

## A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

Greetings fellow MAAS-Tards and MAAS Tee potentials,

I hope that this note finds you at peace before your tank and your fish frantically vying for your attention when feeding. It has been an interesting month and several things seem to be percolating that will take MAAST to the next level as is fitting for the new decade.

One item that changed is the Frag Exchange Program. No longer will this program be hidden from Web Members. Everyone will have visible access to all three levels to see what kinds of corals are actively being traded and even how the program runs. But this alone isn't what makes this change such a welcome one. In a truly bold move the BOD has decided to open level one up to Web Members! Yes, you too can post your level one corals and adopt like-level items in the Program. Having participated in both level one and level two exchanges I can tell you that it is truly an awesome project and goes a long way in doing our part to protect and propagate corals that otherwise may be removed unnecessarily from nature's reefs.

As always, I hope that each of you enjoy the newsletter as much as we enjoyed putting it together. May your coral always be bright and growing.

In the event that you would like to submit information for upcoming newsletters, please feel free to contact any member of the newsletter committee via PM on the MAAST website.

- Allan R. LaViers (Allan)



**Gseclipse02 January POTM Winner**

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## The President's Pen

In this, the beginning of a new decade, MAAST stands poised to spur education and interest in marine habitats around the world. By establishing and maintaining closed marine ecosystems of our own, aquarists develop knowledge and skills necessary to become stewards of the reef. Many aspects of MAAST encourage this ecological awareness in its members and in the community.

One of these is the Captive Breeding Forum. It provides a place for members to share techniques and discuss successes and failures in breeding marine organisms in captivity. By encouraging captive breeding and propagation, our organization helps further procedures needed to move away from wild collection of many marine organisms. In the coming year, this will be a focal area for our organization.

Another area of MAAST that is just beginning to expand is the Library and Equipment Bank. This growing collection of resources not only benefits MAAST members in times of emergency, but also provides critical resources for furthering our understanding of establishing the best care possible for our marine family members. Expansion of this program is another top priority for the coming year.

The MAAST Frag Exchange Program has become a way for members to share the products of their success with other members. It encourages good husbandry and propagation techniques that not only benefit the members but also the organisms we keep. Hopefully this program will continue to expand as more and more members learn and practice these successful methods of propagation.

Each monthly meeting will continue to have an educational piece. These presentations will be made by members and other experts in the field. Also, building on last year's TMAC, a goal for this year's TMAC is to expand the number of topics and presentations.

I feel that this year's Board of Directors share a common goal. This goal is to shift the direction of MAAST back toward education. With your help MAAST will continue to grow and provide a platform to continue that education in the years to come.

- Ace Shedd (Hobogato)  
President

## 2010 Appointed Secretary & Treasurer

The Board of Directors would like to announce its newly appointed Secretary & Treasurer for the 2010 MAAST Calendar year. Congrats go out to the Secretary: Allan LaViers and the Treasurer: Sherri Ancira.

We thank you for accepting your positions as officers and look forward in working with you towards a successful year ahead.

Sincerely,

The MAAST BOD

### January Birthdays:

January 2  
Erebus

January 3  
Corydrysdale

January 4  
BigMc

January 12th  
Chris

January 17th  
joker78148

January 27th  
Medi

January 29th  
earthduzt



## **Water Quality Part 2:**

### **The Importance of Water Changes**

Having looked at source water and making synthetic seawater for our marine aquariums in Water Quality Part 1, it is now time to study the benefits and types of water changes. It is the exception in our hobby to come across an experienced aquarist who does not advocate or practice the adage, “Dilution is the Solution to Pollution” (Gary P). Unfortunately, and for a variety of reasons, many of us do not practice what we preach. From the person without a water filtration system, to the old-timer that no longer has the time or is burnt out on water changes, we sometimes rationalize the necessity for them with a rudimentary knowledge of seawater chemistry and an effective filtration system. While most of us who have been around the hobby for a while understand the ammonia / nitrogen gas cycle, it is what we, the aquarium community, don’t know about seawater chemistry that will get us into trouble. It is this lack of a thorough understanding of seawater chemistry in a closed system that drives home the theory that the single best method to maintain water quality is through water changes.

