

Next Club Meetings: Tuesday, September 7th, and Wednesday, October 13th, 7:30 - 9:30 p.m. Cupertino Room, Quinlan Center, 10185 N. Stelling Rd., Cupertino, CA



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## August 2010 Meeting Highlight

### Creative Editing Challenge

Prepared by Jack Gorham

Tuesday September 7th meeting

#### Bob Meacham's "Better Part" Interview

Bob describes Viewfinders activities in a program shot at KMVT community TV studios. Herb Wolff's movie "The Opening of Jackie Q" screened

Wednesday October 13th meeting

#### Annual Member's Video Contest

Winners will receive the club's Gold DVD award for the best members videos of 2010

# Edit This!



Continued page 2

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# Editing Challenge

On the cover of this newsletter are stills from the short clips that Jack gathered and burned to DVDs. They were handed out to members willing to take a crack at it. Initial enthusiasm must have been high for nine DVDs were distributed. However, some must have found the challenge a lot harder than it might at first have appeared because only four members came through with finished movies.

The rules were simple. Only the clips provided by Jack could be used but not necessarily all of them. The footage was silent so the editors could include a sound track. Additional text and graphics could be added to titles, subtitles, captions and credits.

What was surprising, considering that all competitors had to use the same clips, were the different tacks that each editor took. Imagination and creativity played a large part and the audience at the screening were presented with four quite different stories.

**"Big Redd" by Frank Swanson.**  
(Top Left)

Frank's spoof infomercial for a cell phone takes us back to the days when a phone was "just a phone" and nothing more. This movie is a subtle commentary on how technology has actually complicated our daily lives when we attempt to use our cell phones to talk with one another. The product featured in this movie gives us the chance to go back to the basics of communication and simplify our lives when we use a cell phone.

**"What Is the Meaning in Your Life"**  
subtitled "What Turns You On" by  
**Milt Kostner** (Bottom Right)

Milt started to fool around with tricks and gimmicks with the 19 clips but decided that he wasn't yet good



enough to visualize a new Star Wars intro. So he sorted the clips for some possible meaning applicable to himself. The picture came together as a moral message to say "Decide what you want out of life and then get on with it. Life's too short to wait any longer." After that, he said, the rest was easy.

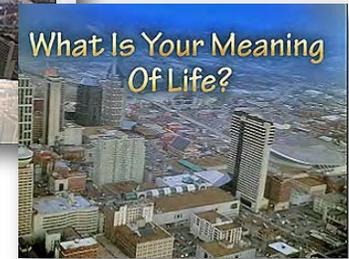
**"The Great Viewfinder's Clip Off" by John Dietrich** (Center)

John's movie opened with some snazzy animated title effects then moved on to an establishing arial shot of a big city where an anxious young couple are waiting for the results of an experimental medical procedure. Urgency is heightened by the the dramatic sounds of cell phones. Doctors are relieved that the treatment has been successful and the couple are told to go celebrate. Hiring a limo, they ride to the beach and party as the sun sets behind them.

**"Jacque Dangereux!" by Luke Bertrand** (Brian Lucas) (Top Right)

This grainy black and white movie parodies old French spy films. The tale tells of Jacque's pursuit of beautiful Russian spy Red Sonja from bustling New York to San Francisco. In a series of phone conversations to Paris he checks in with HQ for latest developments and assures his lover Fifi of his devotion to her. Fifi, however, has found another, which is goose for the gander as Jacque, on a romantic date at the beach bills and coos Red Sonja with his familiar pick up line.

