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PANORAMA

OF AMATEUR FILM & VIDEO

SUR LE FILM ET VIDEO AMATEUR



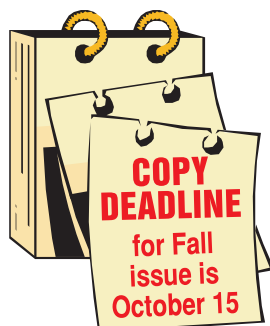
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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Photo by Joseph Bochsler Jr.

Fred Briggs, FSCCA

"Summer Update"

We hope you are enjoying a fine summer with good weather. We know that some are experiencing a warmer than usual summer, though very few of our members live in Yellowknife or Churchill where it seems to be the warmest, and some are threatened again by forest fires. Others have experienced unusually wet weather, including floods, and in Southern Ontario we had a hot Spring and a cool Summer so far, with violent storms and flooding in some areas. May each of you be safe from tornadoes, hail, rising waters, locusts and plague (I mean, of course, mosquitoes, West Nile Virus, Avian Flu and Monkey Pox) for the rest of the season.

I'm sure you know that we are constantly striving to improve PANORAMA, and the SCCA itself. (Please see the announcement about a Sound Effects Library on Page 9.) I hope you see a marked improvement in the quality of the printing in this issue. We can't take credit for it though, as all we did was choose a high quality printer. We have been proud of the reproduction quality in PANORAMA since we selected Athens Printing, but when the Spring Issue was being printed the owner informed me that there was about to be an improvement in the quality as they had ordered a new copier

which would produce superior results. I've just learned that the equipment has been installed, and though I haven't yet seen samples of the product, I'm hoping that the improvement will be noticeable, in spite of the fact that I know printers inspect their work with a loupe! Of course, the quality of every picture depends not only on the copier but even more on the original picture, and as our pictures come from many sources, from high resolution digital cameras to small jpegs and gifs from the internet, not everything will look good with even the best printing equipment. Therefore we always endeavour to obtain the best quality graphics in the first place, with varying degrees of success, but sometimes we have to take what we can get.

PATRONS

At a recent meeting of the SCCA Executive it was decided that Patrons should not remain Patrons for just one year, but that the designation should be permanent. For some time now Patron has been a class of Membership, and designates those who have donated a minimum of \$500 to the SCCA in the past year. This was not instead of their Membership Fee, but in addition to it, and it wasn't considered to be a permanent designation. Some members repeated their donations every year, so are always listed on the Membership List as Patrons, while others come and go on the list.

We have decided that once a member made a cash (or cheque) donation of \$500 or more in one year, he or she should be recognized as a Patron for as long as they remained a member, with the threshold for "donations in kind" being \$1,000 in any one year. This would be retroactive, and the President was to research the records of charitable receipts and construct a new list of permanent Patrons.

Unfortunately, though we have good records for recent years, we don't have all the records, but in the past year we've had records returned from Winnipeg, London, and Burlington. This is a good place to mention that if you have any old SCCA records in Montreal, Toronto, Vancouver, or Ottawa, or wherever they might be, we would appreciate their return. Please send them by mail to me (address on facing page) along with the receipt for postage for which you will be reimbursed.

The SCCA Constitution says:

" Section 16. **Patrons.**

Individuals, business firms or other organizations who are interested in the objects of the Society and contribute to its support by means of grants, donations or otherwise as approved by the Board of Directors, without taking out membership in the Society, may be classified as 'Patrons' and listed as such on programs, brochures and other literature issued by the Society from time to time."

On reflection, we remembered that Patrons, with a Minimum Donation of \$500, was added to the Membership Application as part of an overhaul of the same during the Presidency of Jon Soyka. Therefore, we weren't designating Members as Patrons prior to that, but we did go back as far as 1983 and gathered all the names, active, inactive, deceased and corporate, onto one list, which you will find printed on page 2 in this issue.

What Can You Do?

I have often made reference here to the great deal of hard work that the members of your Executive perform regularly to serve this Society. This continues unabated, but it's time to ask that more of you contribute just a little more to lighten the load of those carrying so much of it. How?

1. Pay your Membership Fees promptly. At the end of July we have twenty-seven members and five clubs who have not yet paid their Membership Fees. "Section 2. **Payment of Annual Dues.** *Dues shall become payable upon application for membership, and thereafter annually in advance on a date prescribed by the Board of Directors. Members whose dues shall remain unpaid sixty (60) days after the due date so prescribed shall be considered as not in good standing.*"
2. Mail in your Proxy which you will find enclosed with this issue. That goes for clubs too, as they have 1 vote or more, depending on the size of the club. You can use the enclosed envelope. If your dues have not yet been paid, please include your payment in the same envelope. Our constitution requires:
"Section 4. **Quorum.** *The quorum for the Annual or Special General Meetings shall be 40% of the Class 'A' members present in person or represented by mail or proxy."*

Continued on page 13

CLUB NEWS

By Joseph Bochsler, F.P.P.O., A.S.C.C.A.

As I write this, summer has arrived, one month late. On July 1st, Canada Day, Joan and I arrived at the park in Caledonia, our hometown, where the Knights of Columbus provided a breakfast, complete with sausages, scrambled eggs and pancakes, smothered with pancake syrup. Coffee and juice was also available.

Of course I started the day with a hearty breakfast and then to my Canon GL2 camcorder. I videotaped the lineup of customers, with wide-angles and close-ups. The food preparation was also taped. Then came the people enjoying the meal at the tables. Here I also took still photographs with the card feature on my GL2. I'm able to send the pictures by Email to the persons enjoying their food.

At 11.30 a.m. the parade started, with about sixty floats, bands and farm tractors, etc. I had my work cut out for me! I made sure that the camcorder battery and sufficient tape was loaded in the cam. I mounted the camcorder on my trusty shoulder bracket and used my homemade shade on the flip-out screen. I shot wide as well as CU, especially on the marching bands. I used different angles such as head-on and low kneeling shots. If I felt that I didn't get enough of a float or band, I would shoot them going away from me. I pay special attention to the convertibles with the dignitaries such as the District Chairman and the Members of Parliament. Four-horse hitches shot at a low angle also make for interesting video. One of the dangers of videotaping a parade nowadays is the many squirt and water-guns used by parade participants to shoot water at the audience at the side of the street, so the videographer has to be very alert to avoid getting water on the camcorder. Another danger is the candy etc. thrown from the floats for the kids. I tape all of the parade and most of the happenings on Canada Day

for a true documentary.

The food vendors as well as the craft booths, along with the entertainment and competitions make for good video. The huge fireworks display, timed to music, ended the day of enjoyable videographing.

My next project is the Golden Horseshoe Village, an annual event held on the Civic Holiday weekend. This happening concentrates on historical times including the steam age and a tractor-pull. The village is built every year on the Caledonia Fair Grounds for this event.

BRANT VIDEO MAKERS, BRANT CAMCORDER NEWS Edited by Dan Kennaley.

Harold and Mary Cosgrove came from Niagara Falls to our April meeting to entertain and educate us on "Good Documentary Videos". They are members of the Hamilton Video/Film Club, where Harold gives an instruction session before each meeting. I think we impressed them with the fact that Brantford has a vibrant Club with a lot of interesting people as members [which we do]. As part of his presentation, Harold showed us some of his prize-winning videos. Harold has probably won more prizes for his videos than anyone else in Canada and has even entered video in competition in England and taken the Gold. The presentation was a great opportunity for all of us to learn the what, why and how of documentaries and he answered many questions from the floor.

The following is some advice which Harold gave us:

- The story is the most important...people are more interested in the story than in the photography.
- Footage and how it is put together is key. Harold shoots from as many angles as he can so he can choose

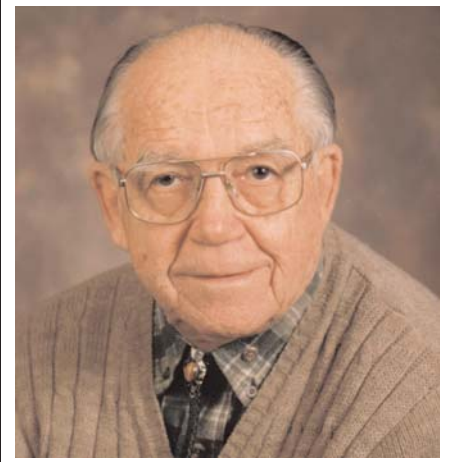


Photo by Joseph Bochsler Jr.

from an array of shots.

- Write a commentary using many sources...internet, brochures etc. He writes and rewrites the commentary and also records it twice.

It is important to answer the questions: who, what, when, where, how and why. Harold uses a Mac and edits using the iMovie program.

He showed us his documentaries titled, *The Missions of California* and *Sugar Bush*. He also projected via DVD some breathtaking documentaries of *Grand Canyon*, *Kites* and another of *Manatees in Blue Springs Park, Florida*.

Joe Bochsler showed us a documentary about the making of *Birth of a Nation* by W.D.Griffith.

BUFFALO MOVIE-VIDEO MAKERS, CAMERAMA Edited by John Weiksnar

Seventy Years and Counting

Our 70th Annual Banquet/Party on the evening of April 18th was well attended, with more than two dozen present, including two from Canada. (Thanks Jon and Tina!). The Screening Room Cinema and Café's Golibersuch family came through again as our wonderful hosts, a total success.

Guest speaker Andrew Michalski captivated the audience with samples of his cinematic makeup and special effects props, everything from a faux senior citizen to a foam alien head. The show stealer happened to be a mock severing of President Phil Utech's throat "a la garotte" with no shortage of ultra realistic fake blood, whose recipe was shared with all in attendance.