We need to remember how it is not just the “Big Three” (calcium, sodium carbonate, and magnesium) elements that need replacing, but many trace elements need to be replaced as well. One can dose these trace elements and many of our sponsors sell products that profess to be a balanced, correct ratio of trace elements for our systems; but as we know, no two systems are chemically alike. How does a chemist working for a supplement company know what your system needs when you yourself have not tested for these trace elements? These products are aimed at the ignorant or know-it-all customers.

If you’re not testing for it, don’t dose it. We also need to realize how the calcium chloride and sodium carbonate being dosed to reef systems leads to an ionic imbalance and impact salinity. From a chemistry stand-

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point it is not this simple, but add the chloride and sodium ions and what do we get, a greater concentration of sodium chloride (NaCl, a salt ion). The solution: regularly check the systems water with a refractometer and perform regular water changes.

The most common water change recommendation of 10% per month comes from the days before South Pacific live rock and high-efficiency skimmers (which also remove trace elements) became prevalent. This quantity of water was aimed at lowering the amount of dissolved organic carbon (DOC) and metabolites in the water and thereby lowering the nitrates and this approach is still good advice today. Systems having nuisance algae problems and those containing newly-cured live rock (meaning most of the live rock has been cured for less than six months) should consider this 10% per week methodology. If a system has a long established means of nitrate and phosphate reduction, it is still important to conduct water changes for ionic balance and this balance is best achieved with smaller (5%) bi-weekly water changes. While this is not as effective for the dilution of pollution, it has shown to produce better growth and coloration in corals in long-established systems as well as lessening the need for dosing the big three.

Which of these three water change schedules is for you? This should not be a budgetary decision but one based on the age and condition of your system. Is the objective to lower the pollution being produced from the rock or excessive bio-load or is ionic balance the only objective? While not an absolute, a good rule of thumb can be 10% per week for six months, then 10% a month or 5% bi-weekly for life.

- Peter Kordelski (Ping)

## This Month's Aquaria Q & A

**Question:** I'm having major plumbing issues, and I have to shut down my filtration temporarily! How long can my tank last?

**Answer:** Assuming you have wisely built your aquarium, you likely have a decent amount of live rock and other sources of circulation within your display tank. Simply keep the water moving, and keep an eye here -- chances are this can be maintained indefinitely without great deleterious effects. If you are concerned about waste buildup, step up the frequency of water changes during the time your filtration is down: 2-3 small (5 gallon or less, depending on water volume) water changes per week will be a huge benefit. Disturbing the surface of the water will also help to allow gas exchange to continue to occur effectively.

- Justin Norman (Corruption)



We need writers!

Now, a lot of you think you can't write an article - but we're not only looking for advanced topics here, we need beginners' stories, tips, product reviews, and more!

Send us your thoughts, any and all are welcome. We look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,  
The Newsletter  
Committee

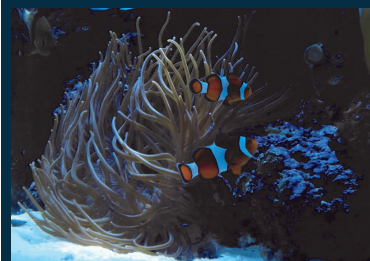
## New Committee Members

As we begin the new year, I would like to welcome two new members to the newsletter committee.

A special thank you goes out to Karin Baker (Euromom) & Justin Norman (corruption) for volunteering their time in helping make the newsletter a big success. We look forward to working with you on future editions of the newsletter.

- Eve Vialpando  
(Pennies2cents)

## Picture of the Month Winner



Gseclipse02

Hello everyone!

First, I would like to say thank you to all who voted in favor of my picture. Here is a small bio on my POTM winning picture. Enjoy!

