



Koi Ahoy

October 2010

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE – Marilee Marshall

Boy was September a month! I'm almost looking forward to the change in seasons. Didn't we have a nice show? Pat on the back, all around. Some quality time got to be shared with new and old-time members.

We have several new club members, and a lot of show visitors at the club booth that are currently building ponds. Not only did the display of our koi inspire them to asking what koi require in a pond, but we were able to offer them some fundamental concepts in construction, and direction to supplier/vendors that could help them.

While a lot of clubs and sponsors are being challenged in this economy, Camellia Koi Club was able to pull of a very nice show. In order to make that all possible the show set-up began with a blank slate

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This was the pallet into which we would create a koi show at the Placer Fairgrounds.



Georgia on the move Getting it all organized inside the Pavilion.



Jim directed the crew on display tank set-up.



Display area is ready to accept the competing koi.



Jason crunched the entry numbers.



Awards were set out for everyone to admire.



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CKC Koi Show and Vendor Faire Highlights



Our club booth was poised for action, and was manned by club members ready to answer visitor questions.



Lots of visitors on both days.





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Volunteers

Each year several volunteers take time from their busy schedules to make the CKC Koi Show a long-running success story. We would like to recognize these CKC family members for their dedication. Without their help, these events cannot happen.

- Jim
- Gary and Sharon
- Georgia
- Marilee and friends Richard, Cindee, and Danielle
- Duane and Melody
- Dan and Cheryl
- Mary Beth
- Garry
- John and Patty
- Tim
- Gus and Leslie
- Joan
- Jack and Barbara
- Ray and Pat
- Jerry
- Betty
- Dennis and Ellen
- Michelle
- Pauline and Lilly
- Ken
- Victoria and Dennis

THANK YOU!



NEXT
MEETING IS.....

October 31st
at the home of
Jerry & Phyllis
327 Del Mont St.
Lodi, CA 95242



General meeting begins at 1:00 and will feature our hosts famous spaghetti. Bring a salad or dessert to share, and a chair.

Board of Director meeting at noon (anyone is invited).

Program: REMEMBER THE SONG?

It happens. All of a sudden a song pops into my head. From a long time ago. Maybe childhood. Most may not remember Rosemary Clooney but there she is singing "Come on-a my house, my house a come on-a." I don't remember the rest. Something about I'm gonna give you candy, figs and dates and grapes and cakes. Everything. Even an Easter egg and a Christmas tree. Come on-a my house. It begs the question; what can I give you if you come on-a my house for the October CKC meeting since it's a bit of a drive to Lodi for some to see my pond.

It's not even my pond. It's a pond of ideas lifted from other club member's ponds. The "First Time Pond Builder" article on my pond was featured in the Jan-Feb Koi USA. If you attend the meeting you can see for yourself what a do-it-yourselfer can do for about \$2300 with a lot of ideas and some new and used equipment from CKC members. The last issue of KoiUSA showed how my little frog spitter saves lives. Come learn how the little lifesaver does it.

I enjoy the fun aspects of the club more than the work aspects so, let's make this a fun time. I'll show you how to make a wet/dry filter for pennies and what cheap and/or rescued Koi can look like in quality water a few years later. How inexpensive educators' can maximize O2 levels without the cost of buying and operating air pumps and big waterfalls. Large rock is expensive so I have fake hollow rock like Disneyland. More do-it-yourself. At 5000 gallons, the pond is not big and fancy but it is different. Afterward we can go down the block to Jack's house and see a converted swimming pool in a backyard to die for if you want fancy. Something for everyone.

Bring an appetite and we will have a spaghetti feed. We have plates and utensils left from the Koi Show. Bring a friend and bring a youngster. The more the merrier. If it rains, I will put a cover over the patio. We worked hard this year and now deserve to sit back and just have some fun. Come on-a my house so we can have some fun together jerry and Phyllis



Board of Director Meeting

Treasurer Report

By: Georgia Vonk, Treasurer

Beginning balance \$4892.69

Expenses 5360.52 Koi Show expenses

Income 8154.02 Koi show income, memberships & sale of two 8' tanks

Ending Balance \$7686.19

As for the Koi show it is currently showing a loss of \$852.09 with Mary Beth owing \$50 for her tank rental and the refund of our deposit from the Fairgrounds outstanding. Once that's paid, we'll have a loss of \$302.09. Considering our extra expenses and loss of sponsors, I think we should all give ourselves a big pat on the back. Great job done by all.

Minutes

New Business: No meeting because of the show.

Outstanding issues: Need to begin recruiting candidates.

Positions to be filled for next term are:

President = 2 yr

Vice Pres = 1 remaining year

Secretary = 2 yr

2 Directors = 2 yr

1 Director = 1 yr



FIRST TIME POND BUILDER, A TRUE STORY

...by Jerold Kyle

Building a pond can be a beautiful thing and doing it right can take you down a learning, friend-making path. Doing it well requires work but the rewards are worth every effort. The key is be smart enough to listen, do some research, join a club, reach out for advice, and be willing to make new friends.

