

Viewfinders

*Next Club Meeting: Tuesday June 5th, 2007, 7:30 - 9:30 p.m.
Cupertino Room, Quinlan Center, 10185 N. Stelling Rd., Cupertino, CA*

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May Meeting Highlights

May is the month that the club reserves for members to bring in a video that they wish the membership to view and this year we were treated to four videos. Two of them were extracts from much longer movies that their owners shot while on extended trips in Europe. Betty Picket chose a segment highlighting Paris on Bastille Day and Bill Loden took us on a river boat trip through St. Petersburg.

Frank Swanson continued his "Tips and Tricks" regular club meeting feature.

MEMBERS MOVIES

The first to be shown was Jack Gorham's movie "La Rochelle Holiday". This is an annual event hosted by the La Rochelle winery in East San Jose and occurs between Thanksgiving Day and Christmas. Primarily a family event (it includes wine tasting for adults), the entertainment provides face painting for children, Christmas Caroling, a Santa Claus and Dixieland Jazz. This is a fun way to get the



family prepared for the Christmas Holidays and, being local, an easy to get to opportunity for something special in November.

Betty Picket screened an extract from her video recording a trip through Europe in 2000 entitled "Paris 2000". Betty and her husband had signed on for a tour organized through her church, "Christ Episcopal", in Los



Altos. The group visited Germany, Switzerland, Austria and the Czech Republic. At the completion of the main tour, Betty and her husband headed for France where the screened video extract was shot. Using her Sony Hi8 camcorder she captured interior shots of Notre Dame and the cathedral's great windows and friezes, the Bastille Day parade through the Arc d' Triumh

while french fighter jets roared overhead and tanks trundled down the Champs d'Lise. Night shots through the windows of a tour boat on the Seine brought the Eiffel Tower in to view, magnificently lit up for the occasion.

Bob Meacham, our president, brought a fishing movie shot on the Yuba river near Sacramento. Bob is well known in the club as an avid angler and has shown other fishing trip videos to the members. With the aid of several of his piscatory buddies we get a demonstration of how the art of fly fishing is performed and the



reward, at least this time, of capturing a fine fat trout that Bob landed. The patience and skill of hooking the quarry as the prime motive of the sport is made obvious when we see it returned to the river and not into the frying pan. Some of us may not be so sporting. The beauty and peacefulness of the wild river is also brought

Continued page 3



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Viewfinders at CineCats

"Lights! Camera! Action!" Joanne Talesfore, the Chair of the CineCats Committee spoke these words to open the 2007 Los Gatos CineCats Film Showcase and opened a grand evening of local film screenings and a Gala After Party, all very Hollywood style.

CineCats (www.cinecats.org) had accepted our club movie from last year, "Maybe Today", and it was selected as

one of the 16 short films from the field of 54 to be screened on Thursday, May 17 at the Los Gatos Cinema. In attendance were about 18 Viewfinders members, family and friends, wanting to see "Maybe Today" on the big screen and check out the competition. The Showcase has two basic categories divided by the age of the film makers; "18 years and Under" and "Over 18 years". The films in the first category ranged from the very basic, including one done by a 6 year old, to some done as large productions by high school film clubs. All were entertaining, some were great first attempts and some inspired laughter from the audience.

The films in the second category ranged from simple animation to the slice of life films, like "Maybe Today", using larger production teams. Some of these were well shot and had decent scripting, lighting and sound. All showed the talents of the film makers and were also entertaining. Although our film received glowing reviews and comments from a good part of the audience and the judges (see compan-

ion article) it was not selected as the top film in it's category. However, the club members in attendance still came away with a great experience, having enjoyed themselves, the great reception and the opportunity to rub elbows with other local film makers, their families and friends.

As one heavily involved in the making of "Maybe Today", I can say that seeing others enjoy the film, attending events like CineCats and meeting others that are interested in film making at every level is just icing on the cake, when added to creating the story and bringing it to life. I speak for all of our members and friends in thanking the CineCats Committee and the Town of Los Gatos for allowing us the opportunity to participate in this event. We look forward to the event in coming years, and hopefully Viewfinders will be a part of the film makers submitting their work for competition.

Bob Meacham

Viewfinders PICTURE PUZZLE
by Frank Swanson

"Maybe Today" Continuity Check
How good are you at continuity checking? Well, here's a video-strength puzzler for you this month - find the *nine* differences between the top picture and the bottom picture. The answers appear in this issue of the newsletter, but don't look until you've given up finding them all.

