

The Alliance July 2005

Monthly eNewsletter from the West Michigan Film Video Alliance



Ed deJong (right), WMFVA Vice-Chair & Co-Chair for Professional Development on location in Juarez, Mexico with Austin (TX) sound tech Rick Kern.

Letter from the Board of Directors

So you want to work (more) in film . . .

. . . well, there is no simpler, less expensive, or immediate way to spread the word about your talent and particular crew skills than getting yourself listed in the Michigan Production Guide, the official directory of the Michigan Film Office in Lansing. The printed version of the Michigan Production Guide, together with the online directory is the main reference tool that Michigan film commissioner Janet Lockwood uses in her referrals for crew requests that come to her office from producers all over the country (check out the online directory at <http://198.109.122.30/MichiganFilmOffice/Search.aspx>.)

The Michigan Film Office is publishing an updated print edition this fall; the online directory can be updated any time. The deadline for submissions and updates is Friday, July 29, 2005, **so don't delay!** For \$10 per category, you can get your name, contact information, services offered, and credits listed in the book and on the state website. There are literally dozens of categories in this directory--just figure out where you can plug in. Even if the only thing you've ever done on a film is P.A.--there's a category for that! Get your name in the book!! Be sure to list WMFVA in the "Affiliation" box.

Not only will producers in Michigan and beyond easily find out what skills you can bring to a project, but the more of us that get listed the better we can demonstrate that hey, West Michigan DOES have the tools, the talent, and the experience to work on television and film projects.

Go online to HYPERLINK

<http://www.michigan.gov/filmoffice> and start the process there or call 800-477-3456 or email HYPERLINK "mailto:jllockwood@mi.gov" jllockwood@mi.gov. Do it TODAY!

Ed de Jong owns Visual EdJ Productions in Grand Rapids. He just wrapped production for the HDV documentary "Communities First" which involved shooting urban community development projects in Atlanta, Chattanooga, Jersey City, Chicago, Santa Ana, Los Angeles, El Paso, Grand Rapids, and Juarez, Mexico. Ed will spend the rest of the summer editing 30+ hours of footage!



**What's
the
Future
Look Like
for the
WMFVA?**

Why Guess?

WMFVA Leadership Retreat All MEMBERS INVITED!

The WMFVA Board of Directors cordially invites all members to attend the first annual Leadership Retreat dedicated to strategic planning for the future of the Alliance to benefit our membership. We are very honored that Susan Shannon, City of Grand Rapids Economic Development Officer, will facilitate this process. We'll look at where we've been, figure out where we are, and look to the future to say where we want to be--next year, five years from now, and beyond! If you want a voice in creating the future of filmmaking in West Michigan, please join us!

**Saturday, AUGUST 13, 2005
Grand Valley State University, Room TBA
9 AM to 5 PM (TENTATIVE)**

Structure for the day is still under development. If we go all day, we are looking at large group discussion in the morning, followed by potluck lunch at noon. Strategy team breakout groups in the afternoon, and large group sharing of results to wind up the day. Please bring a dish to pass or brown bag it. RSVP to Jax Baker Jax@wmfva.org.

WMFVA Sponsors New GR Screenwriters Group

The Grand Rapids Screenwriting Group officially kicked off with its first meeting on June 16th. Eight active West Michigan screenwriters have attended two meetings so far. The group has already shown its value, spawning many ideas and encouraging screenwriters in the area to finish those scripts and get them into the hands of producers and directors. Great movies start with great scripts.

The next meeting is July 12th from 7-9 PM, location TBA. To get more information, email Chris Randall at chris@fulvew.com. Check the WMFVA website for updates as well. - Chris Randall

WMFVA Member Social ** July 21, 2005 at 6 PM ** The Monkey Bar inside The B.O.B.

20 Monroe Ave NW Grand Rapids, MI 49503 (616) 356-2627

GVSU Summer Film Wraps

"The Gospel According to Roy," a short comedy about the "second" son of God on Earth, wrapped on June 19 after 13 days of filming. This is the 11th annual GVSU Summer Film Project, and the 7th under the direction of Harper Philbin, a GVSU film professor and award-winning filmmaker.

"After a string of heavy dramas, it was refreshing and fun to do something lighter," says Philbin. "I dare say it's Capra-esque."



John Hawkinson, star of the GVSU Summer Film Project "The Gospel According to Roy"

Courtesy Diana Ramirez

The screenplay, which won GVSU's annual international competition, was written by GVSU alum Andy Graham. The film stars John Hawkinson (from Detroit, pictured above), Joe Anderson (Grand Haven), Janalee Keegstra (Rockford), Walter Harris (Detroit) and Demian Krentz (Grand Rapids).

"Roy" was filmed in Super-16mm with a Panaflex camera on loan from Panavision Hollywood using an all-student crew led by Philbin and Los Angeles D.P. Jack Anderson, whose credits include features ("Hook," "Down by Law") and television ("Mad About You"). Anderson also teaches cinematography at Cal State Long Beach.

