

Viewfinders

*Next Club Meeting: Wednesday August 1st, 2007, 7:30 - 9:30 p.m.
Cupertino Room, Quinlan Center, 10185 N. Stelling Rd., Cupertino, CA*

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July Meeting Highlights

The future of movie making seems assured if one goes by the many works by young video makers that were screened at the July meeting. We had a full night of videos from two neighboring schools, one an elementary and the other a high school.

STUDENT VIDEO NIGHT

Most of the children from Nimitz Elementary School in Sunnyvale brought their parents with them so we had a near full house. After each video was shown, the students of both schools answered questions about their work from members of the audience.

NIMITZ ELEMENTARY

Susan Woods, a teacher at the Nimitz school and instigator of her wards' productions, kicked off the evening by explaining the theme that her children were to follow, being "What

Everyone Should Know." The school brought eleven 1 to 2 minute movies for us to see. They were:

1. "Why reading Comprehension is Important" by Michelle Fuller, 4th Grade. Michelle explained that she felt that many people did not appreciate how important it is and needed reminding.

2. "Art" by Tamar Gefen, 3rd Grade. Tamar likes to be creative and says its fun. Nobody needs to be perfect, just enjoy it.

3. "Friendship" by Peleg Rand, 3rd Grade. Having friends is very important. It's what makes life enjoyable so we should all have them.

4. "Why Humor is Important" by Gaby Ponce, 3rd Grade. Gaby says laughter is good for you. Everybody has a sense of humor. Life is short so don't take it too seriously.

5. "War" by Amit Ben-simhorn, 3rd Grade. Amit explained why war is so bad. Particularly on families.

6. "Hurricane Preparedness" by Jonathan Chin III with credits by Bobby Chin. Graphs, charts, maps and photographs illustrated the damage caused by hurricanes and how to prepare for them.

7. "My Country Pakistan" by Fatima Naseem, 4th Grade. Fatima shared her native countries culture and heritage.

8. "Airplanes" by John Perez, 3rd Grade. John says jumbo jets are a



Above: Teacher and students of Nimitz Elementary School.
Below: Students and teacher of Monta Vista High School

Continued page 3



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

We are now hot into the "dog days" of summer. It is time to slow down, find a shady spot and watch the world go by.

We find that with more daylight and warmer weather, we are drawn away from our video editing at the computer into life outdoors. As tough as it

may be on our inside work it offers a great opportunity to shoot some interesting outdoor video. We get longer morning and evening lighting situations and the trees in full leaf combined with the green of the grasses make for a more pleasing backdrop on any subject.

Summer offers a great time to get your camera out and shoot lots of video to have "in the can" to fill the winter's editing time. Don't give up on the hobby but use the weather and length of days to your advantage. Take the camera and shoot that long vacation, or the day trip to the beach, or to Big Basin Redwoods or simply a stroll in the local park. Fill up the tapes to revisit them again during the time you spend at the computer editing them into short films or memories.

One of the uses of those short films is coming up on Friday August 3rd. It is

our turn to provide 30 minutes of quality videos to bring to the Video Exchange Night at the San Jose club's meeting. So, sort through the videos you have and set aside 5-10 minutes of videos to bring to our August Meeting on the 1st so they can be put together with other member's videos and taken to the event. Please bring work that has not been widely seen by the other clubs and let's give them a treat.

And, speaking of the August meeting, our program will be a panel discussion on "Audio in Video" presented by John Dietrich, Gordon Peterson and Bernie Wood. It should be informative and entertaining. Come prepared to take notes.

So, after all of this writing, I think I will go get some lemonade, find a shady spot and enjoy the "dog days".