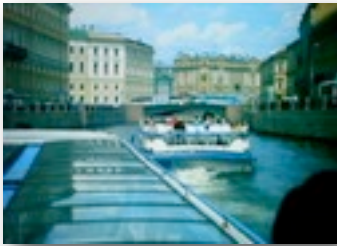
May CrossWord Puzzle answers:



Continued from page 1

to us and underscores the pleasures of this riparian activity. (Look it up.)

New member, **Bill Loden** screened an extract from his "Euro 2000" tour, comprising of a canal boat trip along the River Neva and canals of St. Petersburg, Russia. Bill's tour was organized by the San Jose State University Chorale and included among it's members 65 singers and 20 come-a-



longs. The riverboat ride gives one an excellent view of the city as it criss-crosses between the river and connecting canals. Bill brought back fine shots of the handsome architecture, the people, and the underside of some of the 400 odd bridges of this great Russian metropolis, a northern Venice. Russian composer A.K. Glazunov provided the video's score.

June Meeting Main Feature

INTERCLUB VIDEO EXCHANGE



This month we are hosting the Northern California Interclub Video Exchange. Our guests will be from the San Jose Movie and Video Club, the Peninsula Moviemaker's Club and San Francisco's Westwood Club. It is always good to get together with our fellow video enthusiasts and share videos and ideas together, so please get to know them and make them welcome.

While our club is holding our membership number, some of the other clubs are struggling to recruit new videomakers so let us encourage them to keep the hobby exciting.

The club has a pretty good library of videos but it is always something special when a member arrives with a new movie, so if you have one, or even

an older movie that we haven't seen in a while, please bring it with you.

Tips and Tricks

Following the main event, Frank Swanson will present another in his "Tips and Trick" workshops which have been so useful and entertaining since he began the series early this year.

UPCOMING VIDEO EXCHANGE NIGHTS

San Jose Movie and Video Club
Friday August 3rd
Peninsula and Westwood Clubs
Friday September 28th

American Liberty, our next Themed Club Video Contest will be screened at our July meeting. Working on your entry yet? We're looking for a good turn out to rival the April contest so don't let us down.



Good Luck!

VICE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



THIS YEAR'S CLUB MOVIE

Viewfinder's Video Productions is moving ahead with this year's movie. Unlike last years "Maybe Today", this production is more complex in that the story requires a great deal of dialog from the actors and for them, working in front of cameras with a bunch of technicians hovering around at close quarters, requires concentration. I have worked on the

stage in many productions and believe me, it is far easier to memorize an entire play, deliver lines and stay in character without interruption than having someone yell "Cut" every few minutes and have to get back into character for repeat take after take. Check the sound, check the camera angle, check the framing, check the lighting... and on and on.

In early May we shot the first scene of the movie. It was a long day. Even the best planned script and storyboard cannot foresee the inevitable glitches that turn up. Cars passing the location house, gardeners firing up noisy leaf blowers, something technical in the video or sound equipment needs attention... But we have a crew that knows what they are doing and the actors remain patient and the shooting continues. We worked from nine in the morning to

5:30 in the evening, with a short lunch break, and when that final "That's a wrap" came from the director, all sighed wearily and thankfully and called it a day. That day's work amounted to over 60 "takes" and added up to over an hour's worth of tape for each of the two cameras. By the time the video editor is finished with it, it'll add up to a three minute scene in the final movie. That's a lot of work but, as always, professionalism is about working very hard to digest, condense, and wrestle with the raw material to end up with something that, to the casual viewer, will appear effortless.

Brian Lucas

FILMING FOR FUN CONTEST

By Bernie Wood

The 2007 **Filming for Fun** contest and luncheon, sponsored by the Northern California Council of Amateur Movie Clubs (NCCAMC), was hosted last Saturday by the **Viewfinders Camcorder Club** at Michael's at Shoreline restaurant in Mountain View. It was a gorgeous, warm, sunny day. Nevertheless, some 27 dedicated video movie fans gathered in a darkened room to see the three best movies selected by the judges from 13 entries. Members from four of the NCCAMC clubs entered movies, but all five clubs were represented by members, spouses and friends at the luncheon-screening event.

