

Next Club Meeting:
 * **Wednesday April 13th, 7:30 - 9:30 p.m.**
 Cupertino Room, Quinlan Center,
 10185 N. Stelling Rd., Cupertino, CA



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Adding motion to Still Images

Brian Lucas says this useful and easy to do effect can add creativity to one's videos.
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VP's Message

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Los Angeles Cinema Club

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Miss Woods Pleased Be Back

The Nimitz kids will be at the May meeting with movies better than ever.
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March 2011 Meeting
Highlight

Using Still Images Creatively in Videos

A Presentation by Brian Lucas

Whether making a slide show or adding still shots to a movie we wonder if there is a simply way to add motion to static images - to make them more "movie-like". Well, there is and it is an effect that can be found in even the most basic and

The Ken Burns Effect

inexpensive video editors available today. As an easy to do technique that can add dimension to one's movies it is worth giving thought to not only how, but why, and if, one should use it.



Who invented it?

Not known but not Burns. The technique goes back to before the 1950's. Among others, Ken Morse of the BBC and Douglas Roberts with the National Film Board of Canada were notable exponents.

How is it used?

Typically in historical documentaries where stock footage or original filming is not an option, or for slide shows. Requires 2-dimensional graphics such as photos, paintings, sketches, documents, etc. Motion is given to stills by panning and / or zooming over a single still image.

Continued page 2

Wednesday April 13th Meeting

Making Animation Videos

Michael Humphress of Reallusion, creator of CrazyTalk animation software will demonstrate the program. See page 3 for a fuller description of his presentation.

Why is it called the Ken Burns Effect?

It's a fairly recent name given to the process of panning and zooming over a still image, and coined by the Apple Corporation in 2003 to name a feature of it's iMovie program. Other video software companies may call it the "Pan and Zoom" or "Animated Stills" effect.

Who is Ken Burns?

A film maker who has greatly utilized the technique in his documentaries which have been seen prominently on PBS stations. With over 30 years of documentary film-making he has made himself the master of the effect.



Street scene: entire image



Pan and zoom in on subject

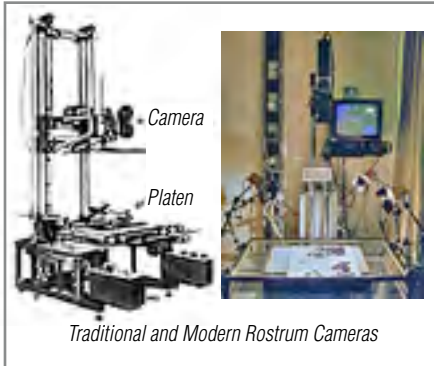


Close up of subject

Continued from page 1

Pan and Zoom Equipment

Before digital editing arrived the rostrum camera worked the magic. The camera moved vertically while the platen, with the artwork attached, moved horizontally in any direction.



Today's rostrum camera setup will incorporate a video display and will be hooked up to a computer to pre-plot the course of the camera over the image.

Rostrum vs. Digital

Rostrum

- Very expensive (Several thousand dollars)
- Requires dedicated area
- More versatile, greater control and accuracy
- No loss of resolution

Digital

- Cheap software (As little as \$50)
- Corrections can be made quickly (Less time consuming)
- Extreme cropping may reduce resolution

Video Editor Pan and Zoom Controls

Most basic video editors will have controls that are a variant of the two examples shown. The first (iMovie earlier versions) has an image window and zoom slider to enlarge or



shrink the image. A pan tool moves the image in any direction. The procedure is to size and position the start and end frames in the window, clicking the start and end buttons for each. Then set the duration time for the sequence.

The second variant requires a marquee to be drawn for the start point and a second marquee drawn for the end point. A separate control is pro-



vided for the duration of the sequence.

Now that we can do it - should we?

Before embarking on a pan and shoot project consider the images to be used, how you want them to support your story and just how many images your movie needs?

