

Next Club Meeting:
 * **Wednesday, February 20th, 7:30 - 9:30 p.m.**
 Cupertino Room, Quinlan Center,
 10185 N. Stelling Rd., Cupertino, CA



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January Meeting

Movies that might make it to the AMPS Festival get a look-over by Viewfinders. Pages 1 and 5

President's Message

Sharing is rewarding according to Harvard scientists, and Ron Rhodes says the Club proves it. Page 2

V.P.s Message

Craig VonWaaden gets excited over a new camcorder he'd like for his outdoor sports activities. Page 2

Analyzing My Last Movie

Ron Rhodes movie Roll the Credits.mp4 taught him a lot of lessons in editing. Page 3

Free Tools to Download

Add to your toolbox with apps and effects from independent software developers. Page 4

Tech Tips

The small screen is with us so we need to tailor our videos to fit the new medium, says Frank Swanson. Page 6

January 2013 Meeting
Highlights

AMPS and SCCA Movies Screened



Movies screened at the January Viewfinders Club meeting from left to right: "A Present from the Past", "A Return Trip to the Moon", "The Last Laugh", "Banff and Jasper" and "8 Ball"

This year the Viewfinders Digital Video Club has been asked to help select some of the movies submitted to the American Motion Picture Society for the AMPS movie festival for 2013. Several of our members have volunteered to review the videos and report their findings to the festival promoters. At the January meet-

ing Viewfinders members were able to see a few of the submissions, along with movies from SCCA, the Society of Canadian Cine Amateurs.

The Movies

The evening began with a showing of "A Return Trip to the Moon", a comedy by Paul Hanson of the the Los Angeles Cinema Club. Paul has a long history of making quirky short films and this one was no exception. Gazing up on a warm summer Southern California night, Paul is struck by the fact that it is a long time since French film director George Melies made his movie about a visit to our satellite back in 1902. It's time to make another trip. Converting the family car into an unlikely space ve-

hicle he takes of to say "Hello" to our neighbors.

In "The Last Laugh" made by the Chichester Film and Video Club (UK), a dead man's will sets his relatives on a search through the house. They follow up clues from one to the next, to solve the riddle set in the document. This they must do if they hope to benefit. The movie is a series of mysteries finalizing in an even bigger mystery.

"8 Ball" by Geoff Harmer (UK). What happens when a man, preoccupied with a personal relationship problem, is joined on a park bench by another man who claims to be able to find an answer to any problem? He may be a lunatic. Or maybe not...

February Meeting

The 12 Essential Story Questions

Ron Rhodes describes the "Dramatica Theory" and its value for screenplay writers.

Final Cut ProX

Wayne Fogle on how Apple's premier editor program has changed editing as we knew it.

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Personal Rewards

Scientists at Harvard have proven that when people get to talk about themselves, they release dopamine into the meso-limbic pleasure regions of the brain. It turns out that self-disclosure is so rewarding that people will give up money for it. Brain scan

results have been used to explain the popularity of social media activities like Facebook, Twitter and emails. And I'd like to think that coming to our club meetings and sharing our movies is one highly rewarding, dopamine releasing activity.

First there is the social benefits of coming together once a month in a familiar place to see old friends and meet new people. Sure it's easier to stay home and watch *American Idol* or *Criminal Minds*. But think about this: People are waiting for you to come out and talk to them, and they want to hear all about you and your latest project. Even if you want to talk about your favorite TV shows.

Then there are the talks, demonstrations and presentations and a chance to learn something new, or to share a movie making technique. Remember it's scientifically proven to be as rewarding as food or money to get up and share something about yourself. Think about how much dopamine you could be releasing if you volunteered to give a presentation yourself.

You never know what what you might be watching at a Viewfinders meeting, it could be the next big thing, or the last train from Clarksville. So bring your ideas, your movie clips, and your \$30 for the membership fee. Your synapses will thank you.

Ron Rhodes

V.P.'S MESSAGE



The GoPro Hero3: Black Edition Action Camera

This month I just wanted to mention a review from *Videomaker* magazine (Feb 2013 edition) of a new camera, the GoPro Hero3. I haven't used it but it looks pretty impressive for anything sports or water related. Entry model sells for \$200, top model: \$400. The review can be found here:

www.videomaker.com/article/15904-gopro-hero3-black-edition-action-camera-review

The low light test mentioned in the article can be found here (compares older model to new model): <http://youtu.be/NDwlaBawfNk>

A demo that shows the camera in action can be found in the next link. <http://youtu.be/A3PDXmYoF5U>
Very impressive for such a small camera.



