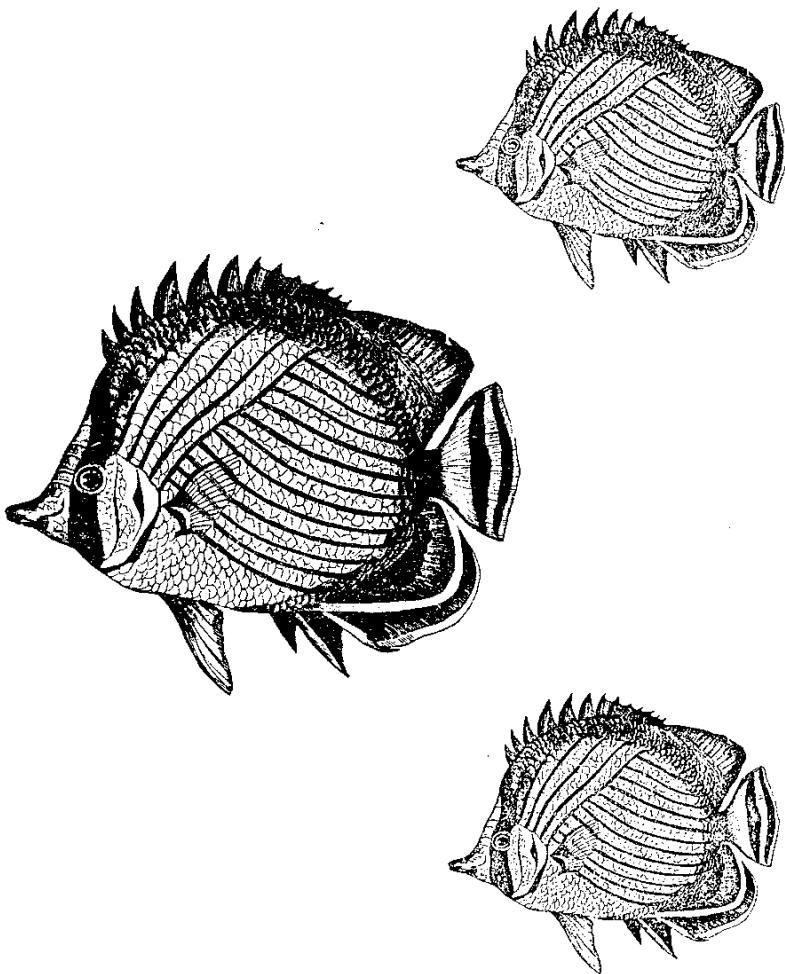


# DELTA TALE

Official Publication of the Potomac Valley Aquarium Society

Volume 29 • Number 6

November/December 1998



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Volume 29 • Number 6

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*Delta Tale* is published bimonthly for the benefit of the membership of the POTOMAC VALLEY AQUARIUM SOCIETY, INC., a non-profit educational and social organization. The society was founded in 1960 for the purposes of furthering the aquarium hobby thru the dissemination of information and advice, and the promotion of good fellowship among the membership by organized activities and competitions.

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All correspondence to the society and to *Delta Tale* should be directed to:

P.O. Box 664  
Merrifield, VA 22116-0664.

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*Vice President* ..... Don Kinyon  
*Treasurer* ..... Barbara McClorey  
*Secretary* ..... Wayne Considine



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Gary Hostetler Ray Hughes Pete Thrift  
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*Ways & Means* ..... Pete Thrift  
*Delta Tale* ..... John Mangan  
*Exchange Editor* ..... Julio Melgar  
*Internet* ..... David Snell

## PVAS Web site

<http://www.erols.com/dsnell/pvas.htm>

## PVAS hotline

703/352-3365

# *Frum the editor's desk*

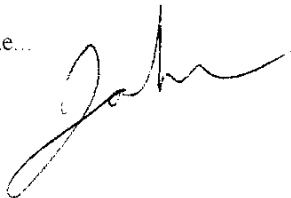
It looks like PVAS has survived another year. Not that there was any doubt that it would under the capable leadership of Dave Snell and all of the other volunteers we have serving in various capacities. After a number of years of just coasting along the group has really been revitalized over the past several years thanks to an influx of new members willing to get involved. Thanks to all of their hard work PVAS is now entering its **39th** year of existence - the club was started in 1960 as the Potomac Valley Guppy Club. No, I haven't been editor for all 39 years, although there were times when it felt like it. For those of you who may be wondering (I was) I just figured out that 1999 will be the start of my 13th year (uh oh) as editor. I started in 1984 but took a break for a couple of years in the late 80's.

