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The Creatures We Keep
David Curtright
Most customers end up keeping to many animals in their ponds. Read what can happen when the “customer” thinks they know more then you do. This is a fun article to read, but the important point is the problems animals can cause when the pond is not built for them. For example, red-eared sliders do not go well with lilies in a water garden and oh what a mess swans can make! Balance is the key.

Staying Productive During the Dog Days of Summer
Pam Greiner
With the current economic conditions, the amount of work opportunities seems to have dwindled – here are a few tip on how to keep you busy. This is a good time to also think about how you market and brand your business. Maybe you should concentrate on smaller projects or projects that will be done in phases. Do you just need to get out and say “Hi” to prior customer – what do you have to offer them? Failure to plan is a plan to fail.

COVER STORY – Support Your Local Distributor
Tom Graham
Do you know the Distributor you buy your products from? Some distributors like Unit Liner offer great learning opportunities throughout the year. The Spring Kickoff event held at Unit Liner was a great opportunity to learn about several different manufactures’ products – learn to use these products the right way the first time. Learning never ends – get to know your distributors and the great products available to this industry.

Keeping Ponds Healthy Throughout the Season
Curt Nuenighoff
This is a good time to remind your customers of various factors that can affect the health of their pond. While most consider filtration to be the number one way to clean water, there are several other aspects to a healthy pond: water treatments, UV clarifiers and the food pond fish are fed, all add to the overall health of the ecosystem. Learn ways to help maintain good water quality.

Language of Koi – Showa
Mat McCann
“The challenge with Showa is that I find it one of the most difficult of the varieties in achieving the goal of breeding a Grand Champion.” The Showa is comprised of three colors: red, black and white. Mat talks about the three colors, especially sumi (black) and the tendency of customers wanting to buy for today and the problems/suggestions of dealing with that.

COVER STORY – Make it Bigger
Mark Bodycott
The story of how a pond became much bigger by seaming two existing liners together. First I said it was impossible – they never work, but this homeowner convinced me otherwise and the project began. Follow this step-by-step process and see how this fabulously larger pond turned out.
42 **Dress for Success**  
*Jayne Southard*  
How important is a first impression? Very – so why not dress for success. Here are some quick reminders and of things you can do to make that great first impression time after time. Also a tip on where you can buy those work shirts.

46 **Botanical Psychotherapy**  
*Kelly Billings*  
Some plants require behavior modification! All plants, like people, have distinct personalities and they are equally as varied. What some plants need is just a little behavior modification or boundaries – who knew you had to learn the psychology of plants. Read the case study of nine plants and learn about the best and worst of them. Then finish with some preventative medicine.

50 **The Masked Bandits of Ponds**  
*Jamie Beyer*  
Just say the word raccoon and I can already see you cringing. They are everywhere – urban and rural. They adapt to their environment and they just love water. Learn the signs to tell whether you have raccoons or not and how to prevent the damage they can cause. Like building the pond with steep sides, at least a one-foot drop instead of slopping sides. If you can’t prevent them there are also several tips on how to control them.

56 **Koi Health Seminar**  
*Vicki Vaughan*  
What was originally “The Fish Health Management Seminar,” has evolved into the Koi Health Seminar. It is now offered to any one interested in Koi Health each February. The course consists of three days of intensive lectures and hours of hands on time in the wet labs. If you are interested in koi, this is a great jam pack weekend of learning (while eating some great food and having some fun).

60 **12 Ways to Decompress after High Stress**  
*Leo Babauta*  
Who doesn’t suffer from stressful times? We all do and here are some great ways to deal with stress – including things like sex and taking the day off! The authors all time favorite is number 12 – Take a nap. Taking a nap is like a restart button for your life. There are many other ideas, so make the time to read this one.
Ponds as a Food Source

Hello Tom,

I finished reading the new POND BIZ, it’s a great magazine and it inspires us to think. With the current “green movement” and the growing concerns about the source of foods I was thinking of a short article based on the principles of Aquaculture. People with garden ponds could be taught how to grow their own fish for food. This could be challenging for some readers and their customers to accept but it is thought provoking. A garden pond is essentially a closed loop system that provides nutrient input control and a possible calculated output in the form of fresh chemical free fish. Most food conscious people value fish as a source of protein. You have presented the term “garden pond” in several issues, which I believe is a good manner of describing the collection of water features that exist. Historically gardens have been created for aesthetic pleasure and for food production, so could a garden pond be more than a display of art? – Jim Kennedy Willow Pond Aqua Farms

Re: About This Forum – Let’s Get Started

First things first –

I was just given my first copy of POND BIZ Magazine by one of my vendors. Wow, Love it. Finally a place where I can bounce ideas off my colleges and get a pulse for what’s going on in other parts of the country.

As to the customer pond care and required maintenance comment – I so agree with you! I actually put together a picture book for my new construction customers that gave examples of different kinds of ponds, water gardens, pond-less features. Then I rated them on level of care and maintenance, equipment cost, labor cost, electric cost, etc. This helps illustrate to them in a more visual style what they are in for. Since I have started this I have had much less problems with projects changing directions in mid build and many less complaints after the work is done. It makes the imagination of a project more of a process.

1. Type: Pond, Pond-less, Feature
2. Size: Small, Med, Lg
3. Living/Non Living
4. Setup Cost
5. Attention Required
6. Long term costs: Electric, Water refill

The system works great for me – Josh, ThePondGuy
As we begin the month of May the picture of how the economy is going to impact our business for the rest of the season is becoming clearer. Whatever segment of the industry you are in, the impact has most likely been significant to you or businesses you are in close contact with. So, what now? What are you going to do to get the most out of this summer’s opportunities? What are you doing different now, to get more traffic through your doors, or to make the phone ring?

To help you think through your choices, and wade through the myriad of marketing opportunities you may be considering, we have added a new member to our valiant team of writers. This issue Pam Greiner joins us and her first topic is just that. What can you do, right now, to generate new business. Is anything more important at this time? For many of us I would guess this is issue # 1.

Pam’s background includes providing online, and off, marketing solutions. Her active client list includes a number of contractors, retailers, and distributors across the country. She helps clients develop cost-effective marketing and e-marketing plans.

In the last issue, I mentioned how important getting away from the office is - by attending seminars and trade shows. (In fact I have been beating it to death haven’t I). I also mentioned the fact that koi health labs were held periodically around the country, and in this issue we have a story by one of the leading “Wet Lab” teachers in the U.S. - Vicki Vaughan.

Vicki’s article is a bit graphic, so hang in there. If you have never attended a wet lab, and you deal with koi, you really should consider it. This article will give you a preview of what you have to look forward to and what you can learn through hands on experience.

Coming up this summer are numerous events, many sponsored by your local distributors. If you get an invitation to attend, give it a shot—even if you already know it all. I had the opportunity to visit the folks at Pondliner.com in Oklahoma, during their annual Spring Kickoff event, and enjoyed many things, including the opportunity to talk with others in this industry without being overheard by potential customers.

Upcoming National events to remember are the IWGS (International Waterlily & Water Gardening Society) annual symposium held this year in St. Charles, Illinois, July 16th – 20th; Pondapalooza – Portland, Oregon, August 23rd – 26th; and Info Tanza, Atlanta, Georgia, October 22nd – 24th. Make it a point to get out and do at least one of these, all three if you can. It is YOUR Industry, after all. Your support is needed to help it grow. You will learn from attending these events and you will come home rejuvenated to boot.
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In the last issue of this magazine, I wrote about the plants that we use in our ponds. I mentioned the conflicts that might arise in the mind of somebody in choosing the plants that they might use in their plantings. Of course, there are always issues of culture to consider, but I also mentioned my concerns about the use of particularly invasive species, and the dangers that they pose to our native wild lands. These concerns are not to be taken lightly in my opinion, and I intend to expand on them in subsequent issues. This time, however, I want to talk about the animals that we keep.

In my work maintaining other peoples’ ponds for the past many years, I have come up against a particular phenomenon among pond keepers. That is that many of them want to keep too many things in their pond. Some people want too many koi. Others want too many turtles. Some actually want to encourage birds to visit their ponds.

Do swans and koi go together? They can but is that really what your customer wants? Thank you to David and Kim Glenn for providing this picture of their backyard.
And the rest just want too many species in their ponds. Bio-
diversity is nice, but even in the natural state a given pool
might not support a large number of permanent residents.
Any pond, including our own domestic ones, can support
several species of visitors, such as coyotes, or raccoons,
damaging as they can be, but keeping some animals, or
combinations of animals, is a completely different matter.

This point has been driven home to me in the past couple
of years because of a particular group of ponds that I maintain.
All of the ponds are on the same property. The so-called,
“main pond,” holds approximately 238,000-gal, while the
other three hold considerably less. For many years, under the
original owners, these ponds existed in a sort of isolated bliss,
rarely suffering visits from any wild waterfowl, and the 50
large koi existed in harmony with several thousand Variatus
Platies and Leucania goodei. I did see an Osprey come through
one day, and saw it strike for a fish, missed, and fly away in a
spectacular explosion of water and feathers. The pond was the
quintessence of a well-balanced pond, and it was possible to
see objects at the bottom of 6’ of water. Waterlilies flourished,
and I was able to harvest Elodea and Ceratophyllum by the
boatload, much to my profit. Then the house changed hands
and it was not too long after the new owner moved in that he
allowed his girlfriend to talk him into introducing swans to
the pond. I emphatically advised against it, adding that swans
look good on Christmas cards or in somebody else’s lake, but
not in a domestic pond that is the centerpiece of the garden.
I included warnings about the accumulation of feces, feathers,
plant fragments, and other signs of stupid, unwitting damage
done to the garden. I was ignored completely.

The swans were introduced in the spring of 2007, and
have since turned the pond into the approximately 238,000-
gal cesspool that was predicted. The lilies are mostly gone.

The few that survive have been saved only by the
depth of the water. The Elodea and
Ceratophyllum are long gone, and the water is
a swirling mess of algae, suspended material,
feathers, and assorted plant fragments.

To make matters worse, a large cohort of
Mallards that normally occupy the pond at
the local tennis club have moved in, undoubtredly on the recommendation of
birds that had stumbled upon the jackpot
that is my client’s pond. There are plants to
eat, food is set out in dishes, and the dog is
an imbecile. I have seen as many as 63 ducks
on the water at one time.

Instead of harvesting plants, and tending
lilies, I now scoop out, by the net full, the
substrate that had accumulated over the
preceding decade, and which was stable with
its populations of Nymphaea, Ceratophyllum and Elodea, along
with a considerable percentage of fresh swan feces. The only
true beneficiaries of this mess are the birds in the pond and
the earthworms in my compost pile.

Many people have an intense desire to keep anything and
everything that comes to hand or to mind in their ponds. This
might stem from childhood memories of all of the things that
they heard or saw “down in the creek,” or “crick.” They want
to recreate some sort of vision that they might have harbored
for decades. It is sometimes difficult to talk them out of their
dreams, but it is often necessary because their expectations are
so unrealistic. They expect to be able to keep one or two of
everything, and that it will all work out somehow because they
have a filter. Very few of them think about how all of these
things will get along, now and over the seasons, or how one
organism’s waste or habits will make life difficult for other
species by polluting the water or by being overly territorial,
and about how the more that you add to a pond, the more
difficult the maintenance becomes.

