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March 2025
volume XXXII
number 1

Greater City Aquarium Society - New York

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Series III Vol. XXXII, No. 1, March, 2025

ON THE COVER

Our cover photo this month, from Joseph Ferdenzi via our Fishy Friends Facebook page, features a juvenile *Hypancistrus zebra* photographed in the tank where it was born.

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From the Editor

by Dan Radebaugh

Welcome to a new year with the Greater City Aquarium Society, and to **Modern Aquarium!** And to the Alley Pond Environmental Center. Last year was rather unexpectedly wonderful for us here at Greater City! Our transition to meeting at the Alley Pond Environmental Center was a rousing success, and we hope we'll see more of the same this year!

This first issue of the year is always fun for me, because it's a reminder of all the things we accomplished last year and what we have on tap for *this* year! Take a glance at the facing page to see what we've lined up so far!

This being our first issue of the year, you'll be able to see all the prizes and awards earned by our members last year. Congratulations to all our award winners! Keep up the wonderful work you're doing!



Aquarium Care of Cichlids



by Greater City member Claudia Dickinson
(Animal Planet® Pet Care Library)

Hardcover — Also available on Amazon Kindle
<https://www.amazon.com/Aquarium-Cichlids-Animal-Planet-Library/dp/0793837774>



I'm trying out a new feature in this issue. For now I'm calling it "Fishes On The Web." Please let me know what you think about it. Look on page 7 in this issue.

Remember, as always, we need your articles! **Modern Aquarium** is produced by and for the members of Greater City Aquarium Society. You, our members, are our authors, and with ten issues per year, we always, *always* need some more articles. I know several of you are keeping and/or breeding fish that I would like to know more about! I'm certain that other members would be interested as well. Share your experiences with us. Write about it! If you're a little unsure about the state of your writing technique, don't worry—that's why editors were invented!

So if you have an article, photo, or drawing that you'd like to submit for inclusion in **Modern Aquarium**, it's easy to do! Just fax it to me at (877) 299-0522, email it to gcas@earthlink.net, or just hand it to me at a meeting. However you get it to me, I'll be delighted to receive it! Enjoy!





GCAS Programs

2025

March 5	Breeder Boxes
April 2	Natural Aquariums, Part 1
May 7	Natural Aquariums, Part 2
June 4	TBD
July 2	The Balanced Aquarium
August 6	Night At The Auction
September 3	TBD
October 8	TBD
November 5	TBD
December 3	Holiday Awards Dinner!

Articles submitted for consideration in **Modern Aquarium** (ISSN 2150-0940) must be received no later than the 10th day of the month prior to the month of publication. Please email submissions to gcas@earthlink.net, or fax to (347) 379-4984. Copyright 2025 by the Greater City Aquarium Society Inc., a not-for-profit New York State corporation. All rights reserved. Not-for-profit aquarium societies are hereby granted permission to reproduce articles and illustrations from this publication, **unless the article indicates that the copyrights have been retained by the author**, and provided reprints indicate source, and that two copies of the publication are sent to the Exchange Editor of this magazine (one copy if sent electronically). For online-only publications, copies may be sent via email to gcas@earthlink.net. Any other reproduction or commercial use of the material in this publication is prohibited without prior express written permission.

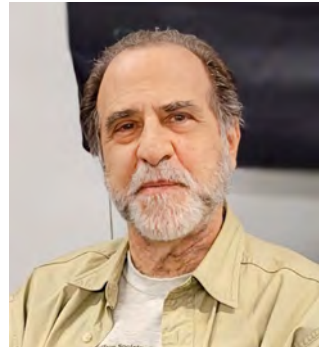
The Greater City Aquarium Society meets every month except January and February. Members receive notice of meetings in the mail or by email. For more information, contact: Dan Radebaugh at (718) 458-8437, email to gcas@earthlink.net, or fax to (347) 379-4984. For more information about our club or to see previous issues of **Modern Aquarium**, you can also go to our Internet Home Page at <http://www.greatercity.net>, <http://www.greatercity.org>, or <http://www.greatercity.com>.

President's Message

by Warren Feuer

Writing this first President's message is, to me like coming home after a long time away. No, I'm not the "prodigal son" returning. I'm more like one who would visit occasionally but mostly stayed away.

Let me explain. I joined Greater City in 1991 and almost immediately became more than a casual member who came to meetings each month. Shortly after joining I volunteered to help with a planned tropical fish show, and in the following years became involved with:



- Initial contact for prospective new members via newspaper and magazine ads
- Editor of **The Network**, Greater City's newsletter publication at the time, which led to becoming Editor of **Modern Aquarium** from its inception in 1993 until 1999
- Membership Chair for several years
- Corresponding Secretary, communicating with manufacturers in order to solicit donations for our auctions
- Chair of the Greater City Breeder Award program (for too many years to remember)

I'm sure I've left some things out, but you get the gist. In addition, I was always one of the first to volunteer when needed.

After my family and I moved from Forest Hills to Long Island, attending meetings and helping out became more time consuming and difficult. Add to that family demands and some very demanding jobs on top of life-altering surgery, and I needed to pull away. By the mid 2010's I had pretty much stopped attending meetings, and my involvement declined accordingly. I also had a 30-tank fish room that took up more than a little of my time. I never severed my relationship with Greater City, just maintained it from a distance.

Fast forward to 2024. My children are all grown up, have moved out and are living their own lives. In addition, I retired from the work world. This gave me more time to myself, and with Greater City moving to the Alley Pond Environmental Center, attending meetings became much easier.

I was really touched by the warm greetings that I received from the long-term GCAS members who are still members, and recognized and remembered me. When Joe Ferdenzi told me that Horst Gerber wanted to step down as President of GCAS, I was ready to step in. The reception I received when it was announced that I would be the next President confirmed my feelings that I had made the right decision. In addition, Mark Soberman, an immeasurable asset to Greater City with tremendous hobby and society experience and knowledge has once again joined the Board of Directors of Greater City.

So, dear readers, welcome to GCAS 2025! I'm looking forward to serving as your President and doing what I can to keep GCAS the wonderful club it is by honoring our past and helping direct us to a great future!





GCAS Thanks You!

