I am a life-long resident of the St. Louis area. I attribute my interest in nature to my family’s love of the outdoors. Some of my earliest memories are of fishing trips with my grandfather, father and brother. During times waiting for the cork to bob, my grandfather would have us bring him a leaf or a bug and he would explain its role in nature. I pursued this interest during my formative years in the scouting programs earning many merit badges including Bird Study and Botany. Later, I attended the University of Missouri at St. Louis studying science. I have worked at Wild Birds Unlimited since 2007 as a salesman in the Birding and Agricultural Department.

Through Cornell University and WBU I received the honorary award of Birding Specialist. I give guided Nature walks and lectures to various community groups as well as work in the development of new food blends. I am an advisor to the St. Louis chapter of the Audubon Society and do field surveys for them. In addition, I am a past board member of the Wild Bird Rehab, volunteering whenever possible, caring for injured birds. I am an active contributor to the on-line bird sitting site www.mobirds.org and e-bird.

Don’t Miss This!
What: Birds of Fall and Winter
Where: Missouri Botanical Garden, Ridgway Center, Beaumont Room
When: Tuesday, October 17, at 7:00 p.m.
Who: Bryan Layton Prather of Wild Birds Unlimited

Tiki Tour 9-30-17

As usual Pam Jokerst did a wonderful job at lining up the hosts for Tiki Tour. I know she ran into a bit of a problem up but everything turned out fine. We could not ask for more perfect fall weather - not too hot and not too cold. There was a lot of socializing and all round good fun. It was a relaxing evening with quality time spent at every pond and garden. It is quite amazing how our water features change and transform at night with lights added. They become an even more tranquil place to sit. Enjoy the photos on pages 5 and 7. All photos were taken by Irv Schallenberg. What a great job!

**Remember the potluck coming up in November with elections. Please check out page 2 to see what to bring and let Cindy know either at the October meeting or by email what you will bring. She just likes to make sure we do not have too much of one thing.**
Ugly Fish Contest

It is that time of year again for our ugly fish contest. Pictures may be turned in at the October meeting or the Pot Luck meeting. Judging will take place at the Pot Luck. Let’s see WHO has the ugliest fish this year. The rules are very simple. It must be a fish that lives in your pond now. No dead fish, no prior fish, no aquarium fish. PLEASE no enhancements to your pictures and no downloading of pictures from the internet.

YOU ARE ON YOUR HONOR! Simply take a picture of your fish and print it. If you do not have a printer, Walgreens can do it for you for a minor charge. Submit all pictures to Cindy Williams at our October or in November at the Pot Luck meeting. One picture per member please. Cindy will number pictures and display them on a board in the library. She will keep a secret list of who brought which picture. In November, the judging will take place to see which pictured fish deserves the prize of “THE UGLIEST FISH OF 2017”. Bragging rights should be enough of an incentive but just in case they aren’t… the winner will be featured in the next issue of Water Word with the picture of their little beauty.

In addition, the lucky winner will receive a fish sculpture to display in their home commemorating this year’s achievement. However, when next year’s winner is announced, the sculpture must be passed to the owner of the new champion.

Pot Luck and Elections

The St. Louis Water Gardening Society is closing out another successful year with a traditional end-of-the year Pot Luck Dinner. It’s time to bask in our success and plan for another year! It’s a party, but there are important matters to decide as well. Our business will include:

• Voting on Vice President and Treasurer
• Approving Our Budget for 2017

Bring a dish to share! SLWGS will supply meat, beverages and paper goods. Not sure what to bring? Use this handy guide, based on the first letter of your last name!

A-J  Salads
K-S  Desserts
T-Z  Side-dish

Call Cindy Williams, hospitality chairman at (636) 394-9214, or email her at happyclub3@hotmail.com to let her know what dish and how many people you’ll bring with you. Please come!!
Greetings, Folks!
The year is almost over. The days are getting shorter and soon it will time to get ready for winter. We only have a couple of meetings left this year.

To my profound disappointment (and that of some others) “Dr. Bob” (Passavoy) who was to be our September speaker developed back trouble the weekend prior to the meeting. Fortunately for us Josh Hetley (a member) took over for him and did a terrific job filling in!

This month we’ll have Bryan Prather from Wild Birds Unlimited. He’ll be talking about “The Birds of Winter.” Bryan was supposed to be the speaker at our February meeting but became ill just prior to the meeting. At any rate, October seems like a more appropriate time for this particular topic.

In November we will be holding elections for vice president and treasurer. While we do have candidates for both offices we will gladly take additional nominations. If interested, please contact a board member. Also in November we will be approving the budget for 2018. Largely thanks to the yearly koi auction it appears that we will have a surplus this year. In accordance with our bylaws, half of this surplus will be designated for community and/or educational projects. If you know of a worthy water gardening-related cause in need of funds please contact a board member with the details. So far, we have received a request from Tower Grove Park, but it appears we will have additional funds available.

