

Fish Make Waves — on the Radio!

The Blue Zoo radio show brings the hobby to fish-loving listeners.

Frank Reece's motorsports talk show ended up delving into fish after he mentioned he keeps tanks. Because of audience response, he started The Blue Zoo radio show to talk just about fish.

David Lass, seen here tending one of his tanks, is very involved in the hobby. Among other things, he writes the "FishKidz" column and various fish articles, moderates the forums on FishChannel.com and now is part of The Blue Zoo radio show. The different people who keep fish are an interesting and exciting part of the hobby. When it turned out that Frank Reece, who emcees a national talk radio show about motorsports, does stand-up at the Improv and hosts major Extreme Sports events, was really a closet fish hobbyist, it was not at all surprising.

"I've been doing my motorsports show for 14 years on terrestrial radio and the Internet," says Frank Reece. "I started talking about fish tanks as much as race cars — so much so that we were getting 10 times as many e-mails asking fish questions as we were getting on car racing." That was in April of 2008, and since then Blue Zoo Radio has become established as the premier Internet talk show about the aquarium fish hobby and industry. The Blue Zoo is live every Monday evening on www.BlueZooRadio.com. Previous shows are also available for listening to the archives with downloads and podcasts on the Blue Zoo site. Frank adds, "I wanted to give the industry a mainstream voice that allows listeners to hear from the 'movers and shakers' in the hobby, as well."

"The first thing I did in planning for the show was to look for someone to be my sidekick who knew a lot about fish, loved to talk and made me sound intelligent — no small task, I may add," says Frank. He asked us here at Aquarium Fish International (AFI) to suggest someone, and we of course suggested David Lass, our "FishKidz" columnist, who also writes for our sister magazine Freshwater and Marine Aquarium (FAMA) and who is a moderator on the FishChannel.com forums. David has been the "Resident Fishhead" on Blue Zoo Radio from the first program.

"The Blue Zoo encourages comments and questions from our listeners via e-mail or call-in to the live show," says David. "Plus the show does much more than simply answer questions from hobbyists."

From the very beginning, The Blue Zoo has concentrated on bringing industry and hobby notables on to talk about their specialty. The guests represent all different aspects of the fish hobby and industry. Well-known authors, such as Mike Paletta, Lee Finley, Heiko Bleher, Bob Fenner and Mike Hellweg (our "Adventures in Fish Breeding" columnist), have been on Blue Zoo, as have master breeders, such as Brad Metz, who breeds zebra plecos.

"Manufacturers are always welcome to talk about their new products," says Frank, "and the Zoo has hosted representatives from Red Sea, Hi-Q, Marineland, Tetra, Aqueon, CaribSea, San Francisco Bay Brand and UltraColor Fish foods." SERA, the large German fish products manufacturer, is making a major impact on the American fish hobby and is a main sponsor of The Blue Zoo. Fish clubs have been well-represented by David and Janine Banks of the New England Council of Aquarium Societies, as well as Joe Graffagnino of the Brooklyn Aquarium Society.

Every week, The Blue Zoo gives away a subscription to both AFI and FAMA, products from manufacturers and Blue Zoo apparel.

As Kurt Johnston of the Lancaster Aquarium Club stated in his review of the show, "Stop by and listen; it's a great show." Check it out live on Monday nights at www.bluezooradio.com, and you can also visit www.myspace.com/bluezooradio.