Our Generous Sponsors and Advertisers

The Greater City Aquarium Society extends our heartfelt thanks to the following manufacturers for their generous donations. Thanks also to our advertisers, whose contributions to our success as a Society are deeply appreciated. Please patronize our supporters.

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San Francisco Bay Brand

Seachem

Sera

Spectrum Brands

Your Fish Stuff.com

Zilla

Zoo Med Laboratories Inc.

Fishy Friends' Photos

by Greater City Aquarium Society Fishy Friends

Below are photo submissions to our “Fishy Friends” Facebook group. I’ve left the subjects unnamed, but not the photographer. If you see a shot you like, and want more info, ask the photographer about it! I’m sure he or she will be delighted to tell you!



Joseph Ferdenzi



Scott Peters



Lonnie Goldman



Jules Birnbaum



Jan Sereni



Rob Lamberti



Kemaoine de Lavallade



FISHES ON THE WEB

THE ZEBRA DANIO



- In our November issue last year, I reprised an article by Susan Priest, a book review that originally appeared in the April 2013 issue of **Modern Aquarium**. The article she reviewed was from the February 13 issue of **Popular Science** entitled “Will This Fish Transform Medicine?” by Virginia Hughes.

The Zebra Danio is still getting medical headlines! Check out the link below for some of the current buzz!

https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2024/10/241016120014.htm?utm_source=substack&utm_medium=email

Photo from Wikipedia



Florida
AQUATIC NURSERIES





BOWL SHOW RULES

There is a Bowl Show at every GCAS meeting, except our Night at the Auction/ fleamarket meeting and our Holiday Party and Awards Banquet meeting. Bowl shows are open to all members of GCAS. Rules are as follows:

- Only current GCAS members may enter fish in the Bowl Show.
- There is a limit of 2 entries per member per meeting.
- Unlike some other clubs, every month is an “open” Bowl Show at the GCAS (i.e., there is no “theme,” such as that one month cichlids are judged, the next livebearers, the next anabantoids, etc.).
- Any fish that wins any prize (1st, 2nd, or 3rd) may not be entered again in the same meeting year.
- B.Y.O.B. (Bring Your Own Bowl!) Entrants are responsible for providing suitable containers and suitable water for their fish. These containers must be clear on at least three sides.
- Only one fish per container (i.e., no “pairs”).
- No plants, ornaments, or equipment (filters, airstones, etc.) are allowed in the judging tank (an external mirror, or opaque cards between containers is acceptable, as is a cover that does not obstruct side viewing).
- Points are awarded: 5 points for 1st Place, 3 for 2nd Place, and 1 for 3rd Place.
- Ribbons are awarded: blue for 1st Place, red for 2nd Place, and green for 3rd Place.
- The person with the most points at the end of the meeting season receives the Walter Hubel Bowl Show Champion trophy at the Awards Banquet.
- The decision of the judge(s) is final.
- A running UNOFFICIAL total of the points awarded is printed in **Modern Aquarium**. Only the tally of points maintained by the Bowl Show Coordinator is official.
- **In case of ties:**
 - 1st Tiebreaker – most 1st Places
 - 2nd Tiebreaker – most 2nd Places
 - 3rd Tiebreaker – most entries

The Next Perfect Betta Tank

Story and Photos by Stephen Sica

I guess that I should have left good enough alone. I have already written about what I perceive to be the very best betta tank, so who would be interested in the very next best tank? Well, sometimes I get a feeling that **Modern Aquarium's** illustrious editor, Dan R, needs an article to turn the tide against reprints, so if

I perceive a serious, silly, or even absurd idea trickling through my consciousness, I might become somewhat curious about it. If the thought remains in my mind long enough, it soon feels like sand passing through an hourglass, and I'd better write it down before I forget. I hope this doesn't sound like the beginning of a soap opera!

In the basement of my Queens home, sometimes known only to me as my fish room (in a very loose description of such a place), I have a flat space on a heavy duty rolling



Notice slight bend in center of the cart surface that is supporting almost 9 gallons of water plus the weight of the tanks and accessories. A gallon of water weighs about 8.34 pounds for 75 pounds total water only sitting on cart.

cart. Its measurements are 18 x 24 inches. Each side is one-half inch shorter but just about everything is rounded-up nowadays. The top surface purportedly can support a weight of 100 pounds, but I found that it flexes downward toward the center with even less.

I had one male and three female *Betta splendens* in three 5.5 gallon tanks and one 2.5 gallon tank, spread around the basement. I thought that if I somehow could consolidate these fish on the cart, surely I would clean up some clutter. I previously experienced that having two females in the same tank would cause one to harass the other; so my desire was to have four small tanks with one fish in each, sitting on the cart. The obvious solution was to have four small fish tanks. Thus I began another search to find the next best perfect betta tank.

The online company from which I initially purchased this best betta tank also sells a smaller version, so it made sense to me to investigate this item. The company, Sevenports.com, carries a large selection of nano aquariums, although many consistently seem to be out of stock. Anyway, I got out my ruler and started calculating the rolling cart's size against various nano aquariums that were in stock. I ultimately purchased three 2.33 gallon ultra clear glass tanks measuring 10.25L x 6.6W x 7.9H inches for \$30.23 each with free shipping.

I always set up my betta tanks as a complete system, that is, I use a tiny, self-contained sponge type filter that Joe Ferdenzi discussed in his GCAS lecture in early 2024. I cover the tank with a thin piece of acrylic or plexiglass about one-eighth or three-



Side view of a 2.33 gallon tank with its resident male blue betta.

sixteenth inch thickness, and I use a clip-on LED fixture that has a built-in timer that you can set for either 6, 10 or 14 hours. Some have white and blue LEDs, while others have red, white and blue, which I prefer. Amazon vendors sell them for about \$14.00 which is a reasonable price. It's basically a self-contained light. It has about ten adjustments for brightness and combinations of color. Finally, I add a small submersible heater in the 20-30 watt range. With all of these accessories, each of my bettas has a complete mini-aquarium to call home.