KEY CAMERA SPECS

- 1080p60 / 720p120 / 1440p48 / 4kp15 / 2.7kp30 / WVGA-240fps
- 12MP / 30 fps Burst • Wi-Fi Built-In
- Wi-Fi Remote Included • GoPro App Compatible*
- Pro Low-Light Performance

I compare this to my snowboarding video shot 5 years ago using a camera about twice the size as the Hero3. http://youtu.be/BQvco9u_J2o

Wow, no question, the technology has evolved a lot! Anyone want to buy my old camera? Make me an offer, I'll give you a deal!

Craig vonWaaden

Viewfinders Web Site

viewfindersclub.org

Latest Updates

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

Download the short video clip *Valentine Revealer*. (Revealers are short video clips used for bringing text on and off the screen).

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

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

10 Things I Learned Making My Last Movie

By Ron Rhodes

I don't have years of technical training, I don't have lots of experience behind the camera, so don't expect those kinds of things in my columns. Please continue to read Frank's excellent series if you want the real deal. Instead, I'll be keeping you up to date on my journey of learning.



1. A lot of the movie was done backwards.

When trying to pan to a specific end point, I'd start at the end and pan away. Then, when the time line is reversed, I'd end up at the correct place without over shooting. I also had to shoot finished results first, and then insert them into earlier scenes. "Roll the credits.mp4" is supposed to be the final part of the movie, but I needed to create the credits first because the movie was supposed to be about finding that file.

2. Shoot lots of B-roll. The whole movie can be from B-roll.

I shot lots of this and that, with only a slight idea of what I needed. Often



times, I needed to reverse a shot (or turn it upside down) and then I got to reuse a clip.

3. Save often.

You never know what may crash your program or your computer. Always save before a major re-working. Save a copy of your project files, or use "save as". I tend to do a lot of experimentation, and not all of it makes it into a movie. Having copies of savepoints can come in handy.

4. Develop a workflow. Know where your files are. Archive.

I had a project folder for movies and stills and also used other folders for loading new shots. I renamed the clips once in Premiere, but the raw files could have been better named and stored together. The Project Archive feature (which I didn't know I had until I was done) will make a copy of all the files and clips used and might be useful halfway through the project to clean things up.

5. Don't promise 10 things if you can only think of 9.

6. Never say it can't be done.

I was sure you could use anti-garbage mattes. You can. However, I just realized that there's a much better way to walk behind a virtual tree (or a circuit board), but I did prove that an anti-garbage matte is possible.

7. Don't be afraid to act silly, just act.

It goes by pretty quickly and people don't remember what you did. It's better to be thought of as silly than not to be thought of at all.

8. Match your video and project type.

I found out that I was using a very high resolution format that wasn't natively supported by Premiere Ele-

ments. Scrubbing was slow and scrolling around was painful. Premiere gives you a one time option of changing the project format to the format of your first clip on the timeline. It took a few tests to get the format that I wanted in the preferences and from the camera. I understand there are pre-rendering programs so that you can force your clips to the same high quality format so that you don't lose anything in editing, but that may be more that I'm willing to do.

9. Always have a backup plan.

Just don't tell anyone when you had to use it. Tell them "I meant to do that". I had one scene with a background clip that panned across the field. With many special effects that had to be traveling along it got to be too much for the time allotted, so I just saved a snapshot of the background and used it as static picture. Looks good. I also eased into one scene and froze it for adding special effects.

10. Pay attention to details, but don't sweat them.



If you can plan ahead, you can anticipate what you need. People will appreciate it when they spot details that you took the time to include. Spending some extra hours getting things smoothed out is real nice but close enough is close enough. ■

Plugins and Apps to Extend Your Tool Set

Most video editing software programs contain filters and tools to enhance our videos, but sometimes they are not quite powerful or varied enough to suit us. Sometimes we should look farther afield to achieve what we have in mind for our productions. That is where smaller, independent video software companies can help out. To sell their applications they need to go beyond what the big players offer us, and frequently they offer free "lite" versions to get us hooked. The following products have been endorsed by many users as some of the best available for download today. Where possible they have been chosen also for their cross platform utility.