Congratulations to all who entered. Creativity is an important part of what makes the Viewfinders Club so successful. ■



## Summary of Proposed Changes to Viewfinders Club Constitution and By Laws

*The Executive Board are currently updating the Constitution and By laws. When completed a full draft will be sent out to all members for comment.*

- 1). Executive Board Officers' jobs have been generalized with fewer detailed tasks to give them more flexibility in carrying out their primary duties.
- 2). Executive Board Officers may serve an unlimited number of years (currently the limit is three consecutive years).
- 3). The Newsletter Editor has been changed to an appointed position.
- 4). Mention of the defunct NCCAMC and AMMA organizations and their activities have been removed.
- 5). Pro-rated dues are applicable only to new members who have not been a Club member in the previous year.
- 6). Numerous grammar and rewording modifications have been made. ■

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



### What Is New and Exciting For Next Year?

As summer begins to fade and we approach fall, we start to think about next year and what it will bring.

What new video cameras will we see? What major video changes will be made? We're already seeing 3D televisions. Are 3D video cameras on the horizon? What new exciting breakthrough will be announced?

What about Viewfinders Digital Video Club? Are we doing all we can to have an exciting Club? As we get closer to our last meeting in November, we need to plan for our election of new officers. Those officers include President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer. We need your help in nominating and electing these officers who are responsible for running your club for the next year.

We need those who will bring new ideas to the membership and exciting topics for our regular monthly meetings. We need enthusiastic and energetic leadership. Do you have some good ideas? Do you want to help? Are you ready to volunteer?

During the next month, we will be calling on you to see if you will be willing to accept nomination to one of these offices. Please give this serious consideration. It is only through the officer's efforts that our Club is able to successfully grow and provide

members with video knowledge and skills. The cooperative help of these four officers make up the Executive Board of your Club and it is they who plan and implement the programs for the regular monthly meetings as well as other administrative functions.

If you have any questions about any office, please contact any current officer for the answer. Our continuing success as a Club is dependent on your participation. Let's not disband as some other clubs have recently done. Keep our Club vibrant and exciting.

Give us your ideas, your leadership and keep us strong!

**Jack Gorham**

## V.P.'s MESSAGE



### My Two Cents

As the year stretches into its last months, let me sing the praises of VideoLAN's VLC Media Player, now in Version 2. This Open Source (free) application for playing videos and audios easily handles most formats whether on a MAC (it's advertised - I use a PC) or a PC. I use VLC as my standard player, whether reviewing one of my videos or watching a Flash borrow from U-tube. It rarely fails me. Having said that, I must add that if I am watching a tutorial in Apple's .mov format, I use the Quicktime player in a smaller screen to sharpen

the tutorial text and numbers on their screen capture.

A year and a half ago I bought a Canon HV-30 which uses tape storage on the basis that tape was more stable, easier to edit than a then competing Sony hard drive unit. I shoot all in 16:9 HDV. My, has things changed in a short period of time. I wish I had to do it over again now at this time. As my wife keeps telling me, "You were born too soon!" Now, with the better editing software gotten control of AVCHD and the cheapest Blu-ray burners are down below \$200 and Blu-ray discs below \$1.50, it would be nice to record up to two hours on a dependable 30 GB flash drive and not have to split clips to edit them. Then archive them on Blu-ray.

Technology advances at a faster clip every year and manufacturers are learning to get those new products to the market to beat the competition. Unfortunately they all cost money. Trying to recycle old units is hit or miss. When I went to a new computer with SATA hard drives a couple of

years ago, I stripped the larger old PATA hard drives from the old frame and use them as USB connected external drives in cans costing only \$15 to \$25. If you decide to go this route, make sure the can you buy will support both PATA and SATA hard drives.

Recycling camera lens is a little harder in that you can get locked into one vendor. Back in the still film days I shot with a Minolta 7000 which uses a "A" mount. Doesn't work on a Nikon or Canon. Sony bought the design off Minolta and the Alpha camera line (but not the new smaller Nexus) will still use them on "A" mount (with changes of focal length). Why do I write about still cameras in a video club? I don't know any video user that doesn't still use a still camera occasionally.

