

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



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February 2013 Meeting Highlights

- Ron Rhodes on Dramatica
- Wayne Fogle on Final Cut Pro X

One perk of being a Viewfinders member is having highly knowledgeable fellow members to turn to when we need help. Yet, even the most skillful of us when working with a program for the first time are faced with tackling the unfamiliar. The two February meeting presentations addressed this.

Ron Rhodes, who has screened some of the most inventive videos the Club has seen, and Wayne Fogle, a professional videographer and editor, explained how and why they dealt with new programs. Let's start with Wayne.

Wayne has been



Editing with Apple's Final Cut Pro X

By Wayne Fogle

using Apple's Final Cut video editing software all the way back to version 4. While he still does most of his professional editing with Final Cut 7, he has been gaining respect for FCPX the more he uses it. (He likens it to FC7 on steroids.) The following are some of the observations he made at his presentation.

Importing: FCPX converts media mostly into Apple's ProRes422 format for speedy processing. The three Import options are: Native, Optimized, and Proxy.

Native media is the format used by the camera. For example, AVCHD, H.264, DV, and HDV. This generally provides the greatest savings in storage space, but may require faster computers to avoid problems. If storage space is more important than editing performance or export speed, then edit using camera native formats.

Optimized media is always ProRes 422. This provides the best possible performance and image quality, but requires additional storage space (roughly 60 GB per hour of material).

Continued page 4

March Meeting

dSLT vs. Camcorder

Milt Kostner will compare video recording differences between a flash card dSLT camera and a tape-based camcorder. In addition to explaining what dSLT is all about he will also talk about changes in lens technologies for these cameras.

Also...

Milt invites any Club member with a still/video dSL-type camera, whether R or T, to bring it to the discussion.

The 12 Essential Story Questions

By Ron Rhodes

A couple of years ago I had a great idea for solving detective stories. If I could build a database of every clue given, I bet I could program a computer to figure out who dun it. I'd have to program in every character, their relationships to each other, their motivations and their abilities. I figured I'd have to build a timeline for each character, actually, a timeline for each clue and each location.

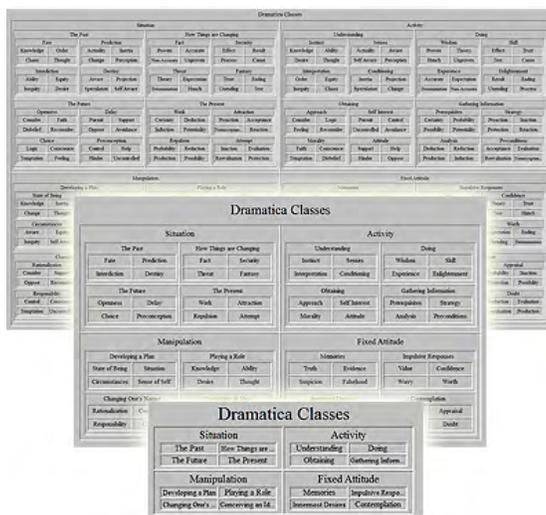
I'd have to know who knew what, and when they knew it. I realized that what people said may or may not be the truth, and how they found out, and what they were doing when they learned it. Each character would have their own world of knowledge and belief, and the detective's job was to find out what they knew. Are they truthful, and how it all compares to the evidence? What the detective is searching for is the one real truth.

One day, after working out how totally impossible this just might be, it struck me that I could work backwards and create a detective story using the same methods. Perhaps I could sell a service to authors for checking their stories for plot holes and logical inconsistencies. Having a computer read a novel, understand it and checking that everything makes sense would require a computer the size of IBM's Watson, but I might be able to use human power to break things into smaller chunks, and in a form more suitable for a database.

PLOTS AND STORY TYPES

This was all fine and dandy for raw facts but what makes a story full and complete? Are there rules for making an interesting story structure? Has anyone worked out a blueprint or plan for telling a story? If I'm going to start making interesting movies, I need to find out what good stories are made of.