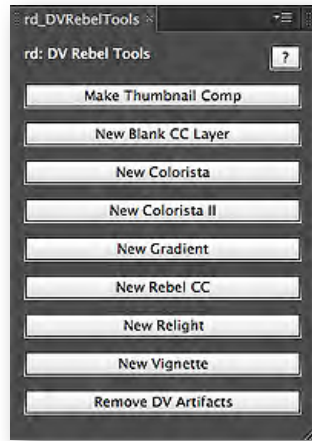
COLOR CORRECTION

DAVINCI RESOLVE 9 LITE (MAC, PC, LINUX)

DaVinci Resolve Lite includes the same high quality processing as the full DaVinci Resolve (\$995.00) with unlimited color correction nodes. It



works with most video editors and gives much more control than your editor's built-in color correction tools. Version 9 adds filmic "Looks" presets to an already strong feature set that includes tracking, secondaries, sharpen/blur.
www.blackmagicdesign.com/products/davinciresolve/software/



DV REBEL TOOLS (MAC & PC)

Handy tools for color correcting in *Adobe After Effects*. Want a vignette? Simply, click the "New Vignette" button and tweak to perfection. From post

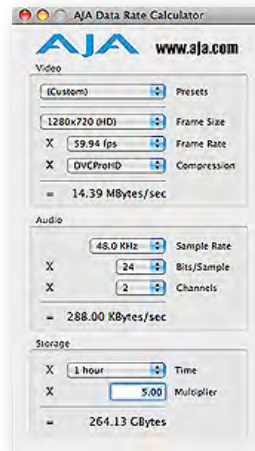
production expert Stu Maschwitz.
www.prolost.com/dvr

CALCULATIONS

AJA DATA CALCULATOR (MAC, PC, IOS)

This calculator figures out your video storage needs based on what format you are editing in. You can specify frame size, frame rate, compression, audio sample rate/bits & audio channels. It works with

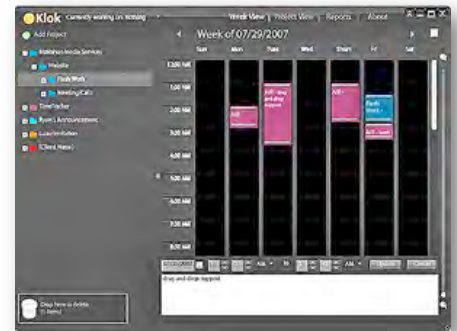
the most popular industry video formats and compression methods, including Apple ProRes, DVCProHD, HDV, XDCAM, DV, CineForm, RED-CODE, Avid DNxHD, Apple Intermediate, 16 bit RGB and RGBA, uncompressed, and more. Video standards supported include NTSC, PAL, 1080i, 1080p, 720p, 2K and 4K.
www.aja.com/en/products/software/



TIME MANAGEMENT

KLOK (MAC & PC)

While Klok is designed primarily for the professional freelance video edi-



tor who charges an hourly rate, it is useful for all of us to track how much time our projects eat up. Integrating Klok into one's production routine enables one to better estimate future projects. Do you know how much time you spend in each stage of making a movie? Klok's simple work timer and visual display shows how your video time is being used.

www.getklok.com/

VIDEO EFFECTS

COREMELT FREE (MAC/PC, PP, FCP, AE)

Coremelt offers 44 completely free plugins with no watermarks or time limits. They include shape masks with keyframes and ActiveText (10 plugins) and are drawn from all the company's product lines. The collection will work in *Premiere Pro*, *FCP7/X*, and *After Effects* and provide excellent transition and titling presets to add style to your video projects.
www.coremelt.com/download.html



AUDIO

LEVELATOR (MAC & PC)

We've discussed this simple voice improvement tool before. The Levelator evens out audio levels for speech based audio. (It is not recommended for music). It automatically balances various audio levels, such as multiple



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Plugins and Apps cont. from page 4

microphone levels in an interview or panel discussion, or segments combined from multiple sessions that were recorded at different levels. Drag-and-drop any WAV or AIFF file onto The Leveler's application window, and a few moments later you'll find a new version which just sounds better.

www.conversationsnetwork.org/levelator

STORY SCRIPTING

ADOBE STORY FREE (MAC & PC)