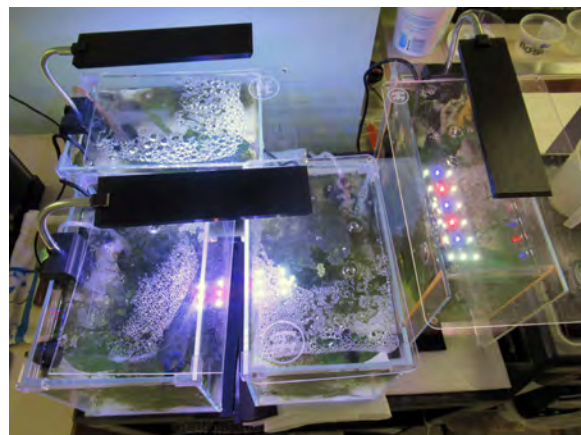
These three small identical tanks are the 2.33 gallon next best betta fish home.

After setting up three mini-aquariums, I had some surface space left on the cart. I still had a fourth betta to house, so I purchased a very narrow 2 gallon nano tank. Its outside width was only 4.75 inches. I may write about this tank in the future, so I won't describe it right now. It's more "eye-catching" than a standard tank. It was on sale for about \$4.00 less than its list price. I figured that I might also write another article about *it* someday, so I purchased it for my last betta.

While I still prefer to house betta fish in a larger size aquarium, it may not always be possible. Of course, if you cannot take proper care of a fish, perhaps you should not even attempt to keep a fish, or any other kind of aquatic life. Sometimes I even find it difficult to take proper care of plants—another form of life. That's one reason I prefer rhizome plants.

If you wish to establish a startup aquarium that does not seem like an elaborate goldfish bowl, I usually suggest a betta or nano type tank with a small school of tetras, or similar, to friends who occasionally express an interest in fish. Usually, it's just "small talk" or merely a passing fad. Many people talk about fish but have no true interest in fishkeeping. Anyway, the 2.33 gallon tank that I am suggesting here seems to keep my bettas happy, and I like its small footprint.

As a fish enthusiast over the years, I would occasionally put a betta in a community tank. I think that I have purchased a betta three times at GCAS auctions. I didn't know much about these fish, other than to observe them being entered in GCAS bowl shows and being sold at club auctions. A year or two ago, I started to develop a keener interest in trying this fish, as most of us like to do upon occasion, something different.



Four small betta tanks sitting on rolling cart.

While watching them swim around their small habitats, I learned one fact new to me: my bettas always desire to eat, whether living alone or in a larger community tank with other fish. A fat fish might think that it's a happy fish, but we know better.



The GCAS CARES

Species Identification and Registration

by Claudia Dickinson



Did you know that if you are maintaining species on the CARES Priority List (https://caresforfish.org/?page_id=40) it is a quick and easy one-time process to register them with CARES under the Greater City Aquarium Society?

The correct identification of species is critical, and with your help and the combined knowledge and expertise of the CARES Team, we will ensure that your fish are registered with the proper species identification.

Registration by the Hobbyist

Species registration is done by the hobbyist through the CARES website contact form titled CARES Species Registration & Photo IDs (https://caresforfish.org/?page_id=109).

Photo

Each species registered requires at least one clear side-view photo that displays the characteristics of the fish to aid in positive identification. Your photos can be taken with your iPhone, if that is easiest for you, and short video clips are also accepted.

File Name

Please label your photo submissions using the file name format: species name_your name_CARES club_submission date. For instance: *Etroplus canarensis*_James Fish_GCAS_2-14-25.jpg

Photos MUST be of Hobbyist's Colony

Photos are not expected to be of the highest quality but MUST be of the fish that you are registering. Photos taken in the past or from the Internet do not identify the fish you are keeping and cannot be accepted for registration. Thank you for your much appreciated help with taking photos for the registration process!

Upload the Photo

Upload the species photo via the contact form titled CARES Species Registration & Photo IDs at http://caresforfish.org/?page_id=879 on the CARES website.

Message Box Data

In the message box please include:

- a) your name.
- b) your email address.
- c) your postal address (optional).
- d) your telephone number (optional).
- e) species name.
- f) where or from whom obtained.
- g) collection location, if available.
- h) when obtained (approximate date is fine).
- i) whether or not the colony has produced fry.
- j) your CARES affiliate organization (GCAS).



One Registration per Email

Register as many species as you would like, but one registration per email please.

Notification to Hobbyist

You will be notified by CARES when your registration is received and a second time when it is approved (or not) for CARES registration.

Notification to Club

CARES will also notify your CARES GCAS Liaison with the approval for registration.

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to let me know through the contact form titled CARES Species Registration & Photo IDs or by emailing me at ivyrosefarm@outlook.com.

We look forward to receiving your CARES submissions! Thank you so much for your help and efforts to ensure that your fish are approved for registration with the correct species identification!

**To the world you are but a single person...
but to an entire species you could be the whole world.**

One person cannot save them all, but we can each save at least one!

Together, we can and we are making a difference!



Mr. Jules' Fish Room

Story and Photos by Jules Birnbaum

I use the term “Mr. Jules” because every time I walk into our bank they call me “Mr. Jules.” Below is what goes on daily on in my 9' X 12' Fishroom. Maybe one idea shown below will be of help in your hobby.

My fishroom is built on a slab, since we have no basement. It was built in part of a converted single car garage, and has a small TV and a house phone extension. I have been using a Mitsubishi heat pump for 15 years rather than many individual heaters. The room has a refrigerator, but it is not working — a result of our entire house being flooded by Hurricane Ida. A slop sink is outside the fishroom in our laundry room. In summer the heat pump air conditions and keeps the room free of excess

JEHMCO, the fish room supply company. 50% water changes on all 30 tanks are performed every two weeks. I can tell when the tanks need water changes by the amount of algae I see on the glass or when the large box filters I use seem to be filthy.

Two Marineland polishing filters are moved from tank to tank to remove wastes rather than vacuuming the gravel. Gravel is never more than an inch in any tank. I clean my box and sponge filters approximately every three months. I presently use Angel's Plus quality sponge filters, because tubing is easy to remove and reattach. Most tanks have one box filter and one sponge filter. I like to over-filter, since most tanks have a high bioload.