Enough with the past, let's look forward. PVAS has a lot planned for the coming year. We have the dates set for 3 more of our huge auctions and are starting the planning for the Fall Workshop. We also have more fishroom tours planned to take place throughout the year. Watch *Delta Tale* and the web page for information on all of this plus a lot of other stuff too.


I am **still** looking for someone to take over distributing *Delta Tale* to local pet shops. I want someone that I can simply hand a box full of issues to that will then coordinate with other members to get them passed out to shops. This is something that gives us good relations with the various shops plus helps get us known to potential new members.


Since this is still technically a 1998 issue I still have all of the 1998 officers, etc. listed up front. I would however like to announce some changes which will appear starting next issue: John Fields is the new Secretary. New board members are - Mike Cardaci, John Burns, and Rick McKay. The new librarian is Mike Canode. We are still looking for someone to fill the positions of Bowl Show and Program chairmen and someone to take over Ways & Means from Pete Thrift.

Until next time...

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John", written in a cursive style.

# WHAT'S HAPPENING!

 For up to the minute information on what's happening call the free PVAS hotline anytime. (703) 352-3365

 Check out the PVAS Web site at [www.pvas.com](http://www.pvas.com)

**Feb. 11:** PVAS Monthly Meeting Program, door prize, raffles, bowl show, mini-auction, refreshments, and more. Everyone is welcome. Doors open at 7:30 pm, meeting starts at 8:00pm. Additional parking available around the corner in the school lot.

**Feb. 21:** PVAS Winter Auction. To be held at Quality Suites Hotel, Rockville, MD. exit 8 off of I-270, turn left onto Shady Grove Rd., left at second light onto Corporate Blvd. Registration 9 am until noon. Auction begins at 11 am. Everyone is welcome to buy or sell. Always lots of great fish, plants, and supplies for sale.

**Feb. 27:** PVAS Fishroom tour. Featuring the fishroom of Joe and Ellen Szelesi. Details and directions available at the Feb. monthly meeting

**Feb. 26 - 28:** The Carolina Aquarium Workshop XV, sponsored by the Raleigh Aquarium Society. Scheduled speakers are: Jack Watley (Discus), Ed Taylor (Florida Fish Farming), Paul Loiselle (West African Dwarf Cichlids & The Threatened Fishes of Madagascar), Larry Jackson (Diving in the Solomons & Setting up a "Berlin" Reef Tank), Neil Frank (Plants), Lee Finely (*Corydoras* catfish), Harry Faustmann (Maintaining Killifish). If that's not enough for you there's also a native fish collecting trip and NCSU School of Veterinary Medicine tour Friday afternoon, a banquet Saturday night, and an auction on Sunday. For more info contact Ken Fowlston (919) 554-9074 or Gary Held (919) 387-0833, or [www.yourtown.net/display\\_main/Org4.932.html](http://www.yourtown.net/display_main/Org4.932.html)  
The Raleigh Aquarium Society is a great group that always puts on an excellent workshop. I highly recommend attending if you can.

**March 8:** PVAS Monthly Meeting

**April 12:** PVAS Monthly Meeting

**May 10:** PVAS Monthly Meeting

**May 14 - 16:** American Livebearer Association Convention, Cleveland, OH.

**June 13:** PVAS Spring Auction

**July 12:** PVAS Monthly Meeting

**Aug. 9:** PVAS Monthly Meeting

**Sept. 13:** PVAS Monthly Meeting

**Oct. 18:** PVAS Monthly Meeting

Nov. 8: PVAS Monthly Meeting  
Nov. 13 - 14: PVAS Fall Workshop and Auction  
Dec. 13: PVAS Holiday Dinner

If you know of any "fishy" happenings let me know and they can be included here.