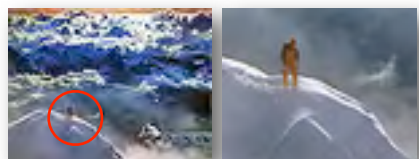
1). Value the Image

- Be sure the chosen image supports the story
- If the image is powerful, little or nothing will be gained by motion
- A single image may have more than one useful picture within the frame
- Motion can alter meaning. The whole image may tell a different story from a close up detail
- Think like a movie director - consider the image for a long shot, medium shot, close-up, pan or zoom



2). Guide the Eye

- Motion tells the eye where to look - which is part of story telling
- A large image can hold lots of small details. Panning or zooming reveals important detail that might be missed by the audience and confuse the story
- Starting tight on an object before zooming out reveals the relationship of the object to its surroundings



3). Less is More

- Don't make motion a crutch. It is not always needed. Let the audience drink in your best still images
- Motion for the sake of motion adds little. Motion should add meaning to the story
- Rather than crowding in more images to tell the story allow your best images more screen time
- Be ruthless - work only with pertinent and high quality images.

Animated Drawings

A short animation cartoon sequence is quite easy to do. It can make an entertaining stand-alone movie, or act as a title sequence for movies and slide shows.

- Start with simple drawings or clip art
- Apply the Ken Burns effect:



The pitcher winds up - the ball flies through the air - the catcher is ready - the batter strikes - the fielder chases the ball

Ken Burns goes 3D

Glasses are not required for this effect but more sophisticated software than a basic video editor is. Simple pan and zoom can add motion but it cannot extract a detail from the image and give that detail motion independently from the background. To do this a program requires multiple image layers or video channels and the ability to extract the detail from



place it on another layer or channel.

And this requires considerably more work and time to do. Still, it is a very neat effect and may be worth the effort.

The pan and zoom technique is really quite simple. Give it a try. ■

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



"Connections"

Brian Lucas's March presentation about "Using Still Images Creatively in Videos" was very informative and interesting. He explained how and why a video editor should employ the "Ken Burns" technique. Burns was not the first to use the method but he used it extensively to make still images "live" for his PBS documentary about the Civil War and his other movies. If you have had a chance to see the mechanical method of panning and zooming the camera over a still image you would have seen that it takes a lot of engineering to accomplish it. Modern video editing software has made it quite easy to do similar effects digitally. Brian showed examples of his progression in learning to use the technique and gave helpful instruction about when to use it. He certainly put a lot of time and careful planning into the presentation. Thank you Brian! A DVD of the presentation will be available in the club archives so check it out if you plan to try it.

During the member "Show & Tell" time Milt Kostner displayed a DVD of his experiments with the "green/blue screen" process with an explanation. I see it used quite a bit in TV commercials and I want to get more familiar with so I can show video within a unique background. Thanks Milt for sharing! Glen Mooty showed a clip from the Oprah show about sharing "happiness" with others. It is a good reminder for our video productions.

We're really looking forward to April's animation program with a demonstration of *CrazyTalk Animator*, a software product that seems to have a lot to offer. Bill Mannion is the producer for this program and has spent a lot of time making arrangements for it. Don't miss it.

This month I would like to feature another of my "connections" through video making. A recent email from John Dietrich indicated he needed some assistance shooting a cooking show at the CreaTV Public Access studios in the ABC TV building in downtown San Jose (www.creatvsj.org). I volunteered to help out and found it an interesting new experience. John had me run a remotely controlled camera mounted above the chef's preparation and cooking area. It was like controlling a video game with switches that moved the camera up, down, left, and right and knobs for adjusting shading (brightness) and focus. I also ran the teleprompter, which took some practice moving the script lines at the same pace of the on camera speakers. I even typed in

some narrative for the hosts. All this was challenging and interesting as are all the experiences I have had with John. He does "high end" video productions and documented body building contests, the Children's Theater productions in San Jose, Christmas music presentations, theatrical productions at Senior Centers and outdoor stages. His equipment includes professional cameras, video mixers, microphones, monitors and lights. He even has two way radios to communicate with the various camera operators while he directs the shots. Our club's movie productions have benefitted greatly from his talents. He also encouraged me to volunteer for the KTEH fund drives where I learned to operate the remote camera shaders (brightness adjustments) for the four studio cameras, and switching in the graphics for the items being offered for donations during the programs. That too was a challenging and expanding video experience. Thanks John for our "connection".