An hour for gathering, visiting, and networking preceded the excellent luncheon of chicken breast Portobello or shrimp Louis. Following the meal, **Bob Meacham**, president of the Viewfinders, stepped to the podium and thanked **JoAnn Pfost** for her magnificent work in chairing the event, **Bill Mannion** for his help as assistant chair, and **Fred Pfost** for taking on projection responsibilities. He also expressed appreciation to the contest judges, **Diane Benedetti**, **Chuck Johnson**, and **Ernie Piini**, the last two who were present. Then he thanked those who submitted video movies to the contest, and announced the five finalists selected by the judges:

- **Virginia Misoff's** *Water, Water Everywhere*, a documentation of water in the liquid and solid states in the vicinity of Antarctica, and many of the crea-

tures that live in and on it.

- **Virginia Misoff's** *The Pantanal*, a wildlife documentary of her visit to the great marsh area in southwestern Brazil, populated by strange and beautiful birds and mammals.

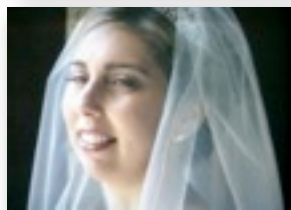
- **Gordon Peterson's** *Royal Barge Procession*, took us to Thailand to witness a royal celebration featuring elaborately decorated barges parading down a river.

- **Frank Swanson's** *Wedding Memories*, recounted events in a couples' marriage. The video narrative was enlivened by flashes from a still photographer with appearance of the still photos.

- **Bart Wittekind's** *Bangkok Dolls*, described the design, fabrication, and marketing of doll figures by residents of a Thailand community. Finally, Bob revealed the top three winners and each video movie was screened.

Following the final screening, NCCAMC officers and club delegates, held a brief meeting to review the council's finances, verify assignment of **Sac-**

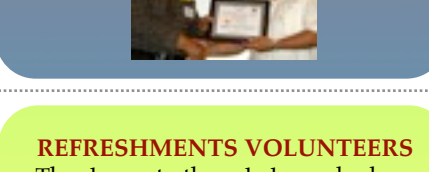
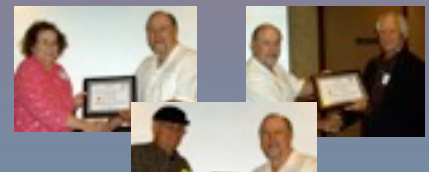
ramento Amateur Movie Makers as the host club for this Fall's **InterClub Contest**, and discuss the organizational status and current need for the organization. The present officers, president **Sal Tufo**, secretary **Stan Smith**, and treasurer **Dick Brain**, agreed to continue in office until next Spring's **Filming For Fun** event, at which time these issues will be again examined, and action taken if needed. Stay tuned.



1st Place:
Bangkok Dolls
by Bart Wittekind

2nd Place:
The Pantanal
by Virginia Misoff

3rd Place:
Wedding Memories
by Frank Swanson



REFRESHMENTS VOLUNTEERS

Thank you to those below who have volunteered. We just have October left to fill in.

| | |
|--------|----------------------|
| June | Karen Louie |
| July | Fred and Joann Pfost |
| August | George Paz |
| Sept | Frank Yap |
| Oct | ? |
| Nov | Fred and Joann Pfost |

Picture Puzzle Answers:

No. 1 (B1): Bob Meacham's white T-shirt
 is missing. No. 2 (B2) Frank Yap now has
 a nametag. No. 3 (A3) John Dietrich's
 shirt has changed to yellow plaid. No. 4
 (C4) Rita Dietrich has a new bracelet on
 her right wrist. No. 5 (C5) Mary John-
 son's jacket changed from green to ma-
 room. No. 6 (B6) Bill Mannion has a V-
 neck shirt now. No. 7 (B6) Fred Pfost's
 nametag has changed sides on his jacket.
 No. 8 (C8) Jack Gotham's award has a
 larger gold sticker. And, No. 9 (B9) Irv
 Webster's shirt now has five buttons.

Travel and Videography in India

Part 2

By Gordon Peterson

We took a night bus 250 miles to our next destination, Aurangabad. It cost about \$10 and took 10 hours to make the trip. It was a typical 60 plus passenger bus, with reclining seats. The driver played a Hindu video very loudly for the people at the back to hear. I stuffed wads of paper in my ears and held air pillows to my head to deaden the noise but with little relief. Bart's partial deafness was caused by the heavy guns used in the Vietnam War. He can barely hear from his right ear and just barely from his left so if he lies on his left side he can't hear much at all. Another problem was the limited opportunity to get off the bus to relieve oneself. We were in serious need by the end of the trip and glad to get to the hotel. The bus driver had dumped us on the road at 2:00 a.m. to be picked up by a taxi which I'm pretty sure was prearranged by the taxi driver and the bus driver. (It turned out to be a good connection, however, for we hired the taxi driver to take us to the Ajanta caves some 68 miles away and the Ellora caves at about 19 miles away.) Our rooms had all the qualities of the rooms in Bombay except they were up 5-6 flights of steps with no elevator.

