



# Mid Michigan Photography Club Newsletter

May 2008

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Chairperson: June Cooke

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"Big-Cookie" Contest Chairs: Scott Mulrooney and John Diephouse

Photo Shoot Chairperson: Penny Verran

## Coming Up in June

We have two main attractions this month! First, special guest speaker **Chad Sanders** will be in to explain the ins and outs of layers in PhotoShop. Chad is a popular PhotoShop instructor for Lansing Community College.

In addition, we're also holding our second "**Big Cookie**" contest of the year. The theme is **Landmarks**: Enter your favorite photo with an easily recognized landmark from anywhere in the US. Maybe you'll be a winner! Two prizes will be awarded, one for the people's Choice and one Judge's award. The prizes are really **big** cookies baked by Penny Verran and her daughter Krystin! The "Big Cookie" contest rules are on the website at [www.midmichiganphotoclub.com/ContestInfo.aspx](http://www.midmichiganphotoclub.com/ContestInfo.aspx).

We'll also have a short recap of Wildflower weekend. There will be an **officer's meeting** following the general meeting.

## May Meeting Recap

The focus of the May meeting was on final preparations for Wildflower Weekend/NatureFest. Following the general discussion, several members and prospective members showed off some of their fantastic photographs. **Russ Allen** really knocked our proverbial socks off with his pictures from South Georgia Island in Antarctica! Wow!

## Wildflower Weekend/NatureFest 2008

All-in-all, however, our first foray into the art show world was a wonderful experience for everyone who participated. The weather was very nice on Saturday and attendance was very good. Sunday was cold and rainy, so attendance was not as good, but it was still better than the previous year!

The **Lansing State Journal** ran an article about the event. An online version of the article can be found here:

<http://www.lansingstatejournal.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=2008805120331>

Here are some other tidbits from the event:



Founding members Ron St. Germain and June Cooke had booths in the art show. Other club members were also showing off their talent. These included Joseph Yarbrough, Gene Tatroe, and Sheri TenEyck. Some non-members were also in the show, bringing the number of booths to about 10. It's a small start, but a good one!



The chainsaw carvers were a hit. Even when it was cold and wet, they still managed to gather a bit of a crowd!



The club generated about \$90 in sales from the portrait shoot. 30% will go to Woldumar. We made prints and CDs on-site. **Rick Klingensmith** and **Lisa Burgess** took the photos, while **Mike Collins** and **Tammy VanderMolen** handled the computer end of things. **Rich Blankenship**, **Susanne Mannino**, and **Marilyn Walsh** also helped out in various ways. Thanks, everyone!



"Wallpaper Woldumar" was a children's art project dreamed up by **Jackie Blodgett** and **Ron St. Germain**. Jackie got artwork from kids in the Waverly school district. The results were a real hit with everyone!

In addition, Jackie also arranged for a school choir to perform at the event. It's good to know people in high places!



**Tammy VanderMolen, Susanne Mannino** and **Mike Collins** all had prints sell from the club booth. The total was somewhere around \$250, of which 15% will go to the club.

The children's art booth run by **Sharon** and **Nikki Howell** was very popular, at least when the weather was good! Sales from the children's art projects will go to the club.



**Penny Verran** pulled together a great selection of plants for the plant sale, despite getting thrown into it at the last minute. She was also pretty busy all weekend keeping the seminars on track, even giving one herself (another was cancelled because of the weather). On top of all that, she helped put together a container plant for the raffle.



Elsewhere, Woldumar staff and volunteers were busy putting on their own show. The pancake breakfast has been a feature of this event for many years and the horse-drawn wagon rides were very popular. As always, the Moon cabin was populated by docents in period costume, baking and sewing much as people would have well over a hundred years ago. In addition, there were pontoon boat rides and nature walks lead by Woldumar naturalists.

The club sponsored a reception on Saturday, co-hosted by **Susanne Mannino** and **Ron St. Germain**. It was a nice way to end a busy day! Susanne organized the indoor half of the reception, while Ron ran the bonfire during the second half. Thanks to all who contributed food or their time to help pull this off!

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## Tip of the Month

We can't all afford to travel to far-away locations to capture images of exotic wildlife. Purists will cringe, but the next best thing is to head over to the nearest zoo! Ah, but the subject is obscured by a cage. What to do, what to do?

Well, here's a handy trick for getting a great shot

despite the cage. If you can get in closer than the minimum focusing distance of your lens, you should see the cage practically disappear in the viewfinder as you focus on the subject. Thanks go to **Gene Tatroe** for reminding me about this tip!

Here are some things to consider:

- Longer lenses work best, perhaps with a teleconverter. Zooms are great for helping you crop the shot just right.
- Use a relatively wide aperture, perhaps between f/4 and f/5.6.
- Get in as close as possible, although not too close! You don't want to be on the 6 O'clock news, do you? Follow zoo rules and don't set a bad example for kids and adults who should know better!
- Autofocus may work against you. Consider turning it off.
- Ditto for your flash unit.
- Keep your lens as close to perpendicular to the cage as possible.
- A tripod or monopod helps if zoo policy allows it.
- Overcast days help reduce extra shadows and glare from the cage.
- If you have a depth-of-field preview option, use it to help set your focus.



Snow Leopard - Louisville Zoo, Kentucky. Photo by Mike Collins.



Amur Tiger - Potter Park Zoo, Lansing. Photo by Mike Collins.

Note: These images are pretty much as they were taken from the scanned slides. Slight adjustments to the exposures were made in the scanning software. No other edits have been applied.

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## Website of the Month

As a follow-up to last month's Book of the Month, this month's Website of the Month focuses on getting better results from your flash, as well as other lighting techniques. [www.strobist.com](http://www.strobist.com) is considered one of the premier sites for all things related to using flash. Thanks to Alan Jones and Gene Tatroe for suggesting this site. John Shaw also recommended this site during his seminar in February. Check it out!

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## Book of the Month

More than 20 years old, now, **John Shaw's *Closeups in Nature*** is still an essential resource for aspiring nature photographers looking to delve into the world of macro photography. John covers the technical aspects of closeup photography as well as the artistic techniques you'll need to master in order to capture great images. Even though the book was written well before the digital age, most of the material is still relevant.