The club hope that members will bring their "Show & Tell" items and ideas at our next club meeting. I would like to know, in advance of the meeting preferably, what the item is and an estimate of the time needed to present it. Then I'll make the time available based on a first contact, first presented bases. Call me at 408-266-0250 or email me at gorapeterson@earthlink.net before the meeting or you can signup there.

Gordon Peterson



At the April meeting you will learn all about CrazyTalk Animator software, an innovative new way to create 2D animation. This demonstration will show you how to create actors using any photo or illustration. You can also learn how to bring actors to life with automatic facial

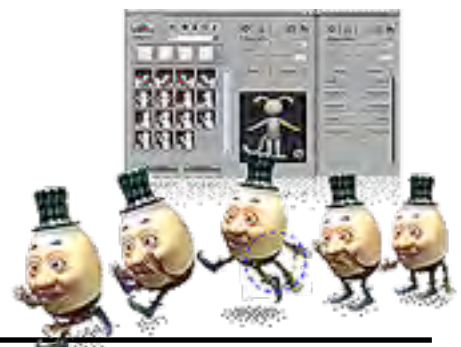
animation and innovative puppeteer-ing motion.

This software allows you to drag & drop a multitude of formats to build sets with scenery and props. You can film and direct all the action with the camera & timeline tracks for complete 2D animation.

Michael Humphress of Reallusion, headquartered in Silicon Valley and a leader in the development of cinematic animation tools for consumers, students and professionals, will demonstrate the use of CrazyTalk Animator

software. For more information, visit www.reallusion.com.

Bill Mannion - Producer



V.P.'s MESSAGE



Perspectives 4

I have two perspectives that I would like to share with you this month. The first is you *can* teach an old dog new tricks. The second is that a *bad* habit is hard to kick.

First perspective: I celebrated 80 years on 16 March and find myself an old dog learning a new trick, i.e., how to maintain the Viewfinders website with much handholding by **Frank Swanson** and **Phil Lenihan**.

Second perspective: The bad habit referred to is sticking my neck out by volunteering to do something I have never done before. Some call this "leaping before you look". Over the years these leaps have never resulted in broken bones, or even a broken ego.

I have learned that volunteering to do things I have never done before always results in expanding my horizons and it makes me really appreciate what the other folks around me are doing, and have been doing for some time, to make things work. More to the point,

they are making the Viewfinders Club the continued success that it has become.

Give this some thought because in the coming months, you will be reading about the volunteer opportunities that the Viewfinders offer its members.

To start with, we need members to sign up to bring refreshments for the remaining meeting months starting in July. And it would be grand if two (or more) members took upon themselves the task of providing a grand refreshment in November 2011 to match the one we experienced in November 2010 thanks to **Janet Holl**.

Some other member volunteer ideas are writing an article for our Newsletter, producing one of the Club's monthly programs, and volunteering for crewing on the Annual Club Video project.

Of course, the big volunteer enchilada is to run for one of the Viewfinder's Officer positions in November. It is never too early for you to start thinking about this. Frankly, it is too late in the year if you wait to be approached by the Nominating Committee. For anyone interested in running for my job, Vice President, here are the duties as they appear in the By Laws:

The Vice President shall assume the duties of the President in the absence of the President. At regular meetings of the

Club the Vice President shall act as host for speakers, visitors and guests. The Vice President shall act as single point of contact for all ideas and suggestions to increase the Club membership, shall implement these ideas and suggestions at the direction of the EB, and shall develop ways and means to promote the Club in the available media. The Vice President shall write and submit timely notices of all regular Club meetings to all appropriate media outlets as is practical (e.g. newspapers, bulletin boards and local broadcasters).