The large round box filters were purchased for under \$10 each from JEHMCO, and give me a visual look at the filth they are picking up. They also give me a chance to condition the aquarium water or adjust the pH. Tubing



humidity. A few individual heaters are used for my lower tanks when the water temperature goes below 68° degrees. Aquarium heaters have been known to fail, so we watch things closely.

I use two pumps with hoses attached leading to my utility room slop sink. There is a third line with a valve attached for refilling the tanks. This set up was purchased from



tends to get hard over time, and can become very difficult to reattach after cleaning the filters.

We all like to watch our fish go after food, but I try to underfeed, except for breeding pairs. In the late morning all my fish get a high quality flake or pellet dry food. In the evening three times a week all tanks get blackworms or frozen bloodworms. My catfish get large catfish pellets a few times a week. When fish are hungry they stay active and seem healthier. Be on the lookout for a fish who is not eating, because he might be sick. I tend to purchase my fish food from two sources: Brine Shrimp Direct and Your Fish Stuff.

Tools: Large tweezers, a pair of scissors designed for underwater gardening, a tablespoon, a brine shrimp incubator purchased from Aquarium Co-op, or one I obtained from Joe Ferdenzi that was made in Germany, and a turkey baster for getting food into tanks and feeding brine shrimp. There is always aquarium salt around for hatching brine shrimp. I use crushed coral to try to raise the pH or just keep it steady.

Live plants: I only keep several varieties of live low-light plants. They look good and help keep good water quality. I have several African tanks with high pH. I have tried some low light plants in these tanks, but so far have not had great success. High pH is not to their liking.

Water quality is maintained by regular water changes (I use a water conditioner rather than aged water), using polishing filters regular filter cleaning and observation of the fish.

Fish breeding: Pleco catfish are bred by including several caves in community tanks. Angels in a community tank tend to lay eggs on wide Anubias leaves. I remove the leaf and place it in the same tank, in a floating container purchased from Swiss Tropicals.

I harvest Cory by scraping eggs that have been deposited on the tank glass with a razor blade. They are then placed in a floating container in the same tank. My shell dwellers (in species only tanks) use their shells to deposit eggs and raise fry. My killifish are bred by just loading their small tank with java moss where eggs are deposited. The fry get microscopic food from the moss and of course are protected from the parents. I use this same method for all my livebearers.

I purchase most of my equipment and parts from JEHMCO, the fish room supply house. This includes the central air pump servicing all tanks, pumps, hoses, valves, box filters, conditioners, medications and substrate.

JEHMCO is a great source for anything needed in a fish room.

Where do I get my fish? Mainly from Greater City Aquarium Society auctions, a few online retailers such as WetSpot, and reliable sources on Aquabid. The several different

shell dwellers I keep came from an online retailer that is no longer in business.

Lighting: I use only LED aquarium plant lights with timers that turn the tanks on for 6 or 9 hours depending on the needs of the plants. When the white lights are off, there are blue lights on that mimic moonlight. The total electric is approximately 260W. Adding the 75W used by the air pump, the total is like having a three-hundred watt bulb. With occasional fertilizer added, the plants are thriving with this set-up.

So this is what is going on in “Mr. Jules Fish Room” on a regular basis. I spend many peaceful hours in this fish room. I have had a number of hobbies in my life, but the tropical fish hobby is at the top of the list!



Pictures From Our Last Meeting

Photos by Marsha Radebaugh



A great turnout for our annual banquet!



Still more revelers!



**Former and Current Presidents:
Joe Ferdenzi and Horst Gerber**



Joseph Ferdenzi and Horst Gerber with VP Ed Vukich (center)



**Treasurer Lenny Ramroop and incoming
President Warren Feuer**



Harry Faustmann with his well deserved Breeder's Award!



Steve and Donna Sica, along with Jason Gold



Bill Amely



Ron Webb



Richie Waizman receives his Bowl Show Award from President Horst Gerber!



Jeff Bollbach



Denver Lettman



**The Peters:
Woltjen and Goldfien**



Guest Barbara Small



Florence Gomes and Vero



Walter Gallo and Silvana



Mike Addalli & Ed Vukich



Jerry Schwartz



Mike Gallo



Ron Kasman



A few of the many auction items



To Horst Gerber, for his dedication as President of GCAS from 2017-2024



Who Are We?

by Marsha Radebaugh

In its 100+ years of existence, Greater City Aquarium Society has had thousands of members. Each month, with the exception of those during the Pandemic, our meetings have an average of 40 to 60 members and visitors in attendance. We all know who the “stars” are, the officers, presenters, regular runners, etc. are individuals well known to the rest of us. There are those, however, who quietly and consistently attend most if not all meetings. We sit beside each other, sometimes chatting, sometimes not, without any idea who our neighbors are outside of this room. Well, I think it’s time we found out! As Membership Chair, I have the opportunity to meet and greet each of you, checking you in and handing you your **Modern Aquarium** issue, your door prize ticket and collecting dues. I know who you all are! But do you? So, going forward, as often as I can I’m going to select a loyal member and introduce him or her to the rest of you in this column. And so,

Meet Peter Woltjen



I’m learning that being an aquarist seems to be in one’s blood. So many people, when asked when they began keeping fish, will talk of childhood memories when parents or grandparents had a tank (usually just one) and how that experience and relationship piqued their own interest in the hobby. Such was the case for Peter, whose grandmother kept mostly guppies, though he fondly recalls her ordering “Sea-Monkeys” and sea horses from ads she found in the back of magazines. His interest in and love for the hobby grew, and still in his teens, growing up in the Ridgewood/Glendale neighborhood of Queens, he got a job at Myrtle Pets, soon to be known as Mark’s Aquarium Shop. (Ridgewood actually being the birthplace of Greater City Aquarium Society.) He worked his way up to manager. It was here that he was first made aware of fish clubs from customers who belonged to the Brooklyn Aquarium Society and

the flyers they sent out to pet shops. And in that club's publication, he found the notice for Greater City Aquarium Society. He learned everything about keeping and raising fish and installing and maintaining aquariums. He often finds himself telling young people, "If you can do anything in the field that you love, go for it!" He was so happy working in the field that HE loved so much. But, as fate would have it, there came a time when he needed a more secure job, offering all the financial benefits necessary to live as an "adult" (granted, an adult with 27 tanks of his own). For a while he straddled both the fish store and his newfound occupation in the scaffolding industry. And, as most young men eventually do, he met and married the love of his life, Maria, a beautiful paralegal.

