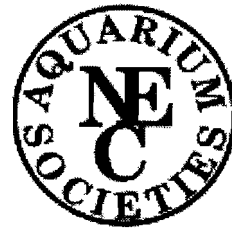


A Golden Anniversary Celebration is on the way for the Northeast Council of Aquarium Societies!



by CLAUDIA DICKINSON

A spectacular event is on the horizon as the NEC celebrates its Golden Anniversary during the NEC 31st Annual Convention on April 7th ~ 9th 2006! The halls of the Hartford Marriott in beautiful Farmington, Connecticut will resound with fishy festivity as the NEC pulls out all stops to make this the Grandest celebration ever!

A fabulous line-up of speaker presentations will be woven throughout by special events, beginning with the illustrious plant expert, Claus Christensen, giving a program at the Aquatic Gardeners Association meeting from 2 to 4 pm on Friday. Those of us who spent time with Ed Champigny and his lovely goldfish at last year's event will be delighted to hear that Ed will moderate a koi and goldfish discussion group from 4 to 5:30 pm on Friday, and share a video presentation on his experiences of traveling to breeding farms in Japan. If Ed and his spectacular goldfish are new for you ~ you are definitely in for a treat!

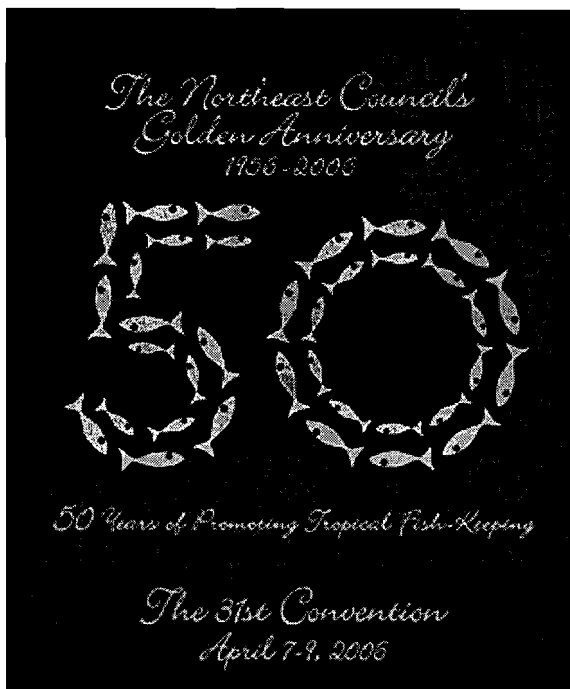
An immense and most exciting facet of the weekend begins at 5:30 pm on Friday as the Aquarium Hobby Historical Society, an online forum group of knowledgeable and dedicated aquarium hobby history buffs, meets in 'real life' for the first time ever! With a membership of over 200, the AHHS, founded by Ted Coletti, works together to authentically resurrect the past, preserving it for the future, as they utilize their combined knowledge, research, and experiences to accomplish this goal. The society's online discussions are a fascinating journey through the yesteryear of the aquarium hobby, resulting in a careful and intricate placing

together of the pieces of the puzzle, as it evolves into a consummate picture of our history. All are invited to meet and greet members of the society, as well as to join in from 8 to 10:30 pm, as 'An Evening with the Aquarium Legends,' sponsored by the NEC and Kingfish Services, welcomes a roundtable discussion by the renowned Dr. James Atz, Alan Mark Fletcher, Dr. Albert J. Klee, Rosario LaCorte, Earl Schneider, Paul Speice and Dr. Stan Weitzman. To have these extraordinary

gentlemen in one room at the same time, and the opportunity of harvesting the benefits of their discussion, will surely be 'history in the making!'

Saturday begins bright and early, with much to fit in, as the breakfast cart is wheeled out and registration opens at 8:30 am. Celebrated authority on the Rift Lakes of Africa, author, speaker, world traveler, and champion of the aquarium hobby, Ad Konings will treat us to his presentation on 'The Cichlids of Lake Malawi,' while in another lecture hall,

Claus Christensen, one-time manager of Tropica Aquarium Plants in Denmark, once again offers his wisdom on aquatic plant life. Legendary Rosario LaCorte, with his golden touch to all things aquatic, and his endearment to all who know him, shares his tremendous wealth of knowledge on 'Tetras and Egglayers,' while Larry Jackson, avid SCUBA diver, underwater photographer, and MACNA Hobbyist of the Year for 2000, brings us his secrets to successful 'Reef Keeping.' If you thought that because your fish originated in the Amazon that they need soft, acidic water, you will want to think again, and listen carefully to what Dr.



Wayne Leibel has discovered through his extensive travels to the region, as well as through his in-depth research, as he presents, 'Waters of the Amazon.' Saltwater authority and respected writer, Bob Goemans brings us 'Reef Aquariums ~ Doing it Right the First Time.' We all know and cherish Sally Boggs from her visit with us last year. Now we will have the great fortune to broaden our scopes further as Sally enlightens us through her experiences with 'Anabantoids,' while a future speaker of the GCAS, Alan Mark Fletcher, will relay an intriguing past as he relates his experiences of working with William T. Innes, along with reports of his pioneer collecting trips to South America and the Philippines.

For new and seasoned saltwater enthusiasts, this 31st NEC Convention has it all, as the Connecticut Area Reef Society will host a meeting on Saturday afternoon, along with holding a 'Frag Swap.' The Northeast Livebearer Association general meeting and discussion will follow. The American Livebearer Association Annual Convention on April 28th ~ 30th, to be held in New Jersey, will be a major focus of the NLA gathering. Saturday night's Banquet and Awards Ceremony will be highlighted by MC Shane Linder, of catfish fame, as he shares his love of plecos with us.

Sunday morning is another early day as we convene for breakfast and then off to view the notoriously vast array of auction lots. The Giant Auction will begin at 11 am and continue for the day, sure to be filled with exceptional finds!

Always a fabulous highlight of the event, our dear GCAS friends Lee Finley, of Finley Aquatic Books, and Ray 'Kingfish' Lucas, of

Kingfish Services, among others, will be star attractions at their booths in the vendor room. This area is certain to be lively, as all gather to enjoy the books, the aquarium products, the bounty of information, and the camaraderie of close friendships.

Throughout the weekend, until 1 pm on Sunday, a continuing Rare Fish Silent Auction will offer hard-to-locate and endangered species that you will not wish to miss out on! Many of these will be eligible for your C.A.R.E.S. Preservation Program tanks. The C.A.R.E.S. Preservation Program is honored and most grateful to the NEC to be chosen as the recipient of funds accrued through the 2006 Rare Fish Silent Auction proceeds. These resources will be a tremendous benefit in the development of the C.A.R.E.S. Preservation Program website, forming global communications between aquarists, scientists and conservationists. A warm and heartfelt thank you to the NEC for their generous support of C.A.R.E.S.!

Your NEC 50th Anniversary Golden Anniversary registration pamphlet will have arrived in the mail. Should you need another, or have any questions, please see me, visit the NEC website at www.northeastcouncil.org, or contact your most efficient and helpful NEC Convention Chair, Janine Banks, at dbanks@together.net. Please know, I am here and always happy to help!

I have missed you for these past two months that we have been on winter break ~ I can barely wait to see you in Connecticut next month! I love this weekend and look forward to spending it with my dearest friends. We shall *all* have a Grande time!

