Pond Construction: Pros, Cons and Pitfalls....

Back in the late 90’s Josh worked at a Garden Center that had a display water garden with large koi. He was responsible for the upkeep of the pond and futile effort to keep the pond water clear. This helped to build a passion for fish and ponds. Fast forward to 2013, after a long hiatus from the hobby Josh was able to start researching and building his dream pond/ponds. Along the way, he became a self-proclaimed filtration junkie, obsessing on water quality to grow large show koi and the construction methods that help people meet these goals. In this talk, Josh is going to highlight some of the many methods used to build koi ponds and their pros and cons as well as pitfalls to avoid. He will also be touching on a hypothetical build with cost comparison based on the different techniques. Josh currently lives in Highland, IL with his wife and two wonderful kids. He has been in the nursery industry his entire career and currently is a sales rep for a national wholesale nursery covering the state of IL. You can find him and his wife around the pond on weekends or at one of the many koi shows through out the year.

FIRST KOI SHOW!

Happy New Year! It's going to be an exciting year ahead with the SLWGS hosting our first koi show. We are teaming up with the Northern Midwest Zen Nippon Airinkai club (NMZNA) for this three day event to be held in September 2018. This will be the 17th year for this show, previously held in Chicago and in most recent years, Indianapolis. The members hale from Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Ohio and Tennessee. It promises to be a lot of fun, along with having some of the best koi in the Midwest on display for all to see! There will also be people from across the country attending. We have another wonderful opportunity to highlight what a great club SLWGS is. There will be various ways for our members to get involved and assist with the success of this event. More details will be available in upcoming newsletters and at the meetings.

Don’t Miss This!

What: Pond Construction: Pros, Cons and Pitfalls

Where: Missouri Botanical Garden, Ridgway Center, Beaumont Room

When: Tuesday, January 16, at 7:00 p.m.

Who: Josh Hetley, Member

 Rick Jokerst  
AKCA/Koi USA Representative  
(314) 368-2652  
rickjokerst@gmail.com

Kentucky, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Ohio and Tennessee. It promises to be a lot of fun, along with having some of the best koi in the Midwest on display for all to see! There will also be people from across the country attending. We have another wonderful opportunity to highlight what a great club SLWGS is. There will be various ways for our members to get involved and assist with the success of this event. More details will be available in upcoming newsletters and at the meetings.
Ugly Fish 2017 Winner

Miss Dottie, the Sanders family fish, was winner in 2016

The First winner was Azul the Williams Family fish 2015

NOVEMBER POTLUCK MEETING

The St Louis Water Gardening Society held its 2017 Pot Luck Meeting in November, which included the annual pot luck dinner and social, biennial elections for Vice President and Treasurer for 2018-2020, and the Ugly Fish Contest.

Taking office this month as Vice President is Joe Summers, replacing Steve Metzler who has served two terms. Joe and his wife, Tonya, own Chalily Pond and Gardens. Joe has served terms as President and Historian and is an active supporter of SLWGS since its beginning.

Ginny Mueller was elected treasurer to replace Steve Harris. Ginny has been very active in SLWGS serving as Pond-O-Rama Chairperson for a number of years and continues to promote the society as Publicity Chairperson. Ginny serves on a number of nonprofit Boards, is active in Soroptimist International, and travels extensively.

Congratulations to Joe and Ginny!

Congratulations to Carol and Ron Greminger of the St Louis Water Gardening Society for winning the Ugly Fish Contest for their fish Roger! Poor Roger got caught in the net many years ago, so he isn't the beautiful koi that he once was. Roger remains happy in the Greminger’s beautiful water feature. Their water garden has been on tour for Pond-O-Rama for a number of years. Congrats, Ron and Carol!

Meet Roger Greminger The 2017 Winning Fish for the Ugly Fish Contest

New Treasurer and Vice President for 2018-2020
Greetings, Folks!

Wow, a new year already! Where does time go? I’m writing this while temperatures are in the single-digits, what a change from last year! Here’s hoping everyone’s fish made it ok!

Some sad news: During our break, longtime member, Wayne Gibson passed away. Our condolences to his wife, Alice, and his family. He and his gentle humor will be greatly missed.

I have to apologize for my absence at the November meeting Sherry and I went to Egypt and, due to scheduling considerations beyond our control we couldn’t make it back in time. My thanks to Steve Metzler for taking over.

Well, we’ve got some changes this year. Steve Metzler decided not to run for another term, and Joe Summers will be taking over as Vice President. We also have a new Treasurer, Ginny Mueller, who’ll be replacing Steve Harris. My thanks to both Steves for the fine job they both did. Also Cindy Williams has indicated that she won’t be able to continue with “Hospitality” and the “Library” Tonya Summers who has volunteered to take over Hospitality, but the Library position it still in the air. Thanks for jobs well done Cindy!