We had a tie for First Place in the annual contest. The Gray Hayes production "Marital Artifacts" and "The Window" by his son Mike both earned

handsome certificates. Not to be out-done, member Bernice Rice took Second Place with the crowd pleaser "Flatulence and Clowns".

The group shared some memorable moments when we presented a pair of Life Member plaques to special guests Wil and Jenny Ostwald and Tom and Betty Alesse. It was a treat to hear them reflect on the fond history of BM-VM. Tom stood up and delivered an impromptu speech that gave everyone there a better appreciation of our rich past.

Finally, the Most Distinguished Member award went to an individual who has long deserved it: Sam Terranova, who also co-ordinated the Pizza and Wings Buffet and contests. The committee wishes to thank all who contributed in any way to the success of the event.

It's Worth Checking Out Many great books on film-making have come out in the past ten years. I recently went to the bargain store on Niagara Boulevard, located in the old Wurlitzer factory in North Tonawanda. The store is well organized, better than most. There are the usual sections with cookbooks, coffee table books, how-to books, religion, science, music, etc.

They have great film books, some a few years old and some very old. There was one on the making of 2001: *A Space Odyssey*, a dictionary of film terms, screen plays (from the mid 1990's), even *Rebel Without a Crew: or How a 23-Year-Old Film-maker With \$7000 Became a Hollywood Player*, By Robert Rodriguez.

Even better, all books are 70% off the regular price! There may be books you wanted to purchase a few years back, but weren't ready to shell out the \$30.00 or more.

By President Phil Utech

HAMILTON VIDEO/FILM MAKERS, REEL NEWS

edited by Dave and Liz Stewart

Wet weather- who needs it? We do of course. The time is right to go out and get stock footage of dreary, rainy, wet weather that could pass as fall weather. Swans are about, waves crashing into the beach, windsurfers are on the bay racing the waves by the Centre for Inland Waters building. Opportunities abound for the enterprising videographer.

Let's see in the coming months how club members have used this opportunity in new videos for our members.

Use your imagination and get wet!!

From the HV/FM library W.D. Griffith, "The Father of Film" I have made a copy of this film - VHS - for the library and suggest the copy be loaned to a member by lottery draw. (Only members are eligible). Episode 3 and 4 will be available at a later date - Joe Bochsler.

(Another find by our librarian, Joan Bochsler, who works very hard, so let's use the material that is found and brought to the meetings. *Dave Stewart*.)

Joe and Joan Bochsler sent a note regarding Peter Janssen, who is having some health problems and cannot come to the meetings for a while. We hope he is feeling better soon and we can see his smiling face at the club. Please let Carolyn Briggs know of anyone who may be absent due to ill health or other problems so that we can keep in touch.

HV/FM Club does it again! Good company, good times and a hearty meal was had by all at this year's banquet on Sunday, June 13/04. A nice variety of videos took the top prizes and we had some great raffle prizes donated by members to make the night an even better success.

Congratulations go to Alex Blockhine for winning with the Video, "Chasing the Mayan Past". Double Award Winner Ken Davy, for "Sheila and Jack's Garden", Evelyn and Nestor Rosa won for "Invasion Of The Coons", Fred Briggs won for "Moody Waters", and Dan Copeland won an award for "Miss Muffin Gets Married". There were other winners as well.

LONDON VIDEOGRAPHY CLUB, IT'S A WRAP

edited by Robert Thorn

This has been an interesting year!

For all but one of our meetings our own Club Members made the presentations. That meeting saw Jon Soyka from the Hamilton Video/Film Makers Club bring his demonstration of Pinnacle Liquid Edition and tips on shooting parades and outdoor sports events.

Bob Thorn and Thom Speechley attended the May 26th meeting of the Brant Video Makers in Brantford, where Thom gave a presentation on the subject of shooting 16:9 widescreen. Thom pointed out that anyone owning a recently purchased D8 or MiniDV camcorder has the capability to shoot in 16:9 while those people may be aware of that fact, they will also realize that they may not have the facility to play back the video in wide screen format.

Some newer "standard" TV sets and all projection TV sets will display 16:9. If the camcorder owner has a set, Thom encourages them to give 16:9 a try.

He then described the three current camera systems used to achieve the wide screen effect. The presentation itself was prepared using the most common format, an electronic "anamorphic" compression and decompression of the video signal. The video was shown using an SVGA projector with 16:9 capability. This manipulation is not true 16:9 and may produce some quality loss. However with careful selection of subject, the effect can be dramatic and pleasing.

In the competition for the SCCA 2004 "Intercity Trophy", the "A" Team (Frank Chiasson, Jiri Jelinek, Ron Jacob, Dave Belne and Thom Speechley) finished their project early. (Skill, talent and experience?) Their exciting presentation includes some 'reality' features with unwitting participants included in the plot. In one crucial scene, Dave arrives at a destination, jumps from his car and rushes towards an office building. An unrehearsed woman, departing the building adds a dramatic touch by turning to follow Dave's rush to the entrance of the building. The production also includes a cameo appearance by a well-known local entertainer. You'll have to wait to see the results.

In the competition for the SCCA 2004 "Intercity Trophy", The "B" Team (Jim Town, Harvey Hackland, Bill Dow, Bob Plumsteel and Bob Thorn) finished their project just in time! Skill, talent, experience, but of course! Well mostly the weather put us off from a lot of outdoor shooting that we desperately needed. The weather cleared just in time to capture the crucial shoots that defined our presentation as an exceptional piece of work! Lots of action, drama, excitement, disappointment, sore feet and of course a bad headache at the end! Fun was had by all and we eagerly await the completion of the judging of all the videos.

TORONTO FILM AND VIDEO CLUB, SHOTS AND ANGLES

edited by Sam Spence

View Point All my retired friends seem to have one thing in common, apart from being retired, that is. They all claim to be very busy. In fact they seem to be even busier than when they had full time jobs. Some of them probably just forgot to get out of bed and others seem to spend a lot of time "surf-

ing the net".

The last reason explains the email I received recently.

"Working people frequently ask retired people what they do to make their days interesting. Here's what we have to look forward to...

"I went to the store the other day. I was only in there for about 5 minutes. When I came out, there was a cop writing out a parking ticket. I went up to him and said, 'Come on, buddy, how about giving a senior a break?' He ignored me and continued writing the ticket. I called him a Nazi. He glared at me and started writing another ticket for having worn tires. So I called him a piece of horse s____. He finished the second ticket and put it on the windshield with the first. Then he started writing a third ticket.

This went on for about twenty minutes. The more I abused him, the more tickets he wrote. I didn't give a darn. My car was parked around the corner. I try to have a little fun each day. It's important at my age."

When the next meeting rolls around we are going to try something a little different. Trev Beard will hold the stage and talk about what to adjust on your camcorder when the lighting level is low, for example, outside at night.

It's a complex subject and you may wish to bring your camcorder to the meeting and fiddle with the settings. There will be lots of open discussion with the audience. He says that in preparation, he has learned a great deal that he did not know before. That I find hard to believe, but we all know about how modest Trev can be.

This will be followed by Richard on the fine art of transferring film to video. Because of the equipment set-up that would be required, Richard will be taping the procedure. After the viewing he will be available to answer a few questions on the procedure.

VANCOUVER VIDEO PRODUCTION CLUB, REEL TALK

edited by Cathy Caravan

Setting It Straight by Pat Sheridan, President.

At the last meeting we had a fine presentation by Dan Bennett, Paul Little and Alex Wu from Sony. I was pleasantly surprised, because you never know what to expect when someone does a presentation at one of our meetings for the first time. I was amazed at how many models of camcorders they

brought for us to look at and fondle. Must've been over a dozen camcorders. Prices ranged from \$600 for a Digital 8 model to \$3300 for one of the 3 chip mini DV units. Somewhere in there was the new DVD camcorder, and I was impressed with how honest and straightforward the head Sony fella, Dan Bennett was in his assessment of this format. This is a camcorder for the point, shoot, and watch crowd. It is not a camcorder for someone who wishes to edit his footage. Since all of us in this club edit our footage (don't we?) none of us should be interested in such a model.

The Sony fellas were kept busy by our many questions, and even during the break there was a steady stream of club members pestering our guests. This indicates to me that our members are quite interested in what Sony has on the market, and I trust that there will be a few members sporting brand new Sony camcorders in the next few weeks.

At the end of the meeting when (almost) everyone had gone home, Bryan Belfont and I chatted with the Sony fellas until after 11pm. They genuinely seemed to enjoy themselves at our meeting and they've even offered to make this an annual event. I say great!

One other interesting tidbit I wanted to mention. With nothing at all being discussed about this prior to the meeting, Dan from Sony whispered toward the end of the meeting that they had a few give-aways. He didn't make a big deal about it, he just told me as quietly as possible that they had a few things for our members. We quickly decided that the best thing to do was to give it away at a different meeting, when we would have more time to organize a draw. When I had looked later what they had brought, I was very surprised and pleased that they had brought many more goodies than the Pinnacle fellas had brought several months ago. The reason why I'm bringing this up is because the Pinnacle guys made such a big, no HUGE fuss over the "swag" (freebies) they were going to be bringing along to the presentation. I was rather deflating to say the least, when it became evident what they had actually brought. The Sony guys were a class act all round and I'd like everyone to be aware of that.