**Milt Kostner**

Just mention the word “Stroke” and it brings lots of different images to different people’s minds. If you are a golfer or a ball player it means swinging to hit a ball, if you are a painter it means the movement of a brush, if you are a gambler it means a winning or losing streak, and for most people, it conjures up the image of a medical emergency. But we are not athletes, most are not painters or gamblers and hopefully we are not medically challenged. For us, as videographers, it has an entirely different meaning.

Since we are videographers, and somewhat on the edge of the artistic field, we are creators. Our job is to take the video we shoot and trim, slice, reframe and add to it to make an interesting piece that will interest, inform, amuse (in some cases) and entertain our viewers. As part of that creative endeavor we quite often need to use text, titles if you will, to help communicate to our viewers. Now, we all understand the importance of choosing the correct words for these text add-ons, but just as important to the creative side is the correct text font, color, style and stroke.

You see in visual text the term “stroke” means basically an outline of an object like a text letter. It is often a contrasting color that helps define the outer edges of a text or font. Strokes can be either an “Inner Stroke”, meaning as we enlarge the stroke it grows inward into the letter not changing the size of the letter, or an “Outer Stroke”, meaning as we enlarge it grows out making the letter appear larger. An object or text can

## Let’s Talk about Strokes!

By Bob Meacham

have both an inner stroke and an outer stroke at the same time, as well as a basic text color.



From the top: 1). No stroke added. 2). 5 pt outer stroke. 3). Inner and outer stroke added. 4). Double stroke

By now some of you may be wondering, “OK, but why do I care about these strokes?” Don’t forget the two

basic things about doing video. One, we are creators. You capture something on video and want to display it in the best way possible. And two, we are entertainers. Your job is to make what you have created, both visually and creatively, interesting enough to keep your viewers watching until the end. If you lose them before it is over, you have not fully succeeded.

Adding strokes to a text does help separate it, make it stand out from the background which may be either color or some of the video. At the basic level a stroke can help to make the text more readable for your viewers. At a creative level it can make your video much more stunning. Strokes are added in 1 point increments. A stroke of 1 is like a defining outline. A stroke of 5 or more becomes a heavy border. Don’t be afraid to mix inner and outer strokes to make the text become what you want it to be as a part of the project.

Any video editing software above the entry level should allow you to add, adjust and customize your text with strokes. One piece of interesting use I have seen a lot of recently has a white filled text over a solid color background, the text then has both an 2-3 point outer stroke in black, and an 3-5 point inner stroke that is the same color as the background.

If you want to “kick up” your texts in your videos, select a text font that compliments the video’s overall style, and add a stroke or two to make it really stand out. ■

## Rules For Annual Members Video Contest

### Screening at the October meeting

- 1). Only fully paid members can participate in the Video Contest.
- 2). The video cannot be more than 10 minutes in length including title and credits. Longer videos will be stopped at the ten minute point.
- 3). The video must not have won an award (1st, 2nd or 3rd) in a previous

Viewfinders Club Annual Member Video Contest.

- 4). Non-original recorded footage (e.g. U-Tube, commercial TV, stock footage/photos) must not exceed 10% of the video’s runtime.
- 5). Only one video per member will be screened during the contest meeting.
- 6). Members who are present will have first priority for screening their video. If a member is unable to be present at the contest meeting, their video may be screened if there is available time at the end of the meeting.
- 7). Only fully paid members will be allowed to judge the screened videos,

except they may not vote for their own entry.

Voting forms will be available for each video screened. The voting forms will have evaluations for: Photography, Editing, Sound and Story. The scores for each element will be as follows: Photography 1 to 5, Editing 1 to 4, Sound 1 to 3, and Content 1 to 3. The voting forms will be collected after the screening. Those videos with the highest scores will be declared the winners of the contest. There will be three prizes: First, Second and Third. The winners will be announced at the November meeting. ■



New to Adobe CS5

# After Effects



We covered what's new in Premiere Pro Creative Suite 5 in the last CS5 discussion. Now let's move on to what's new in Adobe After Effects CS5, again assuming that you know what was in earlier versions. If not, understand that After Effects is an application for generating motion graphics, compositing and visual effects. Of course, After Effects CS5 now requires a 64 bit operating system running on dual or quad (and up) core computers. four GB of RAM is about minimum and up to 16 GB for the pros.