Last month I went to Carmel, Indiana (just north of Indianapolis) and assisted with the preparation for the Northern Midwest ZNA koi show. ZNA, a world-wide koi hobbyist organization, has several regional chapters. The Northern Midwest chapter is seriously considering holding their 2018 show in St Louis. They would provide the equipment, expertise and some of the manpower to run the show. We would act as the host city and would provide assistance in preparing for and running the show. This would be a wonderful opportunity to expand our horizons and call attention to our hobby. A decision will be subject to approval by both our membership and that of the ZNA. Expect more on this topic soon.

With the end of summer has come some changes in the local environment. Sherry has had a summer long feud going with Reba (the ribbon snake). It now seems that either Reba has had a litter or her friends have decided to join her! We have been finding snakes all over the yard, much to Sherry’s consternation! They don’t bother me, but they have an unnerving effect on Sherry when they mutually surprise each other. Whenever I encounter one all I normally see of the critter in question is a tail heading away from me at full speed! I’ve not encountered any poisonous species and the frog population (which they are no doubt in pursuit of) seems to be riveting the second plague of Exodus so some thinning of the herd might be desirable! The hawks are active (and vocal), a pair of hummingbirds have returned to patronize our feeders and even Bennie (the bat) has been spotted flitting about around sunset. The days are getting shorter and soon it will be time to net the pond to keep the leaves on the terrestrial side of things.

Dave Stahre
Calendar of Events

Membership meetings in 2017 will be held on the dates and at the locations listed below between 7 and 9 p.m. Meetings will be held at the Missouri Botanical Garden Ridgway Center, Beaumont Room, on the third Tuesday of every month unless otherwise noted.

October 17—Birds of Fall and Winter
Bryan Layton Prather of Wild Birds Unlimited

November 14—Annual Potluck and Elections
Potluck dinner and election of officers. Nominations will be accepted for the positions of vice president and treasurer to serve two-year terms beginning in January 2018.

The St. Louis Water Gardening Society is a member of the Associated Koi Clubs of America (AKCA). Visit the association’s website at www.akca.org.
Picture of Tiki Tour....
Water Word is published by the St. Louis Water Gardening Society 10 times annually, and is distributed to all members. The newsletter contains information about water gardening and fish-keeping, as well as information about SLWGS meetings and activities. Contributions of articles and photos are welcome and should be sent to the Water Word editor listed below. Documents should be in common text formats, and photos should be in high resolution (300 dpi or higher) jpeg format. The deadline for submissions is the first of each month.

Information about the Society, including how to join, can be found at our website, www.slwgs.org or from any of the officers and board members listed:

### 2017 SLWGS Officers and Board Members

- **President**: Dave Stahre (618) 623-9341 dstahre@hotmail.com
- **Vice President**: Steve Metzler (314) 845-3902 stevenmetzler@att.net
- **Treasurer**: Steve Harris (314) 968-8432 steveiltsinger@gmail.com
- **Recording Secretary**: Sherry Nelms (618) 365-1057 sher200856@yahoo.com
- **Publicity Chairman**: Ginny Mueller (314) 831-3063 vcmueller16@hotmail.com
- **Special Events Chairman**: Pam Jokerst (314) 276-9461 pamjokerst@gmail.com
- **Society Shirt Sales Chairman**: Ruth Mosley (314) 878-7281 rgbmosley@aol.com
- **Librarian**: Katie Williams (314) 428-3037 beezey696@hotmail.com
- **Membership/E-mail Chairman**: Gail Abernathy (314) 428-3037 abernat@swbell.net
- **Jewel Box Chairman**: Kay Miskell (618) 344-6216 km99@att.net
- **Water Word Editor**: Gail Abernathy (314) 428-3037 abernat@swbell.net
- **Website Chairman**: Mary Nies (636) 458-2149 marycnies@gmail.com
- **AKCA/ Koi USA Representative**: Rick Jokerst (314) 878-2652 rickjokerst@gmail.com
- **Pond-O-Rama Chairman**: Robert Henson (314) 495-4233 hatt8v92@aol.com
- **Parliamentarian**: Jeanne Lehr (314) 432-2842 jeannelehr@yahoo.com
- **Historian**: Joe Summers (636) 527-2001 chalilypond@aol.com
- **Hospitality Chairman**: Cindy Williams (636) 394-9214 happyclub3@hotmail.com
- **Past President**: Joe Summers (636) 527-2001 chalilypond@aol.com
- **Members-at-Large**: John Nies (636) 458-2149 jtnies@gmail.com
- **Dan Gravens**: (314) 821-1786 dlgavens@sbcglobal.net
- **Cathy Schallenberg**: (618) 920-9104 iwschall52@aol.com

Looking for more information about pond building, plants or fish care? Visit our website, www.slwgs.org. Check out our “Articles of Interest” section and “Links We Like” for help.
Out on a Limb and need some help?

