



THE WAVE

Your Link to SEASL Events

JUNE, 2006

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The Topic Program, SEASL's new online discussion forum, is now open!

Thanks to a lot of time and effort from Darrin Trager, our webmaster, we have our own discussion forum available at www.seasl.org. This new forum will enable us to post information for members, such as local fish store specials and discounts. It will also provide another means for members to keep in touch!

In addition to providing us with a self-moderated discussion board, the Topic Program will be able to facilitate secure online officer nominations and voting in the future.

The program currently houses 6 member forums:

Tanks A Lot – any tank-related topic

Inverts – a forum for invertebrates

Corals – discussion about all types of corals

LFS Talk – the scoop on the latest sales and member-only discounts

Trading Post – buy/sell/trade livestock and dry goods

The Refugium – off-topic conversation

We are also hosting a Welcome forum in the Topic Program that is accessible to anyone who registers at www.seasl.org. The Welcome forum provides one more way for people to communicate with our members and learn more about SEASL.

If you have any questions or suggestions for the Topic Program, drop us a line!
<http://www.seasl.org/contactPage.php>

Too Close to Miss - The International Marine Aquarium Conference (IMAC '06)

By: Del Brashares

This year's IMAC was everything I expected and more. Last fall, after hearing there was a major aquatic conference in the area (on Reef Central, of course), I had an idea about making the trip. Once the IMAC icon appeared on the SEASL home page, I really got serious and before you know it, my wife Ruth and I were registered.

We got the trip off on the right foot with an IMAC-sponsored behind-the-scenes tour of the Shedd Aquarium. Our group was lucky enough to have the curator, George Parsons, as our tour guide. Phenomenal seeing the pathology department, operating room, food preparation area, quarantine tanks, plumbing, fixtures, and the biggest protein skimmer I've ever seen with four outlets for the foam. One tip – skip the bus back that leaves at 3 PM. We ran into John and Carol Hemkens about 2:30 PM and they suggested taking the train back. That gave us 3 more hours to really get to see the wonders of the Shedd. One factoid – the Shedd recently celebrated its 75th anniversary. *(Cont'd on page 6)*

Featured Local Fish Store

Gateway Aquatics

By John Henrion III

Owner: Chad Smith

4570 Telegraph Rd • St. Louis, MO 63129

Business Hours:

Mon-Fri: noon – 8 PM

Sat: 10 AM – 8 PM

Sun: noon – 5 PM



Chad Smith, owner of Gateway Aquatics

Q: What day(s) do your shipments arrive?

A: Usually Tue-Wed, but we also get some throughout the week. If anyone is interested, call us on Tuesday. That's when I have a good idea when things will be coming in and how many orders I will place. Some weeks I place up to 6 orders from separate vendors to get a very diverse inventory selection.

Q: How long have you been in the saltwater hobby?

A: 7 years

Q: How long have you been in business?

A: 1 year on the internet and 3 months retail.

Q: Why did you open a fish store?

A: To get the business out of my house, as it was growing quickly and overtaking my basement and life. Also I picked an area with no stores to try to bring this hobby to a new area and introduce this hobby to people that have not seen it. Also I grew up in Oakville and graduated from Oakville High. My wife and I plan to move back there close to the store in the fall.

Q: What is your store's specialty?

A: Strictly saltwater, we specialize in common and unique corals, but we also carry a lot of inverts and fish. We can also special order just about anything!

Q: What is your favorite fish, your favorite invert, and/or your favorite coral and why?

A: Well to be honest, I don't have a favorite fish. I really like a variety of fish like tangs, wrasses, and anthias, but I never really decided on a favorite. As far as corals, I am a big zoanthid junky. The variety of colors is amazing and I like to frag them and watch them grow. Inverts are something I really like and would say that one of the least liked inverts is my favorite, the peacock mantis shrimp. It is a truly amazing invert and is like the Swiss Army knife of the ocean. I have one as a shop pet in a tank by itself with corals - it is just amazing to watch.

Q: What is the store's biggest challenge and how do you overcome it?

