

Next Club Meeting: Wednesday, July 8th, 2009.
7:30 - 9:30 p.m. Cupertino Room,
Quinlan Center, 10185 N. Stelling Rd.,
Cupertino, CA



IN THIS ISSUE: JULY 2009

**DVD Authoring:
Make it Look Good**
John Dietrich on
how to make your
DVD's and menus
look professional.
Pages 1 and 2

**DVD Authoring:
Exporting Content**
Mary Johnson dis-
cusses DVD applica-
tions and sound
sources. Pages 2
and 4

**DVD Authoring:
Packaging**
Frank Swanson tells
us how ensure qual-
ity disk and sleeve
printing. Page 4

President's Message
Fred Pfof discovers
the importance of
creative camera
work. Page 3

VP Message
Jack Gorham relates
his experience as
editor for the club
movie "Assump-
tions". Page 5

Tech Tips
Frank Swanson
suggests thinking
like an editor before
going out with the
camera. Page 7

June Meeting Highlights DVD Authoring

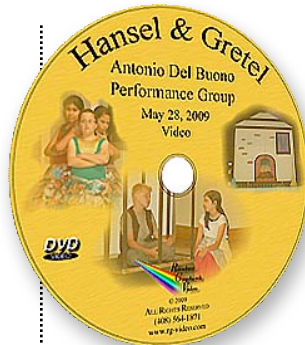
A panel Discussion with John Dietrich, Mary Johnson and Frank Swanson

Three Viewfinders members sat on a panel to share their knowledge of DVD Authoring. The panelists were John Dietrich, Mary Johnson and Frank Swanson.

The following article has been compiled from John and Mary's presentation notes and an article written specially for this publication by Frank.

July Meeting Nimitz Elementary School Student Movies

The junior videographers will be here again this year, as in past years, with a new selection of their movies



Sometimes one makes DVDs for none to see but ourselves. They may be back-ups or storage for images and data. We don't care what they look like. However, when we make them for others to see we need to be concerned with the disk's physical appearance and what will be seen on the screen. This will reflect our work and needs to be carefully considered. It's rather like going to a job interview; first impressions are critical. Not only should the DVD work flawlessly, its physical appearance announces your skills and attitude to your work.

DVD labels give a good indication of this so be sure that they are attractive and illustrate the disk's content by way of color, choice of typeface and overall design.

DVD menus should follow the style of the label. Work with similar colors, typefaces and graphics. And check you spelling!

Make it look good

By John Dietrich

So what exactly is DVD Authoring? At its simplest it is the means by which a DVD containing still and motion graphics, colors, text and sound can be played on a DVD player. There are, however, two ways to burn a DVD; authored and un-authored. The latter, usually termed a linear DVD, may only be played from start to finish in a continuous forward direction. Our concern is with the authored variety.

An authored DVD can be likened to a hallway from which a number of rooms may be entered in no particular order. We can enter as many rooms of our choosing as we wish and examine the contents. For example, if the author is a photographer he can set up different galleries featuring various photo collections for us to choose from. A videographer can provide several movies on one disk, and also include extra features describing the making of the movies. Authored DVD's give the viewer options.

Continued page 2

COLOR

Your color scheme should reflect the DVD'd contents, whether dramatic or jolly. Work out a color scheme before you begin, being sure that the colors compliment each other and then stick to it. If you are going to use colored text you won't want it to fight your background color so experiment with contrasting colors. An artist's color wheel is a useful tool for finding these.

TYPOGRAPHY

There are a host of typefaces to choose from, many are excellent but



some are awful. Select "designer" fonts with care. Too many of them may be eye-catching but suffer from



very poor readability. They won't make your work exciting, only irritating. Fonts fall into several basic categories, serif, sans-serif, scripts and free style. Serif fonts, like Times Roman, are good for practically any usage but each has unique characteristics that can make one version more suitable for a theme than others. Sans-serif fonts like Helvetica and Arial make a better choice for technical or modernistic subjects. Scripts tend to be a first choice for wedding and art DVDs but choose carefully, the swashes on some can be very fine and break up or disappear on screen. Free style fonts have a hand-drawn appearance and are good for light-hearted or juvenile themes.

IMAGES

If you use a photo as a background for your menus avoid busy subjects, they'll make reading the text difficult or impossible. Lots of sky, say, or close-ups with large swathes of a similar color will make your text more readable. Generally it is safer to keep text and images apart from each other. Again, small photos in boxes

are better if they are close-ups. A panoramic photo of a cityscape in a small box will not impress anyone.