The production crew has now disbanded, replaced by a second group of film/video majors who have just begun post-production. "Roy" will be premiered in November and entered into film festivals nationwide. DVDs will be available for sale in November, and will include a behind-the-scenes "making of." November is also the deadline for GVSU's next (12th) short screenplay competition-- the winning script will be produced in summer 2006.

www.gvsu.edu/filmvideo

FILMMAKER NEWS NOTES

Roger Schutter (RSVPS and Consulting) just finished using his new HDV, Z1U camera as the DP for a short "Loaded," created and directed by Rik Swartwelder, screen play by Aaron Smith. This is the second in a trilogy produced as a hands on training piece, with the students of Compass Academy. The third piece is to be shot this fall and the complete set to be finished by the first of the year.



Roger Schutter confers with director Rik Swartwelder (left) on the set of "Loaded."

Photo courtesy of Jessica Staples

Sally Edger is currently on location near St. Louis, Missouri working as a PA on "Saving Shiloh" - the third movie based on the series of children's books by Phyllis Reynolds Naylor. Sally reports that the filmmakers chose Missouri because it resembles West Virginia, and it has a great tax benefit incentives package.

Tony Griffin is currently working on pre-production for a short film titled, "Shooters." More info can be found at www.shootersfilm.net. He's also finishing principle photography on a short film called, "The Tin God" for Greenbook Productions for writer/director, Brandon Bartkowiak, a GVSU film student.

Muskegon filmmaker **David Ruck** is 2/3s of the way through editing the rough cut of his documentary film, "Requiem for a Stream" scheduled to complete by August. He plans to have the finished product by September to show shortly thereafter. Very human stories in Washington D.C., Muskegon, and Whitehall bring audiences through the challenges of grassroots efforts to protect the environment. Coming soon!

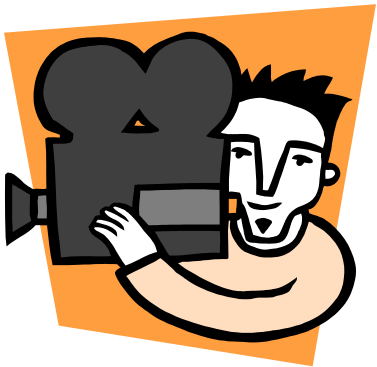
Kevin Park is currently working as an associate producer on a documentary on the Kalamazoo River. This is a project three years in the making. They're capturing the last crucial scene at the end of July and early August. He is in need of a jib arm and crane for the shoot, also looking for actors, singers, crew and most importantly volunteers to help with the shoot. Sign up at www.kalamazooriverus.com or mattd@kalamazooriverus.com. Kevin is also preparing to shoot his short film "The Cost of Manhood" in early/mid August. If you have a steadicam he would love to hear from you.

Bruce Campbell Coming to the Wealthy Theatre

Wealthy Theater has a great event planned for July 23, 2005. Bruce Campbell of "Evil Dead" fame is going to be at the theater signing his new book "Make Love the Bruce Campbell Way" at 6 PM. The Wealthy Theatre will screen his new film "Man with the Screaming Brain" at 10 PM with a Q&A session with Bruce afterwards.

The book signing is FREE. Movie and Q&A session is \$12 general admission or \$10 if you are a member of the Grand Rapids Community Media Center.

WMFVA Explores NEW Member Benefit ...



...DVD "Shorts" to Feature West Michigan Filmmakers

Plans are underway to produce a DVD of short films created by West Michigan filmmakers for distribution and sale, proceeds to go to WMFVA and selected participating filmmakers -- plus exposure and promotion!

The project will be managed by Anthony ("Tony") Griffin and assembled by Digital Video Services. Tony is in the process of researching legal requirements, release policies and procedures necessary to ensure yet another top notch enterprise benefiting WMFVA members. Details will be announced after the Leadership Retreat tentatively scheduled for the second weekend in August (see related article on front page.)

First Traverse City Film Festival Sprouts Controversy



Michael Moore, a Flint native who now lives in northern Michigan, recently announced the lineup for the first Traverse City Film Festival scheduled for July 27-31. After hearing about Moore's plans, Traverse City resident Genie Aldrich contacted [American Film Renaissance](#), which sponsored what it called the "first ever conservative film festival" last year, to help stage a competing event during the same period called the Traverse Bay Freedom Film Festival. Aldrich says when Moore announced his festival, she knew the filmmaker, whom she refers to as "Mr. Deception," had a political agenda.

Among the 31 films slated for Moore's TCFF are four classics that will be shown free of charge on a 40-foot-high, inflatable screen in a park beside Grand Traverse Bay: "Jaws," "The Princess Bride," "Ferris Bueller's Day Off" and "Casablanca." The Traverse Bay Freedom Film Festival will screen "Michael Moore Hates America," "Confronting Iraq," "Echoes of Innocence," and classic favorites such as "Top Gun," "Airplane!," "On the Waterfront" and "Charlotte's Web." Also featured will be the Disney documentary "America's Heart and Soul."