One final note: We’ll be replacing our trusty sound system this year with something more compact and easier to transport and store. We’re going to need someone to take over responsibilities for its logistics. If you’re interested in assisting in one or more of these tasks, please let a board member know.

Joan Ziskind will be assuming the Pond-O-Rama chair-ship this year and will be looking for volunteers to help with this annual endeavor.

Something brand-new this year will be hosting a koi show more information to come. Ok, well we’re off into a new year. I’m still putting the schedule together but we have Josh Hetley talking about pond construction in January, and Jamie Beyer who’ll be talking about how to attract desirable creatures to your water feature while discouraging the unwelcome one is coming in February. We’ll have a presentation on landscaping in March (still in negotiation) and the popular plant auction in April. The rest is tentative at this point.

Dave Stahre
Membership meetings in 2018 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.

January 16 — Josh Hetley “Pond Construction: Pros, Cons, and Pitfalls”

February 20 — Jamie Beyer “Wildlife in the Garden”

March 20 — Terry Miline, Master Gardener “Revitalize your Garden”

April 18 — Judy Evans “Plant Auction”

May 16 — To be Determined

June 19 — To be Determined P-O-R Host Meeting at 6 p.m.

June 23-24 — Pond –O-Rama

July 18 — To be Determined

August 21 — Jewel Box

September 18 — To be Determined

October 16 — To be Determined

November 13 — Annual Potluck & Elections

Pot luck dinner and election of officers. Nominations will be accepted for the positions of President and Secretary to serve two-year terms beginning in January 2019.
Last fall I reviewed my list of activities involved in preparing the koi pond for winter. The nitrate level was high so I drained and replaced 400 gallons from our 1200 gallon pond. The pH was 6.6, a surprise since the tap water is close to pH 9. I added sodium bicarbonate to adjust the pH to 7.8. Since the bead filter and foam fractionator are poorly insulated, I drained and stored all the lines, pumps and units in the garage. This is important because the preceding year I missed a drain plug and had to replace four feet of broken pipe and couplings due to freeze/thaw. I placed two cleaned disc heaters that I assumed to be operational into the pond. I didn't check these for function ahead of time. An air pump, with new lines, had been in use all summer, and I checked and cleaned the pump and lines. I back flushed the waterfall; a new pump had been installed in April. I removed plants and installed three new filters in the skimmer basket. To keep out leaves and debris Carol and I covered the pond with netting stretched over a dome-shaped frame made from conduit. I removed the "Scarecrow". All electrical outlets are on different circuits.

Then reality arrived. Ice began to form on the pond with the holiday cold snap. One of the heaters froze to the side of the pond. The air pump stopped. Ice covered two thirds of the pond surface. The three "sharks" mysteriously disappeared, but the koi lined up on the pond bottom about four feet under water. The temperature outside dropped to -3 degrees F. Santa Claus was late.

Resolution: I replaced the failed heater and discontinued the air pump, (the line will remain frozen until warmer weather arrives), and said a prayer for the sharks. I retired to sit by the fireplace until spring.

After reading the instruction sheet on the new pond heater, I discovered that its effectiveness can be determined by placing it in a freezer for one hour and then testing by plugging it into a grounded electrical outlet. If it immediately heats up it is okay.

People often will ask if winter pond maintenance requires a lot of effort. I answer, "not if you can get someone else to do the work."

by Dan Gravens

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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.

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Check out our “Articles of Interest” section and “Links We Like” for help.

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: Joe Summers (636) 527-2001 chailypond@aol.com
Treasurer: Ginny Mueller (314) 831-3063 vcmueller16@hotmail.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: Gail Abernathy (314) 428-3037 abernat@swbell.net
Membership/E-mail Chairman: Kay Miskell (618) 344-6216 km99@att.net
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Past President: Dan Gravens (314) 821-1786 digravens@sbcglobal.net
Past President: Cathy Schallenberg (618) 920-9104 iwschall52@aol.com

AKCA/ Koi USA Representative: Rick Jokerst (314) 368-2652 rickjokerst@gmail.com
Website Chairman: Mary Nies (636) 458-2149 marycnies@gmail.com
President: Dave Stahre (618) 623-9341 dstahre@hotmail.com
Vice President: Joe Summers (636) 527-2001 chailypond@aol.com
Treasurer: Ginny Mueller (314) 831-3063 vcmueller16@hotmail.com
Recording Secretary: Sherry Nelms (618) 365-1057 sher200856@yahoo.com
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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.
Wayne Gibson will be Missed

Wilburn "Wayne" Gibson, 77, of Granite City, IL, was born November 3, 1940, and passed away November 24, 2017. Wayne was retired from Sheet Metal Workers Union #268. Wayne and Alice have been members of the St Louis Water Gardening Society since 2000. Wayne was an active gardener and was that special guy that always made members smile. He could be found at the Jewel Box on Saturdays, and assisting Alice for years with Pond-O-Rama. Wayne was a good cook who would share his potato soup recipe with Board Members when they hosted many meetings at their home.