Viewfinders CROSSWORD Puzzle
By Frank Swanson

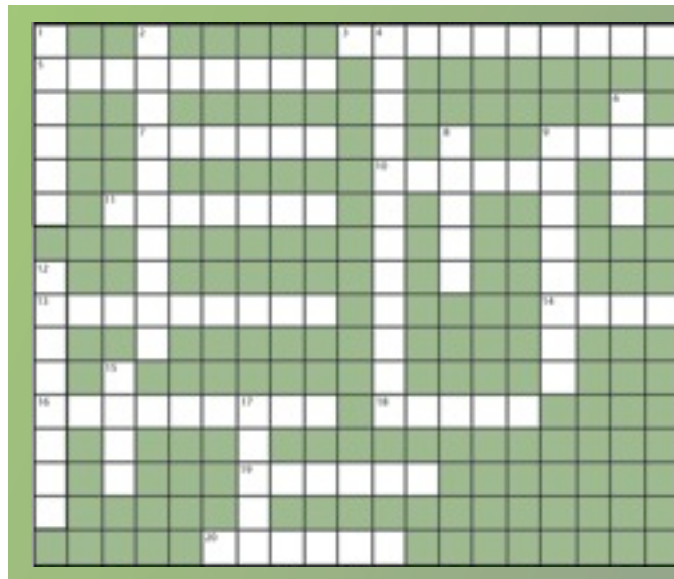
ACROSS

- 3. One of the Club's video-making special interest groups
- 5. City where Viewfinders is located
- 7. Another type of Viewfinders Club newsletter puzzle
- 9. Vehicle that helps movie making a breeze
- 10. Person who assembles and edits a movie
- 11. High-tech internet communications vehicle
- 12. Type of events coordinated by NCCAMC
- 14. Team of people that shoots a movie
- 16. Person who shoots a movie with a camcorder
- 18. Audio, narration and music portion of a movie

- 19. Framework, direction and details for making a movie
- 20. Talent seen and/or heard in a movie

DOWN

- 1. Abbr. of Northern California Council of Amateur Movie Clubs
- 2. Major Club communications vehicle
- 4. Provided during mid-meeting breaks
- 6. Common camcorder recording media
- 8. Visual part of a movie
- 9. Person who acts as project leader to make a movie
- 13. Person who directs a movie
- 15. Abbr. of Amateur Movie Makers Association
- 16. Part of a movie that usually sets the mood



REFRESHMENT VOLUNTEERS

Thank you to the members below who have undertaken to provide refreshments for upcoming meetings.

- August George Paz
- Sept Frank Yap
- Oct Stan Smith
- Nov Fred and Joann Pfof

Continued from page 1

good way to travel, whether on domestic or international flights.

9. "The Dance" by **Barr Zarfaty** and **Sharon Peretz**, 5th Grade. Dance is a fine activity and is good for health and fitness. Everyone should have a lot of fun doing it.

10. "Water Conservation" by **Jackie Chou**, 3rd Grade. Jackie is concerned that people waste water while others suffer shortages. It is important to conserve it.

11. "A Bird's Life", by **Theadora Lau**, 4th Grade. Theadora's movie follows birds from eggs to chicks, learning to fly and falling in love to lay more eggs.

MONTA VISTA HIGH

After the elementary children's videos, the stage was set for teacher **Debbie Vanni** of Monta Vista High School to present her students' more mature work. She had four movies to show us. They were:



1. "Photography" a music video by **Jason Liu, Vivian Le, Jimmy Song, Mani Subramanian** and **Hong Zhang**. This movie, in the style of an MTV video, featured a youth rock band performing on the roof of their high school.

2. "Rx", experimental shorts by **Amir Rakib, Nima Khodai, Bianca Zhang** and **Eric Nguyen**. Included were a movie about a group of youths playing cards and fooling around while under the influence of something other than cream soda, and another short of a young man, after receiving his lunch money from his mother, driving a car.

3. "Imagine" by **Danny Park, Tom McVey** and **Brian Park**. This thriller involves a young man, besotted by TV crime dramas, having visions of a violent intruder with a big knife in his home. Or are they visions?

4. "Petriified" by **Jason Liu, Tim Qi** and **Wily Zhang**. This ambitious movie pits well armed and violent drug lords in a major shoot-out with federal agents hot on their tracks. Much gun play and special effects.