GRAPHICS

Small graphic items like buttons, links and indicators are useful and, if you don't want to build your own, many are downloadable from the web or included in a clip-art collection. They are numerous and well designed by professional artists. They can add some "spiff" to your menus.

MOTION

Creating tailor-made motion graphics for your menus requires specialized software and the inevitable steep learning curve to master it but many DVD programs offer built in templates allowing motion graphics whereby the user can add their own graphics and therefore personalize them to an extent. Apple's iDVD, for example, provides many templates that are suitable for the most used DVD authoring themes. ■

Exporting Content for DVD

By Mary Johnson

Mary began her presentation by listing the types of content that can be included in DVD authoring. These included photos, video, audio, music, voice overs and sound tracks. She then went on to discuss the most popular software options available on the market, distinguishing between PC products and Apple products. These were the following:

Major PC Software Players

Adobe Premiere Pro

The video editing software sales leader. It is a very powerful application with a long history and loads of features but has a very steep learning curve. It is expensive at around \$500.00.

It's available for both Mac (Intel versions only) and Windows. It integrates with AfterEffects and Photoshop.



Continued page 4

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Fred Pfost

I am not very observant or creative from the standpoint of talent but since my introduction to Viewfinders my awareness of the technical aspects of movies has improved. Prior to this I was creative in engineering only. I admire those who can see the creative quality in entertainment endeavors such as exhibited in movies or stage plays.

Now I watch movies with a more analytical eye with respect to the camera work. I don't think videographers receive the recognition that they deserve. In saying this I am also aware that what the videographer records accords with what the director has directed him to record. Two movies that I have seen lately make me appreciate the huge creative ability of videographers but I am not sure who to credit for animal photography.

The incredibly expensive to make movie "Angels and Demons" has scenes that are impossible to understand how they were photographed. I know that many times the computer can do things that one cannot detect from reality but there were scenes in this movie that were fantastic. Another movie that my wife, JoAnn, and I got from Netflix - "The Life Of Birds" has hundreds of scenes that must have taken many hours each to get such close-ups.

I suggest that each of you start looking at movies as works of art instead of just productions for entertainment.

TREASURER'S REPORT FOR JUNE, 2009

Bank Account Beginning 06/01/09	\$995.11
Income Total:	\$22.00
New Members (1) \$22	
Expenses Total:	\$20.00
Joined SCCA \$20	
Bank Account Ending 06/30/09	\$997.11



JOIN THE VIEWFINDERS CLUB NOW!

Bring your check or cash to our July 8th meeting to join the Viewfinders for this 2009 year. The annual dues for the rest of this year are \$14 for individuals, \$17 for families, and \$5 for full-time students. Make your checks payable to the "Viewfinders Club".

Frank Swanson, Treasurer

**Welcome to the Viewfinders Club
SUDOKU July 2009 Puzzle**

The goal of Sudoku is to fill in each box with one of nine letters. Each letter can appear only once in each horizontal or vertical row, as well as only once in each of the nine 3X3

squares. This month's puzzle contains the nine letters A, C, H, I, M, N, O, S and T. As a clue, the nine letters form a word that refers to the name of a popular Apple computer. The answer to this month's medium difficulty puzzle appears on page 4 of this newsletter. Have fun!

							A	
		A	H	T		C		
H			A			M		
M	H			C				
C		N				O		I
				I			H	C
		O			H			N
		S		O	N	T		
	T							

Continued from page 2

Adobe AfterEffects

Adobe AfterEffects is primarily used for creating 2D motion graphics and visual effects. It makes animation on still and moving images possible and allows for time-varying special effects among many other features. AfterEffects works well with Adobe Premiere, Movie Player or any other Quicktime-based application.

Adobe Premiere Elements

If you want to move up from free editors like Movie Maker and add to your editing options, Adobe Premiere Elements is an ideal program. It allows users to easily create simple DVDs and home movies, or edit more involved projects with multiple video and audio tracks, and customized effects. For less than \$100 Premiere Elements comes with DVD authoring software and multiple pre-made DVD menus, and will allow you to easily create and share high-quality video productions.



Apple Software Players

iMovie and iDVD

iMovie is a user-friendly beginners editing program that's shipped on all new Macs. Although it doesn't have many advanced capabilities it sports many features and effects that enable

the user to make creative home movies, including HD editing ability and iDVD, a DVD authoring program. It can be purchased from Apple as part of its iLife suite for about \$80.

