The Movie Producer

 I guess now is as good time as any to tell you about my attempt to become a “movie producer”. The year was 1973. We were living in Loveland, Colorado having just moved from Connecticut. It was about Thanksgiving time and we were talking about making plans for Christmas since it would be our first time that we wouldn’t be with family or them with us. I came up with a great idea about making a movie of “Twas The Night Before Christmas”, using us as the actors and actresses. Since this would be a low budget film I felt that I would be the perfect producer. After all I had a brand new super 8mm movie camera with a light bar. It was agreed to by entire cast including our one year old son Jamie. We also decided that we would have three copies made, one for us and one for each set of grandparents. First we had to make up signs to explain the story, you know “not a creature was stirring”, “ma in her kerchief and I in my cap”. I bought a mouse for the corner, a Santa and sleigh to hang outside the window. I even bought a night cap and nightshirt for yours truly. We were ready to start rolling.

 “And all through the house”, the producer ”me”, walked all around the house with camera rolling. “Not a creature was stirring not even a mouse”’ I filmed the mouse in the corner. I then took a shot of the “stockings hung by the chimney with care”. After those were done the first problem occurred, “the children all nestled snug in their beds”. Did you ever try to take movies of 4 kids, ages 1-9 pretending to be asleep? I finally was able to get that part done at 2:00am while they were asleep so that the bright light didn’t make them laugh or squint. Then I took “ma in her kerchief and I in my cap”, [and nightshirt]. I had to take that looking into the mirror. Next I filmed Santa and his sleigh out on the lawn so he could, “raise such a clatter”. I then hung Santa outside the window to film him flying away. The entire productions had taken two or three weeks. We had to hurry to get the film printed, [no instant videos in those days]. I said “I’ll take the film to the drug store in the morning”. As I opened the camera to retrieve the film, “what to my wondering eyes should appear”? NO FILM!!!! You must remember that yours truly was much younger and not as smart then! It was too late to do it over again. No one has ever forgotten that story. But I bet that they would have lost the film by now. The end of a promising film producer’s career.

I would like to leave you with this thought to remember

“Experience is the worst teacher, it gives us the test before presenting the lesson”

Gary Albert