VICE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Working in Shorts

Have you noticed how alike are short stories and short movies? Both need to be economical in narrative, character and plot. Writers, like England's H.E. Bates, France's Guy de Maupassant and America's O'Henry all specialized in the medium and, interestingly, have had many of their works

filmed or televised. Their stories usually concentrate on a single event in the lives of quite ordinary people. For Bates, it may be a chance encounter between people of very different background or social class. De Maupassant recorded the outwardly mundane but psychologically agonizing concerns of peasants and plebeians. O'Henry, always with an ironic twist, gave Jane or John Doe a once-in a life-time chance to do the unusual.

For us very short movie makers, our modern equivalent may be the better made TV commercial. It must, in 10 to 30 seconds, both entertain us and strive to give us something to dwell on. It must be succinct, simple in plot, usually minimally cast, visually pleasing and make its point.

Not all commercials work this way of course. Many, often cinematic works of art in themselves, seem only to pander to our desire for ownership, comfort and self image. Still, they are made by highly creative people and offer techniques, if we can master them, that can enhance our own productions.

Unlikely though it may be that Bates, de Maupassant or O'Henry would have found work in today's advertising industry they do seem to have shared, along with us video makers, similar disciplines.

Brian Lucas

Travel and videography in India

Part 3

By Gordon Peterson

THE TRAIN TO AGRA AND THE TAJ MAHAL

The next morning, after visiting the Ajanta and Ellora caves, we boarded the train for Agra, home of the famous Taj Mahal. Waiting for the train to arrive at the train station was an experience itself. Indian's from all walks of life streamed on to the train platform awaiting the train. They were just as curious about us as we were about them and a whole group of mostly young men gathered around Bart's wife (a Thai) to talk and laugh together. The common language was English. It was quite a sight to watch the people arrive with their travel loads. Some had suitcases, often carried on the head, and sometimes stacked nearly as tall as the person. Many things were carried in plastic bags or woven fiber bags, some as large as bushel baskets.

An incredible sight was a tall man in full white traditional Seiki dress, including white turban and beard, with a 3-foot long gilded sword at his side. He approached, walking across the tracks from the opposite side of the station, and climbed up on to the platform. He was light skinned. I'm more used to expecting Indians to be of generally smaller stature and brown in color. That was the appearance of most of them, but some were quite light skinned and generally taller. It was quite apparent there are many races in India. The fact is that India is a conglomeration of many different peoples, religions, cultures, and languages and has been a melting pot of



Asia over the centuries. Its history is one of many incursions of peoples from other lands coming to settle and frequently warring with each other.

The train was about 30 minutes late, which I'm told was not unusual. Our tickets included an overnight sleeper which was all of about \$15 to travel the 600 miles from Aurangabad to Agra. The car we rode in had barred windows and a compartment about 6.5 X 6 feet with a bench on each side to seat 3 persons. At the end another bench/bed ran the width of the compartment and was arranged with a "bunk" like bed above. An aisle about 2 feet wide ran down the center. At night the seat backrests would be raised up into additional beds and there was another fixed bed above so that allowed 3 persons to sleep each side and 2 at the end of the aisle for a total of 8 persons to a compartment.

The only place for luggage was under or on the bottom seats. When we configured the place for beds that night I had planned to put my suitcase under the seat at the end of the compartment but was warned not to do that. An Indian helped me out by providing a chain to secure my suitcase to the wall and I was cautioned to keep my day-pack and cameras with me in the top bunk because things often disappear during the night. With them worked

around me as best as I could place them for the long night, made turning over to a new position quite an experience. Fortunately the foam mattress was about 3 inches thick and much softer than the Gaundi specials we had previously slept on.

When we first got on the train Bart and his wife were in a different compartment but the conductor arranged for us to be together. Our fellow travelers were very friendly but what drove me wild was the constant string of vendors who came by selling all sorts of things. Each one would stop at our compartment and yell out their wares as though they were in a football stadium. I felt like choking them. They even continued through most of the night and at every station sellers would enter the train or stop by the open windows selling their wares. The most common was food and drink and in that category the most common thing was chi. Now chi is very popular in India and is a tea mixed with milk and sweetened. Veena, Bart's wife, purchased some sweet grapes. I cautioned them about eating raw fruit but they felt that it would be all right; two days later they were paying the price. I was glad I resisted the temptation to share some. As food was not served on the train you had to bring your own or purchase from the vendors. It is necessary

to be well prepared for the 20-hour trip (we had been told that it would take 10-12 hours, though one source did say it was 18 hours. The question of how long a trip would take seemed to be an unusual one with no specific answer.).