Adobe Story can be used to create industry standard scripts. Users can also import scripts created in other software such as *Microsoft Word*, *Final Draft*, and *Movie Magic*, and edit them in *Adobe Story*. Customizable templates, integration with *Adobe Premiere® Pro CS6*, and other features are available in the free version. Auto-numbering helps assign scene numbers and shot numbers to scene and shot elements. Various tools in the script editor like smart type, and contextual toolbar help simplify the script creation process.

www.adobe.com/products/story-free.html ■

January Meeting Highlights, cont. from page 1

"Banff-Jasper" by Bob Makara

This travel documentary takes us to Canada's most majestic National Parks. Set high in the Rockies and stretching about 300 miles along its length, the parks are places of high towering peaks, glaciers and ice fields, waterfalls and alpine lakes. The video's photography is beautiful, but it is hard to go wrong in such surroundings.

"Present from the Past" by Shawn

Labrecque. This warm spirited Christmas movie suggests that miracles may come true when on a snowy night a tired father loses control of his car. On a hunting trip, three teenagers accidentally shoot Santa Claus but with the help of a crazy scientist Santa is saved and dad returns safely home to an astonished family.

We look forward to seeing more films from the AMPS Festival in the near future. ■

TREASURER'S REPORT FOR JANUARY 2013

| | |
|-------------------------------|-----------|
| Bank Account Beginning 1/1/13 | \$868.68 |
| Income Subtotal: | \$520.00 |
| Dues(19) | \$520.00 |
| Expenses Subtotal: | \$0.00 |
| Bank Account Ending 1/31/13 | \$1388.68 |

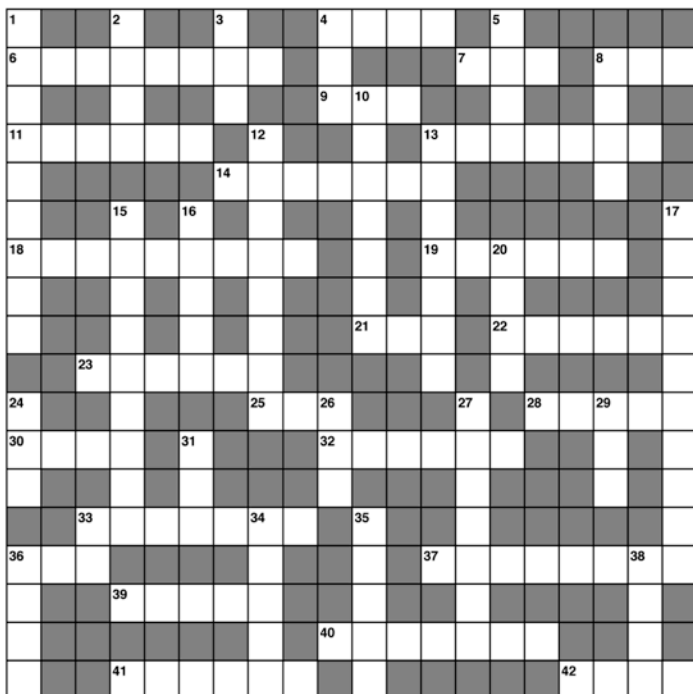


RENEW YOUR CLUB MEMBERSHIP FOR 2013 NOW

Half of the Club membership has already renewed their dues for this year - how about you? 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 February 20th. Make your check payable to the "Cupertino Viewfinders"

Frank Swanson

CROSSWORD PUZZLE By Frank Swanson



ACROSS

4. Single movie sequence
6. Handheld shade
7. Two Left Feet (abbr)
8. Dept. of Motor Vehicles (abbr)
9. Film speed rating
11. Selection of pictures
13. Club Secretary
14. Collection of videos
18. Viewfinders location
19. Written story document
21. National Education TV (abbr)
22. Viewfinders President
23. Image capturing device
25. Dept. of Defense (abbr)
28. Result of videography work
30. Means of evaluating something
32. Originator of a movie idea
33. Main focus of Club meetings
36. Hawaiian garland
37. This month's featured clip
39. Audio portion of a movie
40. Type of video format
41. Things screened at meetings
42. To carry something around

