



Taking Terrific New Neighbors Photos

Photos of New Neighbors people and events are extremely important to sharing our group's variety and excitement with our current and potential members. Shared on our web site and in the local media, there is no better way to encourage participation in our organization and its incredible number of activities. Our membership numbers and presence in The Landings community have increased incredibly since we have established a regular presence in the local media.

WE NEED YOUR HELP in promoting your activity and our organization. Take photos of the events, trips, activities, participants, speakers – anything representative of your activity. Who doesn't like to see their photo in print?? And then see how participation increases.

Below are some suggestions on how to become acquainted with your digital camera (or iphone), set up your photos, and then shoot, edit, and submit them. Together we'll make this a terrifically visual year for The Landings New Neighbors.

Getting acquainted with the equipment

Know your camera – Before taking your first photos, learn as much as you can about your digital camera (or iphone). Take a lot of practice photos and experiment. You're not using film, so there is no per-picture charge.

Learn to control the flash – Light is very important in digital photography. Make certain that your subjects are fully and evenly lit. But, don't always rely on the camera's automatic flash to provide enough light and to put the light where you want it. The flash will light up the immediate area, but will also create unwanted shadows and "red-eye," as well as a reflection from any shiny surface. It's good to have the ability to turn off the flash when you don't need it. Or try partially covering the automatic flash. This will diffuse the light and reduce the glare.

Hold the camera level and steady – Although our photos are often taken "on the run," it is extremely important that the camera be held steady for as long as it takes for the picture to be complete.

Have enough memory capacity – The camera itself will store a limited number of photos. You will undoubtedly need a memory card to shoot an entire event from many different angles.

Taking better pictures

Take a huge number of pictures - The advantage of a digital camera with lots of memory is that you can take lots and lots of pictures so that you can find just the one or two you are looking for.

Think before you click – Interesting pictures are pictures of something in particular; they have a focus. Crowd scenes don't make good pictures.

Move in close – If you want an uninteresting picture of a crowd, stand back and shoot. If you want a picture of a particular person or activity, move in close and frame up the interesting person or object.

Move in closer – Faces are much more interesting than head-to-toe shots. Shoot smaller groups and get in close. It's always better to physically move closer to your subject rather than zooming in when taking your close-up photos. You will get a much clearer photo if you stand closer to the action rather than using the zoom function.

Pick a point of view – Select an angle that best displays the subject. If the picture is of a person making a presentation, a frontal view is much better than a profile shot. Your viewers should always be able to recognize your subject when they see him/her on the street. And never take a group or individual shot from behind – such as a group standing around the refreshment table or sitting in the audience watching a speaker – unless your point is that there was a large crowd in the audience.

Set the focus on the main subject – An automatic camera will focus on the object in the center of your screen. Check that the most important aspects of your shot are in focus by activating the automatic focus prior to actually pushing the button to record the photo. Center up your main subject. Push the shutter button down half way to set the focus (your camera may have a green “focus OK” light in the viewfinder or it may beep). Now you can move your main subject out of the center of the frame, and it will still be in focus. Push the shutter button the rest of the way down to record the photo.

Consider the foreground – Minimize the distraction between you and the subject of your picture. When taking a picture of a nature activity, a bush in the foreground is probably fine – but avoid catching the garbage can.

Consider the background – The background should highlight the subject, not detract from it, and definitely not swallow it. A colorful abstract painting in the background will be a definite distraction. Watch for poles or plants that might appear to be growing out of your subjects head or ear.

Notice the light – Is there a shadow across the face of your subject, are the eyes in deep shade, is the sun (a lamp or window) behind the subject? All are things that should be avoided. Also be aware of any shiny object that may catch and reflect the flash.

Understanding resolution

A digital image is made up of tiny dots called pixels. The term “resolution” refers to the size of the digital image the camera produces and is usually expressed in terms of “megapixels” or how many million pixels the camera can record in a single image. More resolution means better print quality.

Our local media have different resolution requirements, depending on their method of printing. For example, the Landings Journal requires at least 1MB, while the TWATL can accept photos with less resolution. However, the higher the resolution, the better our events and our organization will look to readers.

Post-production

Editing your photos – Photo editing capability is available with most computer programs – such as Microsoft Office Photo Editor or HP Image Editor. With these programs you can perform magic with the photos you have taken, such as

- Crop to standard photo sizes (4x6 or 5x7)
- Clear up red-eye
- Automatically or manually brighten the picture
- Enhance the color

However, no editing can make a blurry photo clear or put in items that your shot missed.

Submitting your photos – **Choose the best of your group or event photos taken by your digital camera or iphone/smartphone and send them ACTUAL SIZE (NEVER SMALL, MEDIUM, OR LARGE)** to Lynn White llw0828@gmail.com for publication in the local media and to John Ufford, newneighborswebmaster@gmail.com for publication on the New Neighbors web site. Please do not wait to forward your photos. The longer you hold onto the photos, the less relevant they become to our local media.

In review.....

Some suggestions on how to become acquainted with your digital camera (or iphone), set up your photos, and then shoot, edit, and submit them:

Get acquainted with your equipment

- Learn about your camera / iphone by taking a lot of practice photos and experimenting.
- Learn how to control the flash.
- Hold the camera steady.
- Make certain you have enough memory capacity.

Taking better pictures

- Interesting pictures are pictures of something in particular; they have a focus.
- Move in close and frame up the interesting person or object.
- Shoot smaller groups and get in close. You will get a much clearer photo if you stand closer to the action rather than using the zoom function.
- Pick a point of view, i.e., select an angle that best displays the subject.
- Set the focus on the main subject – An automatic camera will focus on the object in the center of your screen. Check that the most important aspects of your shot are in focus.
- Consider the foreground – Minimize the distraction between you and the subject of your picture.
- Consider the background – The background should highlight the subject, not detract from it, and definitely not swallow it. Watch for poles or plants that might appear to be growing out of your subjects head or ear.
- Notice the light – Is there a shadow across the face of your subject, are the eyes in deep shade, is the sun (a lamp or window) behind the subject? Be aware of shiny objects that may catch and reflect the flash.

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Submit your photos

Choose the best of the group or event photos taken with your digital camera or iphone/ smartphone and send them ACTUAL SIZE (NEVER SMALL, MEDIUM, OR LARGE) to:

Lynn White, lw0828@gmail.com - local media

John Ufford, newneighborswebmaster@gmail.com, - New Neighbors web site

Please don't wait to send your photos - the older the photo, the less relevant it is to local media.