

G.C.K.A. Newsletter

November 2008

A (usually) Bi-Monthly Publication of the Greater Cincinnati Killifish Association

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Back to Basics:

The hiatus in newsletters comes to a slow close with this edition. If you read these issues and my club-wide emails, you'll remember that we slowed club activity in the late Summer and early Fall this year due to sporadic attendance at club functions. My last communication was to arrange a meeting to discuss the club's future, which occurred November 1.

In an effort to bring everyone to place of mutual understanding I'll provide the following summary comments, which, I think, were shared by those in attendance. Several factors have contributed to the gradual decline we've seen in membership and meeting attendance over the past 5 or so years.

1. Fish and information availability are not the driving reasons for folks to be in the club. The Google and Aqua-bid have pretty much substituted for the club filling those needs.
2. The geographical distribution of the club membership has changed dramatically from a southwestern Ohio group to where we are spread widely over the southern 2/3 of Ohio and northern Indiana, some weekends. Fuel prices have driven travel decisions as well.
3. Monthly meetings are frequent enough to have them slip down the priority list for some who have busy schedules.

Our conversation centered on the value of the long history of the club, the valued members who have devoted extraordinary amounts of effort, time and energy into the club, and that we all valued the relationships we enjoy when we meet. The idea of

dissolution of the club was unanimously declined. We decided to make some changes in order to continue the club's operation with the hope of growing some enthusiasm.

1. We will limit club meetings to four per year in different areas of the state, at least one in central Ohio, one or two in Cincinnati, and one or two in the Dayton area.
2. We will avoid the first quarter of the year to avoid the problems that Midwest winters can bring.
3. Each meeting except the Christmas party will have a program with a speaker or other presentation.
4. We will do at least one major acquisition of desirable fish for auction at one or more of the meetings to attract attendance and visiting by other hobbyists
5. We will re-visit the breeder award program to generate interest in breeding and sharing stock.
6. Tom Recktenwalt stepped forward to manage the website.

So, GCKA will not die and we are committed to continuing what has been a long tradition in the hobby in the Mid-west and in the lives of the membership.

2008 Christmas Party:

The Bazeley's have graciously agreed to host this year's Christmas party on **Sunday, December 14, 2008 at 2:00PM** at their home in the Price Hill area of Cincinnati. I have attached a map for directions. Don Green's home, our usual site is on the market necessitating the switch.

The format for the party will be the familiar "bring a dish to share" potluck with the club providing the meat and soft drinks. The

highlight of the party has always been the gift exchange where we draw numbers to draw from the stash of gifts the each of us bring or, what's often more fun, take a gift that's already been picked from a friend who picks again. There's a \$10.00 maximum value to the gifts.

We always encourage the exchange of livestock, fish or plants, by auction at all meetings, so bring along something to contribute to the auction. This is always a fun time and a chance to enjoy food and fellowship.

Potpourri:

CAFÉ Joint show/workshop: CAFÉ leadership has not responded to our idea of a joint event, so this one goes on the back burner for now. My hope is that we might attract some of the CAFÉ folks to our meeting in central Ohio and re-visit that idea later.

Road Trips to other regional club events are a way to build community in the hobby and a fun way to spend a day or two away from home. The AKA national meeting in the Portland, OR this year, so this may be a good substitute for not wanting to make that trek. I will attempt to make everyone aware of those opportunities as they come up.

Book Review by_-Tom Isgro

Culturing Live Foods

A Step-by-Step Guide for Culturing One's Own Food for the Home Aquarium

Michael R. Hellweg

TFH Publications, Neptune NJ

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\$35.95

ISBN 978-0-7938-0655-3

240pp

Hardback

Many of us know Mike as an accomplished breeder and hobbyist. He has spawned more than 200 species of aquarium fish and attributes his successes to the use of living food organisms in his breeding programs. In this volume, he provides culturing techniques for eighty different living foods from green water to larger crustaceans (crawfish).

The table of contents reads as a veritable who's who in the tropical fish feed program. Green Water, Protozoa (Euglena and Paramecium), Metazoans (copepods and rotifers) Brine Shrimp, plants, worms, mollusks (snails), crustaceans (daphnia, true shrimps) insects, fish and amphibians are all here. Those keeping killies will likely concentrate on the smaller foods but those raising cichlids and other large predators will find invaluable information as well.

There is also a section on collecting living foods in the wild for those who are interested.

Another valuable asset is the 2 Appendices. The first deals with troubleshooting, and correcting issues causing crashes and poor production in live food cultures. The second is a matrix of suitable foods for freshwater and marine fishes, amphibians and reptiles.

This book deals with live foods in a different manner than the previous books with which most of us are familiar. A previous tome by Charles Masters, written some time ago, was more geared to the collection of food items rather than their culture.

Hellweg's book belongs on every aquarist's bookshelf. It is a both a reference and quick read with more than enough information to satisfy even the most advanced fish keeper. If the price seems a little steep, shop around. I found mine on Amazon.com for \$23.

See everyone at the Christmas Party!!