# Calendar


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## Say Cheese

### *Camera Show and Sale*

**LOCAL EVENTS**

'Computers are the hot thing now, whereas 20 years ago cameras used to be the main toy of a lot of people," says Anton of Santa Monica. ("My last name is too long and complicated; everyone knows me just as Anton.") Even so, he hasn't retrofitted his business, Bargain Camera Trade Shows. Digital cameras are generally not to be found at the monthly sale he runs in Pasadena and the twice-yearly one he brings here, every April and October.

"At an event like ours, the focus is traditional photography," says Anton, who neither owns a computer nor has an e-mail address. "We're one of the best sources for used traditional equipment, which is getting harder to find at camera stores. At one of our shows, you can get a very nice range-finder camera for, shall we say, $50, and a nice interchangeable-lens camera for $100. And if you are starting to develop your own prints, you can pick up an enlarger, a really nice one, for another $50. And you're all set to go quite far."

Some of the dealers coming to San Diego this weekend, mostly from the L.A. area, will have used motion-picture equipment of the traditional (not digital) kind, says Anton. "We get a lot of students who come to the shows, and what they look for, and expect to find, are Super 8 millimeter cameras, projectors, and editors. As they're getting harder to find, we're becoming one of the last sources for those types of things, too."

Nikon is one name that still photographers seek, especially on cameras and accessories in good condition. Those in the market for "collectibles" — rather than merely practical, usable items — look for "anything made in Germany," says Anton.

These collectors also want one-of-a-kinds, like the 19th-century French hand-cranked movie camera that someone brought to sell at Anton's show in San Diego last spring. It came with the projector, which was also hand-cranked. "The lot included some supplementary editing paraphernalia, too — little collectible odds and ends in their original little boxes, along with vintage images." The price for all was $200.

PHOTOGRAPH BY DAVE ALLEN

*Rollei Magic II, circa mid '50s*

The seller of these antiques was not a regular dealer. He was just a local resident who set up a table on a onetime basis. Anyone can, and everyone welcomes good fresh "merch."

Likewise, anyone may bring items for a free, informal appraisal — or several appraisals, which is the prudent thing to do, especially if selling them to a dealer at the show is one's ultimate goal. "Instead of driving from store to store, you can walk from table to table for a cross-check," says Anton, who believes that his and others' camera shows may never offer much used digital equipment. "And I'll tell you why. Things, as you probably know, are changing so fast that digital becomes terribly dated very quickly, just like the computer itself. There isn't a good secondary market for it, either."

And yet as film becomes increasingly quaint, does Anton envision a day when the technology will have only collectible value? "Some of the finest commercial photography in the world is still done with traditional equipment," he replies. "I think the two technologies will co-exist for quite a while. In the motion picture industry, some people are resisting it. It took them 25 years to learn all the subtleties of their equipment. If they change, they'll be caught in the transition."

Gary Schacker, a professional photographer in his early 50s who lives in La Mesa, hasn't made the transition. "Digital is viable now, but professional-level equipment is expensive," he says. "And while you'll save on film and processing, there's a trade-off. Even after you shoot, in order to get a set of proofs, it takes a lot of computer time to edit each picture. I probably will convert eventually. But right now there's no real quality advantage and no time advantage. And the cost advantage is offset by a very labor-intensive process."

Schacker does shoot digital for fun. "I carry around a little Canon pocket point-and-shoot that also has manual controls. It's unbelievably good quality. Digital point-and-shoots, I think, are better than film point-and-shoots ever were."

As for the shows, where Schacker used to be a regular buyer, "I haven't been to one in over a year," he says. "There's more to see and more to buy and more to learn on eBay."

To which Anton would counter, at a show there's more to touch, even more than at a camera store, where a shopper isn't encouraged to examine everything in the case. "In the late 1970s, I was interested in movie-making as well as still photography," he says. "But I was intimidated by camera stores. It was an uncomfortable feeling. At the camera shows, there's more informality. Everything is out. A person can come to the show and examine everything, and do it all day long."

— *Jeanne Schinto*

**Camera Show and Sale**
**Sunday, October 26,**
**10:00 a.m.–3:00 p.m.**
**Al Bahr Shrine Auditorium**
**5440 Kearny Mesa Road,**
**San Diego**
**General, $4; students and seniors, $3; active military and children 12 and under, free; family discounts.**
**310-578-7446**