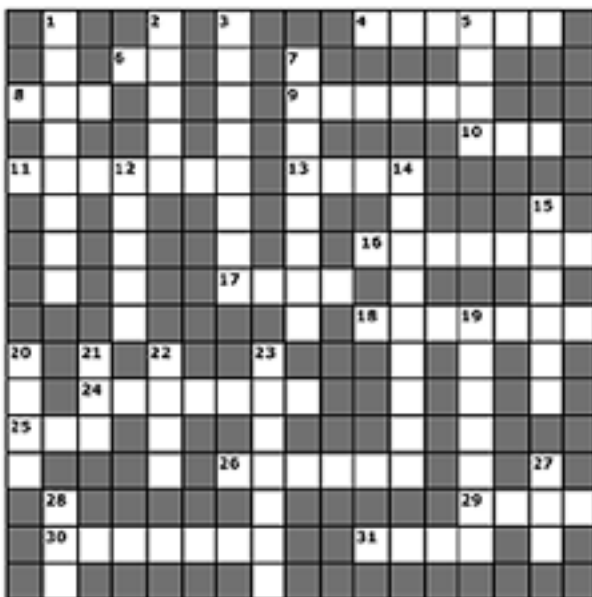
Surely there must be Club members who will read these responsibilities and say to themselves, "I can do that"! I am a firm believer in "throwing the rascals out" at each election so "new rascals" can bring their own new ideas and high energy to the task of growing the Club.

Why not take a look at the By Laws and read up on the responsibilities of the other Officer duties. If you don't have the By Laws let me know and I will send you an electronic copy by e-mail.

Last but not least, I always like to say, "Looking forward to seeing you next month and bring a friend!" All members are always requested to be on the lookout for new members.

Bill Mannion

CROSSWORD PUZZLE by Frank Swanson



ACROSS

- 4. NBC Channel 3 news _____ in San Jose
- 6. A preposition
- 8. _____ Best of the West
- 9. Brian's job in the Viewfinders Club
- 10. _____ Burns Effect
- 11. Technology of the Viewfinders Club
- 13. American Motion Picture Society
- 16. Main feature of our Club meetings
- 17. Fiscal means of running the Club
- 18. Most prolific Club movie director
- 24. California's _____ Movie Club
- 25. A preposition
- 26. One of the Club's original leaders
- 29. Society of Canadian Cine Amateurs
- 30. Potential new Club member
- 31. "Two Left _____"

DOWN

- 1. Club's regular monthly events
- 2. Club's famous acting family
- 3. Where Club member Bart lives
- 5. "Through the _____ Glass"
- 7. "Dearly _____"
- 12. List of newsletter articles by topic
- 14. Video exhibition method
- 15. Country of videographers to the north
- 19. Method of determining best movies
- 20. "Two _____ Feet"
- 21. This month's newsletter (abbr.)
- 22. Best of the _____
- 23. _____ movie of the month
- 27. "Rivers of _____"
- 28. Common video media

Answers on page 8

Los Angeles Cinema Club - 80 years of Excellence

We Viewfinders are proud of our club. With 14 years of solid growth since inception, dedicated members who provide both educational and entertaining meetings and our own video production group we are tempted to be a little smug. However if one checks out the website, the Yahoo Group or the YouTube site of our sister video group in the south it's a humbling experience. I quote (edited) from that club's website:

"Los Angeles Cinema Club began in 1931 when...several amateur moviemakers began meeting at the Kodak auditorium in Hollywood. The Club was incorporated on June 19,1934. Over the years the group concentrated in various film formats and participated in many group projects like the 1932 Olympics and the building of Hoover Dam. During WWII... the club concentrated in slide



shows but then advanced with technology in super 8mm sound.

For some 80 years, LACC has been a social club and workshop for people who are dedicated to the advancement and perfection in the art forms of filmmaking... the club has regular contests and projects for members to work on. A deadline and a competitive challenge is a definite motivation to get a project off the ground or out of our minds and onto video."

A highly impressive promo by editor Frank Pettinato and much info about the club can be viewed on LACC's website www.lacinemaclub.com. The club's YouTube channel: www.youtube.com/laccvw features a number of members movies. Their Yahoo Group: groups.yahoo.com/group/laccvw/ answers questions about workshops and upcoming events in the Los Angeles area. The club's monthly newsletter keep LACC's members informed about the club's activities.

One gains the impression that the Los Angeles Cinema Club has lost none of its dynamism over the years. On the contrary it seems to grow from strength to strength.

We Viewfinders are proud of our club... but we can learn a lot from our senior club in the Southland. ■

Club Movies Available for Sale \$5 each. See Frank Swanson



Maybe Today (2006)

A lonely, elderly man hopes to find companionship on his local bus service.