J.M.

## TRADING POST

PVAS members may advertise in the trading post at no charge. Send ads to *Delta Tale*, c/o John Mangan, 12633, Oakwood Dr., Woodbridge, VA 22192.

For Sale: backissue aquarium magazines. Many different titles. Send SASE for catalog.  
For Sale: Plastic fish bags. Standard thickness and 3 mil extra heavy. Several sizes of each will be available at PVAS monthly meetings and Auctions. **NOTE: I will not be at the Feb. PVAS auction.** If you need bags see me at the Feb. monthly meeting.  
John Mangan, 12633 Oakwood Dr., Woodbridge, VA 22192.



## **President's Message**

David J. Snell

My first year as president of PVAS has come and gone. Looking back I feel we had a great year. I hope you all feel that 1998 was a great year as well.

Here is quick summary of our activities in 1998:

A number of great monthly programs given by PVAS members, other aquarium societies, and knowledgeable individuals.

Three very successful auctions funded PVAS for the year. The trend in our auctions does seem to run a bit longer than normal, but without our auctions we would have great trouble financing our organization.

In April, some PVAS members, including myself, had the opportunity to go on a native fish collecting trip with a number of the region's NANFA members and the NANFA president.

In the summer, PVAS made a trip to Gwynnbrook Farms Discus hatchery owned by Peter Thode.

Our Fall Workshop was a success with 3 nationally known speakers - Lee Finley, Shane Linder, and Karen Randall, 1 great ichthyologist - Dr Stan Weitzman and the always-fun Ray "Kingfish" Lucas. (Ok - so the Workshop banquet room was a little small, but we still ate great BBQ and had a great time).

The return of fishroom tours, with 3 great fishroom tours for the year.

We also saw an increase in attendance at monthly meetings; we have been averaging about 25+ people per meeting.

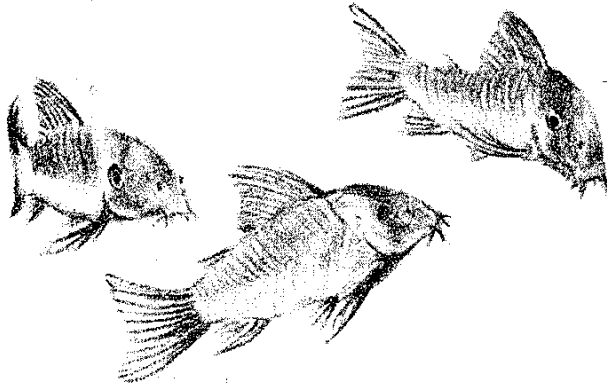
Not a bad year, what do you think?

Looking forward in 1999, we should have another great year. PVAS has already lined up 3 Auctions and our Fall Workshop for 1999. We also have a fishroom tour lined up for February hosted by Joe and Ellen Szelesi, and there is another fishroom tour in the works. As the year continues, I expect PVAS will have a number of other fun activities for everyone.

PVAS continues to need your support. We are always looking for members to help run the organization. This year we have no Program Chairperson, so currently we have no monthly programs. One or two people could handle this position easily. We are also looking to fill a new position this year, the Workshop Chairperson. Members are needed to help replace some positions that have been filled by the same individuals year after year. Ways and Means (currently run by Pete Thrift) and the *Delta Tale* (currently run by John Mangan) needs new people to run them. I would also like to find a person that will take over the Bowl Show and keep track of the monthly winners.

I want to continue to have our membership gain in numbers as well as see our attendance at monthly meetings increase. To do this I need your help. I want everyone to help make others aware of PVAS by helping to distribute the *Delta Tale* to the local fish store that you will visit. I also want everyone to help welcome our new and prospective members. Help by introducing yourselves to any new person you see and by answering any questions they might have about PVAS.

Although I led PVAS for the year, it's you, the member, that make our events and activities successful by helping to organize and by participating in them. Help me make 1999 another great year.



# APISTOGRAMMA HONGSLOI

Don Kinyon PVAS

One of the first rules of breeding fish, any fish, is to make sure your pair consists of both sexes.

