens,

heightening the difference between the lighter clouds and the deeper blue sky – but much smoother than if you had just used the *Contrast/Brightness* tool. Too much darkening? Just use the *Opacity* slider to pull back on the effect. This is great for making stunning skies! Or for giving substance to a wishy-washy entire image.

Now select a shadow area on your image, and follow the same steps except this time blend with the *Screen* tool. See how it brings out the detail in your shadow? Again, adjust the amount of the effect by using the *Opacity* slider.

Adjustment and Fill Layers

Adjustment Layers and *Fill Layers* (particularly the former as far as digigraphers are concerned) are powerful tools that enable you to make certain kinds of adjustments to your image on a higher layer without actually changing the original underlying image. In Photoshop Elements, they are the only kinds of layers that allow you to use *Layer Masks* (see December, 2003 *e-focus*: *"Layer Masking: The Basic Concepts"*) to apply the adjustments only to *selected* parts of your image.

Let's just plunge in to see how they work. Before you start, drag the *layers* palette away from the dock at the upper right of your screen so that it will remain open. That will make it easier to see what is happening.

Adjustment Layers

Now, open an image, let's say one that has a clearly defined sky. Now select **Layer**>*New Adjustment Layer*>*Hue/Saturation*. A dialog box
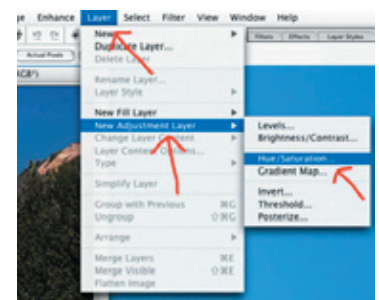
pops up that asks you to rename the new layer if you wish….go ahead and rename it *Test* or whatever you wish. Let's ignore the other boxes in the dialog box for now and just click OK.
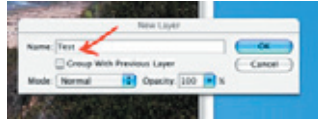
Two things happen in a flash. *First*, the normal *Hue/Saturation* dialog box opens. *Second*, you will see in the *Layers* palette that a new layer has been added called *Test*. It has a funny icon to the left that symbolizes that it is a *Hue/Saturation Adjustment Layer*. It also has a layer mask to the right: more about that later.
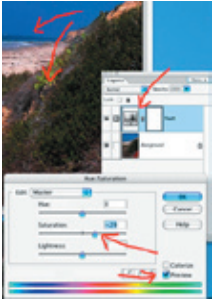
Go ahead and adjust one or more of the sliders in the *Hue/Saturation* box, and you will see your image respond accordingly. When you have made some noticeable change and you are tired of playing around, just click OK and close the *Hue/Saturation* window.

Now, have you really changed your image. Go to the *Layers* palette and turn off the little eye icon to the left of the *Test* layer. Hey, your image appears like it did originally! No changes! Now turn *test* layer back on: your changes re-appear! All of the changes are captured in the new *Test* layer – the original layer remains pristine pure.

But now imagine 15 minutes have passed and you suddenly realize that your *Hue/Saturation* adjustments were not quite the way you want them. No problem. Just double-click on the *Test* layer somewhere on the funny icon and the *Hue/Saturation* window pops open again. Make whatever further adjustments you please, and click OK. You can do this whenever you wish, so long as you keep this adjustment layer. And you have never damaged your original image. By the way, adjustment and fill layers are saved when you save your work….so you can come back to them at any time.

Now, click in the layer mask icon on the *test* layer to highlight and activate the layer mask. Following the precepts of layer masking (see

December 2003 *e-focus*), you can paint "into" the mask (you actually paint over the image area itself if you recall) with black paint. Remember: wherever the layer mask is black, the bottom layer will show through; wherever it is painted white, the adjustment layer takes effect (and you can go back and forth with white and black paint, changing your mind as often as you like). That way, your adjustment layer can be designed to apply selectively only to certain parts of your image. Try it and see for yourself!
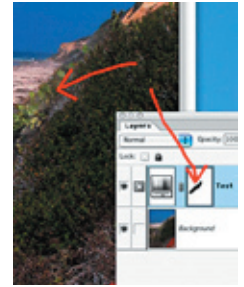
We have been working only with the *Hue/Saturation Adjustment Layer*. But Photoshop Elements also supports adjustment layers to allow you to adjust *Brightness and Contrast, Levels,* and others (Photoshop provides even more choices). Go ahead and experiment.