The two schooling fish you see are clownfish that I picked up off of Craigslist. The anemone is a Long Tentacle Anemone that was bought at Petco for \$5.99.

The picture was taken with a Canon 20D inside of my 100g with 2 MH 250w SE 12k Reeflux.

The clown fish are still alive and living healthy lives. Although, reproduction has yet to occur, the pair seem to be liking each other and are now resting in a RBTA that I got from Eve (Pennies2Cents) and are doing well.

Thanks again for your support.

-JT & Vic-



## Who's Who on the BOD: Meet the 2010 Board of Directors

### ***Ace Shedd (hobogato) - President***

Ace has been keeping aquariums since he was a kid taking care of his mother's freshwater tank, but set up his first marine tank in his college dorm room in 1992: a 29 gallon with a lion fish. Ace is serving his second term on the Board, this time as President, rising to a call for new leadership. His favorite things in his tank at the moment are his baby cuttle fish. Ace works as a high school science teacher and is married to his high school sweetheart, who lets him cut holes in the roof and overrun the house with his many, many hobbies while raising their two live-wired boys. Is there anything this man cannot build?

### ***Eve Vialpando (Pennies2cents) - Vice President***

Eve grew up in rural San Antonio until her college years took her to Corpus Christi, but she moved back after college in order to help care for her ailing father who had been diagnosed with leukemia. Her sacrifice was without regret and he is now 82 and miraculously cancer-free. Family is very important to Eve and sacrifices are just part of the journey, as she left the insurance work world to be a stay-at-home mom to her three sons and considers the task of teaching them to become responsible and respectful men a true blessing. Eve and her husband Ross had a history of freshwater cichlid tanks until the day they purchased a 20 gallon saltwater setup from a local reefer, who referred her to the wonderful world of MAAST. They are now eagerly awaiting their latest upgrade, a 240 gallon euro-braced beast due any day now from Deep Sea Aquatics. Eve tackled a Board position in 2009, stepped up to be Secretary, and now has stepped up to the call of leadership again as she serves as Vice President.

### ***Sherri Ancira (Sherri) - Treasurer***

Sherri bred freshwater African cichlids for 17 years and then finally took the plunge into saltwater in 2002, finding MAAST almost immediately thereafter. Sherri is serving as the MAAST Treasurer for the sixth term, stepping up from Secretary to meet the need when she became aware of some issues of financial impropriety and set about keeping MAAST's money safe ever since. Her favorite thing in her tank is a huge mushroom leather and its offspring that have even survived a tank crash and she only wishes she had more time to maintain the tank lately and keep the red slime at bay. Sherri works as a cosmetology instructor while also owning her own wholesale beauty supply business and enjoys traveling and diving in her recreational time.

### ***Allan LaViers (Allan) - Secretary***

Allan has been keeping reef just over a year. His interest in saltwater began five years ago while helping his daughter learn about her freshwater system, but he held off starting his own marine tank due to frequent military moves. He found MAAST through the miracle of Google and later agreed to serve on the Board and even take on the role of Secretary because he wanted to take an active role in the organization. Allan enjoys dabbling in projects that involve woodworking and welding, but states he is not always good at finishing what he starts. His favorite fish in the tank is Sponge Bob the cowfish, but he appreciates anything in the tank that has new growth. Allan has a wife and three children, one of whom (Milly) is a charter member keeping a reef tank herself.

### ***Rob Bernhardt (Mr Cob)***

Rob's interest in saltwater seems natural, growing up in the coastal areas of Hawaii, California, and Colon City, Panama. Rob set up his first saltwater tank three years ago and still laughs describing the horrible smell of his ingenious carpet-lined stand. Rob was first referred to MAAST by a reader of his craigslist ad trying to sell

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some equipment. He joined in 2007 and then stepped up a year ago to serve on the Board because he believes in jumping in to help rather than standing on the side and complaining. Rob enjoys surfing and soccer when he has time and access to the waves. He once kicked a 60-yard field goal in high school, but these days he's usually kicking it with his beloved wife and two boys as they await their third child.

