

Next Club Meeting:
 * **Wednesday, January 16th, 7:30 - 9:30 p.m.**
Cupertino Room, Quinlan Center,
10185 N. Stelling Rd., Cupertino, CA



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November 2012 Meeting
Highlights



And Welcome
 to 2013

- Presentation of Awards for Members' Best Videos
- Election of Viewfinders Officers for 2013

Each year the November meeting is always a treat. We elect a new Board of Officers and are curious to know what new ideas they will bring to the club and the direction the Club will take. Two of the officers, Ron Rhodes and Craig VonWaaden are fairly new members but

have served on the Board previously and have proven their abilities through their video work. The other two officers, Frank Swanson, long-time Club Treasurer, and Irv Webster are long time members who's experience will ensure that the Club will remain a strong resource for amateur movie makers by building on the work of those who previously served on the Board.



2013 Board of Officers

At the November club meeting the proposed officers for positions on the Board were unanimously elected. They are, from left to right in the photo:

President: **Ron Rhodes**

Secretary: **Irv Webster**

Vice President: **Craig VonWaaden**

Treasurer: **Frank Swanson**

The Club newsletter will continue to be published and edited by **Brian Lucas**.

Congratulations to the new Board and kudos also go to outgoing **Bob Meacham** for his leadership through two terms as Viewfinders President and one as Vice President. Thanks for all your good work.

**January Meeting
 Award Winning
 Amateur Movies**

A screening of some of the best recent movies shown at the American Motion Picture Society, the American International Film & Video Festival and The North American Movie Making Awards Festival.

Continued page 2

November 2012 Highlights cont. from page 1

2012 Club Video Winners

For the 2012 contest the Board presented Golden DVD Awards for the top three entries, and President's Awards in different categories for follow-up entries.

Golden DVD Awards went to:



1st Place: "Half Dome Hiking Adventure" by **Craig VonWaaden**



2nd Place: "Roll the Credits" by **Ron Rhodes**



3rd Place: "Dragon Slayers" by **Gordon Peterson**



President's Awards and Categories were as follows:



Technology: "Elephant Seals at Ano Nuevo" by **Wayne Ott**



Documentary: "Points West" by **Irv Webster**



Music: "Aloha Oe" by **Frank Swanson**



Comedy: "Virginia City Camel and Ostrich Races" by **Janet Holl**



Travel: "Wishful Thinkin'" by **Milt Kostner**



For full descriptions of the movies, please see the November 2012 issue of the Viewfinders newsletter which can be found with other back issues on the club website at www.viewfindersclub.org

Congratulations go to the winners and thanks go to **Janet Holl** and **Frank Swanson** for providing the tasty refreshments for the meeting.



As seen below, Viewfinders members were keen to discuss the merits and the awards given to the videos screened at the November meeting. The photos below were shot by Fred Pfost. ■



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



What's in Store

Welcome to 2013. I'm writing this as your new president, and I'm hoping that you will help me to make this club an exciting and fun way to spend your free time. You wouldn't be reading this if you didn't have some ideas about what makes movies great fun. I think a good movie tells a good story, or at least tells a story in an interesting and entertaining way. That's why I'd like to focus the Viewfinders' 2013 meetings on storytelling. Every video we make should tell a story. The vacation shots, the documentaries, the weddings, the

corporate training videos, the crazy special effects laden journey inside the PC, they all need a set up, a goal, a journey with obstacles, a turning point and a resolution. And let's not forget character. We need a reason for caring about the movie, and we need a character to relate to. This year, begin thinking about which stories are important to you and how you would go about incorporating them into your next movie. Bring in your clips to share with the rest of us viewfinders. I'm working with the other club officers to bring you some interesting and informative presentations this year. If anyone has any ideas for a presentation, please let me know soon so we can update the schedule.

