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## *America at Home*

**Millions of simultaneous snapshots will show what “Home” means to Americans**

**NEW YORK, NY, Sept. 10, 2007**— Beginning Sept. 17, in the course of a single week, 100 of the world’s top photojournalists – and millions of amateur shutterbugs – will fan out around the United States to shoot digital photos of the most important place in their lives: **Home**.

With *America at Home*, Rick Smolan and the team that produced **A Day in the Life of America: America 24/7**, **24 Hours in Cyberspace**, and **One Digital Day**, will be taking on their biggest challenge to date. The result, which is expected to include several million photographs, will be the most extensive record of American home life ever attempted.

“The idea of ‘home’ is as universal and deeply ingrained as that of ‘mother’ or ‘father,’” says Smolan. “Ask people to describe what the word ‘home’ means to them and their answers tap into a deep pool of emotions and memories. We’re inviting millions of Americans to collaborate in the creation of a digital time capsule that may prove to be an invaluable resource for our descendants to understand the fabric of home life in 2007.”

Editorially, *America at Home* aims to capture the emotions of home: the distinctive rituals, intimate moments and all the myriad ways in which we work, play, learn, conduct our lives and interact with friends, family members (and pets!) as we transform our dwellings into our homes. From McMansions to mobile homes, from tree houses to tenement slums, from ranches to old age homes, the public is invited to help document the harmonies and paradoxes of home life across America over a single seven-day period.

### **Snapshots Heard ‘round the Nation**

Through massive grassroots online outreach, millions of Americans are being invited to simultaneously contribute their own images via a series of daily snapshots taken at the same time of day across the nation each day throughout the week. Participants will receive daily emails with assignment instructions and can also take general photos of what makes their home special.

The public is invited to sign up and upload their images at [www.MyAmericaAtHome.com](http://www.MyAmericaAtHome.com).

An international team of leading magazine and newspaper photo editors will edit all of the images, shot by both professionals and amateurs. The best images will be woven together with essays from leading writers in a unique and evocative coffee table book, a website, a TV show, and an exhibit.

The images shot by the 100 professional photojournalists and millions of amateurs will reflect the extraordinary diversity that makes up American family life and will represent a broad range of economic, geographic, racial, political, and socially diverse lifestyles. Topics covered will include:

- **A mother showcases the chaos and glory of her teen-tycoon son's bedroom,**
- **Multi-generational families living under the same roof,**
- **A mom snaps her 10-year-old daughter snuggling with 'flat daddy', a life-sized cut-out of Army dad, away in his second tour of duty in Iraq,**
- **A 'Grand Central' abode which welcomes a never-ending stream of friends,**
- **A single family house shared by two families, who occupy it in shifts,**
- **A pro shooter documents a 5-year-old child of divorce bouncing between her two Manhattan bedrooms,**
- **An eco-hermit snaps his 'living' desert hideaway complete with breathable walls,**
- **A professional photographer tours a million dollar mobile home that follows its movie star owner from film location to film location,**
- **A Pulitzer Prize-winning photographer shoots a family in the last home standing in a condemned neighborhood,**
- **Another photographer explores the secret rooms hidden behind book-shelves and under stairs commissioned by an army of adult Peter Pans.**

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A unique element of *America at Home* is that it encourages participation by cell phone camera users. More than a billion people around the world have an Internet-connected camera in their pocket all day long: their phone. This project will be the first time the full combined power of these millions of phones in the U.S. has been activated for a common purpose. "Humanity has a deep need to tell stories," says Smolan. "That's why photographs are so important to people. The ability to shoot and then instantly share images is going to dramatically change the way humanity sees itself and how each of us tells our own stories."

The *America at Home* book will be published by Running Press in March 2008 and will offer the public the ability to personalize their books with customized covers. The custom cover feature was largely responsible for the success of Smolan's last project, **America 24/7**, when more than 21% of all book buyers customized their copies. This was the first time in publishing history that a *New York Times* best-seller was mass customized by its readers.

*America at Home* is made possible through a partnership with IKEA with additional support being provided by HP's Snapfish, Google, BabyCenter.com, Nikon, FotoNation.net and TravelMuse.

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### ***AMERICA AT HOME – Project Details***

**What:** The largest collaborative project in Internet history as 100 of the top photojournalists and millions of Americans document the concept of home

**Where:** Throughout the United States

**When:** The week of Sept. 17<sup>th</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup>

**Who:** Any American who owns a digital camera or cell phone camera

**Project Url:** [www.MyAmericaAtHome.com](http://www.MyAmericaAtHome.com)

**Publisher:** The book will be published in March 2008 by Running Press

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### **America at Home's Strategic Partner**

**IKEA:** Given the landmark nature of *America at Home* it is not surprising that IKEA, a company synonymous with the concept of Home, is the project's strategic partner. In addition to serving as lead underwriter of the project, IKEA is both promoting *America at Home* in its stores and extending an invitation to its customers to participate. IKEA is also simultaneously launching a major new branding campaign entitled, "Home is the Most Important Place in the World."