Once he transferred full time over to scaffolding work, and became busy with life, he was out of the hobby for a while. Then, his young daughter Catherine expressed an interest in the hobby, and they were back in it, together this time! She's all grown up now, studying for her master's degree in dance education.

Sometimes the older generation introduces the young ones to the hobby, and often that brings the parents back to the fold, and thus Peter stayed with his passion of keeping aquarium fish! He's also an avid hunter, belonging to a Catskills hunt club. And he currently maintains 3 tanks holding primarily angel fish and Corydoras catfish.



The
**MUSEUM OF
AQUARIUM & PET
HISTORY**

If you like history, and you like pets, then this is the place for you. Dedicated to the history of aquarium & pet keeping. The Museum of Aquarium & Pet History includes a huge depository of over 3,000 items all focused on the pet industry. From antique fish bowls, aquariums and cages, to foods, medications, books and advertising signs, we've got it all!

To learn more about this amazing collection of historical pet artifacts, please visit our website:

moaph.org

<https://moaph.org/>



by Warren Feuer

Why do we keep fish? Whenever you get a bunch of aquarists together, there are invariably different answers to this question.

For some, there is the desire to have a pet, any pet, and, due to constraints caused by living quarter realities (e.g. no dogs allowed), allergies, spousal conflicts or even monetary limits, fish appear to be the optimum pet. Those who overcome these obstacles to have a pet are often true animal lovers.

I know this to be true in my case, at any rate at the start of my fishkeeping. I am not allowed to have a dog in my apartment building, I'm allergic to cats and keeping a bird did not appeal to me due to the noise and feather factor as well as the extremely high price of some of the nicer birds I've seen. I kept fish when I was younger and found the idea of keeping them appealing. Eight tanks later, fish have obviously become more than a surrogate for a dog or cat!!

Many aquarists enjoy the challenge and reward of breeding fish. In fact, some folks only keep fish until they have bred them and then trade or sell the fish and go on to breeding other species. This is certainly one good way to limit the number of tanks one has at a sane level. At present, with the extensive destruction of natural habitats occurring throughout the world and with man's feeble attempts at creating a better world while still not really comprehending the impact of his actions (the Lake Victoria experience, for example), the ability to breed fish in our home aquariums is becoming more and more important.

Some keep fish for their aesthetic appeal. Several months ago I met someone who was setting up a 170 gallon reef tank as the centerpiece of his living room because he loves the way reef tanks look and wanted an eye catching piece of "living art". Hopefully, this art lover will follow a regular schedule of maintenance and care that will keep his art work alive and beautiful.

Doctors recommend fish tanks for people who suffer from stress. Watching fish swim

around is purported to be relaxing. Between work and family, the little time I have for my fish is usually spent on either maintenance or feeding so I don't really get much time to just sit and watch my fish swim. But, if you have the time, try this experiment: Turn off all the lights in the room where your tank or tanks are kept (except the tank lights, of course!). Now, just sit back and watch the fish swim around. As an added mood enhancer, put on some soft music, and maybe even have a nice glass of wine (no driving if you drink please). If you can't relax after this experiment, you need a long vacation away from what's bothering you.

There are always those people who like to have the latest toys, even in our hobby. To them, the fish in the tank are almost an after thought to the fancy equipment they've purchased. In this category of "toy lovers" also go those folks who buy fish tanks for things like "air action divers" and "bubbling skulls" or maybe the latest gum ball aquarium and then decide a few fish might be a good thing to put in the tank!! Some of these people actually see the error of their ways and become real aquarists, but most quickly tire of this toy like all others and either throw them out or store them away, indeed, sometimes these goodies can be found at garage sales.

Some people, myself included, remember keeping fish when they were younger, and when accessorizing their homes, naturally include a fish tank or two, or fifty or eighty!! In many cases, people have continued to keep fish tanks from childhood non-stop through their adult years. At GCAS we have quite a few members who have kept fish 30, 40 and even 50 years.

And finally, there are those brave and enterprising souls who decide to make a living out of the hobby. Some attempt this by selling the spawn of their breeding efforts, while others enter the tank set-up and maintenance business. Others go into the retail end as pet-shop owners.

I know several people who have had success with the sale of the spawn, and, one only has to look in the classified ads of the hobby magazines to find fish for sale - mostly, it seems Discus and Angels, which are probably the most in demand, or popularity. Of those I know who have tried to make a business out of the hobby, I've never asked if they still enjoy the hobby aspect. Perhaps one day I'll take a poll. The retail end, if done right, can be successful and pleasant, albeit hard work. For those who have the right mind set, it's a perfect way to combine business and pleasure.

So there you have it. Many reasons why we keep our finny friends. Oh, I think there is one more. They just look nice. And that may be the best explanation of them all.



GCAS Author Award Program

We are always very pleased to welcome new names to our member/author list, and you will see a few new names once again this year! **Modern Aquarium** is primarily the product of our members. We are grateful for every article and photo from every member, and we hope to hear more from each of you in 2025! Hopefully we'll also get to see more of one another as we move through next year, hopefully free of pandemics!

Overview of the Author Award Program

The GCAS AAP awards points for contributions to **Modern Aquarium**. Each person making a qualifying contribution to **Modern Aquarium** receives points, as well as chances for a **Prize Drawing** at the Annual Holiday Party.

Eligibility

Any member of Greater City who makes a contribution to **Modern Aquarium** is automatically a participant.

Points

Five points will be awarded for an original article of 500 words or less.

Ten points will be awarded for an original article of 501 words and over.

Five points will be awarded for an original photograph, drawing, or illustration submitted with, and as part of, an original article. If more than two photographs, drawings, or illustrations are submitted with a related article, only two will be given points (this is in addition to the points awarded the article, based on its size).

Ten points will be awarded for an original color photograph that is used on the front cover. Photographs must be the work of the member submitting them, and must not have been previously published, or submitted for publication, in any commercial or amateur publication.