I always tell people that if the book that you are referring
to for information, or the guy who built the pond, tells you
that your pond will support 10 fish, stop at 6. The closer you get to the full load, the more involved the maintenance becomes. Many of the calculations of how many fish will fit in a pond, or how much surface area should be covered with plants, etc., are attempts to formulize the things that affect water systems. Errors creep in because they are based upon what happens in a pond built in a certain way, set in a certain way, and supplied with the same amounts of food, etc. I tell people not to be in a hurry to fill the pond with fish and other creatures. I tell them that they should be very discriminating in how they choose their fish. The pond will do far better if they exercise a bit of patience and try not to stick to a strictly formulaic approach.

Turtles are always popular, in spite of their propensity for destroying water plants. In fact, the inclusion of turtles is usually ill advised for anybody who wants a nice water garden. That same client of mine, seeking to entertain his children, put turtles into what were two nice ponds, with lilies and hawthorns as the main plantings.

One day I noticed a lot of detached leaves floating around, with their stems cut off somewhere near the bottom. I let this continue for a week or so just to see if it was a fluke, but I found myself removing more of the cut off leaves with each visit. In frustration, I poked around in the ponds until I found the culprits, two red-eared sliders. I removed them and the plants grew back. The client has never asked about them, and I haven’t told him. He is comfortable in thinking that they are there, and that is good, even though he has not seen them since he introduced them to the pond. Of course, now the swans have discovered the ponds (but not until the Hawthorns had grown back), with predictable results.

Another phenomenon is that many fishermen want to keep things that they bring home from the river or lake where they fish. Often, their catch includes crayfish or wild caught fish. Introducing crayfish to a decorative pond is to doom any potted plant. I have had several clients commit this colossal blunder. The problems arise when the crayfish begin to burrow into pots or embankments. In the case of pots, they loosen all of the soil from the plants’ roots, which allows it to escape the pot, leading to diminished water quality and a starved waterlily. In the case of mud embankments, their tunnels introduce
water to places where it was never able to get before the crayfish made it possible, which accelerates erosion. Much in the same way that erosion along the gulf coast has been accelerated by incursions into the coastal marshes, which allows water into these areas, which facilitates their loss to the gulf.

Adding wild fish to the pond is dangerous because it is possible to introduce diseases and/or parasites to your domestic fish population. Also, most of them are game fish and want more room than can be offered in an average domestic pond. Some of these fish make nice additions to large ponds. Their habit of making a depression in the substrate for spawning can cause them to dig in large lily containers. I have gotten around this problem by offering them a tray of sand that is placed near the lily so that they still get the coverage from the lily, but they do not have to dig in the tray of lilies.

The use of fish that are too large for the pond is a problem as well. I once maintained a pond in which the lady of the house insisted on keeping about 50 huge Channel Catfish (*Ictalurus punctatus*). Her opinion was that they cleaned the bottom of the pond. It was obvious that they did not, because there was a lot of sediment in the pond when we began to care for it, and even though I pointed to the damage that they did to the lilies that she claimed to want, she would not part with the fish.

I learned to work with them over time, but the process was not particularly good for the pond. The fish lumbered around, swirling the silt on the bottom of the pond up into the water column, making it impossible to see into the water. They also dug the lilies up, creating an awful mess on at least one occasion. The pond was easily large enough to support a few catfish, but not one of that size. The system was not designed to keep up with such a load. Why have 50 fish that you cannot see, when you can have 12 that you can.

Another animal that might not raise eyebrows in some parts of the country, but certainly does with me, is the Bullfrog (*Rana catesbeiana*). In the good old days, before our local amphibians were threatened with this monster, the desert kept bullfrogs far to the east of here. But, here again, people from elsewhere have wanted to hear the familiar sound of bullfrogs in their yards, and have taken advantage of the easy supply that comes with feeder goldfish from Arkansas. They are collected by the hundreds with small goldfish and are not all culled out. The tadpoles come in with the goldfish, and are sold separately by the stores, or worse, given away to anybody that wants them. As a result, we have what I consider to be a problem that extends all the way up the pacific coast. A few years ago, I saw what looked very much like bullfrog tadpoles near Gig Harbor, Washington. I am sure that they have something to do with the demise of our local toad population.

So what should you include in your collection? There are many things that can be kept, actually. And there is nothing wrong with some of the ones mentioned above, if that is what you plan for. I don’t think that I would ever set a pond up to keep swans or crayfish, but they are, evidently, appealing to somebody, and it is possible to set up a situation in which they can live acceptably. I have seen many ponds that were...
set up for turtles, or to keep bass and bluegill to catch and release, or to keep large numbers of koi, and as long as the owners stay within the limitations of their systems, they have no problems. Whatever your purpose, though, merely putting a pond in the ground and filling it with disparate and incompatible species is irresponsible and can be a recipe for disaster.

I prefer to keep my ponds as simple as possible. I plant them extensively, since that is the true focus of my interests, and I stock them with large numbers of small, inoffensive fish, including Platies (P. variatus), Paradise Fish (Macropodus opercularis), Florida Blue-fin Killiefish (Leucania goodei), and Persian Killiefish (Aphanius mento), among others. I will of, of course, introduce goldfish and koi if the customer wants them, but I am not a fan of the carp, frankly, and so I am always pleased to hear somebody say that they do not want them. Sometimes it is just because they do not want to feed the local Heron and Egret populations, but whatever the reason, I like to hear it because of what it means as far as what I can include in the plantings.

All of these fish are compatible, although in the case of *Macropodus*, if they are kept with *Aphanius* or *Leucania*, it is good to separate a pair or two each spring and to spawn them in a safe tank to ensure the survival of the fry.

To keep it simple, I have never willingly introduced a Red-eared Slider to any pond, although I will tolerate those that arrive in certain ponds from the surrounding neighborhood, since this native of the American southeast has become feral in San Diego and there is nothing that I can do about it. Somehow, I still can’t dispatch a turtle the way I can a tadpole.

Ultimately, what a person chooses to keep in a pond will depend in large measure upon what the climate is like in their area. In areas in which I have never lived, native turtles, snakes, and other animals move into the ponds at will, and there is nothing that the pond owner can, or in many instances, should, do about it. These animals were there first in most cases, and to try to exclude them from what appears to them to be a natural habitat is rude. The more damaging ones should be kept at bay for practical reasons, but smaller animals that do no real harm should be allowed in.

We set these ponds up to bring a slice of the wetlands into our lives, so we shouldn’t be too surprised when a bit of the wetlands comes to our ponds. As it is with everything else in life, a balance must be struck between what we can tolerate and what we desire, and to find that balance in what we deliberately bring into our gardens is a goal that should not be dismissed out of hand.

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**About the Author**

David Curtright  
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He is also the current President of the Southern California Water Garden Society.
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by Pam Greiner

Pond and water feature professionals across the country often find that work is seasonal. Spring provides ample work as homeowners are coming out of their dreary, winter state-of-mind and looking forward to long, warm days in their yards and outdoor havens. Then summer comes around and thoughts turn to vacations and keeping the kids busy during their break before the next school year begins while the focus on improving their outdoor living space dwindles. Even though this is very normal for our industry, current economic conditions further diminish the amount of work opportunities that seem to be out there and make the competition feel fiercer.

Another factor that has come into play is the rise in retail sales and the increase of those who have become Do-It-Yourselfers. Investing in their own homes because selling is not an option, they also are more hesitant to spend the money with a professional if they feel they can tackle a project themselves.

I have often thought of this economy as a ‘Darwin Economy,’ survival the fittest. Those who make it through these next couple of years are the ones who, most likely, have worked hard at doing everything right.

Whether you are trying to get through the summer, or just through the year, one thing you may have to do is rethink how you market and brand your business.

**Size Counts**

While many of us get excited over the prospect of a large project, focusing on smaller entry level jobs will help make a homeowner more comfortable with spending a little money. If a homeowner can get excited about a small project than there is a good chance they will consider going for a larger feature.

**Phase In**

If a homeowner is looking to do a large project but their budget doesn’t allow for it, the option of doing phases will seem more attractive. This also allows you the opportunity to help build a relationship with your customer which can payoff in the form of referrals to friends. While many professionals offer the option of doing the work in phases, most don’t consider it part of their marketing.

**Be Different**

This requires you really doing your homework. You may think you know what makes you different from your competition, but look at how they market their businesses and then determine how you want to differentiate your company from their theirs. When you are perceived as a company that specializes in what you know and the type of work you do, it makes it easier for a consumer to justify spending money with someone who will provide them with a different experience than they would get from anyone else.

**Extra Value**

Whether it is real or perceived, any consumer wants to feel like there is a value in the products or services they are buying. Extra value comes in many forms from your experience and knowledge base to providing helpful hints on care and maintenance. With an increase in the number of homeowners doing the projects themselves, they also need to see the value in...
hiring a professional to get the job done. That value may be in the form time, quality, or craftsmanship.

**Money Matters**

The old saying, ‘it takes money to make money,’ is often true. Spend some time and money putting together high quality, professional looking marketing materials. If this is your potential customer’s first exposure to you, it will make an impression. The level of quality of the materials determines the type of impression it actually makes.

**Just Say ‘Hi’**

A phone call often makes a difference. While email has become our society’s alternative means of primary communication, it lacks a personal touch and often misses the mark. Picking up the phone and personally talking to a customer will allow you the opportunity to find out if they are enjoying the feature you installed for them and what additional work or services they need. It also provides them an opportunity to ask you questions that they may not find the time to call you to ask.

**Get Involved**

No, I mean REALLY get involved. Be out there in the community. Support local schools and sports teams. Do not just put the name of the organization on your business card or Web site. If you are going to be a member of a group, participate in the meetings and activities.

**Top of Mind**

Regular and on-going communications with past and potential customers is one of the best ways to keep your company at the forefront of their memory. When you send them helpful and useful information it helps to establish you as a knowledgeable professional, adds further value to the services you provide, and gives them the information they need to quickly contact you or refer you to friends and family.

**Opportunity Knocks**

Stopping in to visit your customers, checking on their water feature, and providing them with tips and feedback will show that you care beyond the final payment. It also provides you with an opportunity to photograph your work as it matures and add it to your portfolio. It never hurts show up with a gift either—seasonal color, treats for the koi, or a product that will help maintain their pond are all great ideas and special touches.

**‘Failure to plan is a plan to fail.’**

If you haven’t taken the time to update your Web site, now is the time. By updating your site you make it a greater resource to your customers. When new visitors are on your site, it provides them a current and professional view in the work you do helping to create a higher level of confidence in your abilities. It also provides the Search Engines with extra content that allows them to rank you higher in searches.

My favorite phrase when it comes to marketing is, ‘Failure to plan is a plan to fail.’ The first thing any busy owner needs to do is develop a Marketing Plan. By writing down what you need to do and the objectives for each marketing initiative, it will be easier to determine where the gaps are and how they need to be filled. Additionally, it will help keep you on track. Make yourself accountable for following through on the initiatives you want to do.

Do not think of marketing as an expense but rather as a way to increase revenue in the long run. The summer is a great opportunity to provide maintenance service so plan your marketing in the spring months to focus on summer services. By getting information out now, you are helping homeowners anticipate their maintenance needs for the hottest months of the year.

Marketing also is an opportunity to shape the Brand of your company. Do not make the mistake of thinking that you are able to tell people what your Brand is, but rather know that your customers are the ones who ultimately decide that. People in our society are flooded every single day with thousands of messages which they filter and then decide what they want to retain and process, or ignore. Every exposure your customers, and potential customers, have with you is also an opportunity for them to
decide if your company is one they want to work with and refer to their friends. Make sure you capitalize on these touch points by providing a way for customers to refer you to their friends and family.

