*Next Club Meeting: Wenesday May 7th 2008. 7:30 - 9:30 p.m. Cupertino Room, Quinlan Center, 10185 N. Stelling Rd., Cupertino, CA*

**viewfinders**

**IN THIS ISSUE:     MAY 2008**

## April Meeting
# Highlights

Main Features:

## Video Theme Challenge: "Road"

## Members Walk-In Videos

## Tech Tips
**"Field of View" Workshop by Frank Swanson**

---

**May Meeting**

## "Demo Reels"

### Club Members Movies Night

Bring in your latest movie

---

**Road**

*The main feature of the evening was the much delayed screening of the club theme challenge "Road".*

Five movies were entered and were:

***Life is a Road-Travel it Well*** **by Bob Meacham.** Bob's movie utilized a montage of highway, road and trail stills and video. He came up with a clever device to animate them: a yellow highway stripe in the center of the screen constantly moving toward the audience. This created the effect of traveling over the roadways and through the scenery.

***Hit the Road*** **by Jack Gorham.** Also using stills and video, Jack's movie built up from transport themed images from skiing and dune buggies through buses, trolley cars and trains to the penultimate image of a space shuttle launch. Jack capped it all off with an image of a car falling from the sky to, in the words of his title, "Hit the Road."
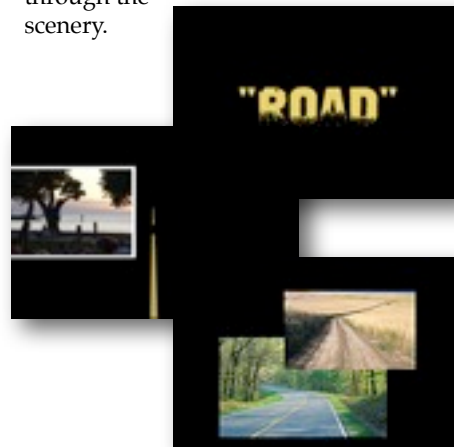
***Trip Tik*** **by Bernie Wood.** Bernie has a long history shooting movies in the Super8 format. His entry, a video conversion, was a winner in the San Jose club's "Salvage" contest some years ago. Bernie made use of outtakes from a family cross-country motor trip travelogue and the Muppets song "Moving Along" for the soundtrack to sew the odds and ends of clips together.

***On the Road with David Peterson* by Gordon Peterson.** Gordon's car racing movie was shot at an Autocross track. He claims the honor of submitting the speediest movie of the night.

***Trotting Around Began* by Bart Wittekind.** Members will be familiar with Bart's videos of South East Asia. Bob shot this movie in Bagan, formerly Pagan, an ancient city in in the dry central plains of Burma (Modern day Myanmar).

## WALK-IN MOVIES

In addition to the Road theme movies, two members, **Mary Johnson** and new member **George Xia,** screened additional videos.

*Demolition.* Mary has undertaken the task of documenting the construction of Sunnyvale's new Heritage Museum in Heritage Orchard Park. (An article describing the project appeared in the March 2007 Viewfinders newsletter.) Her movie shows the first phase; preparing the site by demolishing the old Sunnyvale Garden Shed to make way for the new museum. This is to be a replica of the pioneer Murphy family home. Assisting Mary are other club members, John Dietrich and Gordon Peterson.

George Xia screened his movie, *Alaska Trip*, a travelogue shot on a seven day cruise up the British Columbia and Alaska coasts. Embarking in Vancouver, the cruise stopped ashore at several point before arriving in Anchorage. Highlights along the way were a stop at Alaska's capital Juneau, Glacier Bay and a tour of Denali National Park.

## TECH TIPS

A recap of Frank Swanson's popular workshop for April is found on page 7.