I bought a "pair" of fish at a PVAS auction, and took them home to a fifteen gallon breeding tank all set up for *Apistos*. The pH was 5.8, temperature 78 degrees, some locust wood and oak leaves for cover, and a few clay pots to choose from for the nesting site.

The day after they arrived, the smaller fish turned a fairly bright yellow and stayed in or around one of the pots all of the time. I thought breeding would take place soon. It didn't. I left the set up alone, save for regular water changes and maintenance, for quite some time, thinking that the fish needed some time to get used to new surroundings. Still nothing. Now the smaller fish was not as brightly colored, but still in the clay pot.

Thinking that maybe these *Apistogrammas* need higher temperatures like some others do to induce spawning, I raised the water temperature to eighty-one. This made the smaller fish turn back to the brighter yellow coloration that it had at first. I thought surely breeding would take place soon. It didn't. The large male would display in front of the pot, but the smaller fish would retire inside until he left.

This went on for some time, and other fish were spawning, so the Hongsloi got put on the back burner for a while. Finally I decided that it was time for someone else to give it a try. Before the next club meeting I bagged up the fish to take in, and realized why my "pair" hadn't spawned. I had a nice large, colorful male, and a not so large, less colorful, *male*.

I took the fish in anyway, though I felt a little silly. Luckily for me the club member I was giving them to had an actual male-and-female pair that he let me have.

I then set these up in the same tank, same conditions, and within a week, the pair spawned. Much easier!



I left the young in the breeding tank for several weeks, feeding them on baby brine shrimp and micro worms, and they grew well. Sometime between three and four weeks, the young brood split up and no longer followed the mother fish, so the parents were removed.

At one month old the young started eating small dry prepared food along with the live food they had been on. The temperature and pH were the same as they had been for the adults. At two months they were eating all the same foods as the adults, though more finely chopped. They are growing well and starting to show typical Cichlid behavior at ten weeks.

And I'm getting better at telling the boys from the girls.

# STAR WARS FISH

By George White

Angelfish may be anything but angelic. Have you ever noticed how angelfish sometimes flash like jewels in the morning sunshine? And how they tilt their bodies at odd angles and maneuver about the aquarium rather than swim in straight lines? Well, so have scientists at the Australian National Museum's Division of Marine Invertebrates.

Two of the scientists, Dr. Andrew Parker and Martyn Robinson were intrigued and wondered if there was a special reason for his odd behavior. Was it more than merely a swimming pattern that might be related to the angelfish's need to swim around aquatic plants at the edge of the Amazon River and other lush waterways?

They noticed that when angelfish were apparently fighting over territory or establishing a pecking order, the angelfish moved within specific ranges of each other, slanting their thin, flat bodies into set angles. Sometimes they would maneuver about for hours. Occasionally one of the fish would appear suddenly to be stunned even though no physical contact had been made. Was this a part of a ritualized fight that had evolved as a means for angelfish to decide their arguments without injuring each other? This seemed unusual since other Cichlids inflict at least some damage on each other when settling differences.

One day, a scientist noticed that a very bright flash of light hit his eye as the angelfish spun about each other. He then studied their scales and found they have evolved as very powerful reflectors--the most efficient known to man. Under the microscope he discovered the scales have specialized layers, each of which reflects part of the color spectrum, red, green, blue, and violet. As a result, the scales reflect white light at an almost 100 per cent rate — far better than any manmade devices.

The scientists then studied the interaction between the angelfish and concluded that they utilize Star Wars technology. The fish are able to focus the full force of sunlight to create a laser-like beam. At close range, this beam can be a powerful weapon. If an angelfish succeeds in targeting its opponent's eye for a long enough split second, the beam can burst some blood vessels and stun. In some cases, it can even kill.

The scientists then devoted more time to studying the angelfish and their swimming patterns. They noted that the fish continuously made fine adjustments to their orientation in their vertical planes to either redirect their beams as their opponents swam around or to avoid their opponent's beams. This light fighting would end when one fish swam away in defeat. The scientists did not report which color morph of angelfish is the most effective light fighter. They also did not report whether the light ray technology could be used to stun prey.