Of course, now you're probably wondering what's become of all the Sony and Pinnacle goodies. No, I didn't have a booth at the First Avenue Flea

Market. OK, moving right along ... We will be giving everything away at the June meeting. The plan is this - Everyone who has an entry in the competition will have this name in a draw. (Entrants' names will be submitted once even if they have two entries.) As their name is selected, they will get to pick what they would like. When every entrant has had their pick, their names will go back into a draw of ALL members who are in attendance at the meeting. We won't have enough time to allow everyone to decide what he will want, so a predetermined goody will be announced and a name will be selected. We're hoping that there will be a little something for everyone in attendance.

So if you enter the June competition, you'll be getting two cracks at a goody, plus of course, a chance to win some of the \$175 in prize money. Is this a generous club or what?!!! *Until next time...*

VICTORIA VIDEO CLUB, BULLETIN

Edited by Sheila Perkins

Protecting your CD and DVD.

DO: Handle only by the outer edge or the centre hole Use a non-solvent based felt-tip permanent marker to mark the label side of the disc. Keep dirt or other foreign matter from the disc. Store discs upright (book style) in plastic cases specified for CD's or DVD's. Return discs to storage cases immediately after use. Leave discs in their packaging or cases to minimize the effects of environmental changes. Open a recordable disc only when you are ready to record data on the disc. Store the disc in a cool, dry, dark environment in which the air is clean. Remove dirt, foreign matter, fingerprints, smudges and liquids by wiping with a clean cotton fabric in a straight line from the centre of the disk toward the outer edge. Use CD/DVD-cleaning detergent, isopropyl alcohol, or methanol to remove stubborn dirt or material. Check the disc surface before recording.

DON'T: Touch the surface of the disk; bend the disc; use adhesive labels; for a long time (years); expose to extreme heat or high humidity, expose to extremely rapid temperature or humidity changes; expose recordable disks to prolonged sunlight or other sources of ultraviolet light; write or mark in the data area of the disk (the area the disk "reads"); or clean by wiping in a direction going around the disk. For CD's especially, do not: scratch the

label side of the disk: use a pen, pencil or fine-tip marker to write on the label. **SIG'S....**

No smokers in our Club, so SIG'S must mean "Special Interest Groups." Mike has munched away on this concept and delivered a *luuuuucid* mini-presentation on the subject. Mike, would you outline SIG'S at the next meeting? The drift of Mike's notion... Encourage small groups of members to meet informally on their own as well as Club meetings. But Mike will elaborate. **SCRIPTS:**

On Dave's invitation, last meeting, Alice has provided us with two "scenario" scripts. Thank you, Alice. I think they could both "work" for us, some day. The first one's about a tramp being progressively ousted from his bench by shoppers needing a "sit" to kill off time. They succeed until the tables are turned "one by one" as the tramp reclaims his bench. "Decision From the Bench", Alice?

T'other storyboard, dialogue-dependent, an emotionally-sensitive story, would be a wonderful challenge for a Video Club production. Of course, we know that not all of us are gung-ho on making storyboards. Hey...maybe, if members don't want to use up a whole meeting date on making videos, one of dem SIG'S could do the trick! A thought. Thank you again, Alice.

WINNIPEG AMATEUR MOVIE AND VIDEO CLUB, BULLETIN

edited by Wallace & Jeanette Robertson.

We Salute You... Don Rogers and I were awed when we heard about some of the 2nd Battalion Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry's history from Cpl. Boucher, who gave us a guided tour of the Kapyong Barracks recently allowing us to videotape the buildings, photos, plaques, trophies, flags and the like on our tour - depicting part of the great story behind this legendary battalion. This came as a result of Don's calling 2-PPCLI and asking if the WAM&VC could videotape at their base in Kenaston Blvd., as part of our Dr. Sigurdson's Legacy project. Warrant Officer Bisson was only too happy to have us come to their facility and arranged for Cpl. Boucher to show us around.

Cpl. Boucher was the best! He is very personable and has a remarkable knowledge of the history of 2-PPCLI. He took us through the entire complex, answering all the questions we had and

highlighted some rather important historical pieces (maps, photos, flags, trophies, commemorating swords, guns, plaques etc.) which underscore the rich history of this battalion.

Don's involvement in the war, made it possible to converse very easily about the different battles, etc. with Cpl. Boucher and I just scurried along behind them as best and as fast as I could, trying to capture the "action" with my videocam.

It was all incredibly interesting to me, because about a hundred years ago, when I was "in" Army Cadets back in Pine Falls where I "grew up"(?), our unit won a trip into the city to stay for a weekend at the Ft. Osbourne Barracks, replete with trips to Lipsett Hall (their gym/pool complex,) the St Charles Shooting Range and a few other eye opening experiences they had arranged for us. Slowly, these memories started drifting back into my mind while Cpl. Boucher was showing us around.

It was a beautiful afternoon and at one junction a small "convoy" of two or three army trucks and a brand new armoured personnel carrier hummed by us on their return from Shilo. It was quite a sight which quickly reminded me of the "business" the 2-PPCLI are engaged in!

2-PPCLI have extended an invitation to us to arrange additional "sessions" like this for us, if we wish, so I trust there will be an opportunity for more of you in the club to participate. We wish there had been one or two more of you with us when Don and I were there. The mistake we made was not taking 30 seconds prior to each one of our "stops" to move into camera position and set up *before* the dialogue commenced between Don and Cpl. Boucher. In trying to play "catch-up", I missed some important details. Remote mics *may* have helped the audio indoors somewhat and wind baffles for the mic would have paid big dividends while we were outside. Tripods would have been too cumbersome and awkward in the hallways.

At any rate, let Don or I know if you are interested in helping to document their "closing" ceremonies, parades, displays, etc. at Kapyong barracks, the Forks and other locations. We'll try to get back to you if we are able to firm up any camera locations, times etc. The events are scheduled for June 18, 19 and 20, 2004. *Cheers, Al Ross, President.*

AMATEUR MOVIE MAKERS ASSOCIATION,

AMMA MONITOR

edited by Mark Levy

The Magic Moments Contest by Joyce Axelrod.

The Magic Moments Contest is about having fun. Preparing for the Magic Moments competition has been the most fun I have had as a videographer. Winning the top prize was just "icing on the cake". If you are a member of AMMA or a club member of AMMA, join in the fun and create a one minute (or less) video and submit it on VHS tape on or before September 1st, 2004. You'll have a chance to be the winner or one of two runner-ups selected by a panel of experienced judges.

Joyce Axelrod, 2004 Magic Moments chairperson.

Here are some comments from past winners:

Creating a complete story in 60 seconds (including titles) is always a welcome challenge, requiring great attention to detail, since every frame counts. I think, when it's done well, a one-minute movie represents the highest form of movie image art.

Mark Levy

I like the challenge of telling a complete story in 60 seconds. Besides it is a lot of fun!

Roger Garretson.

It's a fun challenge, helps teach how to cut to improve and permits the showing of the work of many entrants. The tape of all the entries make for a delightful club program which we all look forward to.

Eph Horowitz

Magic Moments is a great format for amateurs to work in narrative style; you get to do a mini-feature on a minute scale. The challenge of telling a story in one minute is exciting, and the limitations make you really evaluate every shot you make and every cut you use.

Walt Gilmore

The Challenge is of fitting an intelligent story with titles in one minute!

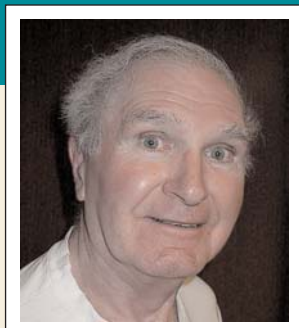
Carol Profy

The challenge is of putting something original, and hopefully funny, together in a minute or less. The Utah Video Club always wants to do one, and that pushes my button.

Jean Frances

You may have an idea that you'd like to develop but it doesn't lend itself to a movie of any length. The idea is only

Continued on page 8



by Trevelyan Beard

A Quick 'n Easy Video

You know how it is - the Club President puts out a call for something - something that's 'not a travelogue.' 'Let's have a scenario, say three minutes long,' he pleads. And so you get to thinking.

I'd been trying at the time to understand James Joyce's book *Ulysses* and, knowing that he, along with so many other intellectual men and women, were alcoholics, I considered, 'Let's make a video actually praising alcoholism! It'll be a change.' Immediately came to mind a few famous alcoholics - Sir John A. MacDonald, Robbie Burns, James Joyce, W.C. Fields, Dick Van Dyke, to name a few.

You see how just the thinking of a theme brings forward ideas. And we haven't yet worked out a plot! You think a little further - the library will

have pictures of all these and more. I'll take my digital still camera up there and shoot them all. So much for the actors.

There will be written stories alongside the pictures - I can reshape these and create a dialog. My mind went to a few dozen empty wine bottles in the basement from the days when I made wine. Maybe these can be used for effect somehow. It's surprising how everything comes together with a hot cup of cocoa, while sitting back in an easy chair. There and then I listed a few parameters:

1. The video will be a mix of stills and video with commentary by myself. The stills will be the major part of the video that should make things easy and quick to complete. It will be a comedy with a twist about alcoholism. The twist is the key to the whole thing.

2. I could make the bottles appear one by one, accumulating as if by magic. Simple to put a bottle in place then run the camera for a second or two, switch off and position another bottle, then run the camera again. I

had fun thinking of another way to produce the same magic. Run the camera continuously and build up the field of bottles as they are positioned one by one. Then in the editing process, delete the frames showing my hand bringing in the new bottles. So simple when you pause to think.