Fill Layers

Fill Layers work very similarly. With a fill layer, you can paint a solid color over the image, or a preselected pattern. Try it and see. Only this time, experiment with different blending modes and opacity settings (using either the boxes that appear in the dialog box when you first invoke the fill layer, or later in the *Layers* palette itself), so that the underlying image will shine through in a variety of ways. This will take you further down the path away form traditional photography and closer to graphic, or even fine, arts.
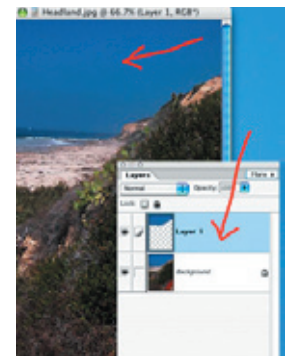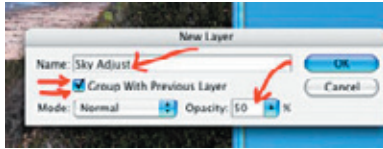
Let's try one experiment with a fill layer. Ditch the *Test* layer by dragging it to the *Trash* can at the bottom of the *Layers* palette. Now make a careful selection of the sky in your image (the art of making good selections will be described in next month's *e-focus*). Copy and Paste it to a new layer. Now go to **Layers**>*New Fill Layer*>*Solid Color* and a window will pop open asking you to name the layer if you wish. Let's call it *Sky Adjust*. This
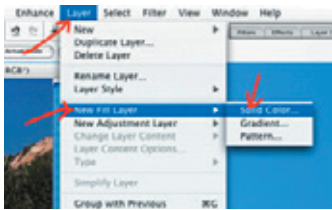
time, set the *Opacity* slider back to 50%. Also – and very importantly – check the box that says *"Group With Previous Layer"*. Then click OK to close the window.

Again, two events happen in a flash. The *Color Picker* window pops open, and a new *Sky Adjust* fill layer has been added above your "sky" layer. Play around with the colors in the *Color Picker*. Your sky – and only your sky (because you grouped the fill layer and your "sky" layer together) will change color. When you are happy with the color, click OK to close the *Color Picker* window.
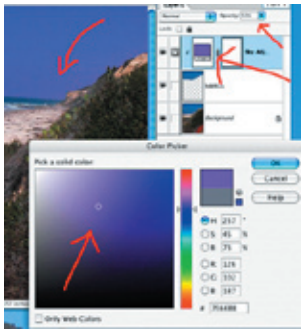
You have found another way to work selectively with parts of your image. And, as usual, you can go back and change the color at any time by double-clicking on the *Sky Adjust* layer icon. And you can use the layer mask that is provided, too. What power!
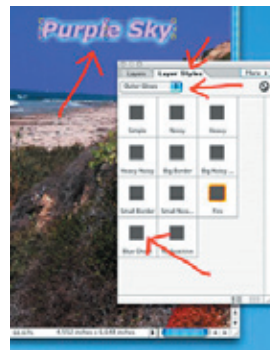
Layer Styles

Just a little about *Layer Styles*. These are tools that enable you to play tricks with each separate layer, such as surrounding them by a glow or making them embossed. Again, their use takes you further away from digital photography and more into the realm of graphic arts. So we will just touch on them lightly.

We illustrate by example. Trash all layers except for your original image. To prepare, drag the *Layer Styles* palette away from the dock at the top right. It may combine with your already separated *Layers* palette, displaying two tabs, one for each palette.

Let's type some text on top of your image. To do this, invoke the *Text* tool (Shortcut: t). Make sure you have selected a nice heavy font and a large font size in the *Toolbar* above – and a nice contrasty color.

Now type something onto your image. Note that this creates yet *another* kind of layer in your *layers* palette: a *text layer*. And when you have finished typing and click on some other tool, it automatically names this text layer with the word(s) you have typed in!

Now, with the text layer selected and highlighted, go to the *Layer Styles* palette. From the pulldown menu at the top left, select *Outer Glow*. You are presented with an array of choices. Experiment with different selections and notice what each does the word(s) that you typed: they create different kinds of outer glows.

Layer styles can be applied to any kind of layer, but the principles are the same. Photoshop gives you more control than Photoshop Elements, but you have more than enough to play with in Elements.