I needed a hobby in my retirement years and, after all, how hard could digging a hole be since our home had been built in what had been an old vineyard. What was important to me digging a pond was the luxury of the first four feet being sandy loam with no rocks or gravel. I thought this is going to be easy. What I needed was a plan.

My grandson built me a computer because that's what kids do these days and he showed me how to "surf." Being told anything I want to learn is out there to be surfed, I typed in "Koi pond." There were over four thousand nine hundred sites and over the next six months I looked at most of them. Later I saw the number had climbed to one million three hundred thirty thousand sites and growing but, of concern is much of the information out there is now old and, in my experience and opinion, is less than accurate as too many make a nice sounding case for just plain outdated or bad information.

There was information at the library but while the pictures were nice the publication dates were old. I had already learned that the hobby is growing at such a rate that five year old information may be old technology. I searched the web as it had the most information and many sites had links to other sites.

One day, by chance, one of the links took me to a site by a guy calling himself "hijack" with pictures of a nice looking pond. More importantly, he had a link to The Camellia Koi Club website. Somewhere along the way in my research I had read that the best way to learn about Koi ponds was to find a Koi club and join. I had been looking but had found no clubs in our area until I stumbled on this link. Now I know to type in "AKCA" to find the home page with a guide to 104 different clubs across the nation.

The Camellia Koi Club met in the Sacramento area only an hour drive away and might be worth looking into. They were planning a pond tour that April which I attended and was hooked. Joining a Koi Club got me invited into many back yards where I saw many ponds that I otherwise would never have had the opportunity to view. Many of these Koi pond owners were people who had a good grasp of what they were doing with diverse ideas from which I could base my plans for my project. Joining a Koi Club is the best thing a person can do to learn about ponds and Koi and make new friends. I often tell others that I joined for the Koi ponds but stay for the people.

It was time to put my ideas on paper but now it was with a sense of confidence as I had a support group behind me. I even met Jack (hijack) who as it turned out lives in my town in the very next block. He was a neighbor. Who would have guessed? With a swimming pool size pond and beautiful Koi, Jack is a gardener and has been an inspiration.

The final plans were in the works and I was anxious to show them to my new "advisors." There were many decisions to make. Did I want a water garden that can support a few Koi or did I want a



pure Koi pond. What was a "pure" Koi pond? There are differences and one must know them or risk disappointment. Of course I wanted it all and I wanted it on a budget. It would be a do-it-yourself project but choices were simplified by the various Associated Koi Clubs of America (AKCA) publications made available to all club members. My new Club member friends came to my home to see what I planned and offered advice so I would not make too many mistakes.

One of the first to arrive was a walking talking fountain of knowledge named Ken. He saw where I planned to dig a three foot deep three thousand gallon pond and told me if I dug it two feet deeper it would hold five thousand gallons and not take up any more space. He explained the pond that the Koi are swimming in is also their toilet. I had never thought of it that way. The more water there is in the pond the more the pollution can be immediately diluted reducing its immediate relative toxicity and its resulting stress on the Koi while giving the bio-filter a little more time to effectively remove it. When I asked if my planned filter was big enough or too big, he smiled and said there is no such thing as too much filter. I was starting to learn. I attended the upcoming AKCA Annual Seminar and visited more ponds looking for more knowledge. My pond was going to end up being a collection of what I perceived as being the features of each that I liked the most. There was much to learn as I visited many club members' Koi ponds.

One of the earliest ponds I looked at belonged to Dennis and Ellen. With a home that takes up most of the lot there is not much room in the back yard, just like at my house. Seeing this 5000 gallon pond convinced me this size feature would fit and could look good in my small back yard. My wife, Phyllis, particularly liked the idea that the pond was raised enough so Ellen could comfortably sit on the raised edge on the patio side and hand feed the Koi. The edge acted like a bench without looking like one. Later, one of the first Koi we got came from that pond. Phyllis named her Miss Piggy as she eats like a pig rushing to be first to be fed and sucks food out of her hand.

Improper water changes or the total lack thereof, is one of the most common mistakes that Koi people make. One of the reasons may be that to dump a thousand gallons of water out of the pond and then refill with treated city water adds potentially dangerous chlorine to the pond and requires special treatment. When I visited Garry's pond I saw that he had a trickle of water continuously running through his pond and out the overflow. The key here is that it was only a trickle and a continuous trickle can greatly add up over a week's time and he added it through a spray head like one would use for a lawn. The spray would dissipate (gas off) off most of the chlorine as chlorine is a gas. With the chlorine gassed off there was no need for costly chemical additives to neutralize the chlorine. The air temperature on the day I visited this pond was well over one hundred degrees. The evaporating spray which was administered from above cooled the air over the surface of the water effectively keeping the hot valley temperatures from overheating the pond on the hottest days. A few years later an article came out in KOI USA advocating this as a positive alternative to sudden massive water changes. To not waste water some use the overflow to water the garden. More features to incorporate into my plans.