3. I could take a video of myself narrating the dialogue about each alcoholic and this would look good in a small window that could float alongside the still picture of the alcoholic himself. A nice mixture of still photography, live dialog and video (my face).

4. Music or sound effects were given some consideration. I dispensed with music and thought the sound of the bottles being arranged on a concrete floor would be sufficient for sound.

The short video took only a few days to produce and edit. I used Adobe Premier 6 for editing. My camera was a Panasonic EZ 30U three-chip bought in 1998 and the still camera was a Nikon CoolPix 950. The short video won an award and brought a few smiles. ■

CLUB NEWS

Continued from page 7

useful as a one minute movie. Magic Moment allows you to use this material which would otherwise not be used at all.

Norm Otto

I.A.C. THE FILM AND VIDEO INSTITUTE

FILM AND VIDEO MAKER

edited by Garth Hope, LICL.

Tom Hardwick's "Positive IMAGE" Tom answers from his mail box.

Q. I've heard that decreasing the sharpness in the custom preset menu in my VX2000 would not decrease the resolution. Would you explain why there is edge enhancement in video?

A. The original reason for edge enhancement in video has to do with the finite size of the scanning spot in cathode ray tubes (both imaging and

display). This is called the "beam aperture" and edge enhancement is also called "aperture correction." (Note that this has nothing to do with the lens aperture.) If you turn off edge enhancement entirely the image looks soft, even with CCD-based imagers. Edge enhancement effectively increases the abruptness of transition between light and dark areas, so it increases the apparent "sharpness" of an image by making edges less fuzzy. Of course, this doesn't actually add any additional detail to the image that wasn't there to start with, but it can still make a resolution test chart seem to give a slightly higher resolution measurement.

The "sharpness" setting on the custom preset menu simply adjusts the level of edge enhancement and hence doesn't really change resolution. A lower level may create a somewhat more film-like look, but this is a judgement call. In fact, different film emul-

sions differ in the sharpness with which they render edges, something termed "acutance" in photography. To complicate matters further, if you transfer to VHS, which has a bit less than half the horizontal resolution of DV, then you might find that higher edge enhancement makes the picture look better by adding apparent sharpness. (On the other hand, it's not unlikely that the VHS VCR does some edge enhancement on playback. The ideal sharpness setting may be greater for VHS distribution than for DVD. If you do copy VHS tapes you're well advised to go into the VCR's menu and switch the sharpness off. Generally it's referred to as the 'edit' mode, though some machines offer you edit, sharp, soft and normal, just to confuse matters. If you leave it on you can get double the 'sharpness', giving that awful thick black line around objects. ■

NEW

SOUND EFFECTS

S C C A M U S I C L I B R A R Y

More Good News! The SCCA Music Library has just received a donation of fifteen Sound Effects CD's! These Sound Effects consist of three different sets of three CD's (with 100 SFX each) published by Madacy Music Group Inc. of St. Laurent, Quebec, another set of four CD's (with 100 SFX each) from Distributions Madacy Inc., and two CD's (with 75 SFX each) from L.D.M.I., all with the same Box Number address in St. Laurent.

All together these fifteen CD's hold 1,450 Sound Effects, and while they are found on five different collections from the same recording company and we might expect a lot of repetition, that doesn't seem to be the case. There is very little replication of sounds among the fifteen CD's, though we did find a few repeats.

There are many "Spot Effects" with very short times (as short as 1 second) but there are also "ambience" or "atmosphere" effects with times extending to a minute (where most of them are cut), and some approaching 2 minutes. If they aren't long enough, you may have to loop them.

This means that we can make these Sound Effects available to all our Members in Good Standing, *without the need for a deposit on account with the SCCA Music Library!*

There won't be any mailing cost for CD's, and there won't be any need for returns, on time, or ever. Just tell us what sounds you need, and we will email them to you! The short dura-

tion spot effects will be sent as .wav files, and the longer running sounds will be converted to MP3 so that anyone with email, even those with slow, dial-up service, will be able to receive them.

We now have all 1,450 tracks catalogued by name, in a program that allows us to quickly find the CD I.D. and Track Number for every Bugle Call, or Helicopter, or Steam Engine, or Barnyard Animal,

these sound effects constitutes a violation of copyright laws", so please don't ask us to make copies of the CD's for you.

You may be surprised by how much the judicious use of canned sound effects can add to your home video, so give us a try for Thunder and Rain (in the city, in the country, in the woods), boats (steamboats, tugboat, marina, outboard, rowing, sailing) trains ((Diesels, steam, leaving station, going away, or entering station), whales (Sperm, Killer, Humpback), crowds (cheering, applauding, booing, angry, panic stricken, disappointed, satisfied, astonished, happy, disgusted, at the horse track, bullfight, or around a Roulette Wheel), or Polynesian Fertility Chants or War Dance, or Bible reading in Cherokee, or Indians attack-



etc., and the software to extract the Track and convert it to MP3, so just tell us what you want by email, and we will gather together all relevant tracks and email them to you ASAP. We will try to satisfy your requirements the same day, but we too have very busy days, go out of town, and take holidays, so you may have to wait until we can read your email and answer it. But it will certainly be faster than waiting for a CD by Snail Mail!

These CD's now belong to the SCCA, and as a member, they belong to you, so you are a qualified user by definition. However, the CD's carries the message "*These Sound Effects are intended for home and private use only. Any commercial use in whole or in part of*

ing the stagecoach. If you have been disappointed that the sounds of a carnival you videotaped didn't sound much like a carnival, or your hot air balloon made no sound at all, or wind never sounds like wind, or planning a trip to the airport just to record a 707 taking off, then give us a try. It's FREE!

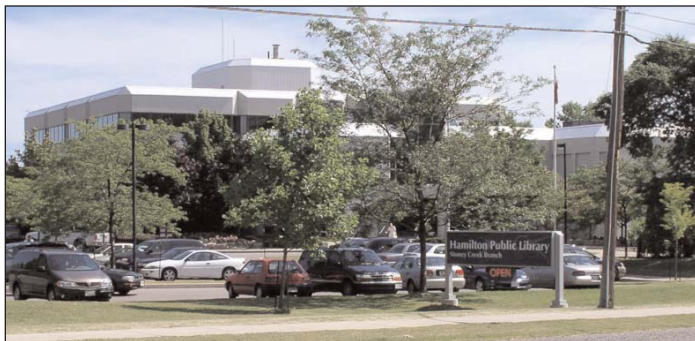
Just email scca@canada.com. Those who don't have access to a computer and email should phone Fred Briggs, 905-662-4406, or write to 3 Wardrobe Avenue S., Stoney Creek, ON, L8G 1R9, and we will see what special arrangements we might be able to make especially for you in your situation. We want all our members to have access to these sound effects. ■



SCCA Annual General Meeting

Presentation of Awards and Winning Videos

The **Annual General Meeting** of the **Society of Canadian Cine Amateurs** will be held on **Friday, October 8th**, in the Council Chamber at the former **Stoney Creek City Hall**. This beautiful new



building was suddenly made redundant when Stoney Creek was forced into the New City of Hamilton, and currently houses several departments of Hamilton City Hall (which didn't need to be located downtown) and a local branch of the Hamilton Public Library. The municipalities forced to submit to annexation have been allowed to



continue to use their own names for postal purposes and proud traditions, and the building now has two very different signs in front of the building, Stoney Creek City Hall and Hamilton Public Library Stoney Creek Branch, which I mention so that those

looking for it won't be confused.

The AGM, with the Presentation of Committee Reports, Elections of Officers, and members' discussion of ques-

tions raised from the floor by Members, will begin at **2:00 PM**, and usually concludes within the hour.

We will then have one or two speakers, not yet finalized, who will hopefully entertain and instruct us on some aspect of our hobby, and a screening of selected old films from the **CIAFF Library**, which has proved very popular in recent years since it was introduced.

We'll adjourn at **5:00 PM** and go to a local restaurant (1 kilometer) for supper, and then reconvene at **7:00 PM** for the **Screening of Winning Videos from the 2004 SCCA Annual Competition**, and the **Presentation of Awards**. We expect to conclude the evening by 10:00 PM.

The maps included here (on the following page so they may be easily read) should make it easy for everyone to find the Stoney Creek City Hall. Those coming from Brantford, Toronto, and Niagara will most likely come via the Queen Elizabeth Highway, and will find it very easy to take Exit #83 from either direction, turn south (away from Lake Ontario) onto Fruitland Road, and turn left at the second traffic light onto Highway #8, heading east. Stoney Creek City Hall is at the intersection of Highway #8 and Jones Road. There is plenty of free parking!

And NO ADMISSION CHARGE!