---

### VIEWFINDERS CLUB REFRESHMENT SCHEDULE

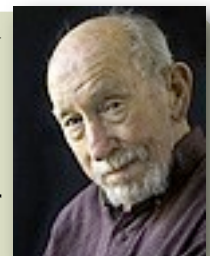*With the club's thanks to those who have provided refreshments for 2008 meetings to date.*

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| *January 9th, Wed.* | *Fred Pfost* | June 4th, Wed. | Dick Brownlie |
| *February 12th, Tues.* | *Bob Meacham* | July | IrvWebster |
| *March 11th, Tues.* | *Brian Lucas* | August | Gordon Peterson |
| *April 8th, Tues.* | *Jack Gorham* | September | Janet Holl |
| | | October | Mary Johnson |
| May 7th, Wed. | John Dietrich | November | Stan Smith |

### MEET OUR NEW MEMBER

**Ed Leary**

Ed will be familiar to many of us having been a member of the now defunct San Jose club and often seen at inter-club meetings. An advanced movie maker, he has a particular interest in documentaries. **Welcome to the Viewfinders Ed.**

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



*"Sex, Lies and Videotape". Well, actually only videotape unless you count the current primaries which always contain some small fabrications (anyone for a trip to Bosnia?). So, the theme for this article is strictly videotape.*

On March 26th Viewfinders joined forces with the MacFilmmakers and REI to present a South Bay Premiere of Lance Trumbull's "Everest Peace Project: A Climb for Peace". Lance was a local videographer, a lot like most of us, back a few years ago and had a dream of doing this documentary on a combined nation's assault on Mt Everest. Our club helped promote the event and supplied refreshments. It turned out to be a very well attended showing. Our club was represented by about 15 members and the general public overflowed the auditorium provided by MacFilmmakers and Apple. It was a good event to be involved with and think it raised the club's visi-

bility in the community. Thanks to Mary Johnson for the initial contact with the Producer Lance and for also coordinating the refreshments for the event.

On other videotape related news, our May meeting program will be an opportunity for members to show off some of what they are working on, in the way of video projects, and have completed. We have been pressed to get to member videos at our meetings in the past few months. If you have a video that you think is ready to be seen bring it in and get it into the queue. We have about 60 minutes to show reels or videos. Time allowing, we will show some (5-10 minutes) or all of the videos. Introductions of videos and short Q&A after viewing will be done, again, time allowing. So, excite us with a new video or project and show us your videotape.

*Bob Meacham*







*"Everest Peace Project" event photos courtesy of John Dietrich*

# Report on NABSHOW™

Where *Content* Comes to Life™

**By Bob Meacham**

Each year I have the pleasure of attending the NAB (National Association of Broadcasters) Convention in Las Vegas. It is held in conjunction with the RTNDA (Radio-Television News Director's Association) and completely fills the Las Vegas Convention buildings. It is the second largest convention in Las Vegas each year. It is aimed primarily at the professionals in the broadcast business but has plenty to offer for the amateur like myself.

This year Apple Computers & Avid Editing software, which had huge booths in previous NAB conventions, had dropped out. From my observation they had little or no difficulty in filling the spaces. Each year the show shows the new hardware, software and 3rd party support of everything video and audio/radio related. Most of the equipment is hands on demonstrations, you can touch and control the newest and best in cameras, lighting, audio boards and equipment. Camera manufacturers in attendance were Canon, Sony, Panasonic, JVC, Red One and many others. The software companies have both registered-only tutorial events and large, open demonstration showings of their new tools. As an example, Adobe held an open demonstration every half hour on different aspects of their editing software for the 9 hours each day of the show without repeating a presentation. As did AutoDesk, Sony Vegas and just

about every other software company there is. Then, add in the 3rd party companies that build plug-ins, attachments for and modifications to both the equipment and the software, lighting and it makes for a very busy day just trying to see a good share of everything.

So, what did I come away from this year's show with? Aside from some great knowledge, a ton of handout materials and some sore feet, I would say the biggest thing was what I learned. As we know, HD is the wave of the future in video, audio and radio and the whole world is going to HD as fast as they can. There was no question of that at NAB. Everything was HD related (only Canon had two SD cameras at the show) but the tell tale signs were in higher quality HD (next generation signal processors and monitors) and faster distribution of HD materials (internet on demand, streaming over air and phone lines and HD digital movie theaters). If you plan on listening to the radio, watching TV, DVDs, going to movies or shooting your own, you cannot get away from HD. It is becoming bigger, faster, with better imagery and very wide spread.

So, if you have continued reading this article this long you are probably wondering, "How this really affects you(me) as a simple videographer making home movies?" Well, what it does is all of this (see above) will recalibrate your viewers to new visual and audio standards. As they see more beautiful HD images and hear clearer, crisper audio they will have less tolerance for sitting through lower quality video and bad audio home movies or videos. Similar to what has happened with VHS as opposed to digital video. It forces you to raise your own game (either in shooting, editing or displaying) to stay at a standard level that your audience will enjoy.