Spring months offer plenty of opportunity to communicate and interact with your customers. When you have these opportunities, view them also as a chance to listen to your customers about their concerns and challenges, ask questions about their vision of their outdoor area, and listen to how you can be a value to the homeowner compared to other professionals.

Overall, right now is the time to start considering the ongoing relationships you have with your customers. Often times those relationships can be built by doing simple things such as returning a phone call promptly, showing up on time, being considerate and professional on the job site, and maintaining a clean work environment. When you provide a positive experience, it endears the customer to you. A quality product and service will make the relationship more substantial. However, it is like any other relationship and needs to be nurtured and paid attention to in order to continue. By beginning communications now in the busy months of spring, you will be able to help create a stream of continuous work throughout the summer months.

About the Author

Pam Greiner founded The Green Pen five years ago as the result of a passion for gardening and the environment. Focused on providing online, and off, marketing solutions, our active client list includes several contractors, retailers, and distributors across the country. Our advice is regularly sought by many other contractors and businesses in the Green Industry, as well as other industries. Our services have included developing a variety of marketing materials for our clients including brochures, newsletters, as well as logo design, branding initiatives, and Web design & development. Additionally, we help our clients develop cost-effective marketing and e-marketing plans.

Pam can be reached at pam@thegreenpen.com or 215-313-0183.
Attention

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You know I really enjoy getting out of my office and visiting the great businesses that make up our industry nationwide. Such was the case a few weeks ago when I had the opportunity to attend Pondliner.com’s Spring Kickoff event in Shawnee, Oklahoma. What an amazing place that is. If you are not familiar with Pondliner.com, they are a division of Unit Liner Company and a wholesale distributor of pond supplies about 30 outside of Oklahoma City. They also have a superb retail outlet, The Pond Pro Shop, at that location. All in all they employ over 70 full time staff members, half of which are in the ponds division.

They regularly hold seminars and training events at their location. To overcome the challenges of the weather they have constructed an indoor training facility. Inside this facility they can do a complete pond build. The 40’ x 60’ raised fenced dirt platform, that they affectionately call the Pond Pit, (see photo to get the idea) allows them to

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**Support Your Local Distributor**

by Tom Graham

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Attendees get their hands dirty, plumbing up a filter system.

Over a dozen ponds outside the front door of the Pond Pro Shop, wait for spring thaw, to come back to life.

Oase’s Category Manager, Frayne McAtee Presented Pondliner.com an award for Sales Achievement and Manufacturer Support. Accepting the Award is Randy Stewart.

Prepping the soil for the pond install is easy in good weather or bad, since the site is indoors.
bring in a small excavator and dig a hole any size and shape they want, build up a waterfall berm, then drop in a liner, build a waterfall and plumb it all up - all regardless of the weather.

The indoor facility is used to train Wholesale customers and for Pond Pro Shop to host educational events for do-it-yourselfers year-round. They often bring in factory reps and outside pond builders to participate. This gives attendees the opportunity to meet other pros and get hands on demonstrations on how the latest products are meant to be used and installed.

At the Spring Kickoff there were 16 manufacturers there showing off their wares (Fishmate, Fielding Pump, OASE, Savio, Little Giant, EG Danner, Sequence, Mars Fishcare, Winston, Atlantic, Kasco, Firestone, Ecological Laboratories and Evolution Pump). Over 100 contractors and retailers, who made the trek for the two-day event, greeted them - and that’s with ice and snow on the roads no less.

Beyond the pond build, attendees received a full days worth of presentations on the ins and outs of pond construction and equipment demonstrations.

I believe the effort put forth by the Pondliner.com team is a real testament to their commitment to this industry, and their desire for their trade and retail customers to be successful in their pond endeavors. Events like this cost money, particularly

Mike explains the benefits of a rock free bottom, and the use of a pump and bottom drain extension in koi pond construction.

Paul Amos (left) and Andy Schoenberger of Little Giant show off the Little Giant Disappearing Water Feature Basin.

Koi sales are a vital part of the business, when ponds aren’t frozen over and frigid.
The Pond Pro Shop has a variety of home and garden artsy things, as well as a full line of pond products.

Attendees that worked on the pond build, staff and vendors gather for a group shot.

Smiles were in abundance. Ashley Gilbreth normally works sales in the wholesale division, but was able to break away to connect with attendees and guests.
with how well they fed us for the two days. Hopefully, it pays off in customer loyalty, new customer acquisition, and increased sales by virtue of the knowledge and experience taken home and put to use by the participants.

The role distributors play in our industry is sometimes overlooked and underappreciated, but I would hate to think of where we would be without them. They facilitate the flow of the products we need to do our business, and help keep us informed and up-to-date on what’s hot, what’s coming, and how to deal with problems when they arise.

Next time you are on the phone to Pondliner.com, or whatever distributor you buy from, take a moment and get to know the person on the other end of the phone line. You might just realize you have more in common with them than you thought, and that makes everyone’s job that much easier and more enjoyable.
What do you look for when buying koi food?

THE INGREDIENTS!

Emperor's Choice contains the finest available ingredients that promote healthy koi.

Minhaden White Fish Meal
The primary ingredient in Emperor's Choice is white fish meal, specifically Minhaden. Some feed companies use ordinary fish meal, but most use the better quality white fish meal. The very best white fish meal is made from Minhaden. Why? Besides being an excellent source of protein, it has very low ash content. It costs a bit more, but it is worth it.

Soy Protein
Next is Soy for added protein. Soy is highly digestible, and the top grain for fish.

Squid
Also included is Squid, another above average protein source. Like Minhaden, squid is a special order ingredient, not usually found in koi food mixes. It provides excellent protein, numerous micro-nutrients for the health of your koi, and even finicky eaters love it.

ENCAPCELL®
ENCAPCELL® delivers microencapsulated nucleotides to the koi in an easily digestible format. Emperor's Choice is proud to be one of the first koi foods on the market with ENCAPCELL®, a patented additive, that provides improved growth and accelerated immune response.

45 lb. container is the best ever! Handy 10 lb size also available.

Ask your dealer for Emperor's Choice. For a dealer near you call (858) 748-5370 Dealer inquiries welcome.
Your pondkeeper customers have worked hard this spring to get their pond into top form for the summer. With the clean-up and preparation done, pond owners will begin to focus on keeping their pond water healthy throughout the season. Remind them of the various factors that can affect the health of their pond. While most consider filtration to be the number one way to clean water, there are several other aspects to a healthy pond. Water treatments, UV clarifiers and the food pond fish are fed, all add to the overall health of the ecosystem.

**Filtration for life**

Most pondkeepers know the benefit of total pond filtration: mechanical and biological. However, this is the perfect time to educate them about the importance of filter maintenance and how it relates to the overall health of the ecosystem. Many will turn on their filtration system and leave it for the season without giving it another thought.

Remind your pondkeepers that the filter must be kept clean to ensure it does not stagnate and prevent the nitrifying bacteria from converting ammonia and nitrite into nitrate. Poorly maintained filters will quickly deprive the biological media of oxygen, leading to a build up of dissolved waste (nitrite is particularly likely to rise). Regular cleaning of mechanical filter media is recommended.

**Header Ponds**

When considering filtration systems, be sure to explain to your customers the benefits of a “header” pond. Plants are a very important part of a healthy filtration system. However, many pondkeepers don’t want to overload their pond with plants, yet at the same time, they realize plants are an integral part of their pond health. “Header” ponds solve this dilemma.
A “header” pond is the smaller pond that feeds the waterfall that flows into the primary pond. Usually a “header” pond is located above the primary pond and is filled with many plants that have extensive roots. Water hyacinth is a good plant to place in the “header” pond; mainly because its many roots act as a natural filter. Additionally, one water hyacinth floating on the pond surface can quickly become hundreds, overtaking a pond during the summer. Therefore, your customers may want to confine water hyacinths to a “header” pond — and keep them from overtaking the larger, primary pond.

Water treatments, UV clarifiers and the food pond fish are fed, all add to the overall health of the ecosystem. Some pondkeepers are not aware that, in addition to beauty, water features also serve a fundamental purpose. Waterfalls, fountains and streams help oxygenate the pond and provide a biofiltration benefit. If the pond contains fish, remember that there can never be too much oxygen. Additionally, waterfalls and streams provide surface area for beneficial bacteria to colonize and help convert harmful ammonia into relatively harmless nitrates. As a rule of thumb, the pond’s entire volume should be circulated in one hour. The more circulation, the healthier the pond will be.

Waterfalls, Streams & Fountains
Water features such as fountains and waterfalls make attractive additions to any pond. The site and sound of moving water adds an extra dimension to a garden and enhances “pond appeal.” According to a market research study conducted by TetraPond, 68% of pond owners have included a waterfall when constructing their pond. Waterfalls remain the most popular decorative accent among pond owners.

As another option, innovative waterfall filtration advances have combined filtration with the action of a waterfall in one unit. The waterfall filter disappears into the landscape, which creates an easy install for the pond owner. As the water passes through the filtration unit, it provides sight, sound and beneficial filtration in one.

68% of pond owners have included a waterfall when constructing their pond.

Nutrition and Water Quality
What your pondkeepers feed their fish directly impacts filtration and the quality of the water. Good filtration is important for the removal of dissolved and solid waste from the pond. However, it’s important to recognize that a major source of this waste is the food being used. The quality and quantity of food being fed will determine how much solid and dissolved waste is introduced to the pond. Logically, it will therefore also determine how much work the filter has to do in order to keep the environment healthy. A good quality food can make it much easier to manage the quality of the water, and is equally as important as good filtration and regular maintenance.
The digestibility of a diet depends on the quality of ingredients and manufacturing processes used to make it. If a diet is not well digested, not only will the fish receive less nutrition but greater amounts of solid waste will be produced. This has a number of implications for managing water quality which will have a negative impact on fish:

- The decomposition of solid waste will use up additional oxygen.
- As solid waste is broken down it will release dissolved waste such as ammonia and phosphate.
- Solid waste will clog equipment, reducing its performance and necessitating increased maintenance.
- Certain disease-causing microbes multiply on solid waste, so the potential for a disease outbreak may increase.

Remember there’s a wide range of prepared foods that are convenient and easy to use. They are available in flakes (for smaller fish) and pellets or pond sticks (for medium and large fish). To help customers choose the ideal fish food, recommend food that softens quickly on contact with the water, ensuring easy digestion. This is especially important since goldfish and koi do not have teeth.

Fish should be fed one to three times daily and only as much as they can consume within five minutes. It is critical to recognize that fishes’ nutritional requirements change throughout the year. For optimal fish health and nutrition, recommend adhering to a seasonal feeding cycle that uses proper feeding formulas for each season and promotes a balanced diet.
Important reminders about maintaining good water quality:

- When a severe water quality problem is detected, encourage customers to undertake an immediate water change that is roughly 30 to 50 percent of the pond’s water volume. For less severe water problems, a change of 15 to 25 percent should suffice.
- Remind customers that seemingly harmless tap water also poses a threat, as it contains chemicals and heavy metals that are dangerous for pond fish. It’s important to recommend water treatments that neutralize harmful chlorine and chloramines and bind and detoxify the heavy metals commonly found in tap water. Some tap water treatments also provide a colloid coating for fish, protecting their sensitive gills and membranes and helping wounds heal quickly.
- Keep a good quality general pond fish treatment on hand so you can treat any emerging problems. The most common diseases at this time of year should respond well to treatment.
- Explain to your customers the clear water benefits of an ultraviolet (UV) clarifier. UV Clarifiers eliminate suspended microscopic single-celled algae that cause green water and destroy its reproductive ability. Remind them that it is simple to connect a UV clarifier to an existing filtration system.