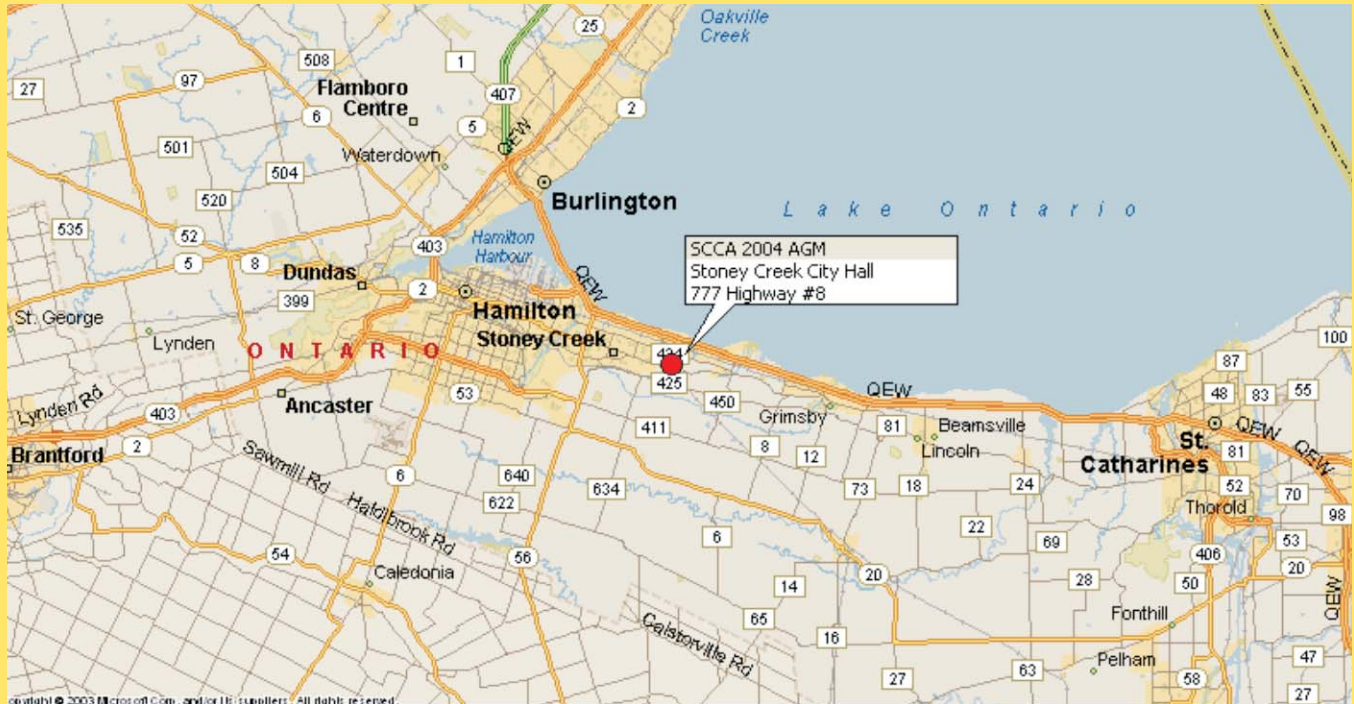


We hope you will be able to attend, but urge all those who can't to **PLEASE MAIL IN YOUR PROXIES**. The SCCA is a Federally Regulated Charity, and can't legally conduct our legally required meeting without a quorum! ■

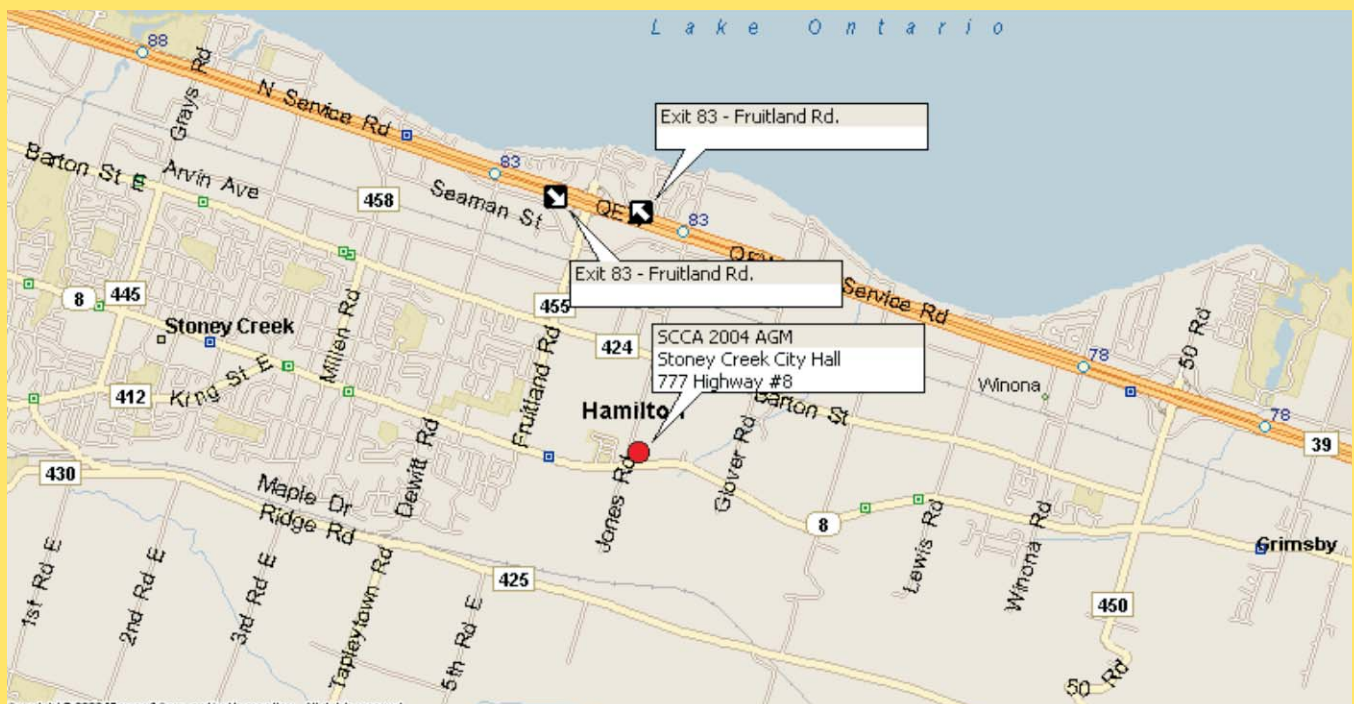




MAPS TO 2004 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING



MICROSOFT STREETS & TRIPS 2004

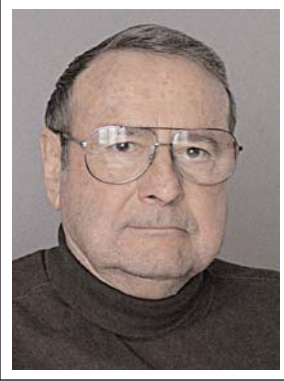


MICROSOFT STREETS & TRIPS 2004

MORE GREAT STUFF FROM THE INTERNET

Safe Surfing

By Thom Speechley



These articles have encouraged you to get creative and discover the amazing amount of useful material out there. The joy of finding that great little utility for your video project on the Internet is especially rewarding when it is free. However I have neglected to take any time to consider a very important aspect of web surfing. I'm talking about the ever-present risks of contracting unwanted viruses, worms or spy-ware and, security in general. So the true cost of those free materials is the need for extra vigilance.

Most viruses and worms are delivered via e-mail and everyone I am sure is aware of the basic rules regarding mail: Install a reliable anti-virus program and up-date it at least once a week. NEVER open an unsolicited or unexpected attachment, even if you recognize the sender. Worms, which hijack someone's address book, replicate and re-mail themselves randomly. They can look perfectly innocent. That is why it is imperative to keep your anti-virus software up-to-date. Remember also that you don't have to open an attachment to activate a virus. Simply opening the message will release certain types. If using MS "Outlook Express", disable the preview pane. (The bottom window on the screen.) That way you can delete any suspicious items without opening them.

Web 'browsing' is a little different story. Historically, there has been little danger in simply surfing the net unless you got careless and downloaded an infected piece of software. Recently, however, threats are appearing which originate at websites or are attached to "pop-up" windows, which

open while you are visiting a site. These are usually innocuous "spy-ware", which install themselves on your hard drive and monitor your surfing habits. The information they gather is sent back to their originators and used to compile mass mailing lists for "spam". Some of the more aggressive varieties make entries in your registry, the "command center" of your operating system, and run programs every time you start your computer. All these types of spyware consume valuable computer resources, a critical consideration when processing video files and this can make your computer's performance sluggish or cause dropped frames while capturing from your video source.

Obviously the threat of any problem is directly related to the amount of time you are "on line". Dial-up users must only be on guard while they are connected to their server. Broadband and cable connections are active all the time your computer is on. Extra vigilance is needed.

Here are a few suggestions for coping with this growing challenge.

Antivirus Program - I must assume that everyone with an internet connection has installed a program to intercept and eliminate viruses from any source. There are many free or 'limited' resource packages out there but I recommend purchasing a commercial program, which comes with free update service. Such service is usually renewable on a yearly basis and it is not necessary to buy a new package every twelve months. Top names are:

Purchase Free

Norton (Symantec)
Avast 4 (home computer version)
McAfee
AVG (probably most popular freebie)
PC-cillin (Trend Micro)
Bitdefender 7 (home version)
Sophos
Panda

There are also free on-line services, which will scan your system remotely. Symantec and Bitdefender provide such a service. 'Windowsecurity.com' will scan specifically for "Trojans", actual programs which may be on your computer. These bits of software look like legitimate utilities or games but actually conceal a nasty virus. There was a recent report of a trojan being transported and activated from a pop-up window. It installed itself in a computer and began recording keystrokes in an attempt to decrypt passwords in the network of a financial institution.

Firewall - Surfing is an interactive function. Instructions go out from your keyboard and information (data) comes back up the wire onto your hard drive. Both antivirus software and firewalls are configurable programs which help you to control exactly what kind of data gets onto your drive. A firewall differs from an antivirus program mainly in its ability to detect an uninvited visitor (a 'hacker') who is trying to gain access to your system. Obviously then, it makes sense to have both types of protection installed. Major antivirus providers also sell firewall software. It has been suggested that buying both from the same manufacturer may avoid possible conflicts between the functions. For example the firewall may not immediately allow the antivirus program to automatically update itself. However you can configure both programs to permit certain other programs to access the internet without asking for permission. Setting up these rules and insuring that both services are up-to-date are essential for maximum protection.