DOWN

1. Repetitive background clips
2. Ill-behaved child
3. Not young
4. Glide over snow
5. Viewfinders is one
8. Annual Club remuneration
10. Club Treasurer
12. Get information from web
13. Online Club news source
15. Manager of website
16. Prolonged look at something
17. Primary Club news medium
20. Quite unusual
24. Contractor for It Is
26. Opposite of night
27. Competitive movie event
29. Video Production Group (abbr)
31. Equipment carrying case
33. Greek for 3.14156
34. Movie sound track
35. Club Vice-President
36. Tonight Show host
38. Post-production process

TECH TIPS

SHOOTING TIPS FOR THE AMATEUR VIDEOGRAPHER: Part 28 by Frank Swanson

Shooting for Online Viewing

Years ago we shot our videos on 8mm analog tape. Then came the much superior Hi8 digital tape, and now, recording high-definition digital video on chips is the standard. In concert with these recording advances was the output media that we put our movies on. First came VHS tapes for playing through a VCR to our televisions, followed by higher quality DVD disc media, again for playing to our big screen flat panel televisions. Today we've begun to upload them to websites like YouTube, Vimeo, Picasa and Flickr for online viewing on our computer screens. But here's the issue at hand with this latest viewing method: *we haven't been paying much attention to changing our shooting techniques to fit the online streaming of our movies.* Before you begin to upload your videos, you have to know how to shoot for the small screen, i.e. for online viewing.



1. Shoot More Close-ups: One of the more important aspects of online video is that unlike shooting for television, you're shooting for a much smaller viewing medium: your computer screen, an 8-inch iPad or even the much smaller 2-inch screen of an iPhone. This means that online videos should stay away from things like panoramic shots, far distance shots, or shots that are much too busy. With videos ending up being so small, wide shots lose too much detail to capture the beauty



that they're intended to show. The fix here is to shoot more descriptive close-up shots to retain the detail on a typical 2 x 3 inch screen.

2. Avoid Transitions: Small screen compression problems leave those nice looking cross dissolves and transitions between scenes looking muddy and more like a mix of random pixels or damaged video. The solution is to use straight cuts, avoiding any po-



tential compression issues.

3. Limit Your Runtime: Most video-sharing websites limit videos to five or ten minutes maximum, so be brief since there isn't much time to drag things along. If you're not sure if you should leave a clip in or not, cut it. Use only what matters. Just because you shot it, doesn't mean that you have to use it. You're editing to select clips that enhance your story, not to include everything you've shot. It would be wise to check the runtime and file size limits of the destination website before you spend hours and hours editing, only to find that your movie is twice as long as is permitted.



A benefit of having a runtime limit is that it will help you focus your efforts down to the essentials of your story. Note: the average online video in 2012 was 6.5 minutes long.

4. Using Titles: The small screen demands that if titles are used they must be big, bold and contrast with the background. And be sure to leave them on the screen long enough to be read. Leaving them up long enough to be read three times should give even the slowest reader enough time to absorb them. Another thing to keep in mind while you're shooting; if you're going to put text over a shot, keep the background as simple as possible. Putting a title over a busy shot or one containing other text, like



BEST

times placing your subject to one side or low in the frame allowing title space will do the trick.

5. Audio – Audio - Audio: Last, but not least, people may accept bad video, but not bad audio. If you intend to post your video online, make sure to use an external microphone to cleanly capture any and all voiceovers, narration tracks and foley (sound effects). The worst microphones are those built-in to camcorders. Many consumer camcorders these days come with a 1/8-inch mini jack audio input, which can accept any standard microphone such as a lavalier lapel mic (direct wire or wireless). If you don't have a lavalier microphone, you should get one for your arsenal of equipment to capture good audio. One final comment, adjust the vol-



ume of your audio so that it's even from beginning to end so that your audience doesn't have to keep adjusting the volume slider.

The next time you go out and shoot video that you intend to upload onto the web, be sure to utilize all of these techniques. You'll be glad you did and so will your audience watching your movie *on the small screen.* ■

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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CROSSWORD PUZZLE ANSWER from Page 5



CLUB MEETING EVENTS 2013

| | |
|---|--|
| <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><i>The 12 Essential Story Questions.</i> A discussion by Ron Rhodes</p> <p><i>Editing Methodology using Final Cut Pro X</i> by Wayne Fogle</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> An online platform for collaborative video production in the Cloud</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.</p> <p><i>Election of officers for 2014</i></p> | <p>DECEMBER</p> <p>No meeting this month</p> |