

WEHR NATURE CENTER
CAMERA CLUB
1982 – 2022

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Following is the introduction to the Wehr Nature Center Camera Club's 20th anniversary booklet, prepared in 2002.

The Beginning:

After going through life's cycle of working, eating, sleeping and pursuing other avenues of fun and hobbies, a light flicked on and an idea was born. The year was 1982 and after traveling back and forth across town meeting with a few other people, the Wehr Nature Center Camera Club became a reality. Today we still enjoy this fine meeting place – a nature center – where we pursue our club's original enthusiasm with old and new members.

In 1988 we became one of the largest camera clubs in Southeastern Wisconsin. We have a mixture of members-- young and old, a diversity of programs, workshops, field trips and competitions. This has created an active, inspired atmosphere where our members gain camera skills, ideas and a real enjoyment for photography in its many aspects.

The idea that was born 20 years ago has blossomed and matured. Today we owe a big THANK YOU to George Fenske, the original visionary of our club.

Ike Eckstein

The information for the first 20 years as presented in this document was included in that 20 year anniversary booklet. The information for the next 20 years was gathered by Sheila Hall, Diane Piontek and Ramona Lenger.

CHARTER MEMBERS:

George Fenske, Ike Eckstein, Chuck Gross, Tom Pelon, Harold Bauers, Greg Trojanowski, Roman Rathsack, Elmer Schienbein, Sam Sporaccio, Ed Bohmann, Clifford and Margaret Husted and Clarence Pletzke

1982 –
1984

FORMATIVE YEARS

Charter members are putting programs together while using the fireplace room for meetings.

MEMBERSHIP GROWS

First newsletter, beginning of slide competitions, with classes A and B. First annual banquet, with Roman Rathsack as 1st “Photographer Of The Year.”

1987 -- Richard Buerger is our Newsletter Editor. He also created all the art work for the Newsletter and all the club material. Otis is born as our mascot.

1987 George Fenske put together his remarkable slide program “The Life Cycle of the Monarch Butterfly”. A three-day field trip to the Ridges in Door County.

1988 Sam Sporaccio Memorial Trophy competition begins.

OFFICERS AND BOARD MEMBERS – 1988

1988 George Fenski – Chairman/Program Coordinator
William Hoehnen – President
Robert Berth – Exec. Vice President
Sheila Hall – Vice Pres, PSA, WACCO Treasurer
Barb Wankowski – Secretary
Ike Eckstein – Treasurer, Membership
Richard Buerger – Newsletter Editor
Bob Hart – Field Trips
Barb Mrotek – Competition, Photo Album
Virginia Seidel – Librarian
Elmer Schienbein –Refreshments
Mike Raasch – New Member Host

- 1/89 Third Annual Banquet – Meyers Restaurant
- 1/90 Bill Turner becomes new President
- 4/90 Club continues to score very well in PSA competition
First Annual Picnic – Ray Balcerzak
- 7/91 George Fenske retires. Reluctantly the board accepts his decision knowing George has given the club countless hours of time and hard work over the past ten years. We agree that he deserves some time off for good behavior. He remains on the board in an advisory position. Harry Richards is nominated to take over as Chairman and Program Director
Groundbreaking for Nature Center expansion begins
- 2/92 Annual Awards Banquet to celebrate WNCCC's tenth anniversary.
- 9/92 Dick Buerger retires as Newsletter Editor after 4 years of winning PSA awards, winning 6th place out of 126 clubs to receive an Honor Award Ribbon. This talented man also designed our club patch and the WACCO logo.
Nancy Kugel volunteers to become new editor of our newsletter
- 6/93 Bill Turner retires as President due to employment commitments
Cindy Pekrul volunteers to make our personal name pins
- 9/93 Ed Kolinski becomes our 4th President
After 34 suggestions to name our newsletter, the OTUS FOCUS was judged to be the favorite title
- 1/94 PSA update – WNCCC places 6th out of 21 clubs
- 4/94 Club membership at 96 making us the camera club with the highest membership in Wisconsin
- 1/95 Carl Hahn opens up a Hot Line for club communications. 414-290-4332
- 2/95 More than 60 members and spouses attend the award banquet at DJ's

- 9/95 Membership kits are developed for new and old members with information about our camera club

- 3/96 Club membership reaches 105
Nancy Kugel, 1992-1996 editor of the newsletter, leaves for other job commitments
Olga Longley takes over as newsletter editor

- 1/97 President, Ed Kolinski resigns after 3 years of service
Dick Knisbeck leaves as program co-ordinator
Dick Buerger leaves the Board

- 1/97 Sheila Hall becomes new President
Cindy Pekrul takes over as program co-ordinator
Carl Hahn takes over mailing newsletter

- 9/97 George Fenske Dec 31, 1908 – July 3, 1997
Our founder and educator

- 1/98 Dues increase to \$20 annually, payable January 1

- 4/98 Carl Hahn becomes editor of the newsletter

- 6/98 Club purchases Ectagraphic projector and zoom lens

- 8/98 Olga Eckstein continues as picnic co-ordinator with food and games
Club receives a donation of \$2500 from the estate of George Fenske

- 1/99 Sheila Hall fills in as editor for Jan – Mar editions

- 4/99 Long-time member and active photographer, Ruth Kurtz, dies 1/30/99 at the age of 97

- 9/00 Dr. Yon-ran Zhu – Our new editor. Award winning photographer
Ike Eckstein does the printing and mailing

- 1/01 Digital photography, computer enhancement with scanning and printing continues to grow
Carl Hahn continues doing an outstanding job soliciting advertisers for the newsletter, which covers the cost of printing and mailing

- 5/01 Club wins 4th place out of 13 clubs in the 1st annual PSA club showcase. A good turn out for the Annual Awards Banquet, featuring western entertainment, K.G. and the Ranger, which encouraged our membership to dress like cowboys and cowgirls
- 6/01 Annual picnic at Heg Park. A great setting, great food, and opportunities for photography (If you weren't there, you missed all the fun.)
- 11/01 Art's Cameras Plus is our newest advertiser. Helex, Reimers and Family Photo continue their years of support to our club. PLEASE PATRONIZE!!
- 1/02 Twentieth Anniversary 1982 – 2002
Our charter membership of 12 has grown as high as 105 in March of 1996. Our current membership is 69.