

**This Month in the Koi Pond** — Jerry Kyle, *Koi Health Advisor* (“KHA”)**WHY DO WE BOTHER TO JOIN A KOI CLUB?  
OR,  
SHOWING WHAT WE DID IS IMPORTANT**

Half of the mission of the Camellia Koi Club is to promote good koi husbandry while the other half is to show koi. Both foster overall good koi health care practices and that is what we are about. Some may show off the fact that they have a good eye while others may have gotten lucky and the koi grew into something to be proud of but all is possible only with good koi husbandry. When we buy a young koi we never know how it will develop. AKCA Certified Head Judge, Garry Chin, told me “It’s a crap shoot.” From the perspective of a local koi show such as ours just bringing a koi to the show is a declaration of support for the club and its mission and lets the world know that one has been successful in the good koi husbandry part of things and is now supporting the show part of things. Without good koi husbandry a koi could never make it to the show. Whether showing off a good eye, superior quality, or simply advertising good koi stewardship it is an honor to be able to bring a koi to the show for family and friends to see. Not all entrants are grand champions but all are always beautiful when displayed together in the blue show tanks where they are even more beautiful glowing in the sun as a collective sight to behold.

Many people from the community look to see and appreciate the beauty that we often consider “ordinary.” It is not ordinary to the rest of the world. Look at public Japanese Gardens whether in Lodi, Portland, San Francisco or the Palace in Tokyo and see the koi. Pretty? Sure, but not nearly as pretty as many of the ordinary koi in our own backyards. By bringing our koi together at our show we take a giant step toward fulfilling our club mission. We show what we can do and it is a living breathing testimonial to our success in good koi husbandry which in turn encourages others to join our club and help us continue our mission.

Those koi kichi who have advanced their eye and koi care abilities to a level above others may be in serious contention for the grandest prizes. As they return each year to compete once more as their koi grow and develop they no longer qualify to compete as Novice. A novice is someone who has never entered a koi in a show before. There is a level of competition at the show reserved only for the novice with awards for the novice. A novice competes in all levels and if he has the Best In Show Koi he can win that trophy over everyone. That means he is competing against the experienced entrants and can win what the experienced wanted if the judges like his koi best. However, the experienced is not eligible to compete against the novice in the best of the novice division. There is a distinct advantage to be a first time entrant and this is something every club member who has never entered should consider. While there is possible glory for the inexperienced coming for the first time, just bringing a koi to the show makes one a winner in the eyes of every other club member. The chance of winning a prize is just icing on the cake. Entering a koi for the first time validates that we belong. We are fulfilling the mission of the club in that we have taken good care of our babies and deserve being recognized for our success.

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