

## The West Michigan Film & Video Alliance presents first professional development seminar: "HD, HDV & New Digital Technologies"

The West Michigan Film & Video Alliance (WMFVA) welcomed more than 30 participants to the first professional development seminar, "HD, HDV & New Digital Technologies," on Saturday, March 19, 2005, 10:00 a.m.- 3:00 p.m. at the DeVos Communication Center on the Calvin College Campus. "Our commitment is to grow and expand our film and video production community," said WMFVA Professional Development Co-Chair Ed deJong, who also presented at the day long event. "We're bringing together professionals who use the new digital cameras to share what we've learned about these technologies. At one time or another, we pretty much end up working together; there's more strength in working as a team than as competitors." The crowd of professionals from as far north as Muskegon and south as Kalamazoo wanted to hear from users, not vendors, about the strong points of the new digital camera technologies.

**John Grooters**, Holland-based producer/director/owner of three companies: **Grooters Productions**, [www.grootersproductions.com](http://www.grootersproductions.com), **Angelhouse Media**, [www.angelhousemedia.com](http://www.angelhousemedia.com) and **Extraordinary Images.Net**, [www.extraordinaryimages.net](http://www.extraordinaryimages.net) has been in business for more than 20 years. He has written and produced documentaries, industrials, short films, commercials, and promotions for more than a decade, serving as writer, cinematographer, and editor. Among many honors John has received 25 Telly Awards, six Communicator Awards, and the National Religious Broadcasters Convention's 2002 "New Producer of the Year" award. Grooters told the crowd about his new passion, the Panasonic Varicam. Grooters, originally a Sony Cine Alta fan, converted to the Panasonic product because it's lighter, about \$25,000 cheaper, and duplicates the warm color tones he wants.

**Jeff Gural**, editor/ videographer/producer/owner of **NorthWind Productions** in West Olive, MI, specializes in documentary-style production. He shoots with a Sony DVCAM DSR-300 and the new Sony HVR-Z1U pro HDV camcorder, and edits in Final Cut Pro HD. In ten years in the video industry, Jeff has shot, edited, and produced a nationally-aired PBS series and has won numerous awards for shooting and editing, including a Cine Golden Eagle and multiple MCA-I Golden Reels. He and **Edwin de Jong**, Grand Rapids director of photography/senior producer/owner of **Visual EdJ Productions, Inc.** [www.visualedj.com](http://www.visualedj.com), presented the Sony-lovers' perspective about their respective cameras. In addition to

Aegis and Telly awards, Ed shot for "Mackenzie Grace," a 2004 Emmy-winning Discovery Channel segment. Mr. de Jong recently began using a Sony HDR-FX1 HDV camcorder for an extensive documentary project. He edits in Final Cut Pro HD, authors in DVD Studio Pro, and is a self-professed "firewire junkie." The pair demonstrated the strong suits of the smaller Sony professional cameras that cost around \$5,000 apiece, and produce eye-popping results.

**Thom Bell**, owner of **Bell Production Services**, is also located in Grand Rapids, Michigan. **Bell** is an independent producer/videographer and a 25+ year veteran of the format wars, beginning with half-inch reel-to-reel and moving through ¾", 1-inch C type, Beta, 16 & 35mm film, and now the new DV tools. His Grand Rapids company, **Bell Production Services, Inc.**, does mostly corporate work. His other venture, Heirloom Video ([www.heirloom.tv](http://www.heirloom.tv)), does long form personal documentaries for families and uses DV technology exclusively. Bell argued for the Canon XL-2 mini-DV camcorder, based on its pristine, crisp images maintained even through three or four generations of transfer. He also loves the ability to change lenses, giving huge variety in angles, especially close-ups. Bell predicted the camera, the last semi-pro video camera to use a form of videotape, wouldn't be on the market much longer.

When all is said and done, however, all presenters agreed that each of the cameras offers a different tool for a different need.

**The next WMFVA seminars are scheduled as follows:**

Sat. May 7 - WMFVA SEMINAR "Acting for the Camera" 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.. Register by May 5.

Sat. Aug. 27 - WMFVA SEMINAR "The Role of Producer & the Business of Independent Filmmaking" 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.. Register by Aug. 12.

Sat. Oct. 15 - WMFVA SEMINAR "The Art and Craft of Screenwriting" 10:00 a.m.- 3:00 pm Register by Oct. 1

Lunch is included in all seminars. Seminar locations and registration fees will be announced on the Alliance web site [www.wmfva.org](http://www.wmfva.org) at a later date.

**Payment is due at registration.**

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