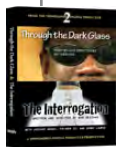
Dearly Departed (2007)

Fearful that her husband will not join her in Heaven, a woman schemes to gain him admittance.



Two Left Feet (2008)

A retired man, bored with his life, decides that dancing lessons will open new worlds for him.



Through the Dark Glass (2010) & **The Interrogation** (2009) Two movies - one DVD

1). A man encounters indifference towards him. However, he may not be what people think. 2). A man is pressured to admit to crime until the proof is finally presented.

CLUB MEETINGS REFRESHMENTS VOLUNTEERS

We're looking for volunteers willing to provide refreshments at club meetings. Please let one of the Board members know which month you will be available. In 2011 we plan to have two people sign up for each month which will ease individuals cost.

| | | | |
|-----------|------------------------------|------------|-----------------------------------|
| Jan 12th | Brian Lucas & Irv webster | April 13th | Jerry Oliver & Virginia Misoff |
| Feb 17th | Fred Pfof & Milt Kostner | May 11th | Linda Grodt & Jack Gorham |
| March 9th | Jim Visser & Bernie Wood | | |

The club thanks those who will or have provided refreshments

TREASURER'S REPORT FOR APRIL 2011

| | |
|---------------------------------|-----------|
| Bank Account Beginning 03/01/11 | \$1336.43 |
| Income Subtotal: | \$245.00 |
| Dues (9) | \$245.00 |
| Expenses Subtotal: | \$0.00 |
| Bank Account Ending 03/31/11 | \$1581.43 |



JOIN/RENEW YOUR CLUB MEMBERSHIP FOR 2011

The membership dues for 2011 like last year are \$30 for individuals, \$35 for families and \$5 for full-time students. If you're one of the few members from last year who have not yet renewed, bring your check (made payable to "Frank Swanson" with memo to "Viewfinders Club") or cash to our April 13th meeting to continue your membership. Our current membership for 2011 stands at 35 (32 renewals + 3 new members).

Frank Swanson

TECH TIPS

SHOOTING TIPS FOR THE AMATEUR VIDEOGRAPHER: Part 8 by Frank Swanson

The Nine Classic Camera Moves

The information you'll be reading has been accumulated over the past several years from various videography magazines and my personal experience as a videographer for the past twenty years. This month's article deals with the nine techniques of physically holding, moving and using your camcorder to achieve some great looking shots. You might say, "How effective and important are they?" Well, the next time you watch TV at home, see if you can find all nine of these moves during the show – my bet is you will!

1. The Pan: What is panning? It's moving your camcorder horizontally left or right to follow a subject, to show distance between two objects, or to show panoramic views. Ideally use a tripod. Always start on a still



shot (minimum of five seconds), begin the pan, and finish on a still shot (wait minimum of five seconds before stopping the recording). Pan "to" something that's the point of your shot, not "away from" your main subject of the shot – don't give away the point with some irrelevant view that has nothing to do with your movie. Finally, when the pan reaches the middle portion between the beginning and ending of the shot, make a mental note whether there's nothing worth seeing in that middle portion; if that's true, then the pan isn't worth shooting – but rather record two separate shots.

2. The Tilt: What is tilting? It's moving your camcorder up or down

without moving its position off the ground to follow a subject, to show the top and bottom of a stationary object or to show how high something is. Again, ideally use a tripod. When you tilt up, an object or person will look larger and thicker; conversely, they will look smaller and thinner when you tilt down. Again, always start on a still shot and end on a still shot, and note whether the middle portion is worth seeing.



3. The Pedestal: What's this mean? It's physically moving the height of your camcorder up or down, usually on a tripod, to get the proper height you prefer for the shot. Shooting everything while standing at your eye height can become boring to the viewer, so providing some variety in height can add greatly to the viewing experience.



For example, when shooting some shots of your pet cat, get down on the floor so the camcorder is eye level with the cat's eyes. When in a crowd at an event, put your camera on a monopod and raise it above the heads of those in front of you while using your LCD screen to frame the subject.