Luckily there were restrooms, some



with western toilets. I couldn't see how anyone could hit the open hole of the eastern toilets. What ever you did was funneled out to the railroad bed so you couldn't go when the train was stopped at stations. Although it only traveled at about 30 mph, it rocked from side to side, so trying to avoid sitting on the seat when going to the toilet was a challenge .

We arrived in Agra the next morning and took a cab to our hotel. It was close to the Taj Mahal being only about 300 yards away from the south entrance. The hotel had an eating area on the roof with a wonderful view of the great monument. It was also frequented by a troop of monkeys that roamed the rooftops seeking any opportunity for food. It was a constant activity for the proprietors to keep them away with a slingshot. We enjoyed several meals on the rooftop, though it was steep climb up four floors or more to get there. The food orders were prepared in the ground floor kitchen and brought up to the roof.

The narrow streets were crowded with animals and people and in the early mornings and late evenings herds of buffalo were driven passed the hotel. The trail of manure they left and the heat of the day provided a perpetual

barnyard smell. People just walked through the drying manure.

We had arranged with our van driver, who had taken us from the train to the hotel, to pick us up the next day. Later we found that we could take a cab at a better price so I went back to the train station taxi kiosk to tell the driver that we would not want the van for the next day. My trip was surely an experience to remember. It was in a three-wheeled golf cart like vehicle. The first one I entered was not running well so I was transferred to another. It was one wild ride down the narrow vendor-lined, people and animal crowded streets. The driver expertly zigzagged from side to side, alternately throwing on the brakes, or accelerating when advisable. By bracing my self in the seat and shooting out the front or side I tried to capture it on video. The driver sat ahead of me in the single front seat while I was in the back on a seat wide enough for about 3 India sized people.



On reaching the train station he parked and pointed the way to the taxi kiosk. As I started to walk I began feeling woozy. I did OK for about 100 yards then I lost my balance and almost fell. I was really concerned because when cars come by they just honk; they don't stop or even slow down. I was like a drunk. It was due to an old problem of mine called "positional vertigo." If my head is in certain positions it causes small particles in the inner ear to float and stimulate the small fibers that provide our sense of gravity. When this occurs the balance system doesn't know which way is up

and neither do I. It can last for a short time or as long as a day. I have to get out of bed from my left side or I'm in trouble all day.



Some cab drivers saw my behavior and came to help, one steadied me so I could walk. Taxi companies rotate manning the kiosk each day so I showed them my receipt and asked them to contact the company. They found a chair and I waited about 30 minutes before a representative came. He was pretty surprised, it was the first time that someone had taken the time to let him or her know we didn't want the van for the next day. Usually the driver just showed up to find no one there. After about an hour I was able to walk back to my waiting driver. The ride back was equally as exciting.

Next month:
Agra and the Taj Mahal

- Gordon



AUGUST MEETING

Audio for Video: A Panel Discussion of "Audio in Video: Microphones, Capturing, Editing and Voice-overs"



John Dietrich - Microphone types and suitability

Gordon Peterson - Capturing audio with the camcorder

Bernie Wood - Voice Over and narration

Our August meeting will feature three of our members discussing and answering questions about getting the best sound quality for our movies.

Understanding the importance of good audio plays a major part in making quality videos. Using correct equipment and working with proven techniques will ensure that our productions are not hampered by poor sound quality.

John Dietrich will describe the different types of microphones that apply to our hobby and the characteristics and best uses of each.

Gordon Peterson has much experience in capturing sound through the camcorder and will describe the do's-and-don'ts that he employs for optimum recording.

Bernie Wood will explain his methods for voice-over and narration and how to assemble a simple but effective sound studio.

Find it on the web: audio

After the meeting, here's some web sites that will help you more understand audio.

www.mediacollege.com/audio: Tutorials for all you may need about audio capture and and equipment.

www.looperman.com/tutorials: Primarily for electronic music makers

but has many general interest audio notes.

www.partnersinrhyme: A royalty free music site with free music, loops and tutorials.

www.videomaker.com: Good basic audio articles for the videographer.