Now, I'd like present to you a critique of one of the movies we saw at last year's members video contest that I think will illustrate my thoughts on storytelling, and how I think we can all add a little something more to our videos. **Milt Kostner's** movie *Wishful Thinkin'* appears to be just a standard

travelogue about the marine discovery museum, and that's the video he started out with. But the "silk purse" he turned it into is a story with character. He created a narrator character who has a slow southern drawl that's reflected in, and reinforced in, the way he wrote the title. Using a simple set, he lays out the background for the story: a hot day, and a wish for cool ocean breezes. Throughout the main part of the movie, Milt's character humorously explains what you're looking at, always remaining in character, yet also teaching you a little along the way. At the end, he brings you back to the beginning scene (always a good way to form a closure) and in an apparent twist, decides not to head to the coast after all. What was the middle all about then? Just wishful thinkin'. He told you that before you even watched the movie. Take a lesson from Milt and turn your video footage into a story.

Ron Rhodes

For Videographers and Photographers; a Pro Color Monitor at an affordable price.

If you're frustrated with the color quality of your monitor, or can't get your edits to look the same on your wide-screen TV, or you love to fiddle with controls for optimum performance, the **Asus PA246Q ProArt 24-Inch LCD**

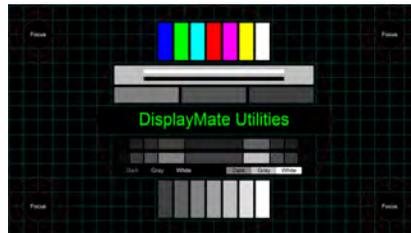


Monitor may be the answer. For \$450 (check out web prices) it claims 98% coverage of the Adobe color space, six way color adjustment and 1920 x 1080 resolution. Reviews have been generally enthusiastic (e.g. www.hothardware.com/reviews). On the face of it a monitor that both the photographer and videographer should be pleased with. ■

Monitor rotates to view documents, webpages, and photos in both portrait and landscape mode.



Color reproduction and gray scale tested as excellent.



REFRESHMENTS VOLUNTEERS

Please let Brian Lucas know which months you will be available to volunteer. We have, so far:

January Brian Lucas

February Bob Meacham

March Greg VonWaaden

Viewfinders Web Site

viewfindersclub.org
Latest Updates

Meetings Page: Video of the Month features First Place Golden DVD Award Winner Craig Von-Waaden's *Half Dome Hiking Adventure*.

Download the short video Jump Back loop *Colored Rectangles*. Don't know what a Jump Back is? Frank provides a link to *Digital Juice* for you to find out.

Productions Page: Click on past club video production titles to view excerpts. "*Hollywood Film Directing*" - links to seminars on the topics of film directing and screen writing

Newsletter Page: Download all Viewfinders Newsletters since January 2007 with a list of selected articles.

Webmaster: **Frank Swanson**

“Pay No Attention To The Man Behind The Curtain”

By Bob Meacham and John Dietrich

That iconic line from “The Wizard of Oz” was about the Wizard behind the curtain that manipulates what was being seen and believed by the folks in Oz. If that movie was made today that man would be a video editor and not just a Wizard, because an editor does much the same thing that the Wizard was doing. A new remake of that movie might be called “The Wizard of Edit”.

Today’s editing “Wizards” control what we see and hear on every movie, show and video. A couple of recent emails mentioned a common technique used by editors called “multi-tracking”. In them it was mentioned, or shown, editing screenshots that used multiple tracks for both video and audio. It is a common technique that has usefulness for editors at all levels.

Multi-Tracking

So, why use multiple sets of tracks for each segment, video and audio? And, what does it do for the average editor creating a simple video? Multi-tracking, incorporating several to many additional tracks in the video or audio beyond the main track, is used as both a creative tool and a control process. Almost all editing software allows for some multiple tracks to be created, and most above the basic entry level software, allow for additional tracks to be created in both video and audio.

If your editing software allows you to create additional tracks it can help you be more creative and produce a better quality project. Let’s talk a bit about what can be done and how it is done both from the creative side and the control side.

On the creative side let’s say you are editing a recent trip video and you want to incorporate several titles, or



From the movie “Flight”, the multiple tracks (across the bottom) were used to create the images in the above frames. (Credit: New York Times)

video clips, that will start and finish in an overlapped fashion. This allows you to get on screen more total images but shaves down the run time on the entire project. It can also be a very strong creative tool. Quite often



Another example of how multi-tracking is used to create all aspects of sight and sound for movies. (Credit: chrisportal.com)

when you put two titles or clips on the same track and bring them together it creates “destructive editing”, meaning you lose a part of one or the other clips. By putting each title or clip on a separate track you can manipulate each in the timeline to get the transition between the two just right without worrying about

destroying any part of each. It also allows you to “blend” the two images using the “effects” tools on each clip without affecting the other.