**Mike Dean (Mike)**

As an Air Force kid, Mike grew up moving around from Germany, Taiwan, England, and Alabama before settling in San Antonio. During the early 90's in his previous career as a book store manager, Mike befriended the owner of a neighboring small pet store with an interesting saltwater selection, and his fascination of saltwater fish began. Mike finally set up his first saltwater tank as a New Year's resolution in 2007. His favorite fish is his mystery wrasse, but he has a great love for the invertebrates such as sea cucumbers and fighting conchs. Mike works as an insurance claims manager and he and his wife are relieved to have raised two foster daughters who are recently out of the house and in college.

**Alex Garza (aggman)**

Alex grew up in Corpus Christi, got his real estate license at the age of 21, and moved to the D.C. metro area to begin selling "mc mansions" to yuppies. Now working in real estate contracts, Alex is passionate about his interests in real estate, architecture, and public service. Alex first fell in love with saltwater tanks while visiting the Monterey Bay Aquarium in California, and aspired to set up his first tank not long after. His favorite thing in his tank at the moment is his impressive duncan colony and he finds that he is constantly looking for a new direction to take his saltwater setups, often buying new tanks and rebuilding. Alex credits the teachings and influence of the staff at Aquarium Masters as well as David (SoLiD) for getting him involved in MAAST and for much of what he has learned in this hobby.

**Peter Kordelski (Ping)**

Peter began learning about saltwater systems in first grade and set up his first 10g freshwater tank in 1973. A friend told him about MAAST back in its early days and he's been a member since 2004. At the moment, Peter is enjoying his very healthy powder blue tang in his home aquarium while fighting with some pesky asparagassum algae. This is Peter's second time to serve on the Board and he says he was motivated to step up because he feels "I owe it to the newbie," referring to his sense of responsibility to pass along his knowledge and experience to the new aquarist. Peter most enjoys contributing to the education aspects of the hobby by writing, teaching, or presenting topics.

**John Roescher (jroescher)**

John lives in Lockhart, TX and has devoted over 25 years to his work as a police officer, while he and his wife raised their adult son and daughter. He began reefkeeping five years ago when the wife and kids gave him a tank for Christmas and he found himself drawn to the unique and bizarre saltwater fish in the local fish stores. John also indulges in other hobbies, including old Volkswagen Beetles and flying remote control planes. His favorite thing in his tank is a very large anemone and he is currently contemplating an automated water change system, if he could just come up with the space to build the cabinet! John served on the Board in 2009 in order to give back to the organization that taught him everything he knows about saltwater aquariums.

**Bill Streep (bstreep)**

Bill has been keeping saltwater tanks since he was in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade and working at the local fish store for \$0.55 an hour. This translates to almost 40 years experience in marine aquariums, which goes a long way to explain his straightforward attitude and frequent voicing of his favorite quote, "It's just a freakin' fish club." Bill has a passion for Mercedes Benz, works as a real estate appraiser, and looks forward to retirement on his sailboat "Merlin." Until then, he and his wife spend most of their weekends and leisure time sailing around the Texas coastline in the company of their two Samoyeds. They have two daughters in their mid 20's who are finally out of college and gainfully employed.

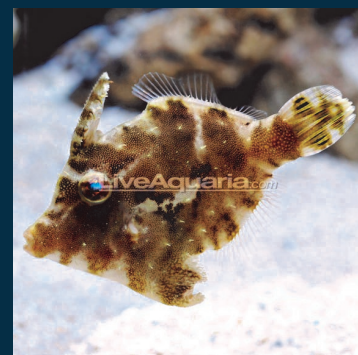
**Jack Watkins (txav8r)**

Jack grew up on a ranch in Uvalde, TX and placed as a World Skeet competition finalist at the age of 13. He has been interested in saltwater fish for decades and finally set up his first tank about two years ago. Jack has a number of other hobbies, including aviation, woodworking, metalworking, classic cars, and dune buggies. His favorite livestock in his tank right now are his Bam Bam zoanths and he only wishes he could go bigger with his current setup. Jack stepped up to serve on the Board a year ago because he loves to help people. He works in sales for an aviation instruments company and has a wife, a son, and four step-children.

