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Don't Shoot the Messenger!

By pat smith

“What do you mean shoot the messenger? There isn't a messenger position on the Board.” I am sure that is what most club members would be thinking, but think again. The Editor IS the messenger for the club. Where do you go if you want to buy or sell items? Where do (should) you look for information about your club or neighboring societies? That SHOULD be your club publication. And, every editor I know puts their heart and soul into what they put together each month for YOUR club. Nonetheless, whenever there is a change, the editor ends up with complaints. “You forgot to put in my article!” “You spelt a word wrong!” “You didn't use my email address!” The list is endless. Rarely is there a letter of compliment about the publication. Not that I am suggesting that editors are looking for the kudos, but they also aren't looking to be ripped to shreds either. Having been an editor, I know how hard it is to get articles submitted in a timely manner. As a contributing writer, I know that I am probably as much to blame as the next guy. There are a million excuses that come up each and every month that keeps us from completing articles. But, who gets blamed if the issue is late? It is always just the editor who is blamed. And, who gets blamed if there are only reprint articles? You guessed it; it is the editor. I know that most times the editor makes it look like child's play to put the publication together. I can assure you it takes a lot of time and effort.

Each member of the club can help make that job easier. All they need to do is take some time and write an article about their fish; their fish room or something that they have done that makes the care of their fish easier. We all have some tip, or tricks that we could share with fellow hobbyists. If you are breeding fish, and trying to build up those BAP points, why not share some information about the tank conditions that inspired your fish to spawn. Remember that the publication is really only as good as ALL of the people who contribute to it. If you don't want to write, how about taking some great photography to be used either as covers or show club meetings and extra events. With today's digital cameras, it has become easier than ever to take great photos. Show off your fish room with a “photo essay”. Use your imagination, share your knowledge and take part in making YOUR publication great.

And, while you are at it, why not take the time to tell the editor you appreciate his effort in putting out a monthly publication!