I first came across the lists of plot and story types in the box at right. There are seven archetypal plots that are told over and over (just with different



characters and twists) in advertising, books, films, anecdotes, etc. The list of story types is more movie oriented.

OK, I see some overlap here, but not much. These lists seem to be more story sub-genres, but useful if you're just sitting down to write a story.

BEGINNING, MIDDLE AND END

What if I had a simple story idea? How do I build a more complete story structure?

I think we've all heard about the three act play. The first act introduces the setting, establishes the genre (Sci Fi, Mystery, Comedy) and the characters. It then sets them on the quest. (I will not even mention Joseph Campbell here because he has all the answers already)

The middle act of the story is where the story happens, where you have to get interesting, or funny, or scary, and where you have to figure out what order you want to tell the clues and actions of your characters.

After the final showdown, or shoot out, or the wedding scene, you end it all in the 3rd act where you explain everything and the plot comes to a, hopefully, logical and satisfying close.

7 Basic Plots by Christopher Booker

- 1) *Overcoming the monster* - classic hero vs. villain approach. (Star Wars)
- 2) *Rebirth/renewal* - (It's a Wonderful Life)
- 3) *The Quest* - overcoming obstacles to achieve objectives (Lord of the Rings)
- 4) *Journey and Return* - go somewhere and come back with changes (Wizard of Oz)
- 5) *Rags to Riches* - from the depths to a rise (Cinderella)
- 6) *Tragedy* - outcome that is not so positive (many Shakespeare stories)
- 7) *Comedy* - laughter (Zoolander)

The 8 Basic Types of Story

<http://raisedonhd.wordpress.com/2012/07/22/movietrivia4theeightbasictypesofstory/>

1. *Achilles* - A fatal flaw causes a previously flawless individual to be destroyed. (Superman, Fatal Attraction, Jagged Edge)
2. *Orpheus* - The gift that is taken away, e.g. tragic loss. (Doctor Zhivago, Born On The Fourth Of July, Rain Man)

3. *Cinderella* - A scenario in which virtue is rewarded in the end; a dream-come-true story. (Pretty Woman, Shrek, Strictly Ballroom)

4. *Faust* - A character (or characters) sells their soul for personal gain, and fate catches up with them in the end. (The Red Shoes, Wall Street, The Devil's Advocate)

5. *Candide* - The indomitable hero who can't be put down. (James Bond, Indiana Jones, Die Hard, Rocky)

6. *Romeo And Juliet* - Classic romance, i.e. boy meets girl, loses girl, regains girl (or not), loses girl again etc. etc. (Titanic, Wimbledon, West Side Story, most romantic comedies)

7. *Tristan* - Love triangles in which a third party intervenes in a romance. (The Graduate, Gone With The Wind, Jules Et Jim)

8. *Circe* - The innocent or the victim pursued by an antagonistic force. (Terminator, Duel, Double Indemnity)

Continued page 3

12 Essential Questions cont. from page 2

This is nice. But maybe we can get more precise.

In Nigel Watts' *Writing A Novel and Getting Published*, the eight points which Watts lists are, in order:

1. Stasis • 2. Trigger • 3. The quest
4. Surprise • 5. Critical choice
6. Climax • 7. Reversal • 8. Resolution

He explains that every classic plot passes through these stages and that he doesn't tend to use them to plan a story, but instead uses the points during the writing process:

"I find [the eight point arc] most useful as a checklist against which to measure a work in progress. If I sense a story is going wrong, I see if I've unwittingly missed out a stage of the eight-point arc. It may not guarantee you write a brilliant story, but it will help you avoid some of the pitfalls of a brilliant idea gone wrong."

Now we're getting some good detail, and something that you could put in a database. So, what do the eight points mean? I will tell you what I think they mean.

Some of these story ideas are ancient, and I'm sure you can find more lists and theories if you kept searching. Aristotle might have a thing or two to say about it. Now I had a pretty good shell inside of which I could plot my plots. A simple 8 point structure that can be used to describe the elements of a story that are all required to be there and the order that they should occur.

A MORE COMPLETE THEORY OF STORY TELLING?