Find resources at www.slwgs.org!

NOTE From Editor

***Looking for articles. We’d love to have articles from members about their ponds or what we should be doing in our dirt gardens. Do not be afraid to write. Sharing your knowledge is what this club is all about. We learn from others who have the same interests. We are looking for a new person to proofread Water Word next year. Please, someone step up. I can do the typing but my grammar and punctuation are bad.

Library and Learning Center

The Library and Learning Center would like to remind anybody that may have interesting photos or articles about Koi, pond care or pond construction to please bring them to the next meeting. Photos can be reclaimed at the end of the meeting or donated to the library. As mentioned last year, the library has bought a digital photo frame. So if you have a favorite photo of your fish or pond bring it in on a jump drive and it can be added to the photo frame. You can also email them to Katie at beezy696@hotmail.com and she can upload them.
Getting Ready for Fall and Winter

As the Fall/Winter season is fast approaching, it is time to take steps to prepare your water garden to ensure the health of your fish and plants for next spring.

Fish Care

When the pond water temperature falls below 60 degrees switch to low-protein, high-carbohydrate food. When the pond water temperature falls below 45 degrees, discontinue feeding your fish until spring. Inspect your fish for parasites or any other signs of disease. If you suspect a problem either from appearances or behavior of the fish, please call Pets Plus for a recommended treatment.

When water temperatures reach 50 degrees, it is time to do the following:

Remove all debris from your pond with a net and vacuum.

Use a net to clean out all of the large debris. Pump as much sludge as possible from the bottom using a pond vacuum, wet/dry or shop vac. Perform a 30% water change. Always add chlorine/chloramine remover to new water to prevent the death of your fish. Remove your pump, filter, and UV clarifier. Clean and store indoors for the winter.

Plant Maintenance

Hardy Plants

All hardy plants can be treated the same. Trim the growth to 2 inches above the crown and submerge to the deepest part of the pond.

Floating Plants

Remove and discard all floating plants such as duckweed, water hyacinths, water lettuce, parrot feather, floating heart, and frogbit from your pond. These plants require too much effort to keep alive thru the winter.

Tropical Bog Plants

Tropical bog plants (marginals) can be treated as house plants, but must be brought in before the evening temperature drop to 50 degrees. Place them in a window that gets good sunlight. Keep the soil very moist and fertilize monthly with lily tabs.

Tropical Lilies

There are 2 methods of storing a tropical lily:

1) Grow Lights:
Place the pot in a bucket or tub of clean pond water under a grow light. Keep the plants above 60 degrees replacing the water periodically. The water will stay cleaner with a small pump and filter.

2) Dormancy:
In order for the plant to survive dormant all winter it will have to have grown a tuber. The tuber is where the plant stores energy. Stop fertilizing the plants in late summer. The lack of nutrients should induce tuber growth. Wait until the weather has begun to turn cold. Usually by early November the leaves of the lilies will be turning yellow but not yet brown. Remove the root mass from the pot, rinse with pond water, and cut off all dead growth. If there is no tuber, let the plant float freely (not in a pot) for a few weeks. Store the plant mass in damp peat moss or sand in a sealed container near 60 degrees for the winter. Re-pot the plant in mid to late May. It's best to start the plant shallow until the plant is re-established. We like to have the top of the pot about 6 to 8 inches below the surface.

(Continued on page 9)
Add a Barley Bale

Barley bales are an effective way to control string-algae in the spring, especially if you had problems with string or hair algae this year.

Add Aqua-Shade

The easiest way to prevent algae growth in the winter is to use the blue dye (Aqua-Shade) to keep the algae from getting the sunlight they need to grow. This will make the pond so dark that you can not see down into the water but it will keep the algae from growing without harming plants or fish.

Add Algaeicides (Algae Fix or Tetra’s Algae Control)

The other method of preventing winter algae is to use algaeicides. These are harder on plants and fish but they will leave the water clear. If you choose to use algaeicides it is best to keep the water moving.

De-Icers

Add a floating de-icer to the pond. It is important to keep a hole in the ice to allow oxygen to contact the water and perhaps, more importantly, for gases caused by rotting matter to escape.

Air Pumps

If you are concerned that the de-icer may not be enough for the number of fish you have, consider adding an air pump to increase gas exchange. They are very efficient and don't pose the same risks as conventional water pumps.

Netting

Cover the pond with netting to keep leaves and trash out of your pond. Some people opt to not cover their ponds over the winter. This is fine as long as you keep up with netting the leaves out in the fall. Letting them settle to the bottom of the pond over the winter will not only lower the water quality and make it more difficult to clean out your water garden in the spring, it may kill your fish over the winter.

Information on this article came from Ponds Plus website. Remember, when you have questions, consult our advertisers who have years of experience. (See their ad on page 4)
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Photo of the Month

An artistic approach to remember our lilies from 2017