Two or more related photographs or illustrations submitted with captions, and occupying one or more pages, will be counted as two photos (10 points) and as an article over 500 words (10 points), for a total of 20 points. An example would be a photo spread with captions.

An original article on a fish in the **C.A.R.E.S.** Preservation Program will receive **double points** (i.e., 10 points for an article of 500 words or less, and 20 points for an article of 501 words or more). Photos and drawings of a **C.A.R.E.S.** eligible species will also receive double points.

Five points will be awarded for an original puzzle which is used on the "Fin Fun" page of **Modern Aquarium**.

Points are awarded only once for an article, drawing, puzzle, or photograph. No points are awarded for subsequent reprints, regardless of whether the original article was awarded points previously in the AAP. To be eligible for AAP points, a contribution must first have been submitted to **Modern Aquarium**. However, if an article previously published in **Modern Aquarium** is significantly revised by its author (as a result of new information or developments), and if such a revision is first submitted to **Modern Aquarium**, it will be treated as a new article. Points are awarded in the year the article is printed. Editorials and President's Messages are excluded.

An article deemed unacceptable by the Editorial Staff of **Modern Aquarium** for reasons of appropriateness of topic, suitability, or possible violations of copyright or libel laws, will be ineligible for participation in the GCAS AAP. Decisions of the Staff are final.

Points credited to an author may not be carried over or credited to subsequent calendar years for the purposes of raffle prize chances or "Author Of The Year" designation.

Bonus Points

If, in the year following its publication in **Modern Aquarium**, an article is given a 1st, 2nd or 3rd place award by the North East Council of Aquarium Societies ("NEC") or by the Federation of American Aquarium Societies ("FAAS"), an additional 10 points will be awarded if the author is a GCAS member in the year the NEC or FAAS award is announced. This applies only to articles (not to drawings, columns, cartoons or photos). These bonus points are credited in the year that the award is announced, not the year for which it is awarded.

Prize Drawing

For every 5 AAP points earned in a calendar year, the recipient is given one chance in our "Authors/Contributors Only" raffle.

Author of the Year

The person with the most points in a calendar year receives a certificate as "**Author Of The Year**" for that year. This is our most prestigious award, and the winner truly exemplifies the high value which they place on the contribution of experience and knowledge to the aquarium hobby at large.

GCAS Past Award Winners

JOSEPH FERDENZI ROLL OF HONOR

Gene Baiocco	Pete D'Orio	Al Grusell	Al Priest	Nick Repanes
Jules Birnbaum	Charles Elzer	Paul Hahnel	Susan Priest	Don Sanford
Joe Bugeia	Joe Ferdenzi	Ben Haus	Herman Rabenau	Mark Soberman
Mary Ann Bugeia	Warren Feuer	Emma Haus	Dan Radebaugh	
Dan Carson	Herb Fogal	Jason Kerner	Marsha Radebaugh	
Claudia Dickinson	Horst Gerber	Jack Oliva	Marcia Repanes	

DON SANFORD BREEDER OF THE YEAR

1981-83 Ginny & Charlie Eckstein	1994-95 Steve Sagona	2011-12, '16, '19-21..... Joseph Graffagnino
1983-85 Rich Sorensen	1995-96 Tom Miglio	2013..... Leslie Dick
1985-86 Yezid Gutierrez	1996-97 Mark Soberman	2014..... Mark Soberman
1986-87 Joe Ferdenzi	1997-98 Jeff George	2015..... Artie Platt
1987-88 Patricia Piccione	1998-'00 Tom Miglio	2017..... Joe Ferdenzi
1988-89 Joe Ferdenzi	2000-01 Mark Soberman	2018..... Warren Feuer
1989-90 Francis Lee	2001-02 Alexander Priest	2022..... Jules Birnbaum
1990-91 Eddie Szablewicz	2002-05 Anton Vukich	2023..... Harry W. Faustmann
1991-92 Dominic Isla	2006, 2018..... Warren Feuer	
1993-94 Joe Ferdenzi	2007-10 Jeffrey Bollbach	

GENE BAIOTTO AQUARIST OF THE YEAR (Since 1990-91)

1990-91 Diane & Harold Gottlieb	2007 Ed Vukich
1991-92 Doug Curtin & Don Curtin	2008 Al Grusell
1992-93 Mark Soberman	2009 Dan Radebaugh
1993-94 Warren Feuer	2010 Pete D'Orio
1994-95 Steve Sagona	2011 Jeffrey Bollbach
1995-96 Alexander & Susan Priest	2012 Jules Birnbaum
1996-97 Joe Ferdenzi	2013 Dan Puleo
1997-98 Claudia Dickinson	2014 Leonard Ramroop
1998-99 Vincent & Rosie Sileo	2015 Alexander & Susan Priest
1999-00 Pete D'Orio	2016 Elliot Oshins
2000-01 Bernard Harrigan	2017 Joseph Gurrado
2001-02 Joe Ferdenzi	2018 Dan Radebaugh
2001-02 Jason Kerner	2019 Marsha Radebaugh
2002-03 Carlotti De Jager	2020 Jules Birnbaum
2003-04 Jack Traub	2022 Jason Kerner
2004-05 Claudia Dickinson	2023..... Harry W. Faustmann
2006 Anton Vukich	

WALTER HUBEL BOWL SHOW CHAMPIONS (Since 1983-84)

1983-84, 84-85..... Tom Lawless	1996-97, 97-98..... Steve Sagona	2009..... Mario Bengcion
1985-86, 86-87..... Joe Ferdenzi	1998-99, 99-2000..... Tom Miglio	2010..... Alexander A. Priest
1987-88 (tie)..... Mark Soberman	2000-01..... Pat Coushaine	2011, 2012..... Richard Waizman
and Mary Ann & Joe Bugeia	2001-02..... William Amely	2013..... Jerry O'Farrell
1988-89 Jason Ryan	2002-03..... Evelyn Eagan	2014..... Ruben Lugo
1989-90 Eddie Szablewicz	2003-04..... William Amely	2015, 16, 19, 23 Richard Waizman
1991-92 thru 93-94..... Steve Sagona	2004-05..... Evelyn Eagan	2017, 2018..... William Amely
1994-95..... Carlotti De Jager	2006, 2007..... Ed Vukich	2020..... Harry Faustmann
1995-96..... Mary Eve Brill	2008..... William Amely	2022..... John "Buzz" Buzzetti