I know most of the things that are shown or available at the NAB shows are beyond the average person's reach but it does show are trends, that will eventually trickle down to the casual videographer. The trend for the future of video is bigger and better than ever before, and HD is the next platform. ■

## Viewfinders Video Productions

# Report

By the time you read this, the Viewfinders Video Productions crew will have shot five scenes at three locations for this year's club movie, *The Dancer.* Locations so far shot are a city park, the protagonist's garage and a supermarket. Actors roles include the Dancer himself, his pals in the park and his wife at the supermarket. The rushes are mostly very good though some re-shooting for technical and editing reasons may be required.

Director Bob Meacham and Producer Jack Gorham are keeping a brisk schedule to allow Editor Herb Wolff plenty of time to call for additional story improving shots if needed, well before the September Festivals deadline.

Crew members are learning a great deal about the art of movie making, especially from Technical Director John Dietrich. This is not point and shoot and hope for the best movie making. Camera calibration, lighting peculiarities and sound quality are studied carefully on site to avoid nasty surprises at the editing desk.

All club members are strongly encouraged to join the crew because hands-on training for movie making and capturing quality footage previous to hitting the editing desk, simply cannot be got out of a book or classroom.

Stills from making *The Dancer* can be seen in Frank Swanson's "Tech Tips" recap and his Picture Puzzle feature in this newsletter. ◼

## Viewfinders PICTURE PUZZLE

**by Frank Swanson**

This month's puzzle is a picture puzzle that I've taken from the set of our latest club movie, "The Dancer". There are 14 differences between the first photo and the second photo. See if you can find them all. The answers appear elsewhere in this newsletter.

# California Film Festivals & Contests

*World-wide there are hundreds of film festivals open to amateur movie makers. Here's a list from California alone. Check out their web sites for details.*

**American Film Institute Festival**
www.afi.com/onscreen/afifest/2008
**American Film Market**
www.afma.com
**American Indian Film Festival -**
**San Francisco** www.aifisf.com
**Beverly Hills Film Festival**
www.beverlyhillsfilmfestival.com
**Buckingham Independent Film Festival**
internal.vusd.solanocoe.k12.ca.us/Foundation/index.htm
**Burbank Film Festival**
www.burbankfilmfestival.com
**California Indep. Film Festival**
caindiefilmfest.org
**Cinequest - San Jose Film Festival**
www.cinequest.org/index.php
**City of Angeles Film Festival**
www.cityofangelsfilmfest.org
**Contra Costa International Jewish Film Festival**
www.jfed.org/page.html?ArticleID=112072

**Film Arts Foundation -**
**San Francisco**
www.filmarts.org/home.php
**Hollywood Black Film Festival**
www.hbff.org
**Hollywood Film Festival**
http://hollywoodawards.com
**Humboldt International Film Festival**
www.humboldt.edu/~filmfest
**International Latino Film Festival -**
**San Francisco**
www.latinofilmfestival.org/2007/index.php
**Long Beach Intern'l Film Festival**
www.longbeachfilmfestival.com
**Los Angeles Asian Pacific Film & Video Festival**
www.vconline.org
**Los Angeles Indep. Film Festival**
www.laiff.com
**Los Angeles Intern'l Film Festival**
www.lafilmfest.com
**Los Angeles Latino International Film Festival**
www.latinofilm.com
**Malibu International Film Festival**
www.malibufilmfestival.org
**Mill Valley Film Festival**
http://mvff.com/2007/2007.html?PHPSESSID=f66287e1847db1a61dbd9ff097999ac3
**Newport Beach Film Festival**
www.newportbeachfilmfest.com
**Ojai Film Festival**
www.ojaifilmfestival.com
**Palm Springs Intern'l Film Festival**
www.psfilmfest.org