Enough about layers! Get to work! One of the best ways to learn about adjustment layers is to work through Joe Ramsey's two particle article

Postscript: after essentially putting this issue of e-focus to bed, I realized that I had chosen a poor illustration in the above article for use with the text on Solid Color Fill Layer. It had a cloudless sky, so there was essentially no point in setting the Opacity to 50%. But I hope readers will understand that if there were clouds in the sky, there would be a need to set the Opacity down for them to show through the Fill Layer! – Ed

Love me, Love my Dig
by Meline Pickus

I purchased the Nikon Coolpix 5700 largely on the recommendation of the salesperson at Helix. He had used it and was wildly enthusiastic about it. After losing my Nikon 100 to the bottom of the Zambezie River, I was looking for a light weight, small travel camera. I wasn't yet sure that I wanted it to be digital but was open to persuasion.

LOVE ME...

The Pros: The camera is indeed small and light weight and takes amazingly sharp pictures. It is a 5 megapixel camera and can shoot in raw and tiff formats. Most camera functions can be automated if desired. White balance is adjustable. There is a macro feature which allows close focus to1.2 inches. Self timer and pop-up flash are included. The flash is programmable allowing red-eye reduction and slow sync. Wide angle and telephoto lenses can be purchased as accessories. In fact, this tiny camera includes most of the desirable features of a very sophisticated larger camera.

The Cons: Camera use is very complex and not especially user friendly. I have had the camera for several months and am still not used to all of its features. Although most of the time, on aperture priority mode, the highest f-stop is about 8, there is a very surprising depth of field with remarkable sharpness of distant objects. The camera is slow to actually take the picture because it must focus first. It would definitely not be a good choice for sports photography or anything with rapid action. Shutter speed can be helped along by slightly depressing the exposure button and thus keeping it in "ready" mode but it is still slower than a film camera. Because it is a small unit, the battery (rechargeable) needs regular recharging.

My evaluation: the jury (me) is still out. I have routinely been pleased with my pictures, sometimes even excited by them. I am thrilled with not having to carry the heavy load of my old camera and lenses and still being able to do a pretty good job without all the fancy equipment. But I am continually frustrated by the complexity of the system and having to go back and reread the manual. We had to buy a generator for the car so that I could charge my batteries while driving and not run out of power.

LOVE MY DIG...

Editor's Note:I, too, owned a Nikon 5700 until recently, and experienced the same pros and cons as Meline. I purchased three batteries and even then could run out of juice towards the end of a heavy day's shooting. The controls do require practice, and even then can be cumbersome. One note: f8 on the Nikon does not equate to f8 on a regular film camera. Other pros: sensitive to infrared; superb optical zoom (35mm to 240mm – the more recent Nikon 5400 handles 28mm to 210mm) plus available extender lenses; great swivel LCD screen which pivots all the way back on itself (a definite plus for candid work and for self-portraits!). Another con: poor manual focusing. But I really enjoyed the camera for the year that I owned it!

Woody's Corner
by Woody Kaplan

AROUND THE e-BLOCK

Ritz *Interactive Complete Online Guild to Digital Imaging* is an on-line tutorial. For $39.95 you get 6 months access learning how to shoot and how to edit your photos digitally. If you're new to digital, what are you waiting for?

http://www.ritzcamera.com/webapp/wcs/stores/servlet/ProductDisplay?storeId=10001&catalogId=10001&langId=-1&productId=13002130&topCategory=1004&cat1=1020&cat2=1365331#void

It's so hard to find things on the Internet! NOT!! All one has to do is type in key word in right place. By chance I typed in BATTERIES on into Googol (built-in to some browsers) and bingo ………

http://www.batteries.com

Did you like PhotoShop 7? Your going to love the upgrade to Photoshop CS when you buy it from Amazon. Mail in $20 rebate. Cheaper than anywhere else, I'll bet. All sorts of nifty new features *(see e-focus, November 2003 and December 2003 – Ed)*

http://www.amazon.com

Looking for a faster DVD burner? Check out this 8X burner:

http://reviews-zdnet.com.com/Plextor_PX_708A/4505-3205_16-30479221.html

Like to see great pictures of "America 24/7 ? Last year Olympus published a book of photos. You can order your own copy.

http://www.america24-7.com/store/index.shtml

Who are the top 10 online photo services if you don't like to do your own printing – or simply want to make it easy for the kids to pay for their own copies of your great photos of the grandkids? Check them out:

http://reviews.cnet.com/4520-3626_7-1021011-1.html?tag=txt

You missed Stuart and Joe at DIPSIG this past month? Become an expert in choosing the right camera, advanced techniques, how to prepare your images for e-mail or web viewing and more at:

http://cma.zdnet.com/texis/cdsales/help001.html

For Mac users, just out and great way to keep track of all your photos, "iPhoto4". You can catalog up to 25,000 images. Sorry! You must buy whole program as part of "iLife '04":

http://www.store.apple.com

If you're a Windows person, check out Adobe and their neat way of keeping track of photos with "Photoshop Album 2.0":

http://www.adobe.com/products/photoshopalbum/main.html

Are you ready for another new Sony? New high end DSC-T1 camera that fits in your back pocket and features a huge 5.1 Megapixel resolution.