My search led me to a well thought out, completely unique, absolutely astonishing, in depth working theory not only of story telling and stories, but of the human mind and how the mind works.

The theory is called *The Story Mind* and it is applied to grand argument types of stories. These stories are big important novels and movie scripts where the author has a viewpoint and he wants to convince the reader that his way of thinking is correct. In a story like this, characters need to argue for all sides of each story point,



Dramatica Desktop

with the author making sure that his favored side wins in a reasonable and wholly possible way.

The story must reflect the workings of a single mind which is trying to deal with an inequity, something that is out of balance. Which characters and which story elements used is up to the author, but each type of conflict must be examined or else the reader will not be convinced due to plot holes or missing information.

Melanie Anne Phillips and Chris Huntley came up with the theory

12 ESSENTIAL STORY QUESTIONS

1. Main Character "Resolve" - Change or Steadfast?
2. Main Character "Growth" - Start or Stop?
3. Main Character "Approach" - Doer or Be-er?
4. Main Character "Style" - Logic or Intuition?
5. Story "Limit" - Time Lock or Option Lock?
6. Story "Driver" - Action or Decision?
7. Story "Outcome" - Success or Failure?
8. Story "Judgment" - Good or Bad?
9. Overall Story Throughline?
10. Overall Story Concern?
11. Overall Story Issue?
12. Overall Story Problem?

and, like me, decided that it would be great to have a computer database help store and analyze the story elements. They developed a program called *Dramatica* (\$149.95), which runs on both Macs and PCs. The program has many pieces, but the main part is the Story Wizard which leads you through forming your story by

asking leading questions. After the basic 12 questions, *Dramatica* uses its knowledge of story theory to assign 64 total story elements into a pattern called a story form. In the box below are the questions.

We saw the 7 basic plot types. We looked at the 8 story types. How many different *Dramatica* story forms are there?

32,768.

And each one is a complete story mind which weighs the competing arguments of each character and story concern and suggests a proper order for all the scenes in the story.

Are you exhausted yet?

I bought the software and have used it to work on a couple of stories, but the results are so vast and requires so much thought, that I have only begun to scratch the surface of what is implied in the reports.

OK, so here we are, we have 12 questions and we will end up with 1 of 32K story forms.

Let's begin with a simple idea for a story and see where it takes us.

JACK AND JILL

The last four questions are very important, but what kind of answers are we looking for? I had to use the *Dramatica* software and plug in the answers there. I found out that the key to using this software and getting a result that is close to what you were hoping for, is to look at all the possible answers before making any decisions and picking the ones you know are very important to the characters or to the story you have in mind.

Jack and Jill is a tragedy. In deciding what would make Jack change his mind and do the opposite of what he thought was right, a key scene popped into my head.

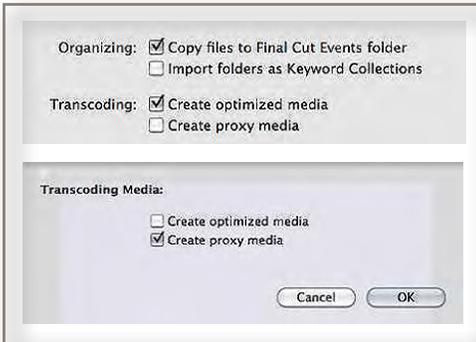
Jill: "Do it my way. Do you trust me?"

Jack: "I love you"

Jill: "Do you trust me?"

Jack does it her way. And he fell down. ■

Final Cut Pro X cont. from page 1



If performance or image quality is more important than storage space, optimizing media is the best choice.

Proxy media is always Apple ProRes 422 Proxy which creates a reasonably high-quality media file that is the same "frame size" as the original, but at about 1/4 the size of ProRes 422. This provides much better performance than camera native with reasonable image quality, while requiring less storage space than ProRes 422 (roughly 18 GB per hour of material).

Final Cut Pro X does not allow manually selecting sections when importing from the camera. (In and out points.) It does however, rather like iMovie, break up the material as individual shots from when the camera was turned on and off when shooting.