Water quality can also be improved by adding a water feature, such as a fountain, waterfall or spitter. One hundred percent of your pond volume should be at least circulated in one hour by your pond pump. Water features aid in circulation in an aesthetically pleasing way. Additionally, waterfalls provide surface area for beneficial bacteria to colonize and help harmful ammonia into harmless nitrates. Be sure to have several options available for your pondkeeper customers.

Healthy water is the most important aspect of pondkeeping. Remind your customers how food, filtration and regular water testing will help your fish to stay healthy throughout the entire pond season.

About the Author

Curt Nuenighoff, TetraPond, serves as the pond products manager and is responsible for product development, business strategy, merchandising and marketing in North America. Nuenighoff earned an MBA from the University of New Haven and a BS from the University of Connecticut in Marketing.

TetraPond is an international leader in water gardening products, with its US headquarters in Blacksburg, VA. TetraPond offers a complete line of products for pond enthusiast, including pumps, liners, filters, UV clarifiers, water treatments, books and fish food.

For more information call: 1-800-526-0650, or visit: www.tetrapond.com or email: Curt.Nuenighoff@tetra.net
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Come Visit Us at the National Hardware Show May 6-8, Las Vegas
As a breeder of many different varieties of koi, the variety I enjoy the most is Showa. My goal of making a high class, jumbo, female grand champion from any of the pairings we do at our farm each year, applies to any and all varieties. The challenge with Showa is that I find it one of the most difficult of the varieties in achieving that goal.

Regarding the pattern of the Showa, it comprises of three colors: black, red and white. The odds of achieving a perfect koi decrease as the number of colors in the pattern increase. This also applies to Sanke, which was covered by Brady Brandwood in the Mar/Apr 2009 issue. The biggest difference between Sanke and Showa, as both have the same colors, is that the sumi (black) of Showa plays a more dominant role in the pattern.

Brady described Sanke Sumi as small circles or patches; in contrast, Showa Sumi tends to be larger stripes or blocks of black running top to bottom and front to back of the whole koi. The amount of true black displayed can change continuously through a Showa’s life. Part of my attraction to the variety is this phenomenon.
Sumi can emerge and sink away with pond water temperature and chemistry changes, as well as age. Sumi takes on a blue grey mottled appearance as it changes its visual state. Sunken grey sumi can give indicators of a future beautiful pattern, and occasionally areas on the koi where there are no signs of any grey at all can suddenly transform and sumi can emerge to complete the koi.

When baby Showa are just three days old the fry are distinctly two different colors. One type is very light yellow and the other type is grey. We only raise the grey type to make Showa. This is often where you may hear that the Showa is a black-based variety as opposed to Sanke where the fry are typically yellow/white at the same age. Sanke is also known as a white-based fish. In my opinion it doesn’t pay to dwell on the black based/white based theory other than for the three day cull.

The biggest argument in the appreciation of Showa is the balance of the amounts of the three colors comprising the whole pattern. Over any of the varieties it can be the most contentious issue for judging them. Judges and customers tastes vary widely. The Kindai or modern type favors less red and thinner sumi markings thus showing more of the white canvas leading to modern, artistic looking pattern. The traditional old style type of Showa favors a heavier blocky sumi pattern over larger red patches often masking much of the white skin. These pattern types can be regarded as extremes in terms of color balance and many Showa fall in between. Some say the perfect Showa is a third white, a third red and a third black with all three colors shown on the head. This may be true; however, I have seen some excellent Showa over the years that don’t conform to these criteria.
Most customers buy small inexpensive Showa that are beautiful on the day of purchase and display a bright hard vivid red that contrasts well with emerged black and porcelain white. This is the ready-for-show look and while satisfying in the short-term can often lead to medium-term disappointment. The reason for the dissatisfaction is that like any koi with red pattern, the harder the look of the red when purchased the closer it is to its peak. Unlike sumi that comes up and down, the red part of the pattern changes through life from soft blurred edge patches to hard crisp edge patches. After peaking in intensity, red frequently permanently disappears or deteriorates becoming blotchy.

Don’t be confused with color tone. We use the word red loosely as its can be tonally different from a light orange to a purple red. All are acceptable. The most important factor is that it is thickly layered and has a soft appearance. Finding koi with soft thick red are rare and are amongst the select few we call tategoi (koi that may improve). Usually young tategoi are rarely beautiful, but discerning customers are willing to gamble larger amounts of money on young Showa as it is the variety than can make a beautiful swan from an ugly duckling.
As we have stated, changing pattern has an influence on the beauty of a Showa, and at any point in time and can sometimes affect the purchase price, especially in young Showa. As any koi matures and grows larger, quality aspects play a much bigger role in the pricing. Until recently the quality of the black on Showa had been lacking. Showa Sumi can display in totally different grades when emerged. The lowest quality appears to be semi-transparent, like charcoal rubbings on paper with red pattern showing through fully emerged sumi. Medium quality sumi is dense but lack luster. The newest type of sumi to be found on Showa is the highest quality–it has deep gloss like wet black ink and is completely opaque. This type of sumi is the basis of the parent koi I use to make our Showa in New Jersey.

So when you or your customers are searching for your perfect Showa, bear in mind that the fun is in the gamble in this variety, with the random chance of sumi emerging at the same time as the red peaking to form a beautifully finished dynamic looking koi. Encourage your customers to buy a few different styles so that they can learn how varied and exciting raising Showa can be.

Showa, and cousin variety Utsuri, change more dramatically as they mature than any other variety in koi. For this reason, to sell young Showa and Utsuri, a dealer would be well advised to have mature koi on display as well. This will help sell the babies, as people can visualize the possibilities more clearly. Photos nearby will help as well, of course. Those who cannot afford a mature koi, can buy tosai, (one year olds) and watch them grow and change.

Mat McCann has kept koi from the age of seven. When Mat was 16, he was asked to spend a weekend babysitting a koi dealership that was managed by a friend of the family. Mat loved working in the store, and he started working for them every weekend while he was in high school. Because of his love for koi, Mat went into the Aquaculture program when he was accepted at Liverpool University. Long story short, Mat came to the U.S., at the request of Joe Zuritsky, for a two-day visit and decided to take the job at Quality Koi. He moved to America in July 2000. Mat now leads the team, with Ross Morgan, at Nisei Koi Farm.
Since there’s an axiom that says, “once you have a pond, you’ll wish you had a larger one.” And since using a liner in the making of ponds has become a standard, there needed to be a foolproof way to seam an existing liner to a new liner for the greater goal of having a magnificent, bigger pond.

Sound good huh? Sound easy? Well it isn’t and to be completely honest before you read on or look any farther let me say that the liner-seaming job you are about to read about almost never happened. I’ve done a lot of pond construction and have heard of and seen liners seamed and it almost never works. I was convinced by this homeowner, Mark Hughes, to help him seam his liner. After I told him it was impossible and I didn’t want any part of the job he convinced me to help out by saying he would do all of the work and that all I had to do was give a little insight as to why it wouldn’t work at the job site and supply him with a truck load of expensive koi and equipment so...I happily agreed.

Before we could seam the liner we laid out the outline of the addition using an extension cord but you can use a garden hose or spray paint.
After we had the layout set we dug down 10” or 12” to form a plant shelf. At this time we exposed the edge of the existing liner to see what condition it was in along with looking for any holes or issues that might cause us a problem with the seaming.

After the plant shelf was done the rest of the pond was dug to roughly the shape and depth we wanted. Also at this time the water returns were put into place along with the bottom drain and skimmer unit.

It is at this point that I lack a few images of the actual seaming because the drying time of the C.I.M. rubber membrane (more on C.I.M. later) left me with my hands full but let me explain in the next few steps how we did it.

Clear all debris from the existing or "old" liners edge. That means everything: rocks, dirt, plants, etc.

Slide some heavy, wide boards under this liner area. We used several 2 x 12’s that were 16’ long, side-by-side to span the curve of the pond. This created a wide, flat work surface that would prove critical, it may be necessary to
lower the water level slightly at this time to allow for an adequate amount of the old liner to have slack.

The old liner should lay on top of this temporary work surface.

It’s time to thoroughly clean both sides of the old liner. It will be necessary to clean a good 12 to 18” band the entire length of the area to be seamed. Remember, both sides! Use a stiff scrub brush with the pond water and add some elbow grease. If the edge of the liner is curved, you’ll need to cut (with scissors, box cutter, etc) a straight-line edge. Also remember in determining your straight edge that the liner seam should extend up out of the water and over the new ponds edge by 18 to 24” minimally. To clean underside of the liner, simply fold the liner back on itself ... hence the benefit of making a nice wide work surface with several of those 2 x 12’s!

Now that the edge has been trimmed straight and that you’ve cleaned the years of dirt and grime off the liner, it’s time to clean it again. Only this time with Acetone.

Acetone is a marvelous solvent for cleaning ... gets all the oil’s and leaves a clean, dry liner surface. Remember to do both sides. This will be a step that will be repeated often as we proceed.

Time to stretch out the "New" liner over the newly dugout pond addition. Be sure to give yourself a good 3 to 4’ of extra liner on the edge that is to be seamed.
You will be placing the old liner on top of the new liner. The underside of the old liner has been better protected from the elements of nature, i.e., the sun. It should be in a superior condition to the topside. At this time make sure that the straight edge of the new liner is aligned and parallel with the new cut straight edge of the old. If not, you can trim the old to make this so. Remember that both liners need to overlap by 12 to 18”. Oh yes, clean the topside of the new liner with Acetone (most new liners have powder on them to prevent sticking and aid in unfolding).

Ok, here we go.

Fold back the old liner so that it’s out of the way of the new liner. Peel off one side of the protective paper and run the joining-tape (most tapes are 6” wide) the entire length of the area to be seamed. As a rule of thumb, put the edge of the joining tape at the edge of the new liner. Now, since we’d rather be safe than sorry, run another joining tape the same way along side the first. This will double the sticky area.

Peel off the remaining protective paper on the top of both joining tapes and fold back the old liner onto the exposed sticky tape. Now press hard. Heck, stand up and walk on it slowly and thoroughly.

Now clean, again, the top surface of the seamed old and new liner area with Acetone.

Place the 6” wide Seam tape (this tape is sticky only on one side) halfway over the new and old liner overlap ...3” will be on the old liner and 3” will be on the new. Now press down hard and walk on it as well.
Next, take some sandpaper (100 grit or similar) and scuff-up the top of the newly applied seam tape as well as several inches all around the tape on the liner. Sure, go ahead and clean with Acetone one final time.

Now it’s secret weapon time. Mix up the gallon can of C.I.M. www.cimindustries.com/CIM-polyurethane-coatings (which means you’ll need a paint mixing rod and a power hand drill). Simply pour the little bottle containing the catalyst into the gallon can of black goop and mix via the hand drill for 3 minutes. Yep, your arms are going to get tired. We suggest standing above the can with it held firmly between your feet ... the C.I.M. will thicken causing the can to want to spin.