On the audio side let’s say you want to add some additional sounds to your video. When you put each sound track or effect sound on a different track you can again fine tune the position in the clip without worrying about over-writing or affecting any other sounds. And, if you want to add two dogs barking, two doors slamming or anything similar they do not have to be sequential as in a single track but can overlap. And, if you decide to add sound effects to one sound, you can easily do that without dealing with other things on that track.

But, the biggest advantage to multi-tracking may be the ability to “turn off and on” individual or multiple tracks while you edit and concentrate on one track or clip. The ability of hearing or seeing just the portion of your project that you are fine tuning is huge.

Additionally, the list of what you can do when you start multi-track editing is large. Open that door and you will find so many things like matting, compositing, rotoscoping, picture in picture, blending images, importing from other editing sources, creating your own soundtracks, creating your own special audio effects, altering sounds by adding effects, just to name a few. Multi-track editing gives you more creative space to make the video exactly what you want people to see, while giving you the control to do it more easily. You then become the “man behind the curtain”, the Wizard. ■

Each year, Viewfinders members have been entertained by Susan and her Nimitz Elementary third grade class to a showing of the iMovie videos that the children have made that

years so were delighted, just before the Thanksgiving vacation in November, to be invited by Susan to address the children.

She thought the class would be interested in a short talk by us about anything of our choice and to display the awards that I have accumulated over the years during

my professional career. This was to be on the last day before the Thanksgiving vacation. Susan's idea was that this might inspire their thinking about subjects they might choose for their upcoming videos. Her plan was for them to start working on their movies when they returned from vacation.

We suggested to the students that even at their early ages they should start establishing goals beginning each day, and then for days (or even years) to come. We explained that this will give each of them a sense of fulfillment and accomplishment. ■

A Visit To Susan Woods' Third Grade Class

By Fred Pfost

year. JoAnn and I have kept in touch with the class in other ways in recent



PICTURE PUZZLE By Frank Swanson

Enjoying some of the yummy treats at our Golden DVD Awards Night last year were Janet Holl, JoAnn Pfost and Rita Dietrich.

There are 10 differences between these two pictures. Can you find them all?

The answers are on page 8.



TECH TIPS

SHOOTING TIPS FOR THE AMATEUR VIDEOGRAPHER: Part 27 by Frank Swanson

Ten Tips for Location Scouting

Have you had that unforgettably disastrous video shoot when your camera ran out of tape or the battery died in the middle of a shoot? Since that happen to me I have always carried triple the number of tapes I expect to use and two extra long-life batteries as well as the charger. But there's one kind of readiness that you might not have thought of. What I'm writing about this month is location scouting, a vital pre-production shooting step that will help you meet almost any challenge when you're in the field. Here are ten tips that will help you scope out potential video shooting locations.

1. Know Your Script: Before you go out and shoot something you most likely have an idea of what your video is going to be and what story you're going to tell. Is it going to be a comedy, a thriller, or a music video?



In any case choose a site that matches the setting of your story; the first rule of location scouting. As you head out to evaluate locations you'll

more than likely face countless possibilities: city streets and buildings, parks and scenic areas, historic sites and vistas, and indoor rooms and auditoriums, to name a few. Remember, you have a story to tell so choose locations that lend themselves to the production. What does your script demand of a location? Go find it.

2. Scout at the Right Time: Be aware that locations can change with time, even indoors. It's wise to check your spot on the day of the week and time of the day that you'll be shooting. There are many factors that can produce surprisingly large changes on the suitability of a location: Automob-

ile traffic and ambient noise, tourists at scenic or historic sites, the sun angle and it's position relative to your camera, atmospheric conditions such as weather conditions can vary dramatically based on the time of day, the day of the week, and the season. If you shoot several scenes at the same location on several different days this can be problematic and requires careful attention to these details.