Alice and Wayne had that special love and caring for each other that spilled over to their children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. Wayne's special gifts of time, talent, and humor certainly made a difference to all of us who knew him.

Wayne will be missed. Our sympathy from all of us at the St Louis Water Gardening Society to Alice and his family. Thanks for all you've done, Wayne, good and faithful servant. We continue to support Alice with our thoughts and prayers.

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.
Our 18th annual Pond-O-Rama pond and garden tour will be June 23 and 24, the weekend after Father’s Day. It is one of the best garden tours of the season and raises funds to support our civic project: planting and maintaining the lily ponds in front of the Jewel Box in Forest Park.

**Members:**
Be a host. Share your water garden! The public is curious. What can they put in their yard to provide water for the birds, the gentle sounds of a waterfall or even a swimming hole for the kids? Some want a very small pond; others, more grandiose. Some want to talk with the do-it-yourselfers, others want to have an elaborate water feature and still others just want to see what possibilities available. They want to see YOUR special area. Fill out the host form here (also available at our next meeting) or email me at joan.ziskind@yahoo.com. They are due in February.

Join a Pond-O-Rama committee. We need ticket runners, writers, photographers, host party helpers and host gift idea people. Email me at joan.ziskind@yahoo.com.

**Landscapers and Pond Builders:**
Show off your best work! Call previous customers. Ask them to be hosts this year, and do it NOW before you get too busy. Fill out a form for each.

Advertise in the Pond-O-Rama booklet. Get your ad in front of all the potential customers attending the tour. Contact Sherry Nelms at sher200856@yahoo.com.

**Retailers:**
Advertise in the Pond-O-Rama booklet. Get your ad in front of all the potential customers attending the tour. Consider having a coupon to encourage visitors to your store. Contact Sherry Nelms at sher200856@yahoo.com.

**Pond-O-Rama form notes:**
If you participated in a previous Pond-O-Rama tour, only changed items in the ticket booklet information section need to be filled in.
Choose your best features for the Description. Please limit your description to 100 words. Those containing more than 100 words will be edited to size.
Sample description: “A large 8’ x 16’ oval pond is fed by a winding stream with two 2’ waterfalls. A wooden deck overhangs one edge of the large pond, offering an excellent area to view the multitude of plants and goldfish. Other ponds were built by the homeowner, including a smaller 8’ x 6’ pond which was added last year. Numerous container water gardens throughout add to the fully landscaped yard.”
Pond-O-Rama Host Form

POND-O-RAMA HOST FORM

The Pond-O-Rama 2018 annual public pond and garden tour will be June 23 & June 24. St. Louis Water Gardening Society (SLWGS) members open their private spaces to the public to share their hobby, provide education about ponds, raise funds for the Society’s projects and attract new members. You can help us meet our goals by sharing your beautiful waterscapes and gardens. To include your water feature in our guidebook, which also serves as the ticket, this form needs to be returned by the end of February.

HOSTS MUST BE CURRENT MEMBERS OF SLWGS, $25 yearly per household with an emailed newsletter.

NAME: ________________________________________ Were you on POR previously? _______
ADDRESS: __________________________________________________________________________
CITY: _______________________________________ STATE: _______ ZIP CODE: ________________
HOME PHONE: __________________ CELL PHONES: ________________________________
EMAIL ADDRESS: _______________________________________________________________________

TICKET BOOKLET INFORMATION (If you were on a previous POR tour, only enter CHANGED data.)

CIRCLE FEATURES IN YOUR YARD:

GARDEN    POND PLANTS    STREAMS    WATERFALLS    FISH    BRIDGE

IS YOUR POND/LANDSCAPE WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBLE? CIRCLE ONE: YES NO
DESIGNED BY: ___________________________ CONSTRUCTED BY: ___________________________
DESCRIBE YOUR POND/GARDEN IN 100 WORDS OR LESS:
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________

GIVE DETAILED DRIVING DIRECTIONS TO YOUR HOME FROM A MAJOR HIGHWAY: __________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________

PLEASE RETURN THE COMPLETED FORM BY THE END OF FEBRUARY TO:

JOAN ZISKIND, 1064 CHAROLAIS DR, BALLWIN, MO 63011
636-394-6342 home or 636-448-5411 cell
Joan.ziskind@yahoo.com

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Photo of the Month
Photo of City Gardens, during our lovely 2018 artice weather. Special affects on photo by member Mark Collins. Photo taken by Sue Abernathy.