GCAS PRESIDENTS (Post 1945 — number in parenthesis = consecutive terms)

1946-49.....Elliott Whiteway (4)	1968-70.....Walter Hubel (2)	1981-84.....Brian Kelly (3)
1950-51.....Robert Greene (2)	1970-72.....Dave Williams (2)	1984-86.....Jack Oliva (2)
1952-53.....Robert Maybeck (2)	1972-73.....Dan Carson (1)	1986-97.....Joe Ferdenzi (11)
1954-55.....Leonard Meyer (2)	1973-75.....Herb Fogal (2)	1997-99.....Vincent Sileo (2)
1956-57.....Sam Estro (2)	1975-76.....Richard Hoey (1)	1999-00.....Jeff George (1)
1958.....Leonard Meyer (2+1)	1976-77.....Ted Tura (1)	2000-08.....Joe Ferdenzi (11+8)
1959-64.....Gene Baiocco (6)	1977-78.....Gene Baiocco (6+1)	2009-16.....Dan Radebaugh (8)
1965.....Andrew Fazio (1)	1978-79.....Louis Kromm (1)	2017-24.....Horst Gerber (8)
1966-68.....Charles Elzer (2)	1979-81.....Don Sanford (2)	

Greater City Aquarium Society

2024 Awards

To be awarded March 5, 2025

GENE BAIOTTO AQUARIST OF THE YEAR AWARD

Harry W. Faustmann

DON SANFORD BREEDER OF THE YEAR AWARD

Harry W. Faustmann

WALTER HUBEL BOWL SHOW CHAMPION

Ritchie Waizman

JOSEPH FERDENZI ROLL OF HONOR

Ed Vukich

AUTHOR AWARD PROGRAM (AAP) AWARDS

OPEN CATEGORY

Unfortunately, the folks at NEC ran into some technical problems in publishing this year's Author Awards. Once they are able to do so, they (and we) will publish the results. Until then,
SUSPENSE!



GCAS 2024 Author Award Totals

2024	Art Work	Number of Articles		Awards	Total
TOTALS	(in points)				Points
	Photo/ Drawing	500 Words or Less	Over 500 Words Or Caption Contest Winner	Bonus Points	2024 Year Total
Author	(Up to two per article)				March to December
Eric Abad	5				5
Donna Ansari	10				10
Alex Ayala	5				5
Jules Birnbaum	30	5			35
Jeff Bollbach	20				20
Jerry Brostek	15				15
Carillo Vladimir Bryan	10				10
Diego Cheng	10				10
Tyrone Dussard	5				5
Joseph Ferdenzi	100	5	10		115
Warren Feuer	10	5			15
Jason Forbes	5				5
Walter Gallo	5	5			10
Mike Gallo	10	10			20
Horst Gerber	10	5			15
Jason Gold	20		40		60
Lonnie Goldman	15				15
Joseph Gurrado	10				10
Basil Holubis	10	5			15
Victor Huang	40				40
Jillian Jouan	10				10
Nonino Juniur	5				5
Nathan Justa	5				5
Tom Keegan	10				10
Jason Kerner	45	35			80
Kennoine de Lavilladde	20				20
Albert Lee	5				5
Angela Lee	35				35
Minh Lee	5				5
Denver Lettman	45				45
Dee Manuel	5				5
Dan McKercher	10		10		20
Scott Peters	35				35
Frank Pirraglia	5				5
Dan Radebaugh	25	10	10		45
Marsha Radebaugh	90	5	80		175
Leonard Ramroop	20				20

Vinnie Richie	15				15
Frank Schalterbrandt	10				10
Jan Sereni	40				40
Tony Siano	5				5
Stephen Sica	75	15	70		160
San Youw Su	5				5
Undergravel Reporter	50	45			95
Thomas Warns	10		10		20
Ron Webb	55				55





GCAS 2024

Breeder Awards Totals

Ron Webb has bred enough fish to have amassed a total of 225 points since the year 2022. This has won him the title of **ADVANCED BREEDER**.

<i>Corydoras aneus</i> - Albino	10 points	Catfish
<i>Melanotaenia praecox</i>	5	Egglayer
<i>Neocaradina davidi</i> - Orange	5	Shrimp
<i>Tanichthys albonubes</i>	5	Egglayer
<i>Ancistrus species</i> -Super Red	15	Catfish
<i>Neocaradina davidi</i> - Cherry	5	Shrimp
<i>Neocaradina davidi</i> - Blue Dream	5	Shrimp
<i>Neocaradina davidi</i> - Green	5	Shrimp
<i>Clea Helena</i> – Assassin snail	5	Snail
<i>Poecillia reticulata</i> - Lyertail	5	Livebearer
<i>Poecillia latipinna</i> - Gold Lyertail	5	Livebearer
Total	70 points	

Jason Kerner has bred the following fish to earn him the title of **BREEDER**.

<i>Corydoras aneus</i> - Albino	5 points	Catfish
---------------------------------	----------	---------

Harry W. Faustmann has a total of **340 points**, earning him the title of **Master Breeder!**

<i>Heterandria formosa</i>	5	Livebearer
<i>Nothobranchius</i> sp. So. Kenya	20	Egglayer-Killifish
<i>Nothobranchius rachovi</i> - Beira 98	20	Egglayer-Killifish
<i>Nothobranchius Korthausea</i> - Red	20	Egglayer-Killifish
<i>Corydoras sterbai</i>	10	Catfish
<i>Aphyosemion bitaeniatum</i> -Lagos Red	15	Egglayer-Killifish
<i>Simpsonichthys santanae</i>	20	Egglayer-Killifish
<i>Macropodus opercularis</i> -Red Tail	5	Egglayer
<i>Tanichthys albonubes</i>	5	Egglayer
120 points for this year.		

Lonnie Goldman has bred enough fish to become a **BREEDER**.