- Kristy Dean (Kristy)

The Matted Filefish is also known as the Bristle-tail Filefish, Matted Leather-jacket, Tomentosus Filefish, or Aiptasia Eating Filefish. The body is a mottled green, brown, and tan coloration.

It is a shy fish, and rarely aggressive towards other fish except those of its own genus. It is best suited for aquariums 30 gallons or larger that do not contain small invertebrates.



The Matted Filefish is known to eat Aiptasia anemones in the home aquarium, but normally nips at soft and stony corals as well. The diet should include shaved shrimp, squid, scallop, mysis shrimp, freeze-dried krill soaked in a vitamin supplement, and frozen marine algae. The Matted Filefish should be fed small quantities of food several times per day.

These fish have been known to spawn in captivity, and males are normally larger than the females, having fine bristle-like hairs on each side of their body down the caudal peduncle or base of the tail.

Information/Photos were compiled with permission from [liveaquaria.com](http://liveaquaria.com).

# BECOME A CHARTER MEMBER TODAY

## Membership

Dues are \$25 for the calendar year. These dues quickly pay for themselves by the discounts given that many local stores honor to MAAST members.

We are trying to make our club better, bringing more educational topics, more door prizes and raffle items, and guest speakers. We also have the routine maintenance items like the website, food for meetings, membership dues to national marine organizations, and print/publication fee's. Membership dues allow our club to keep afloat and make all of this possible. As always, the website portion of the club will remain free.

Why collect dues?

1. Keeps MAAST afloat.
2. Funds club meetings so host does not have to pay for all out of pocket.
3. Allows for an image gallery on MAAST website.
4. Extra funds go into pool for "expert" speakers at the meetings.
5. Higher quality raffles, higher quality meetings, higher quality club!
6. Eligibility to run for a club office or be appointed to a committee.
7. Eligibility to VOTE!
8. Discounts at participating LFS's and online vendors.
9. A membership card
10. A voice to represent aquarists' interest.

For more information concerning Charter status, please read our By-Laws.

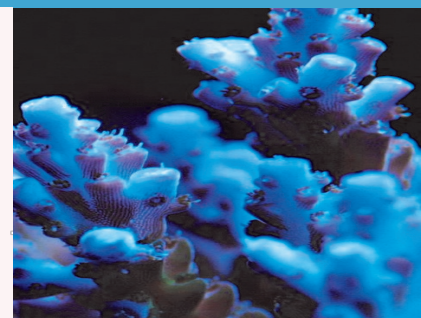
The membership dues are \$25.00. Payment can be made either at the meetings, online via PayPal, or with a check mailed to our PO Box below

PayPal fee's can be sent to [treasurer@maast.org](mailto:treasurer@maast.org)

or via snail mail to:  
MAAST  
P. O. Box 780582  
San Antonio, TX 78278

Please include name, sign-in name, e-mail, home address, and phone!

*Thanks for everyones help and support with this great organization!*



## PHOTO CREDITS

- P1 - POTM Winner- Gseclipse02  
P2- Dendro coral- hobogato  
P4-POTM Winner Gseclipse02  
P5-Mystery Wrasse- Pennies2Cents  
P6-ORA Pearlberry- Offroadodge

## Upcoming Events

**February:** Propagation Basics:  
Frag Corals with Success

**March:** Annual Frag Swap

**April:** San Antonio Zoo Event

*Stay tuned for all the details!*

## Helpful Tips

### Optimum Levels

pH	8.1 - 8.3
Specific Gravity	1.026
Alkalinity	8 dKH
Calcium	450 ppm
Magnesium	1350 ppm
Nitrate	0
Phosphate	0 - .01 ppm