Final Cut Express

Initially it is not easy to see the difference between Final Cut Express and Final Cut Pro except the price tag. Final Cut Express HD is designed for those who have grown beyond iMovie. The learning curve is steep however, and has no relation to iMovie. Final Cut Pro includes several features missing from Final Cut Express, like batch capture, which professionals demand but may not be important to the amateur. So for a program that has about 80% of the features of it's professional brother, Final Cut Express can be had for about \$1,000 less.

Final Cut Pro/Studio

Final Cut Pro is Apple's a professional editing software application and is a module of the Final Cut Studio Suite. For 10 years, Final Cut Pro has expanded its user base of mainly independent film and television editors and now rivals the industry's leader Avid. Final Cut Studio includes Final Cut Pro, Motion, Soundtrack Pro, Compressor, DVD Studio Pro, and Color, for professional color grading. Final Cut Pro can no longer be purchased separately. To master all these modules will probably require training.

Music For Menus

As the audio portion usually comprises of 50% of the final production, one should give a lot of thought to selection. The genre and mood if chosen thoughtfully will considerably enhance the work. Among the many sources of music and sound effects, Mary chose two to discuss.

Sonic Fire Pro/Sonic Fire Plug-Ins

SonicFire Pro is a royalty-free soundtrack creator which comes with musical themes that you can fit precisely to your video production. it works by importing video from many for-



mats and previews the movie much like your video editing program, setting markers to indicate when music should start, stop, and change mood. The musical segments can be resized to fit almost any length of video without clumsy joins.

Sonic Fire Plug-Ins add to the range of music selections that comes with Sonic Fire Pro and include plug-ins that work with Apple's Final Cut software also.

Apple's iTunes Store and Garage Band



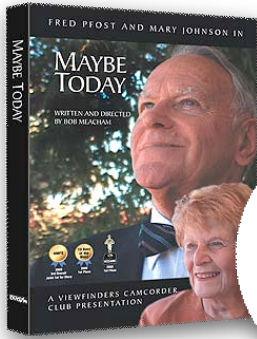
Apple's iTunes music can be downloaded and imported to your iTunes library but need to be converted for your editing program - a simple task. Most songs purchased from Apple's iTunes Music Store covers personal listening use only. However, Apple does offer royalty free music packs.

Apple Garage Band, a simple music compositing software for the musician contains a number of sound loops. ■



Sudoku Answer

W	O	I	S	V	C	H	T	N
H	C	T	N	O	I	S	W	A
N	S	V	H	W	T	O	C	I
C	H	N	V	I	W	T	S	O
I	W	O	T	H	S	N	V	C
A	T	S	O	C	N	I	H	W
T	N	W	I	S	V	C	O	H
O	I	C	W	T	H	V	N	S
S	V	H	C	N	O	W	I	T



DVD Packaging Presentation

By Frank Swanson



As an amateur moviemaker you should be packaging your productions onto the current and highest quality media available, namely DVD's. VHS tape packaging has long passed us by in favor of fully digital DVD media. But, beyond the video and audio quality that DVD's provide, there is a third quality issue that is at stake: the DVD physical media itself and its container, i.e. the DVD's packaging.

Why, then, is DVD packaging so important? Well, there are two reasons for producing a quality package: 1) the *first impression* of a well packaged DVD sets the tone for how well the recipient looks forward to viewing your movie, and 2) the *identification* of the movie's contents. For example, the packaging for the Club's first major production, "Maybe Today", came on a DVD platter with a superb graphic containing both a composite of the main characters overlaid by appropriate font text of the movie's title and production details, and the DVD case insert with a similar graphic and expanded text content that told us about the story, the cast and the production crew. Both the platter and insert met the requirements of making a quality first impression and identifying the production details.

So, the two components of DVD packaging are the disc platter and the case. DVD disc platters used by the amateur are usually white ink-jet hub printable media (Note: professionals usually have their platters silk-screened). Two of the more popular media that can be obtained online from www.supermediastore.com are:

1) Taiyo Yuden DVD-R47WPP600SK at \$35 for 100 pack spindle, and 2) Verbatim DataLife Plus 94854 at \$33 for 100 pack spindle. Note: the spindle itself is a useful tool, as you'll read later.