Unlike earlier versions FCPX does not require scratch disks. A bonus said Wayne who has spend too many hours searching through his collection of scratch disks looking for a particular piece of video.

Apple's claim that the program has auto rendering is only partially true says Wayne. It does render in the background but only when there is a pause in the editing.

Wayne has a large investment in Digital Juice filters but was dismayed initially when he had difficulty trying to get FCPX to recognize them. However, Digital Juice's fine tech support people came to the rescue by suggesting an alternative loading method, so all were saved.

High-res still shots: Wayne has found that high-res photo files supplied by his clients often have to be resized to a smaller file to avoid

program hang ups. It's not a major chore but it does mean an extra step.

Color matching in the program is excellent. Wayne is very impressed at how FCPX can match color from shot to shot by different cameras, at different times and different ambient conditions. In this respect it is far better than any other editor Wayne has come across. Apple claims it can also match different audio clips in the same way but Wayne has not yet played with this feature.

FCPX's color correction tool is very robust, enabling color correction in different areas of a frame, whether



Photo courtesy of digitalfilms.wordpress.com

highlights, mid-tones or shadows to a much greater degree than previous versions.

The stabilization tool is better than previous versions and much faster too. FCP7 is slower because it has to analyze the whole clip while FCPX analyzes only the selected section. Wayne screened three video clips shot with a handheld camera and with different degrees of shake. (See illustration below.) It can be clearly seen how much more cropping occurs when the camera shake is greater. A control does allow the user manual adjustment, trading apparent shake for cropping amount.

Although he is not completely familiar with Final Cut Pro X yet, Wayne believes he will be using the program more and more in the future to take advantage of its speed, quality, and the increasing support it is getting both from Apple and other developers. The future looks bright for this video editor. ■



Worth a Look Online

How Steadicam Changed the World



In 1976, a cinematographer named Garrett Brown introduced the world to the Steadicam. Now, someone has collected the top Steadicam shots of all time.

www.buzzfeed.com/jwherrman/how-steadicam-changed-the-world

85 Movies about Movies at Netflix



There are a surprising amount of documentary movies about movie making. The "Refocused Media" website lists 85 alone that can be seen on Netflix

www.refocusedmedia.com/85-docs-movies-netflix-instant/

Saving Lincoln



Here's an idea: collect a bunch of old photos, in this case from the Civil War, and have your actors work in front of a green screen. Voila!; an award winning movie. See how it's done here.

<http://filmmakermagazine.com/65773-saving-lincoln-director-salvador-lityak-on-cinacollage/>

Continued page 7

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Camera Story: First Two Cameras

When I was 6 years old in first grade we had an arts and crafts period and Mrs. Gummison handed out modeling clay to each of us to play with. Did I make a horse? Did I make a cigarette tray? No, I built a camera. I put together a box, put a little clay lens on the front of it, poked a hole through it, and went around pretending to take pictures of my friends. But that wasn't real enough for me. I took a piece of paper and with my plastic safety scissors I cut out a strip and drew lines across the strip every two inches (I didn't know about millimeters). Then I looked around picked out a friend and drew a quick picture of him on the end of the pa-



Clay Camera (re-creation)

per. I drew a couple more pictures and rolled up the paper strip. I cut a slot out the side of the camera box and put the paper inside my camera, letting the end of the strip hang out a little bit. Then I sealed up the box camera. Imagine my friend's surprise when I pretended to take a picture of him, and then proceeded to pull my "polaroid" photo out the camera. I tore it off and handed the portrait to him. Somehow I got permission to take my clay masterpiece home where I took more pictures of my family. I got my Dad and my sister to

pose together and hey, there's a picture of you two in my plasticine camera. And then I produced a picture of the dog. I wonder what became of that camera?



To be held at chest level.

me before told me that those pictures wouldn't come out because I didn't have a flash. A flash? No, she must be wrong, I wasn't told about using the flash, and those are only used at night. This was the middle of the day. I kept taking pictures. But none of the inside pictures turned out. My mother had a flash unit for this camera and I soon learned how to attach it and how to pop the flash bulbs in and out.