The star of After Effects CS5 is the new **Rotobrush** which is used to prepare animated masks which follow the masked object from frame to frame. (Once you have the mask you can adjust color, hue, saturation or use that portion of the image to composite over other backgrounds.) To use the rotobrush you crudely paint a simple swath across the object you want to mask. It is much better than my past crude attempts to do this manually frame by frame by adjusting a multipoint garbage mask.

After Effects CS4 included **Mocha** for motion tracking, used to synchronize movements of selected layers or to stabilize shake in a video. Now After Effects CS5 has an improved version of Mocha, along with Mocha motion blur and Mocha shape. After Effects CS5 includes Photoshop color enhancements such as vibrance adjustment, a black and white effect, subtract and divide blend mode and selective color.

3 dimensional abilities have been enhanced. One may now independently rotate 2D characters in 3D space, as well as other 2D spaces.

Like Premiere, After Effects CS5 supports Red camera formats (if you've

got the \$\$'s to afford a Red camera, lens, and accessories).

And for us amateurs, After Effects has added an auto keyframe button that when globally activated, will open the effect timeline and add a keyframe on the adjustment of any effect property, thus eliminating the need to click on the often forgotten stopwatch button. Now if they will only provide a "Save Project" button like Premiere Elements has, to avoid the trip to the menu or keyboard shortcut. ■

Milt Kostner

## VIEWFINDERS "UP AND DOWN WORD" PUZZLE

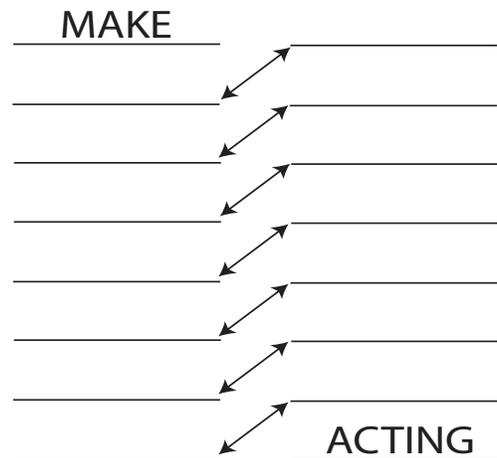
By Frank Swanson

Here is a new kind of puzzle where the second word on each line is also the first word on the line immediately following. See if you can solve it with the following, not in any order, additional words:

**SCENES, TRANSITION, SHOT, VIDEO, METHOD, LIST, CAPTURE**

### CLUES

1. Produce a digital movie
2. Loading footage process
3. Record a camera clip
4. Shooting plan
5. Make a storyboard
6. Fade to/from black
7. Crossfade
8. Technique used by actors



Answers can be found on page 8

# TECH TIPS

Have you ever recorded an event with your camcorder and then when you got home to start the edit you found that the color was not what you remember seeing while you were recording? I suspect this surprise has happened to most of us at one time or another, or even worse a lot of the time. Well, with some of the new editing tools and some creative work on your part, you can fix your footage in the edit bay. But color correction isn't just for fixing bad looking footage. You can have a good-looking shot that with a few adjustments can become a great-looking shot. Let's take a look at some of the tools and techniques that are available to fix the color of those original shots.



Here's a single frame of source clip where you can see that the color is not quite natural in neither the subject girl nor the trees in the background. Her face appears to be "orangey" and blends in with the background that has the same unnatural tint. We'd like to apply some color correction to get the subject to really pop off the screen giving the entire frame some depth.



Most video editing packages have color correction tools, some better and more sophisticated than others, but color correction nonetheless. Apple's *Final Cut Pro* has a number of standard tools whose techniques

should translate over to most other editing applications like Adobe's *Premiere Pro*.