Angelfish have inhabited the earth for 45 million years. The scientists eagerly studied the scales on angelfish fossils. They concluded that angelfish have probably been utilizing Star Wars-like laser beam technology all the time. And, we thought dinosaurs were wicked.

The military has, according to a press report, become interested in the museum's research and has asked the scientists to meet with their technology office. If you see some people in uniforms show up at the next club auction, you can guess which fish they will be bidding on.

*Corydoras paleatus*  
**Salt and Pepper Cory**

by Gene Moy, PVAS

*Corydoras paleatus* are among the most common and available of these little catfishes. They have a blotchy pattern on the sides of their body. *C. paleatus* have a high dorsal fin compared with *C. aeneus*.

I happened on a large female specimen at one of the shops. Her color was a bit unusual, so I decided to take her and a few other individuals home. I placed them with some small cichlid fry that I had. Within two days I noticed the large female trying to find a place for her eggs. I thought about setting up a small tank for them, but did not do so.

Some time later, after thinning out my tanks, I decided to let them spawn. These corys are extremely easy to breed. A well fed group of 2 females and 3 males in a tank by themselves will usually breed in days. Changing the water and dropping the level a bit seems to help.

Within two days, 80 to 100 eggs are stuck onto the side of the aquarium. I usually remove the adults back to a community tank, and leave the tank for the future fry.

The young hatch in 2 or 3 days or so depending on the temperature. At this stage the young are extremely hard to see having camouflaged themselves into the gravel. A week later, young wrigglers looking like tiny tadpoles can be seen moving about. I begin feeding them dry fry foods a few days later, and gradually, begin feeding crumbled flakes.

After 2 months, the young are about 1 inch and can be given away or sold.



## **Nothobranchius guentheri and Nothobranchius foerschi**

David Snell, PVAS

Back in May 1998, I had the opportunity to attend the American Killifish Association's national convention in Syracuse, New York. While there, I picked up a number of killifish including the *N. guentheri* and *N. foerschi*. I was specifically looking for these fish as they are great beginner peat spawning killies and I had never worked with Nothos before this.

Both of these species were kept and bred in the same manner. The only difference is that my first hatch of *guentheri* all died due to a bad water change the day before I left for a three-day business trip. Upon returning from the trip, I had another bag of peat with *guentheri* eggs that I hatched out.

The pair was kept in a 2.5gal tank and conditioned on brine shrimp, bloodworms, and whiteworms. The tank had a basic corner bubble filter and no substrate. The tank was not heated, room temp ~ 72F. I used straight RO water with 1 teaspoon of marine salt per gallon. The pH was about 6.8. After conditioning the fish for about a week, I placed a small glass jar filled with about 1 inch of peat into the tank.

The peat container was removed from the tank after a week. The peat was dumped into a brine shrimp net where it was rinsed under cold tap water. The net was then squeezed tightly to remove most of the water. I then picked through the damp peat removing all the eggs I could find with tweezers. The eggs were very small under 1mm in size. The eggs were then placed in a small amount of the damp peat and stored in a small sealed bag.

After waiting 8 weeks of incubation, the bag of peat was placed in 1.5gal shoebox with about 1 inch of water. The water had approximately the same water conditions as the breeder's water. In about 24 hours, a majority of the eggs had hatched. The fry were moved to a 2-cup container for about a week. They were fed newly hatched brine shrimp and microworms. After about 1-2 weeks the fry were moved to 1.5 gal shoebox. After 2-3 weeks the fry were moved to a 10-gal tank. Feeding of the fish continued with newly hatched brine shrimp, and microworms, and supplemented with grindal worms 4-5 times a week. After 4 to 5 weeks the Nothos started sexing out. In the end I had 15 *foerschi* (1 male and 14 females) and 32 *guentheri* (about 50/50 sex ratio). I have already started spawning the next generation of these Nothos.

# MICRORASBORA RUBESCENS

Don Kinyon  
PVAS

I am yet to find this fish in any of my literature, so any information that I give is purely through hearsay or my own personal experience.