Aurangabad is the base most people use to visit the Ellora and Ajanta caves. The Ajanta caves are the older of the two locations and it is believed that the builders moved to the Ellora site after they constructed the Ajanta. The move was probably related to the location of the great "Silk Road" on which goods between China and the middle East to points west was transported. We arrived on Sunday morning and went to the Ajanta caves first. It was a bumpy, potholed 68-mile drive that took about 3 hours



to complete. The caves were first started around 100- 200 BC with work continuing until around 600 AD. They were abandoned but rediscovered by the British in 1819.

Buddhist monks dug the caves. Some were built as residences (viharas –monasteries) and some as places to worship (chaityas gribas – prayer halls). The location is a horse-shoe shaped gorge with sheer rock cliffs and the small Waghora River at the bottom. There are 27 caves carved in the cliffs and the only way up is by bus operated by the cave management. Videographers are required to purchase a permit for video recording when you visit them, unlike still photographers who do not. Videography is not allowed inside the caves, only the outside of the caves is permitted. Still photographers are able to take pictures in the caves as long as they don't use flash. The Japanese government is assisting in the preservation of the caves and with the stabilization of the interiors. They have installed low level lighting. Many of the caves contain beautiful murals and the cave walls were plastered with a thick smooth finish to make them amenable for painting. It is not known how they lighted the caves for the beautiful paintings and sculpture

that was done. One suggestion was that they used a shallow pool of water on the floor to reflect sun light into the caves and light the interior walls. The fresco paintings tell of events in Buddha's life and of the people of the period, especially the ruling class. Some of the caves are sculptured like the inside of a chapel with roof girders carved from the rock. There are relief figures of angels and demons along the walls and even a reclining Buddha. Originally each cave had a stairway down to the bottom of the gorge and the river. Today the caves are connected by a path that winds its way along the face of the cliff. At each cave you have to remove your shoes. The floors were uneven and rough in many places. It was not long before my feet were raw, even though I left my socks on. Normally I have to wear shoes with supports in them to walk and without them it was painful, but I had come a long way to see the caves.

I found that if there were no other tourist in the cave the guard would often tell me to go ahead and video. I declined because I knew they wanted money for such privileges and it could lead to their being fired and my being in violation of the law. I plan to put together a video combining what I could video from the outside and



India Part 2, continued

still photos of the inside. At the end of the day I hired a chair to carry me back to the information center. The chair, an old style wooden kitchen type, was carried by 4 men and lashed to 3" round bamboo poles. I was a heavy load for them as they were relatively small men. Their fee to take me back to the information center started at \$15 but I bargained them down to \$10 and they accepted. I'm not sure, but during the bargaining a man who was not there showed up in time to help carry me down. He was very friendly and kept up a conversation along the way repeatedly asking if I like my ride down. When we got to the drop off point I felt I was really quite a load for them so I paid them the \$15 they had originally asked for, but the talkative guy wanted more. Some of other carriers shook their heads, no. I told him that I had already paid the original asking price, which was more that was agreed upon before we started, but he persisted. I refused to pay more and they finally left. It left me with an angry feeling toward the man though.

We had a long ride back to our hotel, but there was always something of interest along the rural roads. There are large wheeled carts pulled by many kinds of animals; camels, horses, water buffaloes, donkeys, etc. Other transportation included: bicycles, tractors pulling trailers, motorcycles, peddled bicycle with a flat bed over the rear wheel like a mini pickup truck, large trucks, cars and hand carts. It is common to see women bearing large loads on their heads walking along the side of the road, even way out of town or village. Theirs must have been a long walk. The fields, with their mostly unfamiliar crops, didn't look very productive. Work seems to be mostly done with animal and human power, few tractors were to be seen, and the people were thin and wore worn cloths. There seemed to be no national overweight problem. The roadsides in both the rural areas and in the towns were often littered and the roads were mainly potholes with some asphalt connecting them.

To be continued.