**Pan African Films and Arts Festival**
www.paff.org
**San Diego Asian Film Festival**
www.sdaff.org/festival/2007
**San Diego Film Festival**
www.sdff.org
**San Diego Latino Film Festival**
www.sdlatinofilm.com
**San Fernando Valley International Film Festival**
www.viffi.org
**San Francisco Indep. Film Festival**
www.sfindie.com
**San Francisco Intern'l Film Festival**
www.sfiff.org
**San Francisco Jewish Film Festival**
www.sfjff.org
**San Francisco Silent Film Festival**
www.silentfilm.org
**San Luis Obispo Intern'l Film Festival**
www.slofilmfest.org
**Santa Barbara Intern'l Film Festival**
www.sbfilmfestival.org
**Santa Clarita Intern'l Film Festival**
www.sciff.org
**Santa Monica Film Festival**
www.smff.com
**Sonoma Valley Film Festival**
www.CinemaEpicuria.org
**Tahoe International Film Festival**
www.tahoefilmfestival.org
**Very Short Film Festival**
www.VeryShortMovies.com
**Wine Country Film Festival**
www.winecountryfilmfest.com

---

## ANSWERS TO PICTURE PUZZLE

1. Franz's shirt has changed to purple (C2)
2. Camcorder focus ring has changed to green (D2)
3. Tripod now has a fifth silver leg (E2)
4. Bob's glasses are missing the left-ear part (C3)
5. Bob's pull-over vest is zipped up higher (D3)
6. Bob's left shirt sleeve is longer (D4)
7. Bob's wrist watch is missing (E4)
8. Display's lower white section between Franz and Bob is missing (E3)
9. Cheese label on second shelf is missing "Mozzarella" label (B6)
10. Price tag at $3 appears on second shelf cheese (B4)
11. Cheese price tag is missing (D5)
12. Railing is missing every-other rung (E5-6)
13. Price of cheese on fourth shelf down changed from $4 to $3 (C6)
14. Label of one cheese on lower shelf is missing (E6)

BONUS:

---

**TREASURER'S REPORT FOR APRIL 2008**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Bank Account Beginning 4/1/08 | $ | 1138.45 |
| Income Total: | $ | 20.00 |
| Dues (1)  $20 | | |
| Expenses Total: | $ | 0.00 |
| Bank Account Ending 4/30/08 | $ | 158.45 |

Frank Swanson, Treasurer

# TECH ✓ TIPS

**By Frank Swanson**

*This past month I screened two short video clips from **Digital Juice***'s "Field of View" *series. These addressed the art of movie-making as opposed to the production skills and techniques that we've seen before in our "Tech-Tips" segment. There's more to making videos than knowing what button to push on your camcorder, which font to use for a title, and what menu to use for a DVD.*
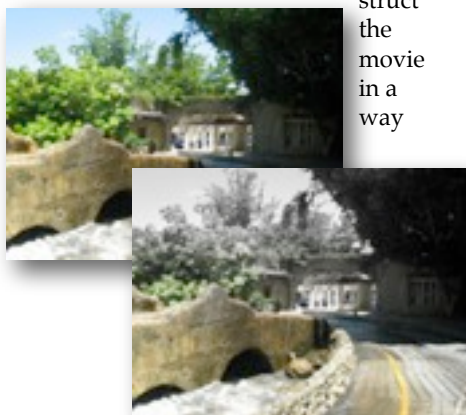
*1. Behind the Scenes:*  The video that leaves the audience wishing for more is made by someone who thinks like a cinematographer and edits like a film-maker. So, how does one make a movie with a cinematic look? Use of dolly shots (as opposed to pans), creative lighting for emotion, and rack-focus shots for a feeling of depth are some of the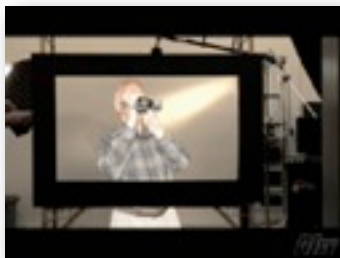 ways to give your movie character. Use of "B-Roll" (aka cut-aways), slow motion and close-ups, softening the focus or using a 16x9 field of view, or altering the color or grain also help.

Think about your content, then construct the movie in a way that best suits your story.  Like speakers who use pauses to allow the audience to think a bit, a few seconds of stillness at the beginning or ending of a shot can allow the audience to digest what's happening. Making good videos is more art than science. Try to steer your movie-making towards artistry because it will make a huge difference on what you produce for your audience.