"Our partnership and support for the *America at Home* project is a perfect fit," commented Pernille Lopez, the president of US operations for IKEA.

### **America at Home's Supporting Sponsors**

**SNAPFISH:** The *America at Home* book project is an innovative example of the power of the Internet that underscores collaboration on a broad scale. This follows the success of the bestselling **America 24/7**, where participation with HP's Snapfish enabled the capture and collection of simultaneous snapshots of moments and events in America as seen through the eyes of professional photographers and everyday people. HP's Snapfish will again serve as the engine for this exciting new project.

**GOOGLE:** "Google is a strong supporter of the *America at Home* project. We believe that Google, through products such as Google Maps mash-ups and iGoogle gadgets, can play an important role in encouraging people to participate, creating a powerful portrayal of what the concept of home means to all of us," says Marissa Mayer - VP of Search Products and User Experience.

Other sponsors include BabyCenter which is inviting substantial portions of its audiences to participate in *America at Home*, Nikon whose COOLPIX S51c wifi-enabled digital cameras, will be used by the professional photographers, FotoNation.net whose Internet digital imaging services power Nikon's my Picturetown imaging service and TravelMuse which provides content, community and planning tools to empower consumers to make better online travel decisions.

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**Daily simultaneous snapshot topics include:**

**Monday, September 17 THE BIG TOUR: 3 pm**

Show us exactly what makes your home your castle. Capture the essence and emotions -- ALL the nooks, crannies and grannies – and don't forget the iguana if you've got one.

**Tuesday, September 18 MORNING RUSH: 8 am**

Breakfast of blueberries and walnuts? A bracing shower? Yoga on the patio? Packing up the kid's lunches for school? Let the world share your hectic sunrise routines.

**Wednesday, September 19 MID-DAY MADNESS 12 Noon**

Who's home? Come one, come all. Show us your dashing kids, lovely friends or even that one strange black-crowned night heron who just built a nest in front yard maple tree.

**Thursday, September 20 DINNER TIME 7 PM**

Lasagna again? [Yum!] Inexplicable Jello salads? Chinese take away? From a microwave or Dutch Oven? Pick up your plates and show us! Be sure to get the family chef in action.

**Friday, September 21 YOUR SANCTUARY 4 PM**

When it's been one of those days (or weeks), where do YOU escape to cool out, re-boot or get away? Don't be bashful; share your sacred space with us.

**Saturday, September 22 HOME TREASURES 11 am**

Your grandmother's wedding ring? Your uncle's false teeth? Your precious collection of snow globes? Bring'em out and let us all gaze in wonder!

**Sunday, September 23 BEDTIME RITUALS 9 PM**

What do YOU do before you hit the hay? Finish a crossword puzzle? Look under the bed for monsters? Fix your cup of hot cocoa with a shot of something? ZZZZ-zzz-zz.

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**The award-winning photojournalists working on America at Home include**

**George Steinmetz**

Best known for his exploration and science photography, George Steinmetz sets out to reveal the few remaining secrets in our world today: remote deserts, obscure cultures, new developments in science and technology. A regular contributor to *National Geographic Magazine*, he has examined subjects ranging from global oil exploration and the latest advances in robotics to the inner-most stretches of the Sahara Desert and the little-known tree-house people of Irian Jaya. For the German and French editions of *GEO* Magazines he has documented the Salt Deserts of Iran, and crossed the Empty Quarter of Saudi Arabia. He recently received a grant from the National Science Foundation to photograph the Polar Desert of Antarctica. Since his first assignment for *National Geographic Magazine* in 1987, George has completed over 20 major essays for the magazine, including three covers.

In addition to *National Geographic* and *GEO*, his work also regularly appears in *Time*, *Architectural Digest*, *Condé Nast Traveler*, *Fortune*, and *Stern*. His expeditions to the Sahara and Gobi deserts have been featured in separate National Geographic Explorer TV programs in 1998 and 2002. In addition to

editorial work, George also does corporate and advertising photography. His commercial clients include Toshiba, Union Bank of Switzerland, General Motors, and Sigma Camera, among others. George has won numerous awards for photography during his 25-year career, including two first prizes in science and technology in 1995 and 1998 from World Press Photo. He has also won awards and citations from Pictures of the Year, Overseas Press Club and Life Magazine's Alfred Eisenstaedt Awards.

Born in Beverly Hills in 1957, George graduated from Stanford University with a degree in geophysics. He began his career in photography by hitchhiking through Africa for 18 months. His latest passion is photographing the world's deserts while piloting a motorized paraglider. This experimental aircraft provides him with a unique physical perspective over remote places that are inaccessible by conventional aircraft. George lives in Glen Ridge, New Jersey with his wife, Wall Street Journal editor Lisa Bannon, and their children Nell, John, and Nicholas.