It’s now time to paint or goop on the C.I.M. over the entire scuffed-up, seamed area. Be liberal with it and work fast. C.I.M. will dry overnight to a tough, rubbery membrane. Ta Da! Picture 7

You’re done. Grab a hose and start filling. Oh, you can use the Acetone to clean your hands. We’ve used this simple, but multi-step process on our own pond for a 100% success rate. Meaning no leaks.

In the morning pull out the work surface boards and start putting the liner into the proper position. Always make sure to get the liner flat against the bottom and side surfaces. Now that you’ve got a bigger pond you can go out and get some bigger, more beautiful Japanese koi. So

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**About the Author**

**Mark Bodycott** – years ago on a whim I built a water garden in my backyard. I became more and more interested in ponds and water gardens, I was hooked! I went to a new store (at the time) Quality Koi to check it out. After spending some time at the store they offered me a part-time job. Cool right?

So there I was 28 years old thinking about a major career change while I netted Koi and backwashed filters. After working part-time the owner asked me to close my auto shop and manage the store full-time. This was a dream come true for me.

After several years and changes I started USA Koi and USAKOI.COM. I was the first person and only distributor to break Evolution Aqua’s Answer onto the scene in the USA. Now I have cut back my equipment sales and started to sell Koi almost exclusively. Here at USA Koi I have retail and wholesale Koi sales, Japan trips, direct shipments and many other services.

To compete in this Internet world, I try to offer the best customer service you can receive along with healthy quality Koi.

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For men, a smart, dark colored suit, with a few good quality shirts and ties and some leather shoes, will ensure you always have something for business meetings. Try to go for timeless styles, in order that you are not having to spend out unnecessarily when keeping up to date with fashions.

The same applies to women. A smart suit, with some black court shoes will always do nicely, women’s costume fashion accessories are very reasonable these days, so you may even find you can spruce up an old outfit for next to nothing, it is amazing what a pretty brooch or next scarf will do to liven up your look.

Whether your work in the pond and gardening industry is construction, retail, wholesale, manufacturing or otherwise, the importance of dressing smart to think smart should be one of your top priorities.

In these hard times of economic downturn, it is all too easy to let the small things slip, but when first impressions really do count, with the world becoming more competitive in it’s fierce fight for business, can you really afford not to ‘look the part’?

Having a few essential items in your wardrobe, whether male or female, is a good place to begin to ensure you always have something at hand at a moment’s notice.

For men, a smart, dark colored suit, with a few good quality shirts and ties and some leather shoes, will ensure you always have something for business meetings. Try to go for timeless styles, in order that you are not having to spend out unnecessarily when keeping up to date with fashions.

The same applies to women. A smart suit, with some black court shoes will always do nicely, women’s costume fashion accessories are very reasonable these days, so you may even find you can spruce up an old outfit for next to nothing, it is amazing what a pretty brooch or next scarf will do to liven up your look.
If you are in need of a professional look, but would still like to promote your business, it is always a good idea to carry some business cards with you, these can be obtained for a very reasonable price, or perhaps you could have some metal pin badges made up? These would look nicer than a logoed shirt and can be easily transferred to different garments of clothing.

So, that covers the more professional look, but what if you attend trade shows, or you are a pond builder visiting a potential customer for a quote. Smart suits and dresses may not be suitable for all occasions, and this is where knowing your audience also comes into play.

If your business has a logo, how about some summer polo shirts with logo, and winter sweatshirts for the colder months? I’m sure if a construction worker turned up at my house wearing a suit I would find it much too formal, but a clean and tidy polo shirt with embroidered logo and some smart slacks with (relatively clean) but lived in work boots, would fit the bill much better.

Also, when it comes to trade shows, customers of koi and pond retailers don’t want to see their local business people suit and booted, the conversation will flow much better if your look is smart/casual with your business name or logo at the forefront of your appearance.

And remember, whatever the situation, clean and pressed is always best!

David Paulino and Gene Chavez of our local Grangettos – they use both – shirts with embroidered logos and name badges. A good combination.

This red shirt caught our eye from the street! Bill (left) along with Grant Cushman look sharp in their work shirts. You not only know their names but their companies – great advertising too.

Industry Tips

Where to buy your bargains

A good selection of work wear is available at your local Walmart stores, I researched just one example you could consider and with a local business to embroider or silk screen on your company logo you could get a whole outfit (with shoes) for less than $150. A good look, and a great way to advertise your business.

Work T-shirts at Walmart: Dickies Men’s work tee $10.84 for a two pack, available in a selection of colors
Or Dickies - Men’s Short-Sleeve Chambray Shirt $13.54
Embroidery Set-Up charge
(1 time fee) $48
Embroidery Per shirt $15
Wear with: Dickies Men’s relaxed fit shorts (selection of colors) $19
To finish: Herman survivors Men’s Buffalo Steel-Toe boots $53

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Plants That Require Behavior Modification

All plants, like people, have distinct personalities and they are equally as varied. Some are slow and calculated; working toward a specific goal in a strict, uniform fashion (Do). Others are moderate in their approach, reaching in all directions but not in a manner that would disrupt their neighbors and with no preferred destination they feel compelled to control (Caution). A select group, on the other hand, have the need for speed; racing across vast expanses committed to overtaking everything in their path (w/Boundaries). It’s all about power with them. These traits can be admirable, but without restraint they can get too big for their britches and cause serious problems for the person in charge of plant maintenance.

Bear in mind that all living things aren’t well known for adhering to the rules.

Bear in mind that all living things aren’t well known for adhering to the rules. Some make their decisions based on the situation they are planted in. Add to that the fact that all plants respond differently to variations in climate, sun/shade exposure, water quality, etc. and extreme environmental trends are possible in any location. What may be the norm in a pond with a moderate fish load and adequate circulation in Florida may not be at all how that plant responds in Michigan or California under similar circumstances.

The Doctor is In

I frequently field calls from customers who have had plants used inappropriately in their garden ponds and lived to tell about it. In some cases the plants grow so fast that their garden ponds could be confused with the likes of the 1960 film - Little Shop of Horrors. All kidding aside, what these plants really need is just a little behavior modification or boundaries. Some are...what these plants really need is just a little behavior modification or boundaries.
large with high impact foliage and deserve a place of honor in any garden pond. Others are commonly used in a majority of pond plantings. If not planted within the confines of a rigid container they may cause damage to the liner.

Often the problem lies in gravel planting pockets, which can prove detrimental since some of these plants are notorious for grabbing on to each and every pore in the gravel and never ever letting go. After extended periods of growth they will eventually need to be maintained and heavy equipment may be required because the dense growth and gravel are impermeable to modern hand tools. Rigid containers are also useful for tropical plants making them easier to extract in the winter for the northern gardener. It also prevents excessive decaying matter from remaining in the pond during the cold months.

**Case Studies Some of the Best and Worst**

*Baumea* – Variegated Striped Rush is a striking rush that has rigid stems vertically striped with a splash of yellow along each narrow blade. It forms a uniform, cylindrical stand of foliage and is a favorite among gardeners and landscapers. Care should be taken when handling Baumea due to the exceptionally sharp tips at the top of the blades. Protective eyewear is encouraged. Like the leaf tips, new growth shoots are also very sharp and are capable of puncturing pond liner when planted unconfined in gravel planting pockets. It is recommended to plant in a rigid container providing ‘Boundaries’ and then nestle the container into the gravel if that is the preferred display/planting method.

*Equisetum* – Horsetail is one of the most characteristically unique plants found. It has been around for a few hundred million years and once established it prefers to hang around; indefinitely. If Horsetail escapes from its intended destination and permeates the soil surrounding the pond it can not be easily eradicated and spreads rather quickly. There are no known herbicides to control it and manual removal is nearly impossible. It doesn’t mean this spectacular plant shouldn’t be used, it simply means a safe place to use it would be in a container without holes that isn’t buried in gravel or better yet in a floating island where it has zero chance of connecting with surrounding soil.

*Iris* – Iris should be considered for most water gardens since it is up early consuming accumulated nutrients from the winter months and offers a clear sign that spring is on the way. Iris is extremely easy to grow and requires little maintenance but recall some plants grab on to gravel and never let go. Iris may well be at the top of that list. Other than top dressing, gravel should remain the enemy of Iris. Several years of accumulated growth in a gravel planting pocket and the plant can become completely unmanageable. A rigid container will prove much easier to manage. Another consideration might be to grow Iris hydroponically. It generates a hefty root system that can easily be self sustaining as long as it is anchored to keep it from floating away or falling over.
Nelumbo – Lotus plants will grow runners from 20’ – 60’ per season depending on the cultivar and growing conditions. Providing a substantial container without holes will easily provide the boundaries necessary to keep lotus in its place. Pond liner can also be used to build a planting area adjacent to the water garden so the lotus can have a larger, more creative growing area. 12” deep with 90° sides is ideal. Keep the soil level shallow (4 – 6”) and no gravel or rocks should be used.

Nymphaea – Water Lilies prefer soil over gravel as a planting medium. Generously sized containers provide adequate soil mass providing room for growth and easy fertilization. Containers simplify the removal of tropical varieties from the pond for winter.

Orontium – Golden Club is definitely on the ‘Do’ list of plants and should be a staple in the garden pond. They can be planted in gravel pockets or containers without incident. The slow, steady, clump habitied growth means this modest beauty requires very little maintenance or care. A winning plant that is underutilized because it is slow to mature.

Phragmites – Reed has extremely sharp new growth shoots that are notorious for puncturing liner. The punctured pond liner can go unnoticed for several growing seasons while the problem continues to worsen. The rigid hollow stems plug the holes in the liner temporarily. Upon eventual removal of the plant dozens of holes are opened on the pond liner sidewall. This plant should always be confined to a sturdy planting container and never used in gravel planting pockets.
Typha – Cattail, like Phragmites, have very sharp new growth tips that can puncture liner. Dwarf and medium varieties pose the same threat so all cattails should be avoided in gravel planting pockets and be kept in containers where they can mind their manners.

Zephyranthes – Rain Lily is clump habit and highly desirable. It has a modest growth habit that makes it suitable to containers, gravel planting pockets, or nestled among rocks along the streams edge. The delightful beauty is underutilized because it blooms so late in the season but the crisp white flowers are a welcome surprise in late summer.

For a complete list of Plant Do’s & Don’ts and what it all means to you, visit www.pondbizmag.com

Preventative Medicine

Gravel planting pockets can complicate the long-term care and maintenance of some plants. Serious consideration should be given to the plant selection and long term success or failure prior to execution. Alternative substrates, like calcined clay can be substituted for gravel to ease maintenance. It is lighter weight and easier to cut through than gravel so it is better suited to plants like iris that have clingy root systems.

Some landscape contractors have been successful creating planting pockets and establishing plants without any media at all. This type of hydroponic growing has huge benefits beyond regular plant maintenance. Fish fry, insects, tadpoles, bacteria, etc will all prosper in the root environment.

Landscape contractors need to be especially aware that what happens after they leave doesn’t just involve failed pumps or algae blooms. A sound knowledge of plant material is the key to satisfying customers. Plants are often overlooked and are a valuable source of revenue in the landscape plan so that knowledge won’t be going to waste. Additionally clients often feel slighted if the plant selection and planting is left to them; it is frequently perceived as an incomplete job. There are a few avid gardeners that prefer to do it themselves but that segment of the population appears to be dwindling as the do-it-yourself market shrinks. More consumers are willing to pay for your expertise. A good understanding of plants and their growing habits can prove invaluable when selecting or recommending plant choices for the water feature as well as adding to your bottom line.