I first saw these fish at my local society auction. They are an attractive rose and silver color combination, and appear to be a schooling fish similar to tetras or the other elongated *Rasboras*. It's not usually a great idea to buy fish that you know nothing about, but they were going for reasonable prices, and the breeder had written extra information on the bag label (water parameters, etc.) so I bought a bag. I was later able to talk to the seller personally, and got more information on the fish.

When I got the fish home, I put them into a ten gallon tank with a sponge filter buried under two inches of black gravel, some Java Fern and a large clump of Java Moss. After a few days of eating a mix of live, frozen, and dry foods, the fish were glowing colors. There were four males and four females in the group. The water they were in was straight out the tap, pH of 7.4 and 8 degrees total hardness; 140 PPM. One quarter of the water was changed weekly.

For a few months I was busy with other things, so the fish were pretty much ignored, save for regular tank maintenance. By the time I got around to working with them, the females were two and a half inches long and very full bodied. The males were slimmer and under two inches.

I filled an eight gallon tank with a mix of water from the first and new tap water, and dumped all the fish in. They got mostly live food for two weeks; *Daphnia*, mosquito larva, white worms, black worms, chopped earth worms, and baby brine shrimp. I put in a clump of Java Moss that filled two thirds of the tank top to bottom. In this time the females got steadily a little less full, so all the fish were removed.

In four days, tiny fry started to appear at the top of the tank. Over the next few days, many more. These babies are TINY! I fed green water for the next week, and then started them on micro worms and vinegar eels. The babies eat a lot and grow quickly. At one month the young were miniatures of the parents, ranging from three sixteenths to one quarter inch in length, and eating the same foods, finely chopped. At two months most of the foods were fed without chopping, and the fry were around half an inch.

I took the parent fish to an auction recently, and in the next week, there were more fry in the bare tank the parents were removed from. Where the eggs were hidden is a mystery, and the young must have been feeding on the algae in the tank for a while, judging by the size.

These fish make excellent community tank residents, or dither fish for breeding smaller cichlids.

## Breeder's Award Program

### BAP Checkers:

Annandale/Falls Church area: Jeff Burke (703) 941-3230  
Centreville/Chantilly/Manassas area: David Snell (703) 968-9084  
Centreville: Michael Cardaci (703) 222-3833  
Frederick: Dov Goldstein (301) 694-7582  
Montgomery County: Ray Hughes (301) 424- 3531  
Montgomery County: Wayne Considine (301) 977-5973  
Mt. Vernon/Olde Town area: Gene Moy (703) 765- 0865  
Oakton/Vienna area: Rick Mckay (703) 281- 1647  
Occoquan/Lake Ridge area: John Mangan (703) 491-4980  
Prince George's County: Lorne E. Williams (301) 630-7674  
Springfield/Franconia area: Pete Thrift (703) 971-0594  
Warrenton/Manassas area: Gerry Hoffman (540) 347-7486

We still could use some more checkers. There are a number of areas where we don't have anyone. Even if there is someone already listed for your area we could always use someone else to help spread the work around.

### BAP Standings:

Breeders Award \*  
Intermediate Breeder \*\*  
Advanced Breeder\*\*\*  
Master Breeder\*\*\*\*  
Grand Master Breeder\*\*\*\*\*

Gerry Hoffman 905\*\*\*\*\*  
Jeffrey Burke 445\*\*\*  
Don Kinyon 475\*\*\*  
John Mangan 165\*\*  
Gene Moy 180\*\*  
Lorne Williams 155\*\*  
Dave Snell 75\*

Recent activity: Don Kinyon receives 15 points for *Apistogramma hongsloui*, and 15 points for the peacock gudgeon *Tateurndina ocellicauda*. Gene Moy receives 20 points for *Corydoras paleatus*, and 10 points for zebra danios. David Snell receives 15 points for *Nothobranchius guentheri*.

I keep seeing the same few names mentioned here month after month. Isn't anyone else breeding anything? You don't have to be an expert or start with something tough to breed. One of the purposes of the program is to help you learn and advance in the hobby. There are lots of people in the club that would be happy to help you with any advice or information you need. Make 1999 the year you get more involved with your hobby.