Anti-Spyware - This is a relatively new problem and is more of a nuisance than a real threat. I should qualify that last statement by stating that it depends on how much you value your privacy. Historically, the only information "swapped" between you and the server were cookies, those

harmless text files which helped speed up your surfing by leaving a trail of your previous activities. Using this same route, advertisers and hustlers are now installing actual programs which monitor all your surfing activities. Some protection can be programmed into your firewall as well as internet options in your browser. You will still need a utility to track down and remove unwanted spyware, especially those leaving tracks in your registry.

All Available in Free Versions

Spy Bot - Search and Destroy
(Patrick M. Kolla)
AdAware (Lavasoft)
Spysweeper (spysweeper.com)
XoftSpy (paretlogic.com)

I use both AdAware and SpyBot but find AdAware is updated most frequently. This sneaky spyware is sometimes hidden in a program you have actually purchased. I recently downloaded an apparently "free" system checker and when I realized that I would have to pay to get it to work, I uninstalled it, with some difficulty. I then discovered that it had left behind another program called "Spyware Nuker". This, masquerading as a spyware removal utility, is actually just another spyware. I exposed it with SpyBot and immediately removed it.

Anti Spam and Pop-Up utilities -

There are numerous programs available to control or block "spam" or any unwanted mail. These are easily integrated with your e-mail system. To eliminate the risks, and annoyance, associated with "pop-up" windows while surfing, there are also many small utilities available. It is necessary to develop an understanding of how each works because you will be required to configure them so that you get the needed protection without giving up certain valuable features in your system. You can learn a lot by reviewing the security and privacy options for both your e-mail program and your browser. In fact, you may be perfectly satisfied with those options and there may be no need to install

additional programs.

There are a few other areas you might investigate if you are especially concerned. One is to determine how many of the more complex features of your browser you need. For instance, Internet Explorer supports most Java, xml and dynamic html features. These are the "languages" which create some animation, special screen effects and interactivity with the web page you are visiting. Some sources suggest that learning how to manage or disable these features removes several points of entry for both viruses and spyware. Unfortunately I can't go into that subject here.

As noted previously, broadband and cable users are most vulnerable since their internet connection is live even if the user is not actively surfing. A firewall usually has a switch to "stop all internet activity" and some modems (your physical link to the net) have a "stand by" button. In both cases you can be computing without worrying about what's coming in the back door and you can easily reconnect when you are ready to check your mail.

Another popular way to minimize problems is to simply stop using Internet Explorer. Microsoft is continually berated for failure to patch holes or for creating new back door points of entry for malicious invasions. Proponents of alternatives such as "Opera", "Amaya", "Mozilla" claim a much lower level of frustration. Or, you can also abandon Windows and switch to the "Linux" operating system with, supposedly, the same benefits.

And finally, although I hate to admit it, those smug Mac owners have a much lower risk level **at this time**. The Mac OS is not inherently less susceptible to invasion but to date only about 50 Mac viruses exist compared with an estimated 70,000 for Windows. And besides, the Mac has that funky little CPU case.

Funky b. Outlandishly vulgar or eccentric in a humorous or tongue-in-cheek manner; campy
American Heritage Dictionary ■

President's Message
Continued from page 3

Without a Quorum, an Annual General Meeting cannot be held, and it is a MANDATORY REQUIREMENT OF THE GOVERNMENT OF CANADA! Without it, we would lose our Charter! PLEASE DO THIS NOW!

3. Contribute an article to PANORAMA. Can you write a 1 to 3-page test report, software or equipment evaluation, advice on some aspect of video making, article on digital photography, profile of an SCCA Member, report on a club activity, or opinion piece on any film or video making related subject? If we could just get someone in every club to take on the responsibility of providing two articles a year from that club and twisting a club member's arm to write it, we could have 5 articles, 5 to 15 pages every month, written by club members. The Editorial Committee would love to have articles from which to choose. Please don't wait to be asked. Just start doing it! As it is now, Joan and Joe Bochsler are very disappointed that not one person has responded to their plea in the Spring Issue for feedback about what you are now getting in PANORAMA.
4. Start entering the SCCA Annual Competition and the CIAFF. As it is now, only a few members enter the SCCA Competition, and very, very few SCCA Members enter the CIAFF. We wish the Competition Chairman of every club would personally encourage each member of their club to enter the best one or two videos he or she has made each year into the SCCA Competition. "Personally" doesn't mean an announcement to the assemblage at a regular meeting, because we already know that doesn't work! "Personally" means one-on-one, on a first name basis, face-to-face during the coffee break or over the telephone on a special call, by a Competition Chairman who knows the names of the video or videos they are encouraging the member to submit. And the Competition Chairman should have the Entry Forms needed, and be prepared to help the member fill out the forms, and maybe even collect the video and entry fee and mail it in for the member. That works! The club

Continued on page 15

"Mirramid"

Experimental 360° Digital Video Capture & Projection System

Kendra E. Hayes

New York State University at Buffalo Graduate Architecture Studio Project



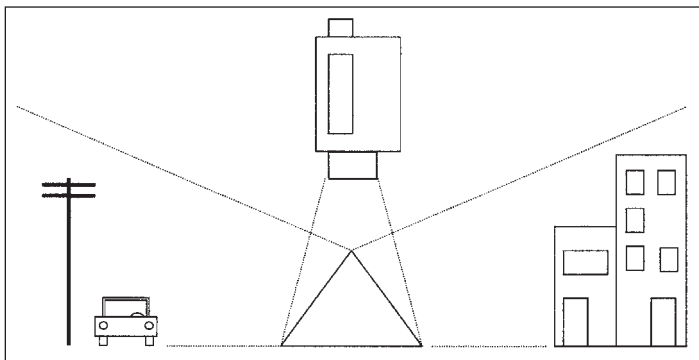
The objective of my fall graduate studio architecture class at the University of Buffalo was to use new media through video to capture and convey the use of space in architecture.

My project involved capturing the use of space over time in major street intersections in downtown Buffalo. Humans temporarily inhabit intersections, while driving or riding in a car or strolling along the sidewalk.

Since location and time of day makes a big difference in the population and use of space, the challenge was how to video tape all the action that takes place in an intersection over time and to present it back to an audience in an understandable manner.

I initially tested video taping intersections with multiple cameras, but it was hard to synchronize playing all the tapes back at the same time and to orient the audience as to what they were seeing on four different screens.

After some thought my Dad and I came up with the idea of trying to capture and project the video in a continuous 360 degree field of view, but with just one camera. The original concept was to mount a reflective cone in front of the camera lens to capture the images of the surroundings as illustrated in the figure below.

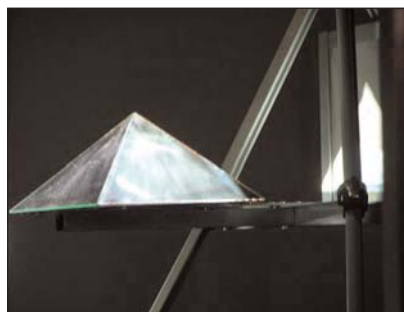


By mounting the same reflective cone in front of a video projector, the images could be reprojected onto a cylindrical screen that sits on a tabletop. The audience could walk around the table to view the scene from different angles.

After many experiments with different types of reflective materials including metal, plastic, Mylar, and auto-

mobile mirror repair kits, it became obvious that creating a high quality conical mirror would be very difficult and expensive.

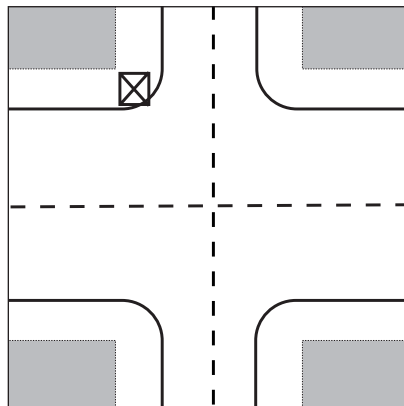
An alternative solution was to create a four sided pyramid from commercial / household mirrors. The pitch or slope of the mirrored sides would control the field of



view. If the slope was very steep the camera would "see" a lot of ground. If the slope was very shallow, the camera would record the tops of buildings and more sky.

The triangular facets were sized and cut to create a 45 degree slope to maximize the amount of eye level footage.

The "mirramid" was mounted on a bracket designed to fit the tripod being used not only to capture the video but for projection purposes as well. The camera was mounted on the arm of the tripod and directly positioned over the center of the "mirramid". A counter weight had to be used to balance the opposite leg of the tripod from the added weight of the equipment.



The desire to capture footage from the center of the busy intersections was soon dampened by risk to life and limb. An alternative safer location was selected on one of the intersection's corners as close to the street curb as possible. This vantage point was consistent with all the

other intersections captures to create a reference point for the viewer.

The tripod was positioned in such a way that each side of the mirror captured a different traffic pattern. Two sides of the mirramid captured pedestrian foot traffic from the sidewalk while the other two sides captured vehicular traffic.

Because the camera captures four distinct views simultaneously on the same frame of tape, the playback pro-

cedure uses the same tripod configuration to bounce the images off the mirramid onto 4 portable screens.