3. Look at the Light: Indoor lighting can be especially tricky and requires special attention. Churches, ballrooms, auditoriums, classrooms, homes, arenas and stages generally feature low amounts of available lighting, and perhaps lighting generated by fluorescent, sodium, metal halide, incandescent, neon and now LED which is becoming popular. Solutions for poor lighting indoors might be as simple as scouting out window blinds and curtains that can be opened to add daylight, or partly closed to provide soft shadows to a subject. In some cases you may wish to bring in lights or ask permission to replace the bulbs in accessible light fixtures with brighter-burning bulbs. Above all, use your camera's white balance feature to get the best color reproduction. Doing it in post-production can be problematic, especially if you're recording with two cameras.



4. Follow the Sun: Outdoor lighting conditions can be as challenging as those indoors. Exterior illumination changes through the day. Pay attention to whether a given spot is in full sun, partial sun or full shade. Bright sun can be harsh on people's faces (giving a washed-out look with no detail), and light-colored surfaces can blow out in full sunlight, causing automatic camcorder lenses to underexpose those shots, so these conditions should be avoided. Camcorders, as sophisticated as they now are, can have trouble handling high contrast

shots. This is where going manual with your aperture settings will prevent the camera continuously adjusting to maintain exposure. Ultimately, you may find that fully shaded locations or overcast days will produce the most consistent results.



5. Check for Power Supplies: Many outdoor locations are far from power sources and even some indoor locations can pose challenges if you need to recharge your camera battery or use supplementary lights. Many camcorders provide for an on-camera light adapter but what if you end up draining all your batteries before you're done? Carrying multiple batteries is always a good idea but check to see if there anywhere to plug in the battery charger. If you are going to use additional lighting fixtures in a location that does have power, you may be able to plug in, but what about the system's pre-existing load and whether or not you can get to the fuse (breaker) box in case something blows.

6. Listen: One of the most critical issues in making a location shoot is obtaining clean, high-quality sound. Most often than not it's silence that ensures you get the location sound that you came for. The whooshing of car traffic, the white noise of moving water, the sound of distant voices can all get in the way of high-quality audio. As you scout a location, check for any of these conditions by listening to your camcorder's microphone pick-up through headphones. Also, test your wireless mike at the site as well, listening closely for any type of interference from other transmitters (e.g. churches these days use lots of wireless mikes).



7. Examine the Elements: Check the weather forecast as you're scouting. Video cameras don't like rain, salty beach air or mist from waterfalls.

Continued page 7

Tech Tips continued from page 6

Water or salt air inside a tape transport can spell disaster not to mention a likely smeared lens. Direct sun on the camera can cause overheating. A beach umbrella can help protect your gear in both sun and rain. Cold temperatures drain batteries quickly so keep your camera warm by storing it inside a coat or car until you're ready to shoot, even wrapping it in a scarf or towel while taping. And watch out when bringing cameras back into warm interiors from the frigid outdoors as this can cause significant amounts of moisture to condense inside the optics, electronics and tape mechanism. For example, I had to be



especially careful on a Panama Canal cruise when going outside into the high humidity air to tape the ship passing through the locks. I wrapped the camera in a plastic bag with only the lens exposed to the air to minimize the humid

air from getting into the mechanism. I never had a problem the entire cruise, but others did.

8. Decide Where to Set-up: Make sure there's adequate space to set-up all of your gear, including tripod, so that you're able to get the shots you have in mind. You may have plenty of room in a large space like a church or an auditorium, but you may not be able to roam freely. As you scout your locations, verify that you can physically get to the spots you intend to shoot from.

9. Get permission: You may need to secure permits and other legal permissions to shoot at certain locations. Have you chosen a street or sidewalk

location that will impede traffic? Do you plan to shoot on someone else's property? Malls, grocery stores, cemeteries, businesses are all private property. Some owners will be happy to accommodate you if you ask. I was shooting an establishing shot at Santana Row in San Jose last year and was stopped by the mall's

police asking to see my permit to shoot there even though I was on a public sidewalk. Two hours later I finally got written permission from the mall's admin office to shoot for that day only. If I had only known in advance my shooting task wouldn't have been interrupted.