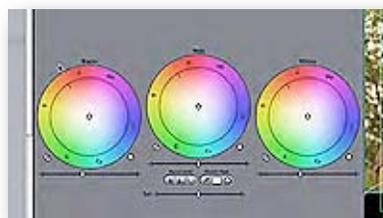
The image of the source footage looks quite a bit flat, so the first thing to do is adjust the luminance values of the image.



We want our blacks to be black and our whites to be white with a full range of brightness in between. Use the Color Corrector 3-way Color Correction tool and apply it to the clip displayed on the Canvas alongside the three circular Viewer filters.



Opening-up a second Video Scopes window will help us evaluate the clip and the changes that we make. (Note: there is more about video scopes and how they work at Digital Juice's TechKnow Episode 207 in the DJTV archives). The 3-way Color Corrector gives us three color wheels: Black, Mids and Whites.



Under each color wheel there is a levels slider that corresponds to the luminance values of that range in the image where the playhead is located in the timeline. These tools are important. 1) because they let us manually take control of the look of our image, and 2) because most auto levels select tools only look at the brightest and darkest portions of our image and we need to consider more than that when our subject lies in the middle of the range.

The first step is to adjust the blacks that are the darker areas such as the shadows. With the slider we want to stretch-out the range of the luminance values, but being careful not to flatten the dark areas to all black. We want a range of tones within the shadows.



The next step is to adjust the whites that are the lighter areas of the image. First we must determine which part or point in the image is to be "pure white" in terms of color and brightness. Typically for people, use their teeth or white clothing that they're wearing for this step.



Then tweak the slider to brighten-up the image, but not so far as to lose clarity within the highlights. Check

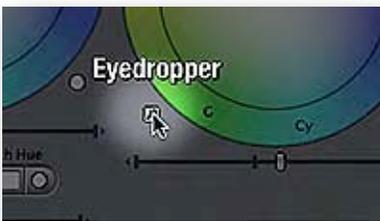
*Continued on page 7*

Continued from page 6

the luminance values using the histogram to move the brightest parts just up to the 100 mark. Again be careful not to go too far and flatten the white areas and lose clarity.



Now we're ready to perform some actual color correction to our image so that it looks natural. Using the eyedropper below the white color wheel, go to the image canvas and click on a pixel area that you know should be pure white. You may need to zoom-in on the image to get enough area to pick-up with the eyedropper. When you do this, the high-lights will shift in color as a result.



But, the image may still not look natural and there may be too much orange in the skin tones, and the trees

aren't green enough. To draw-out the skin tones and the green of the trees, use the Color Control Indicator in the middle of the Midtones color wheel and pull away from the oranges toward the cyans just a bit. Now the skin and trees look more natural in color.



Next, using the Black color wheel's eyedropper, go to the image canvas and click on a pixel area that you know should be pure black. Then adjust the Color Control Indicator in the middle of the Black color wheel to someplace off-center to achieve more realistic dark areas.

Determine where the majority of the colors live. In the sample image most of the colors are within the midtones (i.e. not in the whites or blacks). So, move the Color Control Indicator of the Midtones color wheel to get an image of your liking. You may have to readjust the sliders of each color wheel a bit either left or right to bring-out more detail, but not far enough to blow-out the detail. Do very small adjustments at this point with each of the three color wheels.

Finally, you may want to adjust the Saturation slider just a slight amount to make the colors pop.



Don't think of color correction as a technical chore. Instead think of it as "painting your footage". You can massage and knead the color and luminance of your image into the vibrant landscape that you want. Play around with your footage with your color correction tools and just see what you can come up with.