The four screens, made of white cloth stretched across aluminum frames, were made of different sizes to represent the different scale of activity which took place throughout all the intersections. The screens were then positioned at different distances from the projector to create a sense of scale for the viewer of the intersection's space being projected.

Since light can penetrate the translucent cloth material, the viewers can walk and move around the display to see the images from all sides of the screens, thus experience



the space of the intersections from different angles and views.

My professor, Omar Khan, was very pleased with my project's novel approach and he invited several instructors from the University Film and Video department for my final presentation and critique. ■

CIAFF REPORT

The CIAFF Submission of Entries closed June 30th, with almost exactly the same number of entries as last year. The Judging has all been arranged, and will take place while this issue of PANORAMA is at the printer's, so we won't be able to notify the winners until after you read this.

The new award introduced last year (the Spinning Crystal Globe) was enthusiastically praised by recipients. One individual, an Amateur who proudly displays photos of all his many awards on his webpage, has described it as the most beautiful he has ever seen, and another, an Independent who took a second place, and thus a certificate, has offered to purchase a Second Place Award from us. (There are video competitions for professionals in which all winners receive certificates, and can purchase trophies for an additional fee.) When we find a good thing, we know enough to stick with it.

Similarly, the Screening and Presentation of Awards held at the National Film Board Theatre in downtown Toronto last year was so successful, and the technical facilities so good that we have again booked that site. Several entrants attended the evening

(some from hundreds of miles away) and told us that the CIAFF Awards Presentation was the best they had ever seen for any film or video competition. But we aren't resting on our laurels: we plan to improve it this year!

Three screenings are planned, with a different selection of videos at each showing, and with a speaker or speakers at each session. The National Film Board Theatre has been booked for Friday evening, October 29th, and Saturday afternoon and evening on the 30th. An admission fee of approximately \$10 will be charged at each show to help cover the rental fees and associated costs.

Unfortunately, the video programs and speakers can't be chosen until the judging is completed, but we plan to post more information on the CIAFF.org website as it develops. The screenings will be well publicized through the facilities of the NFB, so we expect to fill the theatre to its capacity at each session. We hope that many of the sponsoring organization will be in attendance, and that means YOU, the members of the SCCA! But please remember that you will be competing for a limited number of seats with the film making students in the Toronto area, the large coterie of professional film and video makers in Toronto, supporting members of the NFB, and the general public, and we expect the turnout will attract the

notice of future supporters from the video industry and force migration to a more commodious venue in 2005.

So mark the dates on your calendar, make plans now to attend, watch CIAFF.org as the program develops, and remember that our present plans are subject to change as we approach the big day. ■

President's Message *Continued from page 13*

Competition Chairman should also see to it that the club always enters a video in the Intercities Assigned Subject Competition, and another, either a club project or the best video of the year, in the Garlick Trophy Contest.

5. One more! Please sign up a minimum of one new member for the SCCA. We currently have 68 Individual, Family, Life and Honourary Members (though not all in good standing), but many of the Honourary Members and most of the Life Members are no longer active. Nevertheless, if the rest of us can sign up one new member this year, and a few sign up two, we could easily add **50 NEW MEMBERS!** It can be done, I know, because I sign up several every year!

So let's all pull together and get this thing moving again! ■

HOT LINKS

By Fred Briggs

DebugMode

WinMorph & Wax

The SCCA Links Page now has 1928 Links, and still climbing, although the rate of ascent has diminished considerably. I hope you are having as much fun exploring them as I am!

If you look under Special Effects (under Editing Equipment & Software > Special Effects) and count down eleven titles (someday I hope to learn how to alphabetize these listings) your eyes will catch the word FREE. The site is DebugMode, which is a little scary to anyone who knows enough to get the inference, and yes, it is a website put up by a real computer hacker. There are three definitions of hacker:

- 1: someone who plays golf poorly
- 2: a programmer for whom computing is its own reward; may enjoy the challenge of breaking into other computers
- 3: one who works hard at boring tasks [syn: hack, drudge]

I use *hacker* here in its best sense: *a programmer for whom computing is its own reward*. Satish Kumar attended ANNA University in Chennai, India, spent a couple of years as a Software Engineer at Motorola India Electronics Ltd. in Bangalore, and is currently a Research Engineer with Togabe Technologies Inc. in the U.S., but all the software offered on this site is free, arranged roughly in order from the most to the least interesting to us. I expect you will want to stay away from the DisC Decompilation Wizard and the Image Compression Toolbox. The Frameserver is "a plugin for NLEs enabling them to export their timeline audio/video data outside so that other applications can use the timeline directly as input", and you probably won't need that unless you plan to write your own video editing programs, although we might have a use for it in this column in the next issue!

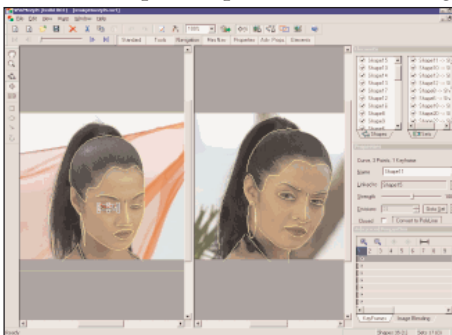
Wink Tutorial/Presentation Creator is "primarily aimed at creating tutorials on how to use software (like a tutor for MS-Word/Excel etc)". This leaves Number 1 and Number 3 for us!

WinMorph Morphing Editor

is for still pictures or video, and allows you to *warp* a picture, or to *morph* it into another. If you manipulated the Mona Lisa to broaden her smile by pulling the corners up, or to make her wink, that would be warping. If you changed from Mona Lisa to Leonardo da Vinci, not with a dissolve but by moving her features till they matched his, to illustrate the theory that Leonardo was his own model for the picture, you would be morphing from one picture to another.

You accomplish warping and morphing by drawing lines (on the image or video) around features. To warp you draw the outline of two smiles, for example, on the same picture, and then *associate* them. In morphing you would associate the lines around the features on the one picture with corresponding drawings on the other picture.

If you are working in video there is another step. If a person was turning



his head you would draw the lines on two different frames, called *key frames*, and the program will interpolate all the frames in between.

There are several tools provided to

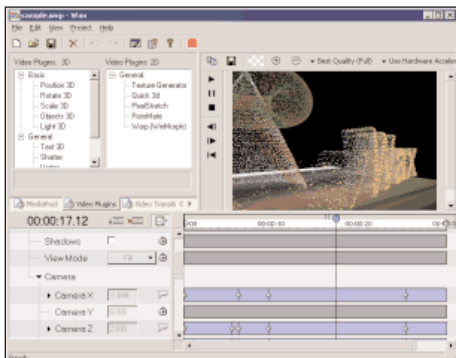
make this all easier, and a set of very complete and well written instructions in a User's Guide you can download as a PDF File. The program can be used as a standalone, or as a plug-in for Adobe Premiere or Vegas Video. It also works as a plug-in for Wax.

Wax is the other program of interest on this site. Satish describes it as "a 2D and 3D special effects and compositing software, focusing on providing both high speed and high quality special effects and compositing tools". It, too, can be run as a standalone program, or integrated with Vegas Video, Adobe Premiere 6 (or above) or Premiere Pro (plus others all the time), as a plug-in. Actually, there are two plug-ins; one in Filters and one in Transitions.

This program is not intuitive, at least it wasn't for me, so you will definitely need to download the User's Guide. The special effects are weird and wonderful and definitely not the sort of things you will find in your editing program. They include 3D objects, onto which you *map* video. These object can be moved, rotated, and/or scaled, so you can *map* a map of the world onto a sphere, rotating and travelling across a field of stars, drawing nearer or receding from the viewer, or a cube tumbling through space, with a different video on each face. You can place a light in 3D space, as a spot illuminating just one item, or as a flood, and produce shadows. You can explode or implode any 3D object, and control the fragment size, the force behind them, the gravity effects, and rotation of the fragments, or create a vortex for sci-fi black holes, whirlpools, etc. You can load models created in 3D Studio, Quake, and other programs.

There is a powerful Texture Generator, and you can stretch or

smear a range of pixels in a video frame. Does your editing software allow you to Rotoscope, or paint on the video? And we shouldn't overlook the Particle Generator. This is how you create fog, smoke, clouds, fire, rain, etc., and you have control over colour, blend, the way the particles are created, emitted, and decayed or destroyed, as well as exactly where the particles come from (extremely important for placing flames exactly where you want them!)



There's also a 3D Text Generator which lets you use any font on your computer and control size, length, bevel faces and size, and colours and styles for the front, back, side, and bevels for selected letters or all of the title. The Warp and Morph functions from WinMorph are also available as plug-ins in Wax, and you can also import DirectX and Windows Movie Maker Plug-ins and Transitions, as well as VirtualDub Filters.

There will be more about VirtualDub and its Filters in the next Hot Links in the Autumn Issue of PANORAMA. If tests I'm planning in the next three months work as well as I hope, I'll be presenting you with a Killer Application for Home Video by using some of the VirtualDub Filters with the Wax Plug-in, and possibly using Debug's FrameServer to let you use the many features of VirtualDub for DV AVI files, even though they are not normally supported by VirtualDub.

Meanwhile, go to the DebugMode website (<http://s-c-c-a.ca> > LINKS > Special Effects > DebugMode) and download the WinMorph and Wax programs and User's Guides, and have yourself a whale of a time, all Free, courtesy of Satish Kumar, hacker *par excellence*. ■

THE ABC's of DVD's

By Adrian W. Robertson

Split Lake, Manitoba

Submitted by his mother, Jeanette Robertson

"One hundred years or more", the experts all told us. Compact Discs (CDs) were supposed to last forever and now Digital Video Discs (DVD's) share that myth. Will you replace your tapes, video or audio with discs because they will last longer? Let's look into this and see where it goes.