# POTOMAC VALLEY AQUARIUM SOCIETY

PO BOX 664, Merrifield, VA 22116

## Application for Membership

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Street: \_\_\_\_\_ Apt. \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Optional information:

Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_

Where did you here about PVAS/get this application? \_\_\_\_\_

Number of aquariums: \_\_\_\_\_ Time in the hobby: \_\_\_\_\_

Special interests: (e.g., catfish, cichlids, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for joining: \_\_\_\_\_

Membership dues for PVAS are:

Individual/Family \$12/yr

Corresponding: \$ 9/yr

Junior (under 18) \$ 5/yr

Please send application and check to the address above.

## SUPPORTING SHOPS

### ANNANDALE SUPERPET

7406 Little River TrnPk.  
Annandale, VA 22031  
256-2400

### AQUATIC ENHANCEMENT

PO Box 22677  
Alexandria, VA 22304  
765-4620

### DISCOUNT PET CENTER

9028 Mathis Ave.  
Manassas, VA 22110  
361-7769

### CUSTOM AQUARIUM CONCEPTS

293 Sunset Park Drive  
Herndon, VA 22094  
(703) 689-2815

### ANIMAL EXCHANGE

765-A Rockville Pike  
Rockville, MD 20852  
424-PETS

### AQUARIUM CENTER

Liberty Rd. at Offut Rd.  
Randallstown, MD  
521-4529

### BROTHER'S PETS

13810 Georgia Ave.  
Aspen Hill, MD 20906  
460-4600

### CONGRESSIONAL AQUARIUM

162 Congressional Ln  
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881-6182

### DISCOUNT PET SUPER- MARKET

1321 A&B Rockville Pike  
Rockville, MD 20852  
309-9110

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761-1113

### MARINE CARE SPECIALISTS

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Rockville, MD 20855  
330-0720

### MARYLAND TROPICALS

13884 Old Columbia Pike  
Silver Spring, MD 20904  
879-0200

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Frederick, MD 21702  
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**TROPICAL LAGOON**

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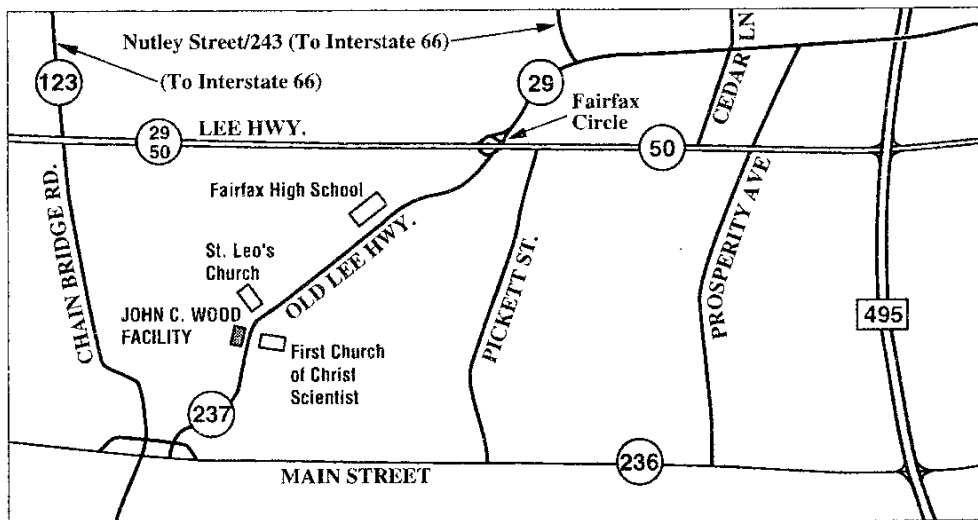
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POTOMAC VALLEY AQUARIUM SOCIETY  
P.O. Box 664  
Merrifield, VA 22116-0664



David J Snell  
10\99  
14328 Artillery Court  
Centreville, VA 20121



**MEETINGS** are held at the John C. Wood Facility, 3730 Old Lee Highway (Route 237), Fairfax City, Virginia. We meet in room 6, which is located behind the police station. Doors open at 7:30 and meetings start at 8:00—**EVERYONE IS WELCOME!**