DVD disc cases are available in a variety of forms: black plastic cases, jewel cases, clamshells, and the very simple white paper sleeve. Black plastic cases come in two thicknesses: standard and slim. The standard case can accommodate from one to four disc platters – quite handy for when you make more than one DVD platter for a project such as a full wedding or a company training class. Again SupermediaStore has the premium 14mm standard black cases holding one platter available at \$36 for 100 units.

Now that we've got the media defined with some suggested sources, what kinds of tools do I use to actually pull-off producing a physical product?

1. Computer with DVD Burner

2. Software:

DVD Authoring Application:

Apple iDVD

DVD Label Printing Application:

Discus Labeling \$35 from Magic Mouse Productions

DVD Case Insert Printing Application:

Adobe Photoshop Elements \$45 from Adobe

3. **Color Ink-jet Printer:** Epson Stylus Photo 1400 Ink Jet \$300

4. **Photo Paper:** Kirkland Professional Glossy Ink-jet Photo Paper 8.5" x 11" Item #126755 \$20/150 sheets at Costco

5. **DVD cake box spindle** from DVD disc source

6. **DVD Surface Protector:** Krylon Crystal Clear Acrylic Coating #1303 \$6/11 oz. at Michael's (spray on top surface while placed in empty DVD cake box spindle)

7. **Paper Cutter:** Fiskars portable 12" paper trimmer \$15 at Michael's

Now, what about those graphics that are mentioned above? How do you go about designing them for the disc platter and the case insert?

For the disc platter, I use the Discus application from MagicMouse and select either one of their background templates or import one of my own developed with Photoshop or my video editing application. Then I use the text tool to overlay the movie title, date, major chapters, etc. And, finally I put my "Copyright © 2009 Frank Swanson" in small Comic Sans fonts along the bottom arcing edge.



For my DVD case inserts, I have developed a Photoshop template with the right side (front DVD side) containing some graphic/photo that easily identifies the movie, the movie title and very little else, maybe a black border. On the left side (back DVD side), I put a bunch of detail about the movie such as a short synopsis, characters, production crew, photo or two of the movie, runtime, and, of course, my aforementioned copyright along the bottom.

Well, there you have it, the process to package your DVD:

1. Create a disc image of your movie
2. Burn image on a blank DVD ink jet printable disc
3. Design the graphics for disc
4. Print the graphics onto the top of your burned disc
5. Spray the disc surface protection on disc topside
6. Design the graphics for DVD case insert
7. Print the DVD case insert
8. Cut the DVD case insert to fit DVD case
9. Install the DVD and insert into DVD case ■

VICE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Jack Gorham: Editing for the first time

Several months ago, the Viewfinders Project Group met to review ideas and scripts for our next movie. After "Assumptions" was selected as the script, the group met again to decide on the function that each crew member wanted to do. I was out of town for that meeting. When I returned the following week, I was told that I was the editor.

I had edited many personal vacation movies, but never one for our Viewfinders Video Project Group. I was hesitant to accept, but a couple crew members said I could do it. After the first shoot day of "Assumptions", I got the video tape and loaded in into the computer. The clips were then broken down into subclips and given titles that I hoped would help me find the correct scenes for putting together the story. Over the next several days, I tried to make a logical sequence of the "playground" scene. Cut here, insert there, review, review, review. After several hours, it gets so repetitious I have to close down and give my mind a rest.

At the next Project meeting, I brought a DVD of the edited video and played it for the group. The showing provoked many comments. Some felt that certain scenes should be reshot, but the editing is okay, nothing exciting.

The week's progressed and I got more tapes. Again, a DVD of the edited scenes are shown and there are comments about reshooting. Recommendations are made for changes to the editing. Then it happens. Conflicting viewpoints with Director Dale

Porter eventually brings the project to an abrupt end and I am left with about six tapes and two-thirds of the movie completed. As a courtesy to the actors and director, I was asked to put together an edited version of the various scenes that were shot. Copies were made and sent to them, but they were just scenes with not much of a story because several key scenes were never shot.

When Dale received his copy, he contacted me and asked whether I could add some additional clips by including a drawing and text to fill in some of the unfinished scenes. After including those, I added a title, credits and music. Another crew member, Bob Meacham, reviewed what I had made and noted some discrepancies and made suggestions. I reviewed it again and looking for the umpteenth time, I said to myself "how could I have missed that?" I edited it again, cutting away more, and the story became more interesting.