*2. Through the Window:*  What doesn't show on the screen doesn't exist for the viewers. They see only what you choose them to see. That's how video works. This important concept sounds simple, but it's a lot more complex than you might think. When you compose a shot you should consciously make a decision on what will be viewable. Shooting is the process of selectively revealing some things and concealing others. The greatest tool you have to do this is the edge of the frame.

Consider that behind every shot and frame in your movie there is a story. What did your selection of a particular shot, angle or camera movement convey to the audience? Shooting a movie is to frame a particular part of the world you want your viewers to observe. That frame is your viewfinder - perhaps that's why we call our club the VIEWFINDERS. Making videos is a process of moving the frame to tell the story. Whenever you reposition your window you make a decision on what to reveal and what to crop out. An example of the latter may be your shooting crew, their equipment, reflections or shadows. If they're unintentionally revealed they'll likely ruin the illusion for your audience. Whatever doesn't fit into the story must reside outside of the frame. The viewer accepts the window as the view of the world. Take advantage of the concept *"If you don't show it, the viewer doesn't know it."*

The purpose of your movie will determine what you choose to conceal or reveal. The camera has a limited field of view so the movie images need to be filtered and selected for the purpose of telling a story. The human mind extends what it sees inside the frame beyond the frame whether it really exist or not. What you imply by what you show or conceal creates in the mind of the viewer something that isn't necessarily there. This concept is a powerful tool to create unreal realities on the screen. In the world of video, if you imply it, the viewer will buy it.

Another thing, don't use the viewfinder like a submarine's periscope, unable to see anything but the periscope's limited view. Get your eyes out of the eye cup - just use the viewfinder as a picture frame for your viewers. Periscoping is not the best way to shoot, your shooting is too reactive, you don't know where to stop or adjust your moves and may look indecisive. So, on your next shoot take time to consider what's happening on the edges. Understanding how the edge of the frame influences your audience will make you a better shooter, better editor and better visual story teller.

This Tech Tip can be seen on your computer at **www.digitaljuice.com**. ■

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.
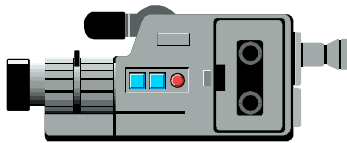
OFFICERS
President: Bob Meacham
R9meach@aol.com

Vice President: Fred Pfost
fpfost@aol.com

Treasurer: Frank Swanson
frank_video@swansonhome.com

Secretary: Brian Lucas
lucasbouret@sbcglobal.net

WEBSITE
www.viewfindersclub.org

# CALENDAR OF EVENTS
# 2 0 0 8

**JAN 9th, Wed.** (Cupertino City Hall)

Meeting: AMPS 2007 Contest winning videos screened

Tech-Tips: "Shoot to Edit"
   Frank Swanson

**FEB 12th, Tuesday**

Meeting: "How to Make a Digital Slide Show" by Jim Visser.

Tech-Tips: "Sound Advice"
   Frank Swanson

**MARCH 11th, Tuesday**

Meeting: Andy Panizza of Pinnacle Systems demonstrates "Studio Ultimate"

Tech-Tips: "Animating Text"
   Frank Swanson

**APRIL 8th, Tuesday**

Meeting: "Road" Theme Challenge screening

Tech-Tips: "Field of View"
   Frank Swanson

**MAY 7th, Wednesday**

Meeting: Club Members Movie Night

Tech-Tips: Frank Swanson

**JUNE 4th, Wednesday**

Meeting: Panel Discussion "Adding Effects" with Bob Meacham, John Dietrich, Mary Johnson and Brian Lucas

Tech-Tips: Frank Swanson

**JULY (Date TBD)**

Meeting: Nimitz Grade School Videos

Tech-Tips: Frank Swanson

**AUG (Date TBD)**

Meeting: "What's New in HD" by Jason Housel of Snader and Associates

Tech-Tips: Frank Swanson

**SEPT (Date TBD)**

Meeting: "Shooting Underwater Video" - Guest speaker Mike Boom

Tech-Tips: Frank Swanson

**OCT (Date TBD)**

Meeting: Club Annual Video Contest screening

Tech-Tips: Frank Swanson

**NOV (Date TBD)**

Meeting: Annual Gold DVD Awards and Social

Tech-Tips: Frank Swanson

**DECEMBER**

No meeting this month