Jewel Cichlid	10	Egglayer
<i>Poecillia reticulata</i> -Guppy	5	Livebearer
Parrot Cichlid - Polar Blue	20	Egglayer
Endler's Livebearer	5	Livebearer
40 points for this year		

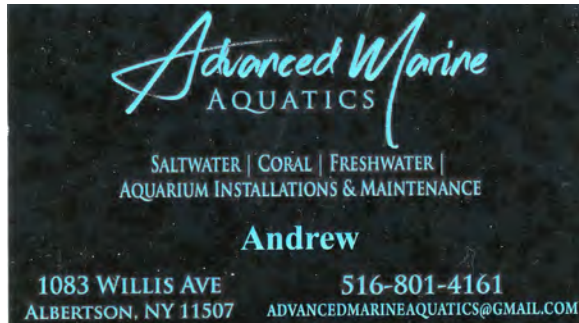
Edward Vukich has bred enough fish to be a BREEDER.

<i>Xiphophorus helleri</i>	5	Livebearer
<i>Variabilichromis moorii</i>	15	Egglayer
Dwarf Fireball Platy	10	Livebearer
<i>Barbus</i> species	15	Egglayer
<i>Tanichthys albonubes</i>	5	Egglayer
<i>Poecillia sphenops</i>	5	Livebearer
<i>Macropodus opercularis</i> -Red Tail	5	Egglayer
60 points for this year		

Jules Birnbaum has enough fish to become an ADVANCED BREEDER with a total of 130 points since the year 2022.

<i>Cryptoherus maculatus</i> -Yellow	10	Egglayer
<i>Corydoras aeneus</i>	10	Catfish
<i>Labrolocus ocellatus</i> -Gold	15	Egglayer
35 points this year.		

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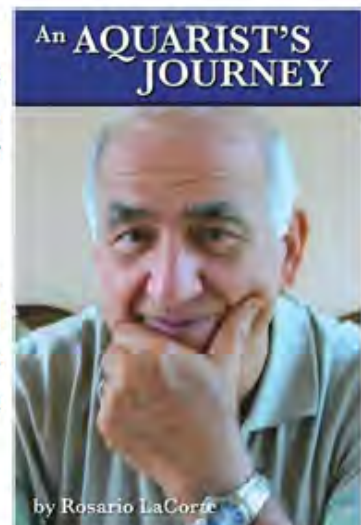


An Aquarist's Journey

Rosario La Corte is one of the world's leading authorities on breeding fish and he has written numerous articles and books, contributing greatly to our understanding of fish and their habits.

Now, for the first time, here is a compilation of his travels, adventures, successes (and, very occasional failures) all relating to collecting, keeping, and breeding fish, and in his own words (and edited by **Modern Aquarium's** Editor, Dan Radebaugh).

Available in softcover at Amazon.com



Ex-President's Message

by Horst Gerber

I can't let go completely after eight years, so here is my Ex-President's message for 2025. I hope everyone had a wonderful holiday season with family and friends! Our official year at Greater City begins in March, so Happy New Year! A particularly happy new year for me, since I don't have to keep acting presidential any more!

The Greater City Aquarium Society was founded in 1922. Our current magazine, **Modern Aquarium**, has been published continuously since 1994, and there was a predecessor—see below! We saw many successes in 2024, including the move to our new meeting place at Alley Pond Environmental Center!

We have also seen a steady increase in the number of our younger members -- both men and women. We're very pleased to continue to serve and encourage all!



Horst



Scientific Expedition in Peru Yields Aquatic Marvels

A series by the Undergravel Reporter

In spite of popular demand to the contrary, this humor and information column continues. As usual, it does NOT necessarily represent the opinions of the Editor, or of the Greater City Aquarium Society.

A “biological scavenger hunt” in the remote Alto Mayo region of Peru uncovered more than two dozen new-to-science species (native populations had already encountered these animals), headlined by the blob-headed catfish.

The expedition took place in the summer of 2022, but researchers only published their discoveries at the end of 2024. The researchers from Conservation International took the trek deep into the Peruvian jungle where the Andes Mountains meet the Amazon rainforest, and they did so alongside local indigenous groups such as the Awajun.

The headline discovery (at least for our purposes) was a “blob-headed” armored catfish with an unusually large nose. It looks like the ugliest *Plecostomus* that the Undergravel Reporter has ever seen, though it was characterized by researchers in the genus *Chaetostoma*, and not *Hypostomus*. Trond Larsen, the head of Conservation International’s Rapid Assessment Program, said that the Awajun eat these blob-headed catfish, though he offered no details about how they are prepared. The function of this large head “blob” is not well understood.

The blob-headed catfish was not the only newly-discovered freshwater species. The expedition also recorded a new species of bristlenose catfish of the *Ancistrus* genus,

as well as a colorful tetra of the *Knodus* genus (the blue tetra is the only tetra of the *Knodus* genus that appears widespread in the aquarium hobby). In addition, the research team collected a new species of swamp eel capable of “walking” on land and breathing for a time out of water.

The researchers also found a semi-aquatic mouse species, considered a particularly rare and noteworthy find, as well as a dwarf squirrel with a maximum length of about five inches. One small patch of white sand forest was brimming with a new species of salamander that climbs trees to eat insects with their long tongues, but scientists warned that the salamander habitat was limited to an extremely small range.

Conservation International has noted that since 2000, many lands traditionally populated by the hunter-gatherer Awajun

people have been overtaken by Peruvians that seek to grow vanilla, coffee, cacao, and rice. The researchers at Conservation International hoped to raise awareness about some of the unique species in the Alto Mayo region, which is considered

protected land but has been increasingly encroached upon by plantations and logging operations. Conservation International hopes to establish “ecological restoration and recuperation zones” that can be protected from development, and to help Peruvians adapt sustainable agroforestry practices. Yulisa Tiwa, an Awajun community member who participated in the expedition, noted that Conservation International has also helped to teach the Awajun community about human rights.



Source: [Blob-headed fish and four mammals among 27 newly described species in Peru’s Alto Mayo](#)



The 'blob-headed' bristlemouth armored catfish (*Chaetostoma* sp.). Image credit: Conservation International / Robinson Olivera.

From The Pages of Yesteryear

The Aquarium December 1962

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