### **David Peterson**

David Peterson has been a photojournalist for over 32 years, beginning his career at the *Topeka Capital-Journal*. The last 30 years he's been a staff photographer for the *Des Moines Register* and recently left the newspaper business to freelance. While at the Register, Peterson won two Pulitzer Prizes, the first in 1987 for Feature Photography for a photo essay on Iowa's Farm Crisis. The work was done with the help of a Nikon/NPPA sabbatical. He shared in another Pulitzer in 1991 for Community Service for a story on a local woman who came forward after a brutal rape. Seven of his photographs were included in the entry. Other accolades while at the Register include two stints as judge for Pictures of the Year, White House News Photographers contest judge, three times Region 5 Photographer of the Year, and numerous other local, regional and national awards.

Peterson worked on several book projects, including *Baseball in America*, *A Day in the Life of Ireland*, *24 Hours in Cyberspace*, *The Power to Heal*, *One Digital Day* and *America 24/7*. I have also had a book published highlighting Drake University. He is currently working on a book about the Drake Relays, to coincide with that event's 100 year anniversary. He lives in Pleasant Hill, Iowa, a suburb of Des Moines with his wife Julie and two cats and has three children and two grandchildren who all live nearby.

### **Kim Komenich**

Kim Komenich is currently a staff photographer at the *San Francisco Chronicle* where he has worked since 1982. He is also a co-founder of the San Francisco Exposure Gallery, a non-profit venue for issue-based documentary photography that opened in March 2003. This year, he worked as a shooter and editor for the *America 24/7* project. Other book projects include *A Day in the Life of California*, *24 hours in Cyberspace*, and *Power to Heal*. He has taught at the journalism program at the University of California, Berkeley, the U.C. Extension in San Francisco, and Stanford University and been a visiting instructor at the Missouri School of Journalism.

His work has been featured in *Life*, *Time*, *People*, *Fortune* and *Newsweek*. He received the 1987 Pulitzer Prize for coverage of the Philippine revolution, the World Press Photo award for news picture stories and the SPJ distinguished service award. For the past two years he has attended Platypus Workshops for documentary videography, and is pursuing work in the video documentary field. He is currently devoting his energies to an upcoming San Francisco Exposure Gallery show of Pulitzer finalist Matt Black's work on California's Central Valley.

### **Doug Menez**

Doug Menez began his career shooting for newspapers in 1978, and shortly thereafter won an internship at *The Washington Post*. In 1982 he began working for *Time*, *Life*, *Newsweek*, *US News*, *Fortune*, *People*, *USA Today* and other national and international publications, accepting assignments to cover news, feature stories and sports in the US and abroad.

Menuetz has covered many of the major news stories of the day, including the famine in Ethiopia, presidential campaigns and party conventions, and the Los Angeles Olympics in 1984. He has documented the homeless in America, the destruction of the Amazon rain forest and the AIDS story. His work has appeared in six Day in the Life books, The Power to Heal, and the Circle of Life. In 1987, Menuetz began specializing in black-and-white photojournalism of business and technology. He has completed special assignments, annual reports, books, videos and long-term documentary projects worldwide for such companies as Apple Computer, Adobe Systems, Beckman Instruments, Eastman Kodak Company, J.P. Morgan, and Sun Microsystems.

### **Maggie Hallahan**

Award-winning Maggie Hallahan is an accomplished photographer with over twenty years of experience shooting advertising and editorial assignments. She has been represented by agencies in New York, Paris, and Tokyo, and is currently with Corbis Photo Agency. Maggie's photographs have been published in hundreds of newspapers and magazines throughout the world, including *Time*, *Newsweek*, *L'Expansion*, *Paris Match*, *Stern*, *German Focus Magazine*, *Wired*, the *Los Angeles Times* and *The New York Times*.

She has been pioneering digital photography for over a decade for clients such as Martha Stewart Living Omnimedia, UN, OES, MSNBC and Expedia. Her exhibition "State of Emergency," featuring 45 dramatic and colorful images, is currently touring through California. During the summer of 2006 Maggie was invited to travel to Iceland on the Adobe Lightroom/Photoshop Adventure 2006. In Iceland she photographed and then processed the digital images files in Adobe's New Application Lightroom for the book *Photoshop Lightroom Adventure: Mastering Adobe's Next Generation Tool for Digital Photographers* by author and photographer Mikkel Aaland, published by O'Reilly. Maggie is currently photographing a malaria prevention advertising campaign for Sumitomo Chemical in Africa. She is also working for her regular clients, including Disney International, The San Francisco Wharf and AMO USA, Inc.

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