Comments on "Maybe Today" from

By Bob Meacham



In talking to one of the judges for this year's CineCats, Marianne Lucchesi Hamilton, I had asked her to provide us with some comments on our film. I must start by saying she was very impressed with our effort and was eager to share her feelings on the film. Marianne has great credentials to be a film judge in a competition such as this. She is former Assistant Director of the San Jose Film Commission and is now a journalist/marketing writer, is Chair of the Los Gatos Arts Commission and a member of the Board of Director of KCAT TV-15 the local public access channel in Los Gatos.

Her comments:

"Maybe Today" completely resonated with me personally, as I certainly identified with that "what if?" feeling; that sense of missing out on what could be a life-changing chance for connection and happiness. That's a universal experience, which is what makes the film so compelling. The lead character's performance was extremely touching — he couldn't have been better cast. I actually believed that he'd wear bow-ties and boutonnieres in real life!

I was especially impressed with the craftsmanship; the technical prowess that kept all of the judges engaged. It's easy to get very distracted when the sound goes sideways, or the camera-work is shaky, or there's some screw-up with the continuity. But it was such a well-crafted film; all

of the pieces meshed together so well to create exactly the desired effect. You obviously took extra care to capture the sound in a professional manner; that's often the "gotcha" on amateur films.

In terms of constructive criticism, it wasn't entirely clear whether Mr. Finley had met the object of his affection at the senior dance-class, was hoping to see her at one of the classes, or just wished he could dance with her — I realize your team didn't want to be too literal and spell out every detail. But that was a bit of a distraction of itself. The film might even have worked without those scenes: Mr. Finley has simply fallen in love from afar, and goes to the bus-stop every day to try to catch her eye & see if she'll respond. Or perhaps I'm just too literal and thick-headed to follow the storyline...:-)

In any case, the fact that this film is the first project crafted by your team is nothing short of remarkable. You all showed enormous care and professionalism with the film, and you are to be commended on a wonderful achievement. CineCats looks forward to future submissions from Viewfinders, and we expect to hear the club name mentioned at the end of many sentences that begin "And the winner is..."!

Warm regards,
Marianne Lucchesi Hamilton

TREASURER'S REPORT FOR MAY 2007

| | |
|--------------------------------|----------|
| Bank Account Beginning 3/31/07 | \$982.65 |
| Income Total | \$ 0.00 |
| DVD Sales (5) | \$ 25.00 |
| Expenses Total | \$334.00 |
| Quinlan Room Rent | \$300.00 |
| Video Awards (Water) | \$ 14.00 |
| CineCats Entry Fee | \$ 20.00 |
| Bank Account Ending 4/30/07 | \$648.65 |



Frank Swanson, Treasurer for 2007

TECH TIPS

By Frank Swanson

At our May meeting I thought it was now time to show you how to use single camera set-ups so you can acquire inspired interviews.

Every videographer needs to know how to set-up and shoot an interview. You might think it's easy to get great results, but there are a number of examples of ineffective and downright awful interviews that get shown on television every day. Here are five tips for shooting great single camera TV style interviews:

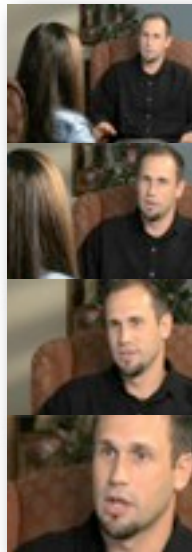


1. Preset Your Set: get your set prepared before your interview subjects arrive. Plan

ahead by controlling what will be in the frame of the camera - don't shoot from the hip - and avoid compromising the quality of your shots. Contain your interview subjects to an area that is preselected, pre-lit and pre-mic'd. Both subjects should be seated to prevent them from rocking side-to-side and to help them focus on each other. Using stand-ins to adjust the seats, lighting and microphone helps make the real interview go quicker and smoother.

2. Go Over the Shoulder: most "average" interviews are shot with the subjects seated side-by-side but it's hard to get good shots with this arrangement, especially with a single camera. You'll have to settle for poorly composed profiles that frequently contain a shot of an ear. A high-end TV style interview involves using a face-to-face configuration. Position your single camera to shoot over the shoulder of the interviewer so you get a nice shot of your interviewee looking slightly to the side of the camera (never have them look at the camera).

From this camera position you should be able to get four good shots: 1) a wide establishing shot that includes both subjects, 2) a tighter over the shoulder shot with only the interviewer's head in view, 3) a medium close-up, and 4) a close-up of your interviewee for more intimate answers.