10. Take Lots of Notes: When you sit down to evaluate a location after a day of scouting, you'll be glad you have something to refer to. In your scouting expeditions, in your daily travels on family vacations, and in your mind's eye, you'll come across countless locations and changing conditions, each of which will be unique and potentially important to you in the future so write them down. Take still photos or shoot a little video with a running audio commentary and note the date, time

of day, quality of the light, sounds in the air, and the things you felt about that location. One day you might return. In summary, here are some things to look out for in a few locations:

- *School Auditoriums:* poor audio, large space, inability to roam.
- *Churches:* low lighting, echoing sound, hard to be unobtrusive, inability to roam.
- *Parks and Nature Areas:* changing weather, light, humidity; difficult gear transport.
- *Urban Centers:* background noise, high traffic and pedestrian presence
- *Beaches:* wind noise, salt air, sand contamination, direct sun, and humidity.
- *Outdoor Events:* poor audio, crowd noise, and competition for space. ■

TREASURER'S REPORT FOR NOV-DEC 2012

Bank Account Beginning 11/1/12	\$1222.80
Income Subtotal:	\$45.00
Dues	\$35.00
DVD Sales	\$10.00
Expenses Subtotal:	\$399.12
Room Rental	\$360.00
Annual Awards	\$39.12
Bank Account Ending 12/31/12	\$868.68



TREASURER'S REPORT FOR YEAR 2012

Bank Account Beginning 01/01/12	\$1485.81
Income Subtotal:	\$622.00
Dues	\$557.00
DVD Sales	\$65.00
Expenses Subtotal:	\$1239.13
Room Rental	\$660
Website 3-year Renewal	\$197.44
Club Business Cards	\$51.79
Name Tags	\$50.00
Speakers	\$50.00
Annual Awards	\$145.92
DVD Production	\$36.00
DVD Return Postage	\$7.98
SCCA & AMPS Dues	\$40.00
Bank Account Ending 12/31/12	\$868.68

RENEW YOUR CLUB MEMBERSHIP NOW FOR 2013

The Club membership at the end of 2012 reached 42 members (36 renewals and 6 new members) paying an average dues of about \$26. The membership dues for 2013 are like last year: \$30 for individuals, \$35 for families and just \$5 for full-time students. Bring your check or cash to our next meeting on January 16th. Make your check payable to the "Cupertino Viewfinders"

Frank Swanson



businesses are all private property. Some owners will be happy to accommodate you if you ask. I was shooting an establishing shot at Santana Row in San Jose last year and was stopped by the mall's

CREDITS

Editor and Publisher: Brian Lucas
newsletter-editor@viewfindersclub.org
 Viewfinder Newsletter is published during the fourth week of each month, except December, 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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PICTURE PUZZLE ANSWER from Page 5

- A1-A5: Seven more lights appeared in ceiling
- E4: Someone ate the top bunch of purple grapes
- F3: The film-strip decoration grew-up a bit
- E2: Janet's napkin in her left hand disappeared
- C3: Top of JoAnn's shirt below her chin has dropped
- B4: Window behind Rita has disappeared
- E4: Pile of green grapes has grown a bit
- E5: An extra leg on grape stand has appeared
- D2: Janet's right sleeve has grown in length
- A1-A2: Air vent strip has disappeared

CLUB MEETING EVENTS 2012

<p>January 16th, Wednesday</p> <p><i>Award Winning Amateur Movies:</i> screenings from recent AMPS and SCCA events</p>	<p>February 20th, Wednesday</p> <p>Program to be announced</p>
<p>March 13th, Wednesday</p> <p>Program to be announced</p>	<p>April 10th, Wednesday</p> <p><i>WeVideo Cloud-Based Video Editor.</i> A presentation.</p>
<p>May 8th, Wednesday</p> <p><i>Nimitz Grade School Video Screenings</i> by Susan Woods' 3rd Grade Students.</p>	<p>June 12th, Wednesday</p> <p>Program to be announced</p>
<p>July: Date to Come</p> <p>Program to be announced</p>	<p>August: Date to Come</p> <p>Program to be announced</p>
<p>September: Date to Come</p> <p>Program to be announced</p>	<p>October: Date to Come</p> <p><i>Annual Member Video Contest:</i> Screening of the year's best Club members movies.</p>
<p>November: Date to Come</p> <p><i>Golden DVD Awards Night:</i> Award presentations to the Annual Member Video Contest winners. <i>Election of officers for 2014</i></p>	<p>DECEMBER</p> <p>No meeting this month</p>