About the Author

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Almost every water gardener that I know has raccoons (Procyon lotor) prowling around their water gardens or fish ponds. This includes both rural and urban pond owners. As they say, if you build it, they will come. Coons love water, but chances are they were probably already there, because they are so adaptable and people have created superb habitat for them in so many ways. They love sweet corn, garbage, pet food, compost, bird food, warm chimneys and the list goes on and on.

Raccoons are common over all of North America with the exception of the Rocky Mountains higher elevations and some areas of the arid Southwest. They are more numerous and more widely distributed now than they were in the 1800’s, most likely due to the changes humans have made in the raccoons’ environment.

Recognizing Whether Raccoons Are the Problem

I would like to discuss clues that will help you determine if a client has a problem with raccoons. Since they are nocturnal (active primarily at night), they may not be spotted eating fish or damaging plants, and only the signs left behind will tell you what’s happening. Their footprints (either muddy or still wet in early morning) are sure evidence of raccoons. Of course, the client, or you, must be able to determine if they are coon track. They are distinctive. Please refer to Figure 1.
Raccoons are very destructive when they are foraging for fish. Telltale signs of their activity include tipped over potted plants, or water lily leaves that are torn up and in disarray.

**Plan on building the edge of your pond so that it drops immediately**

Missing fish could also indicate raccoon predation, but this usually only happens when the pond edge is shallow or sloping or the pond is so small that a raccoon can easily stand in it and catch fish. Remember that a lot of other critters eat fish so this fact alone does not always indicate that raccoons are present.

**Preventing Raccoon Damage**

The best way to control the damage done by raccoons is to prevent them from getting to your fish. Before even a shovelful of dirt is turned, while the pond is still in the planning stages, is when the best precautions are made. Anybody that has been in this business very long quickly learns that sloping edges on a pond invite wildlife in to explore. Most naturally occurring bodies of water have this type of edge and so wildlife, like raccoons, can easily enter a pond and cause damage. Plan on building the edge of your pond so that it drops immediately to at least one foot in depth. I have seen references say that at least two feet of depth are needed, but I know that one foot will work great. (The one foot depth also is safer for children.)
This way, when a coon wants to catch fish in this type of pond, he has to go swimming. I have always said that when a coon is doing a backstroke he cannot catch fish easily.

On many occasions I have seen a properly designed pond with one foot ledges, where a raccoon has entered the pond, swum out through the water lilies about 5 to 7’ and then immediately headed back to shore. It is easy to see the trail through the displaced water lily leaves. This may only happen one or two times during the season. On all occasions there has never been any fish lost, at least, any that we know of. Believe me, if they were snacking on fish they would be back every night.

Okay, so a client still has problems with the masked bandits. They could be raiding container gardens or smaller water features that may not even have any fish. There are many other things that can be done to prevent these critters from creating problems. Make sure that neighbors in the area aren’t

Raccoons are easily caught in box traps. This trap was set next to a pond that had raccoon track near it. Notice the plywood under the trap. Raccoons can rip up the grass under the trap while in the trap so plywood was used to keep this from happening.
feeding their pets outside with a pan always filled with food. This entices coons and when they find the food they will have their bib on every day at this food pan. Once in the neighborhood, they cannot help but check out the area’s water gardens.

Garbage cans and dumpsters need to have lids and covers that coons cannot open. Bird feeders and sweet corn patches will also attract them. My experience tells me that once the coons find a food source, they will continually check it out for months even after it has been removed.

Controlling Raccoon Damage

So, you know that you already have raccoons, now what can be done? There a several techniques that will work to keep them from doing any damage. Unfortunately, there is usually some kind of disadvantage to each of these beyond the effort involved to create them. Again, prevention is much easier.

Keeping a large dog that has free access to the landscape where the pond is located, at least during the night time, works very well. Great deterrent, but not all people are able or want to do this.

Installing an electric fence will also be very effective. Most of the time one wire only 6” off the ground around the pond will work very well. Sometimes two wires may be necessary. Two wires off the ground 6” and 12” will keep all coons out. The system can be on a timer so that it is on from dusk till dawn. It is wise to install a disconnect switch on the system in case you want to access your pond at night. Electric fencing works but it can be an eyesore. The obvious disadvantage is the wires going around the pond, but I have seen some very effective systems that did not look all that bad. (Figure 2).

I have one client that likes to cover his small water garden with 1” by 1” welded wire at night. He does not have
any upright marginal plants that will interfere with the wire. This is really only practical for smaller ponds.

A last resort for taking care of a raccoon that has decided to make your garden his home, is the technique of box trapping the critters. I am not advocating this technique in the spring of the year when sow s would have young back in the den. **Always check local regulations concerning trapping before you begin.** Use a 12” x 10” by 32” single door box trap that is well built. Tomahawk box traps are very good as well as the professional grade of Havahart box traps. Some of the cheaper versions will hold a coon for only a few minutes. They are a very strong animal and traps made with light gauge wire will not hold them. Bait the trap with cheap sardines that are packed in oil, not tomato paste.

Think about “what you are going to do with the coon” if you decide to box trap them. I would encourage you to euthanize the animal instead of translocating it and this is why – in some states you legally cannot release animals in an area that is different from where it was trapped. Nobody else wants your problem. Besides, if you move a box trapped animal it is important to move it 20 to 30 miles. Otherwise, the coon could beat you back home. Any shorter distance and you are simply releasing the animal back into its own home range.

**Techniques for Controlling Raccoon Damage That May Work for Awhile**

A motion activated water sprinkler (Scarecrow), placing capsicum pepper around the pond, playing an all night radio talk show and/or leaving a light on may work. At least until the raccoons get used to them. I can visualize a raccoon, listening to the radio, eating your fish sprinkled with capsicum pepper and being able to easily see you coming because of the light. Then his sprinkler shower would be over.

A technique that I have not tried yet, but want to, is to cover very hot peppers (like habanero) with peanut butter and place them around the water garden. I suspect that these would be avoided in time and they still will dine on your fish.

**So What is the Final Answer?**

If a pond is designed and built correctly with steep edges that go immediately down to one foot, then raccoons are not a problem. This is where you can serve your clients the best. Plan it right to begin with.

If bird feeders, garbage or pet food attracted coons initially, then the problem can be corrected within a short time frame by removing the attractions and then box trapping the coons. Of course, using electric fencing or a large dog also works, but these are not always the answer.

Whenever I deal with any wildlife species there are always exceptions to the “rule.” They can be frustrating at times, but the above techniques will work the majority of the time.

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**About the Author**

Jamie Beyer brings a lot of knowledge and enthusiasm. Jamie is a Lifetime Master Gardener and is founder and immediate Past President of the Central Iowa Water Garden Association. Water gardening has been a passion of Jamie’s for over 45 years and, currently, he has three 10,000 gallon ponds and one 27,000 pond which contains many kinds of water plants and fish. He combines this experience with his Master’s Degree in Fish and Wildlife Biology to become uniquely qualified to be one of the Midwest’s foremost experts on the subject. His broad background of fisheries, dynamics of water, wildlife ecology, and horticulture gives him impressive credentials. Jamie frequently speaks and writes on all aspects of water features and water gardening to gardeners in the Midwest. In addition, he also has a consulting/installation business, called Midwest Waterscapes, which he works as a water garden, fountain and pond consultant/installer to people that want extra help. Jamie has considerable experience installing ponds, diagnosing water garden problems, teaching classes and helping do-it-yourselfers, do it right. Since the late 80’s, he has been involved with the design and installation of over 500 water gardens and features.

Jamie and co-author Veronica Fowler, wrote the Ortho Book “All About Garden Pools and Fountains.” Over a half million copies of the book has been sold in the six years since its publication.
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POND BIZ Magazine
by Vicki Vaughan

Editor’s Note: All across the koi world, people are flocking to koi wet labs, to better understand the diseases that challenge our fish, and how best to deal with them. One of the most widely traveled instructors is Vicki Vaughn of the University of Georgia. Here she tells us about the course she teaches.

The Koi Health Maintenance Course was established in 1996 at The College of Veterinary Medicine, University of Georgia, Athens Georgia. I had been involved with The Fish Health Management Seminar offered by Dr. Jack Gratzek who taught fish medicine at the Vet School. I was the course coordinator for 3 years until his retirement in 1994. At this time, Dr. Branson Ritchie and I developed an SPF (specific pathogen free) aquaculture facility in order to provide aquatic species (primarily koi) for our research purposes as well as other institutions on a cost recovery basis. I became director of this facility and the fish health course was dropped as a continuing education course for the time being.

I was fortunate to meet Dr. Erik Johnson in 1996 when he visited my facility. He was like a kid in a candy store as he viewed the creatures at the aquaculture center. At that time I had thousands of koi, giant freshwater prawns, a 13 pound flounder we had adapted to fresh water, golden shiners, red claw crayfish from Australia- all kinds of neat things for the fish geek in all of us.

He was dismayed to discover that the fish health course had been dropped and he urged me to resurrect the seminar. After a moments consideration I told him NO (politely) because of the tremendous amount of work involved to coordinate such a course. He left with his head down and stated that he would do all he could to help and that he thought it a shame to loose the wealth of information that the course had provided over the years to veterinarians, hobbyists, breeders and retailers. “Sigh.”

Well, I thought about this for a couple of months and decided that I would tackle this project, but selfishly only focus on koi health. The fish health course covered such a broad spectrum of subjects that it held limited appeal for anyone (such as myself) that was focused on koi. It covered marine fish, reef tanks, species specific diseases with little focus on koi.

I decided that we would change the direction of the course and only offer information on koi and the identification, prevention and treatment of diseases associated with these animals. Dr. Johnson was instrumental in organizing the first course and we had the full support of the Atlanta Koi Club as well. We have had the input of numerous fish veterinarian over the years. Drs. Eric Johnson, Nick St Erne, Sandy Yosha, Julius Tepper, Tim Miller Morgan, Helen Roberts, Brian Plameiro, Branson Ritchie, David Perperian, and Steven Hernandez Divers, have all participated at one point in time.
We have also been fortunate to have many hobbyists and retailers participate and contribute much information about non disease issues. These subjects include pond construction, history of koi, koi types, filtration, and judging of koi. We have had many KHAs (AKCA’s Koi Health Advisors) involved from helping with the course material, setting up and helping with the wet labs, hauling books, barbecuing pigs, making beer runs, and so forth.

The course consists of three days of intensive lectures and hours of hands on time in the wet labs. The course generally is held in February when most sane koi people (if there is such a thing) have some spare time to learn how to be better caretakers for their fish. We begin Friday a.m. and the first day culminates in a Cuban pig roast at a local art studio. The artist is Stan Mullins. Stan has completed several works with koi as the subject in many different media from paintings to marble and even bronze. He also has a large koi pond, which of course has some of my progeny swimming in it.

Breakfasts, lunches, Friday reception and all course materials are included in the course fee. A CD of all lectures will be offered next year in the all-inclusive $500.00 seminar fee. Lodging is very reasonable as we get a block of rooms at the Holiday Inn in downtown Athens, Georgia adjacent to campus. Athens is a vibrant college town with lots of nightlife and the University is the oldest chartered University in the US—lots of historic buildings and a beautiful campus.