This Tech Tip is available on the Digital Juice web-page:



[www.digitaljuice.com](http://www.digitaljuice.com). In their Community dropdown menu select "DJTV & Training", then select "Exact Match" and do a search of "Cutting Class". Scroll down to the bottom of the movies and open the last one "The Joy of Coloring". I'll select another tech tip for screening for our next meeting, so be sure to come and learn something new. ■

**CLUB MEETINGS  
REFRESHMENTS VOLUNTEERS**

*The club thanks those who will or have provided refreshments*

- Jan 13th Fred & Joann Pfrost
- Feb 10th Bernie & Nancy Wood
- March 10th Brian Lucas
- April 14th Richard Brownlie
- May 12th Ivo & Mary Webster
- June 9th Linda Grodt
- July 13th Bob Meacham
- Aug 11th Jim Gorman
  
- Sept 7th Stan Smith
- Oct 13th Frank Yap
- Nov 10th Janet Holl

**TREASURER'S REPORT FOR AUGUST 2010**

Bank Account Beginning 8/1/10	\$1686.89
Income Subtotal:	\$19.00
Dues (1) \$14	
DVD Sales (1-MT) \$5	
Expenses Subtotal:	\$0.00
Bank Account Ending 8/31/10	\$1705.89



**JOIN / RENEW THE VIEWFINDERS CLUB FOR 2010**

The membership dues for new members is pro-rated and still just \$14 for individuals, \$17 for families and \$5 for full-time students. The annual renewal dues for members is \$30 for individuals and \$35 for families. Bring your check or cash to our September 7th, Tuesday night meeting. Make your checks payable to the "Viewfinders Club".

**Frank Swanson**

**CREDITS**

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Viewfinder Newsletter is published during the fourth 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

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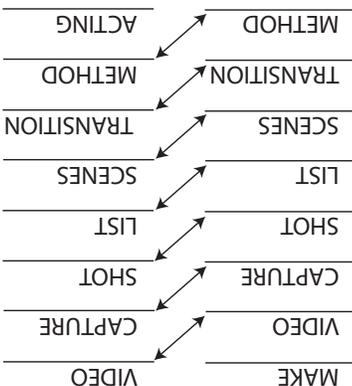
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*"Up and Down" Puzzle Answer*



# CLUB MEETING EVENTS 2010

<p><b>January 13th, Wednesday</b></p> <p>Fred Heiman movie maker: Presentation and Opera San Jose, &amp; wildlife documentary videos screened</p> <p>Tech-Tips: Frank Swanson</p>	<p><b>Feb 10th, Wednesday</b></p> <p>2009 Contest winners movies screened by Frank Swanson</p>
<p><b>March 10th, Wednesday</b></p> <p>Celx pre-production software demonstrated by Milt Kostner</p> <p>Tech-Tips: Frank Swanson</p>	<p><b>April 14th, Wednesday</b></p> <p>De Anza student's movies screened and discussion</p> <p>"Theme Challenge" announced for June screening</p>
<p><b>May 12th, Wednesday</b></p> <p>Nimitz Grade School movies screened and presented by teacher Susan Woods</p> <p>August "Creative Editing" contest announced by Fred Pfof</p>	<p><b>June 9th, Wednesday</b></p> <p>Theme Challenge "Creatures" movies screened</p> <p>Tech-Tips: Frank Swanson</p>
<p><b>July 13th, Tuesday</b></p> <p>Tony Dometelli from Keeble and Shuchat will talk about HD cameras</p> <p>Tech-Tips: Frank Swanson</p>	<p><b>August 11th, Wednesday</b></p> <p>Members "Creative Editing" clips screened</p> <p>Tech-Tips: Frank Swanson</p>
<p><b>September 7th, Tuesday</b></p> <p>"The Better Part" TV Interview with Bob Meacham</p> <p>Herb Wolf's new movie screened</p> <p>Tech-Tips: Frank Swanson</p>	<p><b>October 13th, Wednesday</b></p> <p>Annual Member Video Contest videos screened and judged</p> <p>Tech-Tips: Frank Swanson</p>
<p><b>November 10th, Wednesday</b></p> <p>Meeting: Awards presented to member video contest winners, board election and social</p>	<p><b>DECEMBER</b></p> <p>No meeting this month</p>