Well, cameras have changed a little since then. Single Lens cameras used to be called SLRs, then DSLRs when they gave up film, and now there are DSLTs and other types of hybrids where an electronic viewfinder is usually required. At the March Meeting, Milt Kostner is going to review his newest camera, a Sony A37k. Many people are now getting DSLRs and other hybrid cameras and using them for both still shots and videos. Even major motion pictures have been shot using these cameras. If you use one of these, you might consider bringing it to the meeting so we can look at them and compare features. I'll be bringing my Panasonic Lumix GH2, which is a micro four thirds style camera (μ 4:3). Come to the meeting and maybe Milt will explain what a pellicle is.

Ron Rhodes

Camera with pellicle



Viewfinders Web Site

viewfindersclub.org
Latest Updates

Meetings Page: Video of the Month features Second Place Golden DVD Award Winner Ron Rhode's *Roll the Credits.mp4*

Download the short video clip *Sparkles Revealer (1.8MB)*. (Revealers are short video clips used for bringing text on and off the screen).

Link to Chet Davis's "Preserving Your Digital Memories" webinar.

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**

REFRESHMENT VOLUNTEERS

Please let Brian Lucas know which month you will be available to volunteer. The Club will recompense expenses up to \$20.00 per meeting.

- January** Brian Lucas
- February** Bob Meacham
- March** Greg VonWaaden
- April** JoAnn Pfost
- May** Nancy Wood
- June** Sal Trufo

TECH TIPS

SHOOTING TIPS FOR THE AMATEUR VIDEOGRAPHER: Part 29 by Frank Swanson

Getting Location Access for Documentaries

All of us at one time or another have taken our camcorders out in public and not given a single thought as to whether what we see in the viewfinder is legal to shoot or not. We just aim the camera and press the record button to capture the scene, perhaps with our family in the foreground or an interesting view of city downtown buildings. Nothing to worry about, right? Well, if you're shooting spontaneously with a hand-held camera for only a few minutes, you're probably going to be okay.

But, if you use a tripod, take a lot of time to set-up the shot with a scene that has private buildings or people's faces in the background, and have a



crew alongside you like when you're going to make a documentary, then you'll need to consider getting proper location access. When our Viewfinders Club made the "Maybe Today" movie six years ago, we had to get written permission to shoot at several of the locations before we recorded the first frame – locations that gave our story credibility and interest.

This month's Tech Tip will help you identify the types of venues that you'll have to deal with, how to manage these locations, and when you'll need location releases.

1. Types of Location Access: Getting access to the right locations for your documentary requires clever maneu-

vering, good relationships and sometimes just plain luck. Knowing as much as you can about gaining access can make a huge difference in getting your story told. There are three common types of access: *Unlimited*, *Limited* and *Restricted*.

- *Unlimited access locations* are areas in which anyone can shoot video without the need for permits or scheduled time. They may include public streets, parks and, of course,



any land or buildings that you own. These are the most ideal situations where you can set your own hours, move about as you choose, and not have to explain to anyone else what you're doing. However, unlimited access locations may still require permits if you'll be interrupting traffic, shooting in a congested area such as a city, or otherwise causing conflict with the public goings-on in that area.

- *Limited access locations* are areas in which an owner controls whether or not shooting can occur. These may include corporate offices, places of business, people's homes and entertainment venues. In more sensitive locations some owners may ask ques-



tions about your documentary and even insist on supervising the shoot. Though it can be a nuisance, making sure the owner is happy should always be your highest priority. Next to unlimited access, this type of access is preferred since it usually involves less complications than restricted locations. Even so, it's always a good idea to make sure you get locations

releases filled out by the owners before recording begins. This way the owners will know what to expect and won't give you a tough time before the shoot.

- *Restricted access locations* are areas that require several levels of approval before shooting can even begin. Typical restricted access areas include government buildings, jails, hospitals, schools, military installations and large businesses. Since so many people need to sign-off on these locations you'll want to make sure you start the approval process as early as possible so that your shoot doesn't get delayed. It's also a good idea to make sure that these locations are open to you while you're in the planning stage. This way you can change your focus in case access is denied.