4. The Dolly: No, this isn't a girl's plaything. Mount your camcorder on tracks or wheels and move towards, back or alongside a subject (especially useful when subject is walking along a path) to



follow an object smoothly and/or get a unique perspective. Sound too complicated? Well, a wheelchair is an ideal dolly platform, as is shooting out the window of a car (as a passen-



ger, of course). Hold your camcorder by two hands and tuck your elbows into your sides to provide some stabilization, and then have a friend move you across the scene as you shoot. Be sure to start shooting before your subject appears in the frame and continue until well after the subject has left the frame.

5. Floating Stabilizer Device: This sounds expensive, and it is. TV movies use a lot of this technique. They mount the camcorder to a gyroscoped mechanism (e.g. Steadicam) that straps to the videographer to follow an object through twists and turns such as through hallways, doors and around rooms. There are no abrupt jumps in the shot and the motion can be continuous for a minute or so. Got \$2K to \$10K to spend? If so, then this is your next piece of equipment to buy.



6. Crane, Boom or Jib: Mount your camcorder at the end of a long and steady device to give a bird's eye view. This technique is especially useful for high sweeping shots or to follow the action of your subject. Used frequently to set the scene from high up, and then swoop down to eye level for the action that begins the scene. Consider



using staircases, ladders, or the upper story windows of buildings for vantage points to shoot from. Unusual perspectives can be intercut with more standard views to break up the monotony of a single view shot. I typically use my monopod that lets me shoot from a height of ten to 12 feet – especially useful if you're standing in a crowd.

Continued page 7

Continued from page 6

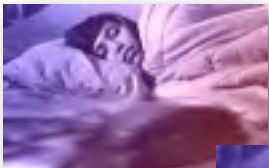
7. Handheld: Just hold your camcorder without a tripod, monopod or other device, to catch spontaneous action. Avoid zooming in or using telephoto lenses as the recorded video will be shaky and distract from the scene. It is better to move closer to your subject and



shoot with as wide a setting as you can. Handheld is best when you are shooting someone or something that is moving; it looks very bad when shooting landscapes, buildings or stationary objects. Remember, use both hands and tuck-in your elbows. Lean against something solid like a car, tree or wall to add even more stability.

8. The Zoom: It's using your camcorder's rocker (or lever) to zoom in or out to bring objects at a distance closer to the lens, or to show size and perspective. Some camcorders have variable speed capability that allows you to start and stop the zooming gradually. Zooming in brings objects closer to you, providing less visible area around your subject, and distant objects are compressed. Zooming out gives you the wide-angle shot and more of your subject and surrounding areas, not to mention the depth perception is changed and the size and distance between objects is more pronounced. Continuous zooming in and out is annoying to viewers. Use a tripod if you zoom. Practice your zooming first before recording if you have the time. And again, record five seconds before starting the zoom, and five more seconds after stopping the zoom.

9. The Rack Focus: What's this technique? Assuming you have manual control of focus with your camcorder, focus on one subject (e.g. girl in bed), and



have everything in front out of focus; then adjust

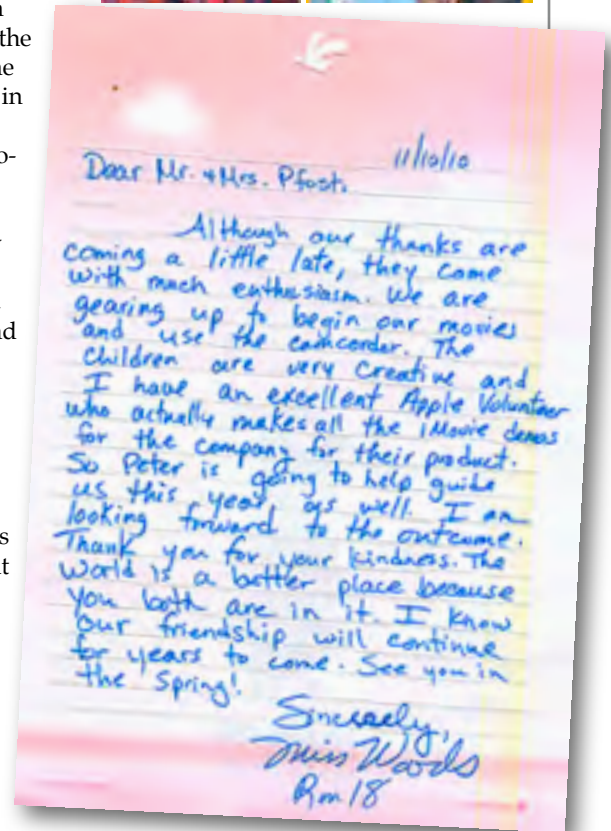
Nimitz Kids back in May



Good news for those who have been charmed by the iMovies produced by Miss Woods's elementary school children in previous years. Thanks to the efforts of Fred Pfof and the Viewfinder's Board a spot in May has been found for a screening of their latest productions.