http://www.sonystyle.com/is-bin/INTERSHOP.enfinity/eCS/Store/en/-/USD/SY_DisplayProductInformation-Start?CategoryName=dcc_DIDigitalCameras_Cyber-shotDigitalCameras&ProductSKU=DSCT1&Dept=dcc

Or another hot little camera, the Minolta Dimage XT, so small it fits in *any* pocket, is ready for first picture in 1.1sec from switching on. Check it one out at: http://www.minoltausa.com. (Click on CAMERA +ACCESSORIES following which the last camera on right would be the XT). Click, "Take a Tour" or "Watch Movie" What will Madison Ave. think of next? Or go directly to the movie:

 http://www2.konicaminolta.jp/english/products/consumer/digital_camera/dimage/dimage-xt/xt_movie.html

Then again, in the "in the pocket" sweepstakes, you may want to check out the Olympus 300:

http://www.olympusamerica.com/cpg_section/cpg_product_lobbypage.asp?l=1&p=16&bc=27&product=902&DCMP=homepssty300

Or are you ready to step up to that 8 megapixel digital camera (no, it doesn't fit in the back pocket – yet!)? You say you just bought a new camera? When you check out the new Sony DSC-F828, you may go back to work if you're retired! For less then $1000 you will have the most up to date Sony camera for the next 6 weeks. Gerry Dupree already has his; Stan Spiegel has one on order. Who's next?

http://www.sonystyle.com/is-bin/INTERSHOP.enfinity/eCS/Store/en/-/USD/SY_DisplayProductInformation-Start;sid=Z6D54VvJcJT5oBvgAdfz6hTGigmx8SJ6YiY=?ProductSKU=DSCF828&Dept=dcc&CategoryName=dcc_DIDigitalCameras_CybershotProDigitalCameras

Finally, have you been to Nikon's web site recently?

http://www.nikoncoolpix.com/main.html

Woody

Your questions answered! e-focus has assembled a team of international inexperts to help you with your digital problems. Please send your questions to e-focus@cvdcc.org.

Dear e-bby: I understand that the digital camera operating chip is due to be changed to a new chip soon. I do not know the old chip name or the projected new chip name I am wondering if any cameras are using a new, advanced chip and/or when we might see an improved system? Thanks, Stan.

You are probably thinking of the transition from CCD (Charged Coupled Device) arrays to CMOS arrays. The good news is that CMOS is already here. I believe the first under $1,000 digital camera to incorporate CMOS is the Canon Digital Rebel. A key advantage of CMOS is that it is "noiseless" at any ISO setting. The Rebel, for example, does not even include a "noise reduction" setting found on many CCD cameras.

Dear e-bby: What is the difference between layers and adjustment layers and when is it appropriate to use each? Meline.

Adjustment Layers are just layers that have a specific purpose. They have the effect of allowing certain transformations to your image without altering the original image – all the transformations occur on a separate layer above the layer containing the original image. So, for example, if you invoke **Layers***>New Adjustment Layer>Brightness Contrast, Photoshop or Photoshop Elements opens the dialog box that enables you to adjust contrast and brightness. When you have finished your adjustments and closed the dialog box, you will see a new layer perched on top of your original layer (which remains unchanged) in the Layers palette. It has a brightness/contrast symbol. At any later time, you can double-click on this new Adjust-*

ment Layer to reopen the dialog box and change your adjustments. It also comes with its own layer mask, so you can "paint" in or out those areas of your image that you want to be affected by the adjustment (see e-focus, December 2003). Photoshop has more kinds of Adjustment Layers than does Photoshop Elements. See "Beginners' Page", this issue, for more.

Dear e-bby: When resizing pictures, how do we determine the best number of pixels in the resolution box? My Photoshop Elements version defaults to 72 which I usuall change to 72 when I remember it. Yours, Bill.