A: building and maintaining a store on a budget is very difficult. As we all know this hobby is very expensive and so opening a store full of saltwater livestock is not cheap, especially when I have done this without any type of business loans or partners. My method is to try and have low overhead to keep prices low. As the business and clientele grows, the store and inventory will grow. I am very committed to the store and continue to put a major majority of the store's income right back into livestock and dry goods. I am a small fish, but hoping that I can have the best prices and selection as well as good customer service and that should set me apart from other LFS. I also try to keep the store as clean as we can, as I think that really makes a good impression on people. I know it does for me.

Q: If you could offer a single piece of advice to a marine aquarist, what would it be?

A: Do a lot of research and talk to fellow reefers and see what works for you. If you ask 10 people 10 questions, you will get 10 different answers, so look for first hand info and see what works well for you. Saltwater tanks vary, so what works for one might not work for you. This hobby can be very challenging, but also very addicting, so accept the challenge and you will see the rewards.

Q: Any additional comments you would like to share?

A I have been a hobbyist for 7+ years and have been to every store in the area, I tried to combine the best of them all into my store. We are a small store, but with lower overhead, our prices are less than most stores and usually as good or better than a lot of internet companies, due to the fact that I sell online and ship livestock all over the U.S. and outside the U.S. We can special order items and have custom tanks built to your dimensions. We also offer a 10% discount to all SEASL members on any purchase over \$50, excluding tanks and salt. Please stop in and see us, we are the new guys on the block, but we have plenty of knowledge and inventory to keep our customers happy.

Watch for details on Gateway's
Grand Opening June 17 – 18. Chad will be
hosting a BBQ and a chance for hobbyists to get
to know each other a little better!

May Meeting Recap

Frag Fest 2006

SEASL's annual frag swap was held on May 13 and was attended by approximately 80 hobbyists. The turnout was incredible and we were very fortunate to have such a large space for this event. Thanks to Dennis Coombs for hosting us!

The event was organized a little differently this year to accommodate several new games and events. The raffles were a big hit and "Rob Your Neighbor" was a crowd pleaser.

Many frags and several fish exchanged hands this year. Everyone went home happy, whether that meant they traded away their surplus frags or picked up a cooler full of new ones.

The swap was followed by a pizza party and some good conversation. It was a fantastic end to a great SEASL season. Although our "official" meetings are on hiatus until September, keep your eyes on our website for local store tours and gatherings during the summer months.



Brad Witte shows off an entry in the Ticketed Raffle



The rooms started to fill as the raffles started to get organized



The Officers clown around before business



Chad Farmer's Jr. Reefer

Summer Meeting Previews

Beldt's

Weds June 7 from 8pm – 10pm



Beldt's will be hosting us for a store tour on June 7 from 8pm – 10pm. A few items they have planned for us include:

- 20% discount on dry goods
- 30% discount on live stock
- Tanks at dealer cost (if you pay with a credit card, add 3%)
- Buckets of Coral Life and Instant Ocean Salt for \$29.99
- Door prizes
- At store PACKED with fish, corals, and supplies from a \$12,000 inventory purchase for this event.

This is a SEASL event, but non-members are welcome to join us! Feel free to bring a friend or two. If they aren't yet in the hobby, this tour might be just the nudge they needed.

Gateway Aquatics

Tues July 11 from 7:30pm – 9:30pm

Gateway Aquatics will be hosting a SEASL store tour on July 11. Watch www.SEASL.org and The Wave for more details!

Welcome New Members!

We would like to welcome our newest club members:

Aaron Binkley
Daniel Brandt
Matt Bringer
Robert & Amy Conwell
Edward Cory
Paula DeClue
Floyd Denton
Kelly & Ellen Edggar
Eric Fite
Tim & Heather Frayer
Nicholas Grant
Josh Gruenwald
McFadden Joe
Tricia & Shawn Moore
Mike Peliken
Eddie & Sara Peliken
Sean Roman
James Sanders
John Schrock
Glenn Stemmesmann
Harvey Thielemier
Bill Trost

Phew! That's quite a list!
We're glad you found us and we hope you'll enjoy everything SEASL has to offer to St. Louis area hobbyists.

