

ACA



NEWS



BECOME A LEADER IN THE ACA: RUN FOR THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The membership is once again in search of eight (8) qualified candidates to run for a two-year term on the Board of Trustees of the ACA. Any member in good standing is qualified to run for office. If you love cichlids and would like to see the ACA prosper now, and in the future, please consider running for the ACA BOT and submit a resumé of your qualifications and mention your goals and plans for the organization.

A total of up to eight (8) members will be selected by the election committee to be placed on the ballot. The membership will then vote for up to four (4) nominees to serve a two-year term on the ACA BOT.

Please submit your intent to run with your city, state info because there is a geographic component to the process. Please send to the ACA Nominations Chair at Crambo@valleywater.org by October 31, 2025. At that time a ballot will be created and sent out to the membership for voting.

Thank you for being a member of the ACA.

Sincerely,
Chuck Rambo

Bluegrass Bash!

Don't Miss
This!



June 25-28
2026

Get ready for another exciting convention!
Fish Geeks converge in Lexington, Kentucky in 2026

Hello ACA members!

We are excited to be guest editors of the ACA Newsletter. In case you haven't heard the American Cichlid Association Board of Trustees (BOT) recently approved holding a joint convention with the American Livebearer Association and the International Betta Congress in Lexington Kentucky next June 25-28, 2026. The three big nationals will be hosted by two local fish clubs; the Louisville Tropical Fish Fanciers (Louisville, KY) and the Bluegrass Fish Keepers (Lexington, KY). Both clubs are working hard to host this event. The LTFF has hosted three very successful ACA conventions in the past, including the Triple Crown. There is no doubt the annual convention is one of the things that the ACA does well so plan on attending and registering early as it really helps the host club. Lexington is an excellent location and accessible by car for the majority of our members. A huge plus for the event. Flying into Louisville, Cincinnati and Lexington are all options.

Louisville and Cincinnati are short drives and one might find less expensive airfares with one of these options. Lexington is smack dab in the middle of horse and

bourbon country and basketball is king in this state. Southern hospitality is number one and both host clubs promise a fun time for all. Attendees will certainly be treated to one of the best conventions to date. The hotel is located in Northern Lexington at the Clarion Hotel and Convention Centre. Room rates are only \$105 per night and those rates are guaranteed from Tuesday to Monday of convention week. The Clarion has 292 rooms, indoor swimming pool and an indoor basketball court. The hotel connects with the Sedona Tap House which features excellent food and drinks, all at quite affordable prices. Keep in mind that ACA has only so many blocked rooms so register early! Free parking and wifi. Reservations are now available at choicehotels.com/reservations.

Last year in Texas the ACA did not have a fish show. This year, the Cichlid Show is back but in a little different format. The show in 2026 is limited to 50 entries and there are only three classes - small, medium and large. Participants are limited to three entries in the show. So start grooming that special cichlid and get your entry in early. Again, the show is for the first 50 entries received. We want your best of the best for this show. In addition, the Livebearer and Betta shows are available to all participants. The photo and art shows for both ACA and ALA and IBC are also open to everyone who registers. Remember, register early or you may miss out. Space is limited.

For the early-bird attendees, we are trying something new. There will be a pizza and bourbon tasting party in the hospitality room with local home brew



available from Kentucky Akasha brewing company, who is sponsoring the event. A nominal fee of \$25 to attend and seating is limited so register for this preconference event early.

A few of our combined activities include the Friday night Rare Livebearer auction and the famous late-night BABES auction. In the past, the rare Livebearers actually out-bid the BABES so don't miss this special event. Keep in mind the BABES would love to have your rare cichlids in the Friday auction so please consider making a donation. Every penny in both of these fine auctions go directly to the funds for each organization.

The CARES distribution program is back. Thanks to Craig Storms and Mike McKinney for organizing. This year participation will require preregistration and there is a \$10 fee. There are a limited number of spots for this, so register early. The pledge commitment will be digital thanks to Craig. CARES is an important part of our ACA mission.

Our speakers list is exceptional and many of them are first-time speakers.

- For the first time ever we will have Humberto Zea Martin from Columbia speaking on the cichlids and Livebearers of Columbia. Humberto runs and manages one of the most successful fish wholesale export businesses in Bogota. Be sure to not miss this lecture.
- Gerald Griffin will speak on some of the rarest bettas in the hobby, the domestic types, and the rare mouthbrooding Bettas.
- Art Parola (ACA bred and raised) and Amanda Fredal will present a joint lecture on the current status of our hobby. Both are experts in their fields.
- For all you Rift Lake Cichlid lovers Dave Shumacher will speak on Malawi cichlids and Pam Chin on the amazing fish of Lake Tanganyika. This pair really understand those fascinating fish.
- Omar Dominguez is coming from Mexico to lecture on his dealing with the reintroduction of goodeids and the FishArk. Omar's immediate family has five biologists and he is well-versed on anything aquatic.
- The ALA will feature several graduate students lecturing on their poster boards about the research they are conducting on the assorted Livebearers. This is becoming one of the favorite activities at these combined conventions.
- Rusty will be lecturing about his success with keeping Cichlids and Livebearers (both wild and domestic) together. There will be plenty of video from aquaria and in native habitats.
- Grace Benes, a rising young aquarist and one of the founders of KICKS, will speak on the big stage about her experiences with our hobby.
- As many know we can not do these conventions without the help of Zoo Med. Gary Bagnall will be presenting a live demonstration of his unopened antique product donations for The Museum of Aquarium and Pet History.
- Michi Tobler of the University of Missouri will speak on Conservation concerning cichlids and livebearers.

The Saturday night banquet speaker is Spencer Jack and even if you don't like fish this is a must see - even non-fishy spouses will enjoy it. Most



The Museum of Aquarium and Pet History. It's so cool ...

importantly the banquet will be buffet-style and one of the main dishes is Cichlid. Yes, cichlid. Tilapia, plus Kentucky fried chicken. We know the Livebearer guys and gals will get a kick out of eating Cichlid.

Sunday is the biggest change from all past conventions. The traditional Sunday auction will be replaced with a Sunday SWAP meet. Swaps have become more successful in the Midwest than auctions so this year we are trying something different. Swap Tables for Sunday can be purchased online for \$75 and tables are limited. So again register early. Tables can be shared by members as long as each participant has paid a convention registration. Paid registrants are admitted free; locals will have to pay \$5.00 for admittance. The Sunday swap will allow those attending the convention a source of getting rid of those fish that did not sell from room sales.

T-SHIRTS AND POLOS

These will be available in the standard cotton-type shirts with graphics provided by artist Chuck Davis.

VENDOR SPACES

Spaces will be exceptionally large this year. We have 6162 square feet of space for the trade show so get the word out we have plenty of space. Please feel free to reach out to Clay Tractman at clayt101@cox.net.

The website will be live soon. So keep an eye out for the official announcement. Check out aca-convention.org.

That's it on the convention News!
We hope to see everyone in Lexington next June 25-28, 2026.



THE BEST OF DR PAUL LOISELLE!

Would you be interested in this book if ACA reproduces copies for about \$25.00 each? Email rusty@wesselinsurance.com and reply (YES or NO). This is a compendium of Paul Loiselles very early articles for ACACS's magazine and Aquarium News when he was living in Southern California. Thank you to ACA member Neil Frank for providing the original copy!