The use of videotape started back in 1953, when the deck was a reel-to-reel, costing in the vicinity of \$50,000. Audiotape of course predates that. Many of the still existing tapes are in good condition even now over 50 years later. For example, my father, Wallace, has an audio tape recording of his Dad on an old reel-to-reel. This piece is definitely older than I am. That is over 33 years ago. The quality is still good.

When we look at CD's we find that each manufacturer has their own form of quality control: there is no set standard.

A recordable CD is composed of five layers: The clear polycarbonate plastic layer at the bottom, a layer of dye, a reflective layer, a thin acrylic, and the label. When the CD is recorded on, (the young generation calls this process "burning") the laser in the recorder heats up the dye layer and creates "bumps and pits" within it. This is just like the bumps and pits in a record groove, but in a digital format, and not nearly as large.

Many people believe that injury to the bottom layer is the only thing that can render a CD inoperable. This is not so. Depending on the dye used it can degrade over time: this is now known as "CD rot". The dye can decay because of light or age, depending on its chemical composition. Some people even say this could be from the edges of the disc not being properly sealed, allowing air to get in.

The Dutch magazine PC-Active conducted a test and the results

were published on August 19th, 2003. It appears that they picked thirty different CDs in 2001, "Burned" the data on to them and for two years they were "kept in the original packing in a closed cupboard" (translated online from original quote). After twenty months much of the data had been rendered unreadable. At <http://www.cdfreaks.com/news/7751> a translation of the original articles says, "These included discs of well known and lesser known manufacturers.

It is presumed that CD-R's are good for at least 10 years. Some manufacturers even claim that their CD-R's will last up to a century! From our tests it's concluded however that there is a lot of junk on the market. We came across CD-R's that should never have been released to the market. It's completely unacceptable that CD-R's become unusable in less than two years." The original Dutch article is at:

<http://www.pc-active.nl/toonArtikel.asp?artikelID=508>

One other problem that can occur with CDs is a separation of the layers, however this appears to happen only rarely.

While damage can occur to the bottom layer this can usually be fixed with any of a number of CD/DVD scratch repair kits on the market. Essentially, one is cleaning the disc and filling in the scratch with a form of wax. (If anyone has or is willing to test this out, let me know if "Pledge" works.) Damaging the side with the label is strangely more devastating to the CD; this is because the reflective and dye layers are closer to that surface than the bottom.

Professionally cut CDs are far more reliable because they are pressed just like the old-fashioned vinyl records.

All the above applies to DVD construction as well. ■

Annual Festival of Non Commercial Videomakers

September 23-26, 2004

Victoria B.C.



by Mary Cosgrove

Imagine a beautiful harbor, some of the most picturesque scenery in North America, friendly people, and a video festival that is superb. Now, picture the **Harbour Towers Hotel** located a block from the harbour, within walking distance of most of the highlights of Victoria, including the Parliament House, the Empress Hotel, and scores of other attractions, and you now have an idea of what awaits you at the video festival hosted by the **Amateur Movie Makers Association (AMMA)**, **American Motion Picture Society (AMPS)** and the **Ten Best of the West (TBW)**. Attendance is open to all individuals with an interest in amateur video and film making (not just AMMA Members and Contest Entrants), and that definitely includes you!



The festival will be held from **September 23rd to 26th, 2004** at **Harbour Towers Hotel**. The program includes viewing the winning video productions from the three host sponsors, speakers to entertain and enlighten us, and camaraderie among U.S. and Canadian amateur video makers.

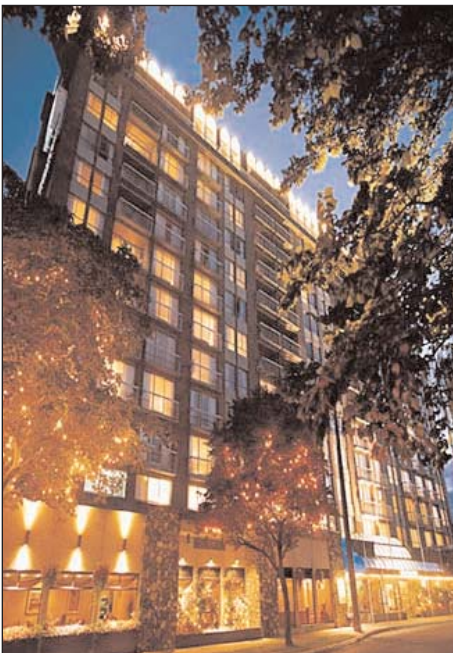
The preliminary schedule of events includes presentations by the following:

Chet Davis - "Audio Applications in Video Production"

Wally Shaw - "How Dinosaurs Made Movies B.C."

Ned Cordery - "Amateur vs. Independent"

David Cooperstone - Professional Home Movies, How to Incorporate Professional Gear and Techniques into Home Movies"



No visit to Victoria would be complete without a short trip to Butchart Gardens, one of the most spectacular gardens in the world! Or travel up the coast of Vancouver Island to see the frolicking whales, birds and magnificent scenery. Perhaps an afternoon tea at the historic Empress Hotel will attract you.



For more information and a registration form please contact the
Registration Chairperson: Mary Cosgrove,
PO Box 793, Niagara Falls, ON L2E 6V6 • Telephone: 905-356-6865

You are invited to join with the members of the AMMA and entrants in the AMPS and TBW Contests and help make this a great festival in Victoria. The **Registration Fee** is C\$28, C\$35 after August 15th, and the Saturday Evening Banquet is C\$35 per person. Registrations close September 8th. The Convention Room Rate at the Harbour Towers Hotel is C\$135 (+ Tax) for single or double occupancy.

MEMBERSHIP FEES; June 1st 2004 to May 31st, 2005

Class "A" (voting)

GROUP Membership(Clubs)	\$.075 per member -- Min. \$20 ____ members on April 30, 2004	
INDIVIDUAL Membership . . .(Repeat)	\$ 30.00 per year	
	(First time ever) . . . \$ 20.00 first year only	
FAMILY Membership(Repeat)	\$ 35.00 per year	
	(First time ever) . . . \$ 25.00 first year only	
LIFE Membership	\$ 600.00	
SUSTAINING Membership . . .donation of	\$ 100.00 per year or more	(Tax receipts issued
PATRON of the SCCAdonation of	\$ 500.00 per year or more	for all donations)

Class "B" (non-voting)

STUDENT Membership	\$ 15.00 per year	Age ____ School ____
ORGANIZATIONAL Membership	\$ 30.00 per year	
INDUSTRIAL Membership	\$ 50.00 per year	
<u>Special Donation to SCCA</u>	\$??? .00	(Tax receipts issued for ALL donations)

Harold's Tips

by Harold Cosgrove

1. To record ambient sound in a windy location, lay your microphone on the ground. You will still get the ambience but with much less wind noise. Use an omni-directional mike, they are less sensitive to wind noise than directional units.
2. Since most camcorders now have "internal focus" (they don't rotate) it is a good idea to keep a polarizing filter screwed to the front of your camcorder lens at all times. Not only does it protect the lens surface but it is instantly available to add contrast to the sky or eliminate unwanted reflection like the shine from a bald head or the ability to see fish clearly under water.
3. Recording good live sound in a home or echo type environment can be quite difficult because hard walls bounce the sound waves all around the room. Here are two easy solutions:- In the home place your microphone in the entrance to a closet filled with hanging clothing. If a similar environment is not available take two pieces of cardboard or other similar stiff materials and cover one side with heavy soft plastic foam. Stand the pieces up to form a "v" shape with the foam side toward the speaker, place your mike close to the "v" hinge and position yourself so you are speaking into the "v". The sound waves are then trapped in the "v" area eliminating any echo.



The Last Word...

Don't make excuses about not getting to our Annual General Meeting, just come and enjoy the day. Stoney Creek is a fascinating place, full of life and history. I think it would be worth the trip just to see the building itself. It's quite a memorable place.

In our neighbourhood we've had a big change. Several neighbours have moved away after living here for decades. We began to wonder was it something we did or said that caused this. Probably not. But we're making videos of the changes - a form of preserving local history. A young family now lives in an older home that is supposed to have a resident ghost. We'll keep the video camera handy just in case.

Summer happened finally, and I have a farmer's tan to prove it. Our garden is blooming and that's worth catching on video as well. We have to keep as much as we can of this wonderful summer to get us through the cold that is yet to come. That's where video can really help.

It's almost time to get ready for the fall fairs everywhere in Canada. Our local fair gives prizes for the best videos and also allows free access for participating videographers.

Let's enjoy this sunny season either at home or away. Just remember to take the video equipment with you. That would be the best way to record summer events, and maybe feel even warmer in the winter. ■

See you at the A.G.M.

Joan Bochsler, Editor.



MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION & RENEWAL

MEMBER INFORMATION *Please print clearly*

SCCA:

Classification

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____ Society Honours: _____

Address 1: _____ City: _____ Prov./State _____

Postal Code: _____ Ctry: _____ Area Code#: _____ Home#: _____ Work#: _____ Fax#: _____

Member of Club: _____ E-mail: _____

YES _ Please give my address to Visual Convergence so that I may receive a free subscription

NO! _ Do not give my name and address to Visual Convergence.

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