The Traverse City Film Festival will screen other independently produced films from the past couple of years, ranging from cutting-edge foreign documentaries to comedies and period romances. They will be shown indoors, with most tickets selling for \$7. (Admission to the opening-night film, "Mad Hot Ballroom," and the closing-night centerpiece, "Broken Flowers," is \$25.) The Traverse Bay Freedom Film Festival films are shown with no charge.

Traverse City Film Festival schedule and ticket info: <http://www.traversecityfilmfestival.org> Further information about the Traverse Bay Freedom Film Festival can be obtained by calling 231-271-1121.

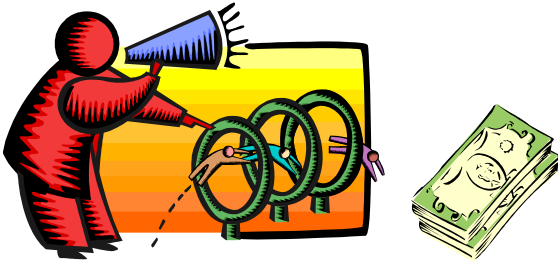
Above article quoted from various sources compiled by Michigan Film/Video Production Community (MFP) online discussion forum.

New Michigan Film Advisory Commission Chair Announced?

NOT YET- but call Jan Lockwood's office next week for update. Should be happening any day now! See her LAST WORD on page 4 for her office phone and to get advice on enhancing your filmmaking success!

WMFVA and MCAI Bring You “The Business of Filmmaking”

The WMFVA Professional Development Strategy Team leaders are planning for the upcoming seminar, “The Business of Filmmaking.” The WMFVA seminar is scheduled for Saturday, August 27, and will offer an in-depth look at legal and budget issues that face an independent filmmaker.



*Feel like you're jumping through hoops?
OK, but at least get results!*

Additionally, the organization ArtServe Michigan is offering a seminar called “Risky Business: Financing and Distribution,” which is slated for Saturday, October 15, 2005, at Wayne State University, featuring Mark Litwak, an attorney who has written several books on these topics. The WMFVA will move it's seminar on screenwriting, scheduled before this event was announced, to make it possible for interested west-side producers and filmmakers to attend.

A sign-up notice for “The Business of Filmmaking” will be posted to the WMFVA and other production-related list serves as details become available by the end of July.

Professional Development Co-Chair Ed deJong, also President in the upcoming year for the Media Communications Association-International (MCA-I) Mid-Michigan Chapter says, “Let's be AWARE of what the WMFVA/MCAI is doing and offering in terms of meeting topics and/or seminars and workshops and let's be *complementary*, not redundant,” which offers new opportunities for the two groups to offer programs that support overlapping interests.

Big Thanks to a Big Hearted Company!

WMFVA would like to thank BBK Studio (648 Monroe NW, Suite 212, Grand Rapids 49503) for providing image analysis and logo development services for the Alliance. BBK Studios chief Kevin Budelman of the design firm offered the service in the spirit of service to non-profit community groups such as the WMFVA. Marketing, Membership, and Sponsorship (MMS) Strategy Team member Ken Robinson originally contacted the firm and represented WMFVA at early meetings with Budelman to plan the collaboration.

The BBK Studio staff is scheduled to meet with Board of Directors and members of the MMS Strategy Team on Tuesday, August 16 for a half-day session. Thanks to Ken Robinson, former creative director and current owner of Kalamazoo Pictures for his initiative on behalf of the Alliance.

Board Notes

**WMFVA Member Tony Griffin
Presents “Shorts” DVD Proposal at
Marketing/Membership/Sponsor (MMS)
Strategy Team Meeting
Wednesday, July 13, 6 – 8 PM
GVSU DeVos Center Atrium**

WMFVA member Tony Griffin (UnSAFE Film Office, LLC) has offered to manage the first ever DVD compilation of West Michigan filmmaker shorts. He will present an outline of his strategy for marketing team review at the next MMS Strategy Team meeting.

The proposal will be discussed further at the WMFVA Board of Directors meeting on Thursday, July 21, 2005, 6 PM at the Monkey Bar, inside the B.O.B. at 20 Monroe Avenue NW.

**ALL Board and Strategy Team Meetings
OPEN – You're Invited!**

LAST WORD: MFO Director Jan Lockwood says: Remember to get your contact info for the new Michigan Production Guide into our office ASAP! For \$10 a category, your name, info and credits will be in the book and on the state website. Have your name available when the call goes out for YOUR area of expertise. The deadline is fast approaching - Friday, July 29. Call 800.477-3456, go online to www.michigan.gov/filmoffice and start the process there, or email jlockwood@mi.gov TODAY! We want West Michigan heavily represented.