Finished and finally done (I thought), I burned another DVD and sent it on to Dale. He liked it, except for a glitch in one of the scenes where there is an abrupt change to one of the actors. I played it again and yes, I could see the glitch-just a couple frames too many. "How did I miss that?" I said to myself. I corrected it and dropped another DVD in the mail.

It has been said that a film editor never really finishes his editing; he eventually has to abandon it. You need a lot of patience. Editing is a continual learning process, one is constantly reviewing and reevaluating the decisions made. One way to get that experience is working on an actual movie. For those of you who want to learn, I encourage you to join the Viewfinders Video Productions Group and try your hand at one of the crew positions.

Our Production Manager, Milt Kostner had recommended to me a book entitled "The Conversations - Walter Murch and the Art of Editing" at the time I was asked to be the film editor. I purchased it, but never got around to reading it until now. Some of the comments in the book that I thought were helpful are: "You have to have an

intuition about the craft. As much as possible, you try to be the audience - where is the audience looking, what are they thinking?"

In the end, the editor of a film must try to take advantage of all the material that is given him and reveal it in a way that feels natural but exciting, unfolding the ideas of the film. It is a questions of orchestration: organize the images and sounds in a way that is digestible and interesting to the audience. ■

VVPG's *The Interrogation* Update

By Milt Kostner

The VVPG project group is entering the critical phase of preparation of "The Interrogation", a comedy of less than 10 minutes. The two sets were to be erected June 27th and the filming taking place on the following Sunday but the extreme heat postponed it. Editing will take place late July in expectation that it will be entered into several local, national and international video competitions.

Shooting will take place in Santa Clara's old Depot, which is now a museum. Even on Sunday, trains are expected to run by on the average of every half hour, even without consideration of five bus routes that run by the station. This should provide an additional sound challenge to the crew.

The screenplay (script to most of us) was written by Bob Meacham who is also directing it. Others in the crew are Fed Pfost: Director of Photography, Jack Gorham: Editor, Brian Lucas: Sound, Franz Helbig: Camera, John Dietrich: Lighting and Set Construction, Herb Wolfe: Consultant/ Camera, Scott McLaughlin: Grip, and yours truly, Milt Kostner: Production Manager.

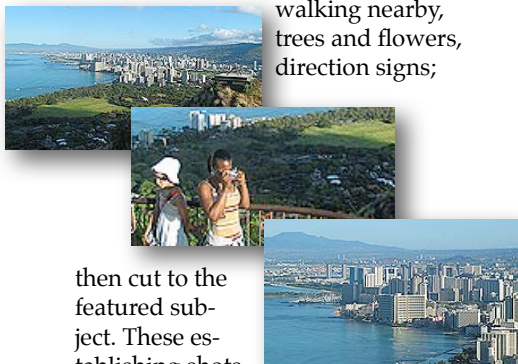
If you'd like to join the team in future projects, get your name into Fred Pfost for consideration. ■

TECH TIPS

By Frank Swanson

Don't want to spend a whole lot of time editing your video footage you'll be taking on your summer vacation, or a family event that's planned soon? Well, read this Tech-Tip based upon Digital Juice's "Take 5: Shooting to Edit" video and find out how to shoot everything you'll need the first time – think ahead about how the footage will be edited before you press the record button. The secret is to shoot with the eye of an editor.

1. Set The Scene: Establishing shots help put your scenes in context by telling a more coherent story by identifying the environment for all of the succeeding shots. Frequently more than one establishing shot is useful to set the stage, each one visually honing in on where the majority of the scene is to be shot. For example, if you're going to shoot a vacation trip, set the stage by beginning your video by showing the grand view of the area; next close-in on your main focus of your movie with the next shot; some B-roll of that area like people walking nearby, trees and flowers, direction signs;



then cut to the featured subject. These establishing shots gives the editor important elements to tell a better story and prepare the viewer for what's coming up next.

2. Cover Your Cuts: This tip means to shoot cutaways to cover awkward edits. What are awkward edits you ask? Often it's where you've got to condense an hour of video, or you have footage from a number of different angles and perspectives to put

together, or you've shot a series of entirely different scenes at and want to make one cohesive movie. Just stringing all this material together can produce ugly edit points. So while you're there shooting the basic material, gather a collection of cutaways like close-ups of people talking to each other, or a close-up of someone eating a piece of cake. Use your imagination and get as much B-roll as you can find, even if it occurs before or after the main material is shot.



Remember, cutaways add variety and interest to your movies.