Oftentimes the authorities of these kinds of locations will only give you a limited time to shoot, will not allow a lot of movement, and may even ask to review your final script before granting you access. As such, restricted access locations should be used sparingly in order to make sure you have the freedom you need to make your story work.

2. Managing Locations: Now even if you've gotten access to a location, your work is not done yet. You'll need to be able to manage both people and equipment. The first thing to



remember is to be timely, and make the owner happy. If they are on your side they'll quickly become most

Continued page 7

Tech Tips cont. from page 6

helpful on the shoot. They can direct you to the best shooting spots, identify interview subjects, and can give you a better insight into a part of the story you may have missed. Also, if the owner asks you to follow some of their own rules, make sure you do everything in your power to adhere to them. You really don't want to burn bridges for you and other videographers who may follow you later. After shooting is over, it's always a good idea to give the owner a thank you card or gift, invite them to the initial screening of your movie, or send them a free copy of the finished product.

3. Location Releases: If there's any possibility that the location you're filming at isn't public, you'll need a location release. Without it you could get arrested for trespassing, an embarrassment at best and a criminal act at worst. So you don't want to leave this up to chance. A location release is a binding contract between a production and an owner, which grants writ-



ten permission to shoot at their location. When drafting your location release make sure it has a section outlining the inability of an owner to sue the production for filming and to get compensation for access. Unless you're a legal expert, it's best to get this release written by a lawyer or to get a template online. Although it's easier to get a verbal confirmation to shoot, having the agreement in writing is preferred since it's easier to prove. A sample location release form is provided on the Viewfinders Club website.

Location access requirements can be a tricky business, but it's one that every documentary videographer should understand. By knowing how to gain legal access to the right locations you can help make sure that your documentary is visually pleasing, credible and well told. ■

Worth a Look Online cont. from page 4

Star Wars 7: Will it never end?

If you're planning to see the 2013 Oscar winning French film "Amour", Austrian director Michael Haneke's parody movie may put you in the mood.



<http://blogs.indiewire.com/theplaylist/watch-trailer-for-michael-haneke-s-star-wars-episode-7-20130305>

TREASURER'S REPORT FOR FEBRUARY 2013

Bank Account Beginning 2/1/13	\$1388.68
Income Subtotal:	\$185.00
Dues (6) \$180.00	
Contribution: \$5.00	
Expenses Subtotal:	\$0.00
Bank Account Ending 2/28/13	\$1573.68



RENEW YOUR CLUB MEMBERSHIP FOR 2013 NOW

More than half of the Club membership have 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 March 13th. Make your check payable to the "Cupertino Viewfinders"

Frank Swanson

SUDOKU PUZZLE By Frank Swanson

The goal of Sudoku is to fill in every empty box with one of nine letters.

Each letter can appear only once in each horizontal row, as well as only

once in every vertical column and only once in each of the nine 3X3 squares. This month's puzzle contains the nine letters A, E, F, G, I, N, R, T, and U.

As another clue, these nine letters form a word that usually precedes the name of a movie's star actor. The answer to this month's difficult rated puzzle appears on page 8. Have fun!

			R	G		T		
	I			T				
		U			A	G		
R			I					
	E	G				I	F	
					R			T
		A	E			U		
				U			I	
		F		A	G			

CREDITS

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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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SUDOKU PUZZLE ANSWER from Page 5

N	E	R	G	A	T	F	U	I
G	I	V	N	U	F	T	R	E
F	T	U	R	I	E	A	G	N
T	V	A	N	R	E	G	I	U
R	F	I	U	N	A	G	E	T
U	G	E	T	F	I	N	V	R
E	R	E	A	G	I	N	U	F
A	N	F	E	T	U	R	I	G
I	U	T	F	G	R	E	A	N

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><i>Comparison of Sony's SLT-A37K DSLT camera and Canon's HV-30 camcorder</i> by Milt Kostner</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>