Subjects covered during the seminar include, disease identification, use of the microscope for parasite identification, bacterial, viral and fungal pathogens and their treatment and prevention, history of nishikigoi, water quality, injection techniques, serology, bacteriology, necropsy, proper sampling techniques, culture and sensitivity, histology, water analysis, how and where to submit samples to reference labs, interpretation of laboratory results, proper pond construction and filtration, classification and proper use of antibiotics, wound management, surgery techniques, and we are constantly adding and updating material. We offer hours of closely supervised instruction in the laboratory section so that everyone is comfortable with the use of a microscope and the various procedures necessary to become proficient at disease identification and treatment. We have lots of attendees that return year after year to get exposure to the latest technology.

The Koi Health Seminar is accredited by the Georgia Board of Veterinary Examiners and offers 20 hours of continuing education credits to veterinarians and KHA’s. The attendees have an entire weekend to discuss koi related issues with some of the best minds in the country. We have round table discussions after each day of lecture when everyone gains tremendous insight as each individual contributes to the issues related to the proper care of our pets. The floor is always open for questions and we encourage attendee participation.

The next seminar will be offered in February 2010. For more information and registration go to the website www.koihealthsemiar.com.

Vicki Vaughan has been involved in fish medicine for 15 years. She was director of the SPF Aquaculture Facility at the College of Veterinary Medicine, University of Georgia. She now owns and operates KOILAB which is a full service reference laboratory involved with the diagnosis and treatment of fish related illnesses. KOILAB also manufactures and distributes fish medications. Vicki developed and patented Tricide NEO, which is a potentiated antibiotic for fish.

Vicki is also owner of Flat Rock Koi Farm which breeds domestic koi as well as direct importer from Japan.

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The last couple of days were just crazy for me. My days were jam-packed with activity, meetings, people stopping in to see me, hundreds of emails, phone calls and messages, one project after another. I am usually able to maintain calm and focus in the midst of a workday, but the last two days put my abilities to a test. I stayed calm, but the stress levels were definitely higher than I care for.

After all that, I needed to decompress.

So today is a decompression day for me. I have a number of tried-and-true methods that work for me, and I have to say, in the last 24 hours, my stress levels have dropped dramatically.

Here’s what works for me:

1. Deep breathing
   Take a deep breath. Hold it. Now let it out...slowly. Try counting to 10 as you let out your breath. Feel the tension and stress flowing out of you with your breath. Repeat 3-10 times, as necessary.

2. Self-massage
   I like to massage my shoulders, neck, head, lower back. It helps a lot. Even better: get your honey to do it for you! Another great relaxation technique is to tense up and then relax each muscle in your body, one at a time, starting from your toes up to your head.

3. Take a walk
   When I’m in the middle of stress, I like to take 5, and take a walk around the building. I also do the deep breathing and self-massage mentioned above as I do so. It’s a great way of letting go of tension and allowing yourself to re-focus.

4. Exercise
   This morning, I went to the beach at 5:30 a.m. and went for a swim. It was beautiful at the beach at around sunrise, and the swim was invigorating. Yesterday I went for a bike ride, and the morning before it was a short but refreshing run. Tomorrow I think I’ll do another short run. It really gets the stress out of your system and gives you some quiet time to think when you exercise.

5. Get outdoors
   Even if I didn’t do the swim, just being there at the beach, with my decaf coffee (I quit caffeine, remember?), was calming. It’s nice to connect with nature and take in the beauty around you. While you’re there, stretch, yawn, take some deep breaths, and enjoy.

6. Sex
   One of the all-time greats. It works like a charm. Seriously. It’s probably the best on the list. (Sorry, mom.)
7. Take a day off
That’s what I’m doing today. Don’t tell my boss. I have lots of vacation and sick leave saved up, so it’s not a problem, actually. I’m just going to veg out and allow myself to calm down and center.

8. Meditate
You don’t need to be trained to have a short, relaxing meditation session. Just sit somewhere quiet, close your eyes, relax, and focus on your breathing. Try to concentrate on it coming into your body, and then going out. When other things pop into your head (they will, inevitably), just acknowledge them (don’t try to force them out) and allow them to leave, and then focus again on your breathing. Do this for as long as you can, and then take a couple of cleansing breaths, and get up a new person.

9. Read
I like to throw myself on the couch with a good book. Well, not necessarily a good book — a page-turner. Something that will engross me completely, take my mind off everything else. John Grisham works well for me, as does William Gibson. And Terry Pratchett. Or Ann Patchett, for that matter. And Stephen King. Just get lost in their world.

10. Love
I like to spend time with my kids or my wife. Just snuggle with them, focus on them, forget about the world. They are all that’s important, and sometimes I need that reminder.

11. Disconnect
Turn off the phones, turn off the computer, and shut off the outside world for a little while. These things just raise your stress level. Go offline and forget about the online world! You can do it! Except for Zen Habits. That’s the only blog you’re allowed to read when you decompress.

12. Take a nap
One of my favorites. Just take a 30-minute nap, and you’re re-set! A nap is like a restart button for life.

About the Author

Leo Babauta is married with six kids, he lives on Guam, he is a writer and a runner and a vegetarian, and the owner of Zen Habits. He also is the author of a new best-selling book, “The Power of Less: The Fine Art of Limiting Yourself to the Essentials ... in Work and in Life.” If you want Zen Habits’ philosophy in a handy little volume, please buy the book.

Zen Habits is one of the Top 100 blogs on the Internet, and covers: achieving goals, productivity, being organized, GTD, motivation, eliminating debt, saving, getting a flat stomach, eating healthy, simplifying, living frugal, parenting, happiness, and successfully implementing good habits.

See his web site at www.zenhabits.net
The 12th Annual PONDAPALOOZA National Pond Expo & Conference will be held August 23-26, 2009 at the newly renovated Sheraton Portland Airport Hotel in Portland, Oregon. The conference, which changes locations from year to year, is geared towards bringing manufacturers, distributors, retailers, growers, Koi and pond fish wholesalers and installers together under an umbrella of educational opportunities, information sharing, product exhibits, on-site, hands-on pondbuild, peer networking, offsite tours and fun events. PONDAPALOOZA is the only National event of its kind held annually in the United States.

This year's focus will be on navigating your business successfully through a poor economy and will feature workshops and presentations to help people involved in the garden pond industry to succeed despite negative consumer spending trends. Many of the sessions are designed to help those involved in the industry to think outside of the box, look for new opportunities, and work more efficiently while increasing their bottom line.
The annual event will begin with a pond and courtyard makeover at the host hotel. Pondstruction™ is the most comprehensive, hands-on water feature build of the year—an opportunity to Learn to Earn! An existing concrete lined water feature will be dismantled and replaced with a new water feature and stream. Lighting, pathways and new terrestrial plantings will also be a part of this hands-on learning experience. The makeover project will teach installers how to work with commercial businesses in quoting, designing and completing work of this kind. Mike Garcia of Enviroscapes in Redondo Beach, CA will be the lead designer for the project. Atlantic Water Gardens is the product sponsor and will donate all of the products used to create the water feature. OASE will provide fountain technology products and instruction. Pacific Water Garden’s Neal Lucht will also be assisting in the design and mentorship aspect.

The 3rd Annual Catalog Design Contest and the 2nd Annual Tabletop Aquatic Display Contest will be held throughout the event. The catalogs will be judged by the attendees, while the tabletop displays will be judged by a selected panel of three individuals.

There are 10’ x 10’ and 10’ x 5’ booths available for exhibitors. Set-up for vendor displays will be Monday, August 24th with the show opening Monday evening with an Exhibitor Reception. The show will continue through August 26th.

Post Conference Labs and Events will be held on August 26th. These will include hands on Fish and Water Quality Labs as well as business forums. The afternoon will offer a Road Rally tour of various public gardens and residential ponds.

For more information contact Garden Pond Promotions, Inc. at 814-695-4727, e-mail videorose@aol.com, web site www.gardenpondpromotions.com.
Irrigator Technical Training School is proud to announce their newly added Pond Technical Training School. Irrigator Tech has expanded to meet the needs in the Pond Industry as well as the needs in the Irrigation Industry. A recent Irrigator Tech Committee educational meeting presented a primary topic. “There is a need for pond educational classes.” When hearing the concerns of many, a planned goal was established. Richard Daigle, Eric Triplett and Kent Wallace teamed up to create Certified Pond Installers Series. The “C.P.I.” course outline will include Pond Ecology & Maintenance to Disappearing Water Features, Waterfalls & Rock Column Fountains. We welcome you to visit Pond Technical Training School at www.pondtech.org for more information on class descriptions and upcoming class dates. We welcome your support and input.

Aquascape Foundation installs Rainwater Harvesting System for Kuve School in Ghana, Africa

St. Charles, IL – A group of Aquascape Foundation volunteers traveled to the Kuve Village in Ghana, Africa the week of January 12th, 2009 to install Aquascape’s RainXchange™ System and Genieye’s Eye-Nizer™ water purification system. The rainwater harvesting system provides clean drinking water for the village’s school children, and creates the ability to prepare one hot meal per day.

The newly-installed system allows for rainwater to run off the school’s roof and is then stored in a sub-surface 8,000 gal. reservoir. The water enters into the first chamber of the 22’ x 24’ x 4’ basin, which acts as a sediment trap to remove particulate matter, before being passed through the ionization manifold via a solar-powered pump. The Genieye Eye-Nizer™ adds trace amounts of copper and silver ions to the water to kill bacteria and other waterborne pathogens. The sterilized water then passes into the second chamber where it’s stored before being pumped for use by a single hand pump.

“Pairing the Eye-Nizer™ with the RainXchange™ System provided the perfect solution for this village that has no electricity. We were able to install a solar panel on the roof to provide power for the ionization manifold,” claimed Ed Beaulieu, Foundation vice president and chief sustainability officer for Aquascape, Inc. “We want to leverage our water feature expertise for humanitarian efforts and this project will be one of many life-saving applications.”

The system will capture and filter over 100,000 gallons of water per year, providing clean drinking water for more than 400 children throughout the year. Aquascape Foundation chose the Kuve school project after contacting the I.N. Network in Zeeland, Michigan, whose mission is to connect partners in community development.

Aquascape Foundation volunteers who participated in the rainwater harvesting project included foundation president Carla Wittstock, Wayne, IL; foundation vice-president, Ed Beaulieu of Aquascape, Inc. in St. Charles, IL; Lauri Mitchell of Mitchell Motivation in Palatine, IL; Roberto Cosme and Tim Bottoms of Aquascape, Inc. in St. Charles, IL; Tim Muttoo of Genieye Systems Inc. in Ontario, Canada; Dale Vnuk of Wyld Creek Water Gardens in Fox Lake, IL; Al Lenz, of Lentzscaping in Warminster, PA; Glenn and Isaac Ferrell of Living Water Aquascapes in Lakeland, FL; Bob Blasing of Ripple Effect Water Gardens in Redwood, CA; Keith Robinson, of Semco, Inc. in Belton, MO; April Dugan of Nature Scapes in Grafton, NH; and Karen and Dayton Wright from Ogden, UT.


The Aquascape Foundation is a not for profit 501 (c) 3 organization established in 2008. The mission of The Foundation is to create sustainable solutions for the world-wide water crisis. The purpose of The Foundation is to promote awareness of water as our most precious resource through environmental, educational and philanthropic efforts.
EasyPro Pond Products of Grant, Michigan announces the recent addition of Rick Smith as Director of Sales. Nathan Blom, who has been the sales manager since the 2007 season, will become the Director of Marketing and will focus on marketing programs and services to support the continuing nationwide growth of the EasyPro Product line.