Miss Woods is particularly pleased to have the expertise of an Apple employee, Peter, working with her and the children so we anticipate a particularly good selection of movies this year.

Fred had donated a camcorder to replace the class's old and defunct equipment which was very generous of him and saved the "Nimitz Movie Studios" going out of business. Well done Fred. We look forward to the show.



the focus so the subject becomes blurred and the foreground becomes clear (e.g. the telephone ringing). In this movement, you are changing the focal length to make an interesting transition that is not possible with post-production equipment or software. This move is particularly effective when two people are in the same scene conversing with one another. Use a tripod for this move.

So, there you have it. Nine possible camera moves to add variety, complexity, and interest to your movies. The Club's Video Production Group is going to incorporate some of them in their next production this year. If you'd like to get involved and learn some new skills as a crewmember, contact **Bob Meacham**. ■

MEET OUR NEW MEMBER Ron Rhodes



Ron sees himself as a newcomer to movie making but has two camcorders and two editing applications already. He expects to develop his skills through sharing ideas and learning new techniques with the help of club members. The kinds of movies he's interested in making include music videos, short story features and recording marching bands. That last one sounds like something new for a club member. **Welcome to Viewfinders Ron.**

CREDITS

Editor and Publisher: Brian Lucas
 newsletter-editor@viewfindersclub.org

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

OFFICERS

President: Gordon Peterson
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Secretary: Fred Pfof
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WEBSITE

www.viewfindersclub.org

Crossword Puzzle Answer from Page 4



CLUB MEETING EVENTS 2011

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>January 12th, Wednesday</p> <p><i>Videomaking Made Easy with the Canon SD 4500</i> by Jonathan Parnell of Keeble and Shuchat</p> <p>Tech-Tips: <i>Framing the Shot</i></p> | <p>February 17th, Thursday</p> <p><i>Award Winning Amateur Movies:</i> by Frank Swanson. Screening of movies from SCCA, AMPS and AIFVF contests in 2010</p> |
| <p>March 9th, Wednesday</p> <p><i>Using Still Images Creatively in Videos:</i> how and why the video editor should employ The Ken Burns Effect by Brian Lucas</p> | <p>April 13th, Wednesday</p> <p><i>Making Animation Videos:</i> with John Martin and Michael Humphress of "KrazyTalk Animator"</p> <p>Tech-Tips if time allows</p> |
| <p>May 11th, Wednesday</p> <p><i>Nimitz Grade School Movies:</i> screened and presented by teacher Susan Woods and Apple employee and editor Peter</p> <p>Tech-Tips if time allows</p> | <p>June 8th, Wednesday</p> <p><i>Member Video Screenings:</i> recently produced movies by club members are shown to help Club members improve the quality of their productions</p> <p>Tech-Tips if time allows</p> |
| <p>July (TBD)</p> <p><i>Making Low Light Videos:</i> basic rules and procedures for improving your low light video shooting and editing</p> <p>Tech-Tips if time allows</p> | <p>August (TBD)</p> <p><i>Making Family History Videos:</i> what, why, how and when to get started in documenting your family history</p> <p>Tech-Tips if time allows</p> |
| <p>September (TBA)</p> <p><i>Independent Movie Maker Presentation</i></p> <p>Tech-Tips if time allows</p> | <p>October (TBD)</p> <p><i>Annual Member Video Contest:</i> screening of best movies produced by Club members this year</p> <p>Tech-Tips if time allows</p> |
| <p>November (TBD)</p> <p><i>Golden DVD Awards Night:</i> screening of the top three movies for the year; also election of Club officers for 2012</p> | <p>DECEMBER</p> <p>No meeting this month</p> |