TREASURER'S REPORT FOR JULY 2007

| | |
|--------------------------------|----------|
| Bank Account Beginning 7/01/07 | \$678.65 |
| Income Total | \$ 24.00 |
| DVD Sales (2) | \$ 10.00 |
| New Member (1) | 14.00 |
| Expenses Total | \$24.00 |
| DVD Production | \$24.00 |
| Bank Account Ending 7/31/07 | \$678.65 |



Frank Swanson, Treasurer for 2007

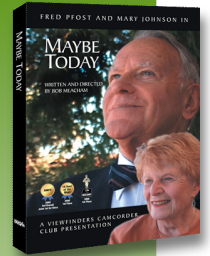
"Maybe Today" DVD's Still Available for Sale!

If you haven't a copy of this award-winning club movie, now's your chance to own one.

For a mere \$5.00 you can choose either a DVD with the movie alone (version 1) or accompanied with a trailer (version 2)

Since it's original screenings at three movie festivals it has been seen at other locations where it has garnered praise for its story and production quality.

Call or email Frank Swanson, or talk to him at club meetings. He'll be pleased to fill your order.



UPCOMING VIDEO EXCHANGE NIGHTS

San Jose Movie and Video Club
Friday August 3rd
Peninsula and Westwood Clubs
Friday September 28th



American Liberty, our next Themed Club Video Contest will be screened at our August meeting. Have your entry ready yet? We're looking for a good turn out to rival the April contest so don't let us down.

Good Luck!

Crossword Puzzle Answer



CREDITS

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Viewfinder Newsletter is published during the third week of each month for Viewfinders Camcorder 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. 10188 N. Stelling Road, Cupertino, California. Watch the calendar for programs updates. Admission is free.

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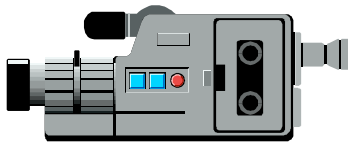
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| CALENDAR OF EVENTS 2007 | |
|---|---|
| <p>JAN</p> <p>Jan 3 Meeting: "10 Best of the West" and NCCAMA movies screenings. Jan 5th San Jose Meeting: "Gorillas..." Tech Tips: Frank Swanson "I've Been Framed"</p> | <p>FEB</p> <p>Feb 7 Meeting: Fred Pfof on "The History of Video Tape" Tech Tips: Frank Swanson "Steady Camera Work"</p> |
| <p>MARCH</p> <p>March 14 Meeting: John Dietrich on "Matting and Chromakey Techniques" Tech Tips: Frank Swanson "Creative Camera Work"</p> | <p>APRIL</p> <p>April 4 Meeting: Members Quarterly Short Video Competition screening. Theme: "Water" Tech Tips: Frank Swanson "Light and Shadows"</p> |
| <p>MAY 2, Wednesday</p> <p>Meeting: Club Members Video Screening Night. Tech Tips: Frank Swanson "Shooting Interviews"</p> | <p>JUNE 5, Tuesday</p> <p>Meeting: Inter-club Exchange Night Tech Tips: Frank Swanson "Transitions"</p> |
| <p>JULY 11, Wednesday</p> <p>Meeting: Nimitz Grade Sch. Videos Monte Vista Student Videos</p> | <p>AUG 1, Wednesday</p> <p>Meeting: Panel Discussion of "Audio in Video: Microphones, Capturing, Editing and Voice-overs" American Liberty "Themed" Contest Tech Tips: Frank Swanson</p> |
| <p>SEPT 11, Tuesday</p> <p>Meeting: Recording Your City's History -Guest Brian George Tech Tips: Frank Swanson</p> | <p>OCT 3, Wednesday</p> <p>Meeting: Club Annual Video Contest screenings. Tech Tips: Frank Swanson</p> |
| <p>NOV 7, Wednesday</p> <p>Meeting: Annual Gold DVD Awards and Social. Tech Tips: Frank Swanson</p> | <p>DEC</p> <p>No meeting this month</p> |