Rick Smith joins the EasyPro team with over 27 years experience in the Lawn and Garden industry, as well as a passion for water gardening and 15 years in the industry. Rick was formerly the Sales and Marketing Manager of the retail division for J Mollema and Son, Inc., Grand Rapids, Michigan, then served as the Great Lakes/Chicago Regional Sales Manager when Commerce Corp. purchased Mollema in the spring of 2006.

EasyPro Pond Products is excited to provide the additional support to our nearly 200 distributors in the United States and Canada. For more information contact EasyPro at 800 448 3873.

Announcing MinnFinn Max and NeuFinn

New from AquaSolver, there is a revolutionary new treatment for your Koi and Goldfish. Up till now there were very few tools available to fish keepers to effectively treat external diseases. And of those, many are toxic to you, the fish and the environment.

AquaSolver is pleased to announce the new treatment for Koi and Goldfish, MinnFinn Max. MinnFinn Max was developed to be easy to use, effective at ridding most parasites (i.e. Costia and Trichodina), including flukes, and external bacterial infections, often in one treatment. Imagine being able to treat fish, neutralize the treatment with NeuFinn and not have to worry about water changes. There is also no worry about the addition of chemicals that are harmful to the environment or what harm may be done to the fish and the user.

An example of the effectiveness of MinnFinn Max was demonstrated against a severe bacterial gill disease infection where fish health was so bad the tank was to be euthanized. One treatment of MinnFinn Max turned the tank around to where there was no mortality the second day after treatment and beyond saving 500 fish.

It is time to start using more responsible products and reduce the use of cancer causing agents and heavy metals which are harmful to the user, the fish and the environment. We at AquaSolver are promoting Product Responsibility with the introduction of MinnFinn Max. MinnFinn Max now offers an alternative with no toxicity to you, no long term toxicity to the fish, no toxicity to the environment, no water changes and no worries.

MinnFinn Max is available in 1 liter bottles which each will treat 8000 gallons of water and includes the NeuFinn neutralizer. Available soon will be MinnFinn which will also be in one liter bottles and will treat 2000 gallons of water. As with MinnFinn Max, MinnFinn will also include the NeuFinn neutralizer. For more information please contact AquaSolver; at 800-955-0221 or Paul Curtis at 760-518-8170 or Don Gressly at 719-287-0002. Please also see our website www.minnfinnmax.com for more information.
Anjon Manufacturing announces that they have joined with Industrial Sales to present Pond Forum 2009. “The Pond Forum is a very unique spin on the traditional Anjon Pond Build”, stated Anjon CEO Jon Lottes. “A traditional Anjon Pond Build is catered to the installer and or distributor, however, the Pond Forum will allow Homeowners and Do It Yourselfer’s a glimpse of this intense training process.”

Carson Enterprises’ jumped on board immediately when presented with the notion and will host the location in Omaha, Nebraska. Scott Carson of Carson Enterprises stated that he “fully supports this new way of thinking for pond education” and backed up his words with a large contribution to make the event happen. Homeowners will have the opportunity to witness the pond construction process and develop a first hand relationship with installers. “Armed with tricks of the trade some attendees will want to tackle the project themselves; while others will learn a pond install is better left to the professional”, Carson commented.

To be a part of Pond Forum 2009 contact Anjon Manufacturing at 800.553.5605 or www.A jonMFG.com. Pond Forum 2009 will be held May 1st and May 2nd, 2009 in Omaha Nebraska. All proceeds raised will be donated to Make a Wish Foundation.

Aquascape, Inc., Launches RainXchange™ Rain Barrel

St. Charles, IL – Aquascape, Inc. is proud to announce the launch of its new, decorative, urn-style RainXchange™ Rain Barrel, which can be incorporated into existing gutter and drainage systems. Made in the U.S.A., the barrel’s 75-gallon capacity allows for greater rainwater storage than most rain barrels on the marketplace today.

The RainXchange™ Rain Barrel offers an introductory option for consumers desiring to get started with rainwater harvesting. The unit requires no electricity and the large internal overflow system keeps water in the barrel and away from the house. Durable plastic walls withstand extreme conditions and a 5-year warranty is included. A brass spigot can accept a garden hose for ease in irrigation. The childproof lockable lid has a screened gutter inlet and can be used as a planter to help naturalize the barrel into the landscape design. The attractive design is an aesthetic option for stormwater management over traditional rain barrels that tend to be an eyesore in the landscape.

“The RainXchange™ Rain Barrel provides an economical and responsible solution for irrigating landscape plants,” states Dave Kelly, Vice President of Product Development for Aquascape. “Watering restrictions don’t apply to rain barrels and rain water is proven to be better for plants than municipally treated water.”

For more information on Aquascape’s new RainXchange™ Rain Barrel and RainXchange™ Systems, log onto www.rainxchange.com. For information on Aquascape and its products and programs, visit www.aquascapeinc.com or call 1-866-877-6637 (US) or 866-766-3426 (CAN).

Aquascape is North America’s leading innovator in the water gardening industry. Aquascape invented the low-maintenance, naturally balanced ecosystem pond that is the #1 contractor-installed water garden. The St. Charles, Illinois headquarters, dubbed “Aqualand,” received Silver Level recognition in the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Green Building Rating system. Aquascape’s mission is to help our customers succeed at building, selling, and retailing water garden products. Aquascape and its vast network of Authorized AquascapePRO™ Distributors sell exclusively to contractors and retailers. Founded in 1991, Aquascape made the Inc. 500 list of fastest growing private companies four years in a row. In 2005, founder and CEO Greg Wittstock was named one of America’s Best Bosses by FORTUNE Small Business Magazine and Winning Workplaces™.
EasyPro Pond Products (Grant, MI) is pleased to announce it has acquired PondEco Aquatic Systems of Tulsa, OK. Both companies are manufacturers of pond skimmers, filters, waterfall spillways and various other molded products. “This merger is a perfect fit since our existing line is contractor oriented and PondEco is more DIY oriented. It now gives us a full range of products,” stated Dave Ouwinga, Vice President of EasyPro.

The Tulsa operation was moved to Michigan in October and EasyPro expects the entire line to be up and running by early December. Despite having increased warehouse size to 50,000 square feet in 2006, an additional 20,000 square foot warehouse was needed to accommodate the growing EasyPro line as well as the new PondEco line. All manufacturing, assembly and packaging for both lines will be done at the new facility then transferred to the existing location where the sales and shipping departments are based.

EasyPro plans to market their existing line under the new name of Pro-Series while calling the PondEco line their Eco-Series.

By combining the two lines, EasyPro will have one of the largest selections of fountain basins, waterfall spillways, pond skimmers and filter boxes of any manufacturer in the United States as well as several unique and patented products for the watergarden market. For more information contact EasyPro at 800 448 3873.

Blue Heron Decoy

United Aquatics LLC have added a blue Heron decoy to its US range. Comes complete with life like legs and standard pole attachment which allows it to stand 30” tall. United Aquatics say this could be one of the best value for money and most life like heron decoys available in the USA in 2009.

United Aquatics LLC
1 Eves Drive
Marlton New Jersey 08053
Tel: 856 985 9339
www.unitedaq.com

Savio Ownership Transition

For many, many years; the industry has known and respected the dedicated and unparalleled talents of Chic Kelty as an avid inventor and manufacturer of the industry’s most recognizable, quality water feature products. In an effort to pursue his passion to invent, Chic has relinquished; in sale; the full and complete assets and intellectual property of both Savio Engineering, Inc. and Freedom, Inc. to long time President of both companies, business partner, confidant and friends...Valerie Steele.

As the new owner of these two industry icons, Valerie pledges to keep the integrity, reputation, dedication and direction on track for an awesome 2009 and beyond. The entire staff and management team remains intact and wishes Chic a fond farewell as he pursues his future endeavors.

Savio Engineering, Inc. manufactures the most unique and advanced line of water feature components available. Superior equipment, low maintenance and high consumer appeal define the Savio® brand. Savio components are backed by first-class after-sales service and consumer education materials. Savio pond designs and equipment result in clean, clear Livingponds®.
Web: www.savio.cc
Savio Engineering, Inc.
6701 Jefferson Street NE
Albuquerque, NM 87109
888-333-2356 or support@savio.cc

Two new sizes of Powerclenz Pressurized UV Filters

Now available from Fish Mate® Two new sizes of Powerclenz Pressurized UV Filters. Simple Plug n’ Play pond filtration. Max pond size up to 6000 gallons (24 watt) S/R $99.99, and 9000 gallons (36watt)S/R $1199.99.

A brush, screen, and four sponges filter solids. Just twist the knob; wait one minute for automatic compression of the sponges, turn the knob back and the filter has been cleaned. Also comes with Supra Bio Medi, for 3 stage filtration.

More information available from Fish Mate®, 800-728-4333 www.pet-mate.com , info@pet-mate.com

EasyPro Pond Products has acquired Pond Eco

United Aquatics LLC have added a blue Heron decoy to its US range. Comes complete with life like legs and standard pole attachment which allows it to stand 30” tall. United Aquatics say this could be one of the best value for money and most life like heron decoys available in the USA in 2009.

United Aquatics LLC
1 Eves Drive
Marlton New Jersey 08053
Tel: 856 985 9339
www.unitedaq.com

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Upcoming Events

May 1 – 3
Maricopa County Home & Landscape Show
Arizona State Fairgrounds, Phoenix, AZ
www.maricopacountyhomeshows.com

May 5 – 7
National Hardware Show/Lawn and Garden World
Las Vegas Convention Center, Las Vegas, NV
www.nationalhardwareshow.com

May 16 – 17
IKEAGE – Mud Pond Pull/Harvest and Mini-Seminar
Flat Rock Koi, Watkinsville, GA (60 miles East of Atlanta)
www.flatrockkoi.com

June 16 – 19
National Lawn & Garden Show
Hyatt Regency, Atlanta, GA • www.nlgshow.com

July 16 – 18th IWGS Main Symposium
Extended July 19 – 20th
IWGS 25th Anniversary - event held simultaneously with Aquascape’s Pondemonium as they celebrate their 10 year Anniversary
Pheasant Run Hotel, St. Charles, IL • www.iwgs.org
Speakers: Gary Wittstock, Clay Allgood and more
Tours: Ball Horticulture Gardens, Shedd Aquarium (behind the scene), Chicago Botanic Gardens, Aquascapes, Inc., Area Water Gardening Store, and a Pond Tour

August 23 – 26
Pondapalooza
Following the Farwest Show - The Oregon Association of Nurseries Show. Sheraton Portland Airport Portland, OR
www.gardenpondpromotions.com See article on pg 62.

September 18 – 22
American Society of Landscape Architects
McCormick Place Lakeside Center, Chicago, IL
www.asla.org

Sept. 23 – 24 (tentative)
Garden Market Expo
Las Vegas Convention Center, Las Vegas, NV
800-748-6214 • www.gardenmarketexpo.com

October 2 – 4
Koi America 2009
Held at Carroll County Agriculture Center in Westminster, Maryland with Koi, Goldfish, Vendors, and Speakers.
www.makc.com

October 22 – 24
Info Tanza ’09
An Educational & Information event hosted by IPPCA - See ad on page 55. Atlanta, GA • www.infotanza.com

November 16 – 18
Pool|Spa|Patio Expo
Mandalay Bay Convention Center, Las Vegas, NV
www.poolspapatio.com

Send Upcoming Events to – cindy@pondbizmag.com.
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