Many, if not most, digital cameras store images at 72 dpi and let the image physical dimensions fall where they may depending on the pixel dimensions of the array. A 1440 x 2160 pixel array, for example, will pass on a 20" x 30" image at 72 dpi. There is no compelling reason to change the resolution until such time as you are ready to output the image, although you may have to demagnify it to fit on your screen. When you finally print, you should aim for at least 300 dpi, but you should try to achieve this without creating or losing any pixels if possible. Suppose, for example, that you want to print the foregoing image at a size of 5" x 7.5" (I have chosen the numbers for convenience): go to **Image***>Size (***Image***>Resize>Size in Elements) dialog box; be sure to* <u>uncheck</u> *the Resample Image checkbox (that way, you do not add or subtract pixels when you change dimensions); and enter the required image dimensions into the Width and Height boxes (if you keep Constrain Proportions checked, you only need enter one of these – that's the best practice). The Resolution Box will (with these choices) automatically change to 290 dpi (which is 4 x 72), just about enough for printing. You should always choose your dimensions so that there is sufficient resolution for printing and this limits how large an image you can print, particularly if you have cropped your original image. Some authors claim you print as low as 140 dpi, but I would not tempt this theory too far!*

Stan also notes: Anyone wanting to compare pricing on cameras as well as many many other items should go to http://www.shopping.com **and compare pricing from many stores. The items as well as the sellers are rated by customers. It is a very helpful website.**

Submitting Winning Competition Images For Website Posting

(This is a reprise in more detail of an article by Lillian Roberts in December, 2003 e-focus)

In future, all winning competition images will be posted on the website instead of in the In Focus newsletter. The following are guidelines on submission of images to the Webmaster (Stuart Lynn).

Images Not Submitted Electronically.

It is preferable to email the images. However, if you are not able to do so, please be sure to hand your slide or print to the Webmaster or designee (the designee will announce themselves) *at the end of the competition meeting*. There will be a few days grace after the meeting, but it will be the creator's responsibility to deliver the image to the Webmaster. After that, the winning image will *not* be posted.

Images Submitted Electronically

Please make a digital *copy* of the file containing your image (resized according to the instructions below) and email it to webmaster@cvdcc.org within *three* (3) days of the competition meeting. After that, the winning image will *not* be posted.

Please help the Webmaster keep track of images and be considerate of his time (we're all volunteers!) by following these instructions!

File Name

Please rename your file before sending it as follows:

"member's initials"_"competition month"_"competition year"_"title"

*Be sure to use the title that was used in the Competition*. Thus, for example:

SL_11-03_Swimming Upstream

Following this simple requirement will help the Webmaster identify your file rather than having to sort through and rename a bunch of files labeled "My winning image.tiff" or "BFS1019.jpg"! Thank you….. I appreciate it!

Sizing Your Image

It is important that your image size be correct. This will both save the Webmaster's time and ensure that your image looks spectacular when posted. To achieve this, do the following:

1. Open your file in Photoshop or Photoshop Elements. In Photoshop go to ***Image>Image Size***. In Photoshop Elements go to ***Image>Resize>Image Size***.This will open a dialog box that looks as follows:
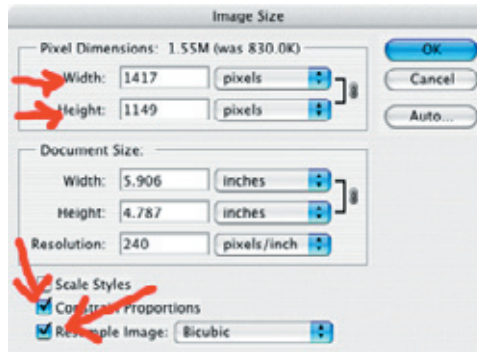
Make sure the *Constrain Proportions* and *Resample Image* boxes are checked. This is *very* important!

2. Now comes the harder part. But you can make it!

   In the very top box labeled *"Width"* (under *Pixel Dimensions*) change whatever number appears there to 1024.

   The number in the box below it labeled *"Height"* will most probably change. If the new number is *less* than 768 (or *equals* 768), heave a big sigh of relief and go to the next step.

   If it is *more* than 768, change it to 768 and then heave a big sigh of relief.

   It's easy once you've done it two or three times. I promise!

3. Hit the *OK* button.

Saving Your Image

Save your file (using the above filename) as a jpeg file, medium to high quality.

E-Mailing Your Image

Finally, just attach your saved file (or files if you have several winners!) to an email note, and send it to webmaster@cvdcc.org. To help your disorganized webmaster keep things straight, how about a subject line that says "December Winning Images of Betsy Doe"!

Thank You!

Many thanks for your assistance in saving me time! If anything in the above is not clear, feel free to email me (webmaster@cvdcc.org) or call (my phone number is in the Club directory).

Stuart Lynn
CVDCC Webmaster
January 21, 2004