3. Don't Look at the Lens: you'll get better results if you take the interviewee's attention away from the camera. Most people are not comfortable looking into the lens. The host of the show (i.e. interviewer) should address the audience and the guest should address the host. Both subjects will feel more comfortable since the process will be like a normal conversation. Oh, cover or turn-off your camera "record" light so your subjects are not distracted by it.

4. Zip Your Lip: don't let the interviewer step on the interviewee's answers. Shoot with the edit in mind, the interviewer should ask a good focused question and then let the interviewee answer without interruption. Coach your interviewer in advance with the right way to pose the questions and know how to respond non-



verbally to acquire pure audio of the interviewee for your edit. Try asking your interviewee to rephrase the question before responding. Make a note of the answers so that you can have the interviewer rephrase the questions to better match the answers - which leads to Tech Tip #5.

5. Ask After the Answers: Frequently it's better to record the questions by the interviewer after the interview is

over. Don't mic the interviewer during the interview. This process will help you get good clean audio from your interviewee and help you focus on that portion of the interview. Once you've recorded all your interviewee's answers and they leave, go back and have the interviewer ask the questions after the fact. Reposition your camera to show the host's face, but frame it on the opposite side of the screen so the two shots will cut together cleanly. Then, with the help of the interviewer, assess the answers and rewrite better questions. Mic the interviewer and record two important actions: 1) have the interviewer ask the newly framed questions to an empty (but not seen by the camera)



chair, and 2) a series of non-verbal reaction shots by the interviewer such as

head nods of serious, curious, agreement, and thoughtful expressions will give you an arsenal of options when you edit the interview. These head nods not only connect your two subjects, but are a cool tool to cover your cuts when you're doing the edit later.

The next time you see an interview on television, pay some attention to how the interview was recorded and see if you can recognize each of these five tips, or whether any of them were not followed. These tips can be seen live on your computer by going to www.digitaljuice.com, click on "DJTV" on the top of your screen, click on the "search" tab, type in "interviews" and hit carriage return. Up will pop "Take 5: Awesome Interviews". Click the "run" arrow in the clip's window to the left and sit back. There are a whole bunch of other great instructional videos from Digital Juice that are just waiting for you to watch while you're on their website. I'll pick another one for screening at our June meeting, so be sure to come and see my choice for next time.

CREDITS

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Viewfinder Newsletter is published during the third week of each month for Viewfinders Camcorder Club of Cupertino members. Please send announcements and articles for submission to the publisher during the two weeks previous to the following monthly issue. Send address and email corrections to the publisher.

MONTHLY CLUB MEETINGS

Held in the Cupertino Room, Quinlan Center. 10188 N. Stelling Road, Cupertino, California. Watch the calendar for programs updates. Admission is free.

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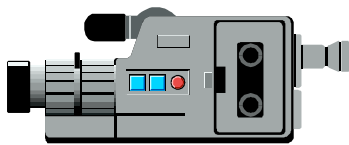
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| CALENDAR OF EVENTS 2007 | |
|--|--|
| <p>JAN Jan 3 Meeting: "10 Best of the West" and NCCAMA movies screenings. Jan 5th San Jose Meeting: "Gorillas..."</p> | <p>FEB Feb 7 Meeting: Fred Pfof on "The History of Video Tape" Tech Tips: Frank Swanson</p> |
| <p>MARCH March 14 Meeting: John Dietrich on "Matting and Chromakey Techniques" Tech Tips: Frank Swanson</p> | <p>APRIL April 4 Meeting: Members Quarterly Short Video Competition screening. Theme: "Water" Tech Tips: Frank Swanson</p> |
| <p>MAY 2, Wednesday Meeting: Club Members Video Screening Night. Tech Tips: Frank Swanson</p> | <p>JUNE 5, Tuesday Meeting: Inter-club Exchange Night Tech Tips: Frank Swanson</p> |
| <p>JULY 11, Wednesday Meeting: Mountain View Student Video Festival Tech Tips: Frank Swanson</p> | <p>AUG 1, Wednesday Meeting: Panel Discussion of "Audio in Video: Microphones, Capturing, Editing and Voice-overs" Tech Tips: Frank Swanson</p> |
| <p>SEPT 11, Tuesday (Meeting to be determined) Tech Tips: Frank Swanson</p> | <p>OCT 3, Wednesday Meeting: Club Annual Video Contest screenings. Tech Tips: Frank Swanson</p> |
| <p>NOV 7, Wednesday Meeting: Annual Gold DVD Awards and Social. Tech Tips: Frank Swanson</p> | <p>DEC No meeting this month</p> |