3. Shoot Alternate Angles: Changing your camera's position and lens settings gives you editing options. You'll find that footage choices allows you to tell your story in an interesting and



unique way. If an event has some repetitiveness (like shooting a

basketball game of your grandson), don't just drop your tripod down in one spot in the bleachers or leave your camera at one height. Try shooting from different angles and heights. Shoot wide, medium and tight shots from several different angles and perspectives. Move around. Your goal as a shooter is to provide yourself as editor with a wide variety of shots to choose from.

4. Shoot Multiple Takes: Once you think you have the shot, shoot it one more time if you have the opportunity. This gives you as editor the option of choosing just the right shot that helps with the continuity, pace



and flow of the scene. You never know when a safety shot might save the day. This concept also applies to those cutaways we talked about earlier in this article. Try using a slow moving tilt-up and down, pan left and right, and a slow zoom in and out. Variety is the spice of movie making.

5. Make a Plan: "Plan your shoot and shoot your plan"; without one can be a hit-and-miss endeavor. Shooting lots of footage for editing options means that some of your shots won't be used. Making a plan before the shoot limits extra shooting, even if the event is something simple like a birthday party. Write a list of the shots that you "absolutely need", then a list of the shots that you "would like", and finally B-roll shots to provide interest and continuity. Then use this checklist at the event to ensure you've got everything you'll need later when you edit your movie. This is especially important if you shoot out of sequence, like cutaways and establishing shots. Finally, don't just stick to your list, keep your eyes open for unexpected opportunities – these can be some of the best B-roll you'll ever get.

One last tip: tape is cheap. It's better to shoot more footage than you think you'll need than find not enough when you get home. When you watch TV, pay close attention to how the editor used establishing shots, cutaways, alternate angles and B-roll to make the movie interesting. This Tech Tip can be seen on your computer by going to www.digitaljuice.com at their DJTV series. I'll select a new tech tip for screening at our next meeting, so be sure to come and learn something new. ■



CREDITS

Editor and Publisher: Brian Lucas
 lucasbouret@sbcglobal.net

Viewfinder Newsletter is published during the third week of each month for Viewfinders Digital Video 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. 10185 N. Stelling Road, Cupertino, California. Watch the calendar for programs updates. Guest admission is free.

MEMBERSHIP DUES

- \$30 for individuals
- \$35 for families
- \$5 for full-time students

OFFICERS

President: Fred Pfof
 fpfof@aol.com

Vice President: Jack Gorham
 jack_g93@yahoo.com

Treasurer: Frank Swanson
 frank_video29@swansonhome.com

Secretary: Brian Lucas
 lucasbouret@sbcglobal.net

WEBSITE

www.viewfindersclub.org

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

2009

<p>JAN 14th, Wednesday Meeting: AMPS 2008 Contest winning videos screened</p>	<p>FEB 11th, Wednesday Meeting: Presentation on the Theory of Light and Video Lighting: Fred Pfof and John Dietrich Tech-Tips: "Cutting Room Floor"</p>
<p>MARCH 11th, Wednesday Meeting: What you need to know about White Balance and High Definition Video by Fred Pfof, Franz Helbig and Milt Kostner Tech-Tips: "I've Been Framed"</p>	<p>APRIL 8th, Wednesday Meeting: "Theme Challenge- Coast"" screening night. Hi-Def Cameras Overview by Milt Kostner</p>
<p>MAY 13th, Wednesday Meeting: Club Members Movie Night Physics of Sound and Sound Editing by Fred Pfof and Bob Meacham</p>	<p>JUNE 10th, Wednesday Meeting: Panel discussion "DVD Authoring" with Mary Johnson, John Dietrich and Frank Swanson Tech-Tips: "Shoot to Edit"</p>
<p>JULY 8th, Wednesday Meeting: Nimitz Grade School Videos Tech-Tips: Frank Swanson</p>	<p>AUGUST 12th, Wednesday Meeting: "Theme Challenge" Screening Night Tech-Tips: Frank Swanson</p>
<p>SEPTEMBER 9th, Wednesday Meeting: Guest speaker TBD Tech-Tips: Frank Swanson</p>	<p>OCTOBER 14th, Wednesday Meeting: Club Annual Video Contest screening Tech-Tips: Frank Swanson</p>
<p>NOVEMBER 4th, Wednesday Meeting: Annual Gold DVD Awards and Social Tech-Tips: Frank Swanson</p>	<p>DECEMBER No meeting this month</p>