

## AROUND THE TOWN

# Photographs, memories go hand in hand

Last week I covered a story at the Mystic and Noank Library about digital photography. It focused on organizing and sharing photos using Picasa, a free program that enables you to work some pretty neat magic on your photos.

I watched the delightful Nancy Hevenor show the audience of varied abilities, how to make the most use of the very user-friendly program. She was friendly, articulate, engaging and informative. Now I'm not sure what constitutes an obsession but the woman has more than 40,000 photos. And she sure is good at taking them, organizing them and sharing them with friends. And she is good at teaching others how to do the same.

She is a gift to the community. She'll be back to the library in a week or so to teach a class on how to make Christmas cards, which will probably be filled, if it isn't already, just like her last class.

But back to the photos. Why would someone snap and keep 40,000 photos I wondered. This fascinated me as I raced back home to download Picasa. I couldn't wait to see what I could do. I love taking photos, although my own camera was recently pronounced dead after weeks in the camera hospital. I still get to play with the newsroom camera taking photos for my stories. Anyway, the things you can do with Picasa amazed me. And compared to Photoshop it is so easy to use.

All this photo talk had me wondering why we take photos. I guess it's all about capturing memories. One of the other things Hevenor shared that I suspect I'll be taking advantage of is [www.scanmyphotos.com](http://www.scanmyphotos.com), the ultimate ease in capturing memories. The company allows you to send in a box of photos, organized or not, and they will scan them and either send you

a disk or a hardcover volume of all your photos to peruse page by page.

All those boxes and random envelopes of prints can be combined into a safe place where they will be preserved forever. How cool is that! The price was pretty reasonable, too.

So, I'm thinking that I might gather the family photos and present a volume of pics to mom for Christmas. I can just see the tears coming already. The perfect gift. I'm not sure if I'll do just my sons and I, or if I might involve the whole gang. It's a pretty big gang but I know she would really enjoy it. We'll see.

Memories. Every now and then I have one of those flashback moments where I relive an experience from childhood. I remember a toy I used to play with or an activity I used to share with my family. They are usually good memories.

Recently my youngest son began telling me about a toy that he just had to have. He was with some friends who were playing with an Etch-ASketch and that triggered a memory of a toy he had as a child.

He's 21 but we all love a good toy. He described it to me, not knowing the name and I immediately knew what he was talking about.

Still, not knowing what it was called, I dropped into Mystical Toys, certain they would have it. I described what it was and of course they had it. They have everything in there, (and the best selection of mobiles I've ever seen.) It is called Wooly Willy. You drag magnetic particles under the clear plastic cover with a special pen, to give hair, mustache, and beard to the bald face under the plastic. Shake it up and start again.

Remember that toy? It's a classic.

It was around when I was a kid. And my son remembered it from when we went on trips to Cape Cod when he was a kid. I suspect he'll buy one for his son or daughter when he has them.

Such is the life of memories.

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PATRICIA ANN CHAFFEE

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# Digital photography class was more than a snapshot

By Patricia Ann Chaffee

Press Writer

MYSTIC – The Mystic and Noank Library recently played host to a digital photography seminar presented by Nancy Hevener as part of its Technology Tuesdays program.

Hevener serves on the library board and knew it was looking to offer some different programs that would be of interest to people. The first part of seminar covered selecting a camera, gathering digital photos from other sources and organizing your photos. Part two, held last week, was about sharing and enhancing photos.

Hevener recommended

[www.scanmyphotos.com](http://www.scanmyphotos.com) as a great source for transferring all those old prints to digital.

You can send a whole box of prints and have them scanned onto a disk or put into a hardcover book for a pretty reasonable price. If there is any question about Hevener's interest in photography, she said that she currently has more than 40,000 photos on a thumb drive.

"When you start to have thousands, you have to get them organized," she says. She suggests saving them in folders by the year they were taken. She recommends using Picasa 3.0, which by the end of the class, had just about all 25 in attendance convinced.

It's really pretty amazing.

Her calm, patient and friendly voice encouraged questions and her comments evoked occasional laughter from the room. Her talk was very informative and simple enough for even the novice photographer to understand.

Picasa 3.0, which is free, can only be used with Windows. It

currently does not have a Macintosh compatible program.

She discussed the compatibility of cameras and computers for importing pictures and suggested that using the memory card from the camera and putting that into the computer or a \$ 15 USB card reader, might be the simplest way to get the pictures from the camera onto your computer. However, she did mention that photos can be imported from a disk, as well.

The class, which was filled, appeared to be of varying levels of ability. People asked great questions to further understand the process.

Hevener does not recommend printing photos at home, as it almost always less expensive to order them from CVS, Walmart, and Target. Picasa can help to upload the photos to the site you choose if you wish to send the stores your pictures for printing.

Picasa allows for complex editing of photos in the simplest of ways. You can lighten, crop, remove red eye, remove blemishes, and lots more.

Or, the program will do it all for you by clicking on, "I feel lucky."

There are special effects that can be applied, as well as collage, and captions. She provided handouts for folks to look at after the class to become more familiar with the program.

Picasa is very user friendly and so was Hevener's presentation, both entertaining and informative. She was the perfect candidate to teach the class.

She was the department chair of computer science at Hartford State Technical College and president of a software engineering firm, Micro Logic, Inc. for 30 years before selling the company and settling in Mystic after retiring.

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Nancy Hevener teaches a group about Picasa 3 at the Mystic and Noank Library.

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