I talked to Mary Beth about an idea of having a catch basin at the bottom of the waterfall to catch the falling water before it then spilled into the main pond. The catch basin would be raised and have its own bottom drain. While I was still thinking about it and planning it Mary built it. When I visited her pond I found she could turn off the water to the waterfall, open the drain in the catch basin, and with a nozzle on a garden hose she could blast off any algae or other material on the falls and flush it down that catch basin drain. Then she just closed the drain, turned the falls on again, and water resumed flowing through the system. The beauty of this is she can clean off the falls in about five minutes and



does not wash dirt or debris into the pond. This keeps the water clean and clear and doesn't impact the filters when cleaning the falls. This was definitely an item to add to my plans.

Some Koi raisers are all about Koi. They may have unbelievably beautiful Koi while the pond may be pure functionality with the total focus on water quality for Koi quality. One of the earlier ponds I enjoyed seeing belonged to Pauline. When she built her fiberglass pond with best information available for water quality for Koi quality, she chose not to sacrifice looks to have a quality functioning water system. Seeing what this master gardener did convinced me the pond does not have to end at its edge. The visual concept can continue onto dry land and once again seeing what a club member did made me want some of that. Another idea was added to my growing wish list.

My best ideas were more and more not my ideas at all but bits and pieces of what other club members had done. When I saw Ken's pond for the first time I just loved the cooling shade and the lush ferns. Needless to say my pond area has cooling shade and lush ferns. When I saw Dan and Cheryl's yard with the patio off the family room and the raised pond to the side of that with the waterfall focal point on the far end I knew that would work for me. When I saw that Jack and Barbara had a pond that was part of the whole instead of the yard being only all about the pond, I wanted that too. When I saw a fallen leaf on Wayne's pond race across the surface to get in the skimmer quickly I knew I wanted that. I had seen too many lazy skimmers so I talked to Doug, when I was at his pond, about water flow and installed with his advice a 4" drain on the skimmer as well as on the centered bottom drain so I have as little or as much of my water flow go out either exit. It's a rare pond that can run nearly 4000 gallons an hour through a skimmer. This is very useful when the neighbor's fruit trees are losing their blossoms and the spring breeze sends them my way. The list kept growing.

When the pond was finally up and running in the summer the water was green. It stayed green. One of the considerations of bead filters is a tendency toward green water if the pond is not sufficiently shaded. Even then it can happen. A common solution is to add a UV light. I looked at green water as a symptom and did not want an expensive quick fix so called on Jason at his pond. After seeing what he did I built a homemade trickle style wet/dry filter out of rock filled egg crates stacked behind my waterfall. The waterfall itself is more of a grotto with a spray bar inside the cave like structure. With half the water returned to the pond through eductors pointing up for a fluming action, an idea I got from Steve, and nearly half returning via spray bars through my wet / dry trickle filter I have maximum oxygenation without the cost of bubbles from an expensive air pump and the water is not green any longer.

Everywhere I turn I see my pond is not my pond at all but a compilation of ideas gathered from others that I would never have met had it not been for joining a Koi Club. I still remember its president, Carolyn, advising me to listen to all ideas. I saw Bob and Jeannine's pond with a little filter that logic said should not do the job. But, it does the job beautifully in an exquisite front courtyard. With only a few bigger, but nicer Koi, they balance the fish load to the filter which is so well hidden it does not detract from the beauty of the garden. Another Bob and Janine, with a much larger pond, installed steps and Phyllis made me add that to the list in case I ever fell in the pond. When I visited the other Carolyn's pond to see her prize winning Koi I also saw her artistic side in the garden art and knew I wanted some of that too. John and Jolene had smoothly integrated their living room, patio, and pond seamlessly together while Dennis and Marilee could monitor their Koi on the TV. More additions to my want list. Duane and Melody have a separate upper pond for plants that act as a "veggie filter" so they have beautiful water plants and still enjoy Koi in a separate area so I enlarged the waterfall catch basin plan a little so I could have removable plants in the system but out of the Koi



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area of the pond. I also learned I could have plants just out of the pond that could hang over the side into the water so they looked like they were inside but the Koi could not root them out.

One day Garry told me there is no such thing as the perfect pond and to quit planning it to death and finish building it. So I did. If he is right it may never be as perfect as I wanted but I can keep tweaking it as I learn. My pond is a credit to everyone in the Koi Club and is only my interpretation of their best ideas. It took four years during which time I added to my knowledge by becoming an AKCA Certified Koi Health Advisor, visiting ponds in other cities and other states through the Camellia Koi Club's affiliation with the AKCA. AKCA arranged for qualified Vets to teach me at no cost to me, and I attended annual seminars and learned more. I wish I had found a Koi Club sooner so it would not have taken so long.

I firmly believe there is no more effective way to learn about this hobby than to join an AKCA affiliated Koi Club and become involved with others who enjoy the beauty of Koi. You too may find that you joined for the Koi and for the knowledge but stay for the exceptional people and the friendships made with others who are a little koi kichi – that's Japanese for Koi crazy.30



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