Can you draw a stickman?

We're still looking for help designing the title art for The Wave. If you can draw a decent stick man, you have more artistic talent than all the officers combined and we need your help! Email Becky McAlister at becks@socket.net or PM McBeck at Reef Central.

Show Us Your Baby!

Lee Van Hoose's full tank shot:



Roy Brown's Superman Danae:



Del Brashares snapped this shot of a skimmer at the Shedd Aquarium:



Tips & Tricks

Shoot with your lens front parallel to the aquarium glass. Shooting at an angle to the glass can create distortion.

- submitted by Darrin Trager

Product Review by Greg Frimel

PRODUCT: Easy Blade Scraper

COST: \$15.49

Recommended? YES!

I have an in-wall 75 gallon glass tank with no access from the front. I have struggled for years to remove coralline algae, particularly near the bottom and in corners.

I purchased the Easy Blade Scraper to see if it would help. The scraper retrofits to a Magnavore magnetic scraper with super glue, which took about five minutes. They do make other models for other magnetic scrapers.

It has a removable blade and works great for removing coralline algae. The blade does have to be removed from the water or it will rust.

I highly recommend this product for anyone who has struggled to remove coralline algae from their tank.

(IMAC '06, Cont'd from page 1)

One of its inhabitants, Granddad, an 80-plus-year-old Australian lungfish, arrived in 1933 from Sydney in time for the World's Fair.

The conference itself was superb. Lots of vendors and product displays and a few samples. A 6-foot T-5 lighting kit with 14 bulbs was unveiled. We saw a demonstration of a lighting kit made of LEDs. I have an idea of what many of us will be using for lighting kits a few years down the road. You could pick up the latest info on saltwater mixes and fish food. Julian Sprung, Anthony Calfo, and others were signing copies of their books.

It would be hard to imagine a better set of aquatic speakers. Anthony Calfo presented "A Call to Farms." Allen LaPoint (Shedd Aquarium) talked about water quality monitoring. Dr Sanjay Joshi discussed thwarting Murphy's Law when designing a reef system. Mike Paletta went through the trials and tribulations of setting up a 1,200-gallon aquarium. Other big names included Julian Sprung, Eric Borneman (coming to SEASL in November), and Robert Fenner. DVDs of the presentations will be available soon from IMAC. The SEASL library has a number of the DVDs from the 2005 IMAC. A sample presentation from a presentation Eric Borneman gave at last year's IMAC is available at www.theimac.org.

Dozens of raffle items. Everything from skimmers to books to supplies to you just about name it. How about a fully stocked 90-gallon reef



A number of SEASL members were in attendance; Jim & Janet Craig, John & Carol Hemkins, Del & Ruth Brashares, and Kathy Leahy are pictured here.

aquarium? Now sure how one would get that home in your trunk or back seat. How about clams? One couple was particularly fortunate. A company donated 14 clams. The couple was winning clam after clam. Even after the tickets were shook up again, they won more until they claimed 8 of the 14 clams. No word yet how they've done with lottery tickets lately.

And food? How about a dandy pizza buffet at the Friday night reception. And a great banquet on Saturday night with Walt Smith as a guest speaker giving us a virtual tour of his coral propagation facility in Fiji. After the dinner and before the presentation, Walt awarded a trip for two to Fiji. The evening wrapped up with a group of Polynesian dancers providing some fine entertainment.

We all met a lot of fine folks and shared a lot of experiences. These memories will stay with us for a long time. One note of concern was that Dennis Gallagher, who has been the force behind IMAC for a number of years, suffered a stroke and heart attack less than a month before the conference. He was able to get around using a scooter. We all look forward to seeing him in better health next year.

Speaking of next year's conference, it will be held on 1-3 June 2007 at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, near O'Hare. What a great way to spend time learning more about our hobby and making some fine friends.