

The Inland Koi Connection

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF IKS • ISSUE 279 • SEPTEMBER 2021



Potluck Meetings Resume!

Sunday 26 September ~ 3 - 6 pm

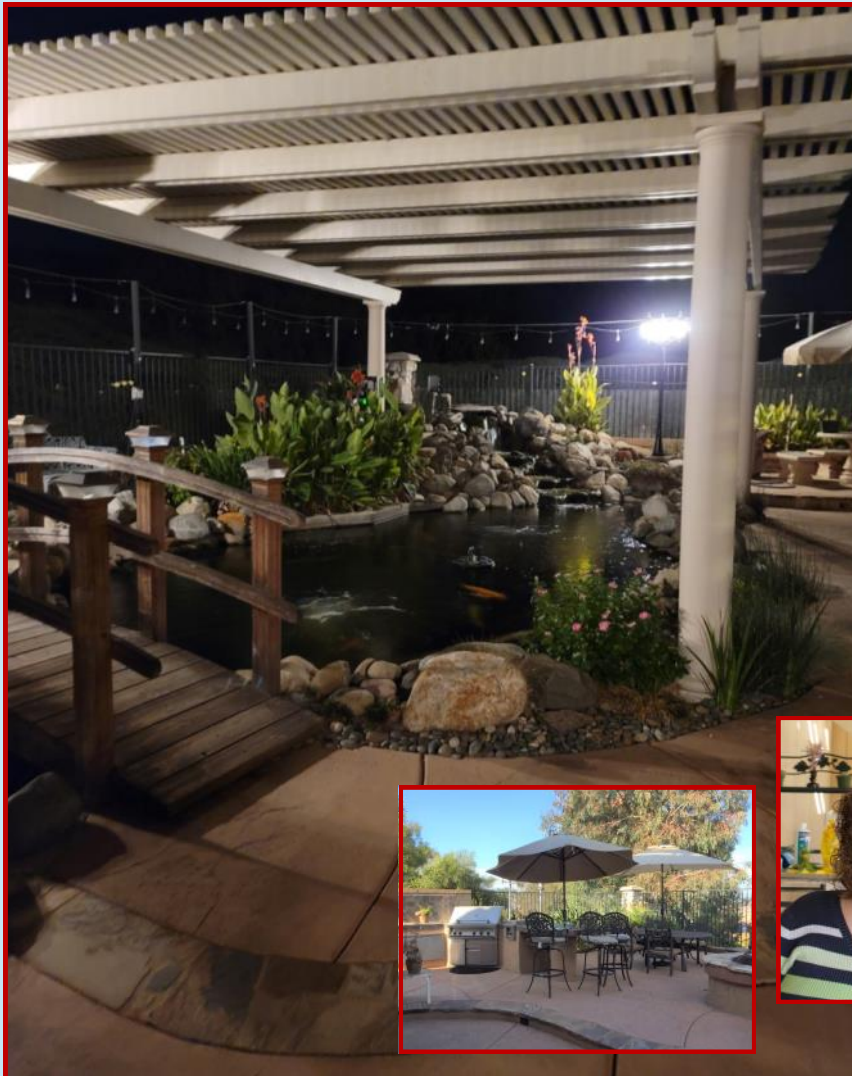
1556 Vandagriff Way, Corona 92883

*Our hosts,
Ed & Linda Kushner,
will welcome you to
their home in Corona.*

Program:

- After the Pond Talk, Tom Wright will explain the filtration system and answer questions.
- Ed will talk about our Koi Rescue Program and share some rescue stories.
- Demonstrations of fish handling, the proper way to net and transport koi.
- Koi Persons of the Year recognition.
- Rescued koi on display and for sale.

Please do not park in the driveway: drive up to drop things off, then park on the street. Handicap parking only at the top.



*Questions, lost...?
call 951.520.0092*

WHAT'S BEEN GOING ON IN IKS IN RECENT MONTHS?

• **The IKS Board met September 12** and considered members' responses to questions posed at the August meeting regarding future plans for the club. They were encouraged that so many wanted to continue with monthly meetings, but that will require your help: we will need meeting places — members willing to host the club around their ponds. Rather than forcing someone to call every member seeking meeting locations, **if you are willing to be a host, please call VP Brenda Aker to volunteer** and let her know which month is best for you. You know how hard we work to leave a meeting place fully cleaned up, with only a bag of refuse to be added to the hosts' trash bin.

• **Meetings:** It was so good to see so many members at the August 22 meeting at the Milfelds! We had a turnout of 53, including one couple who followed our signs and joined in, taking away a very positive impression of the club.

• **Meals:** We will return to our traditional Potluck Lunch format! There was about a 50-50 split over the question of how to provide a meal. "BYO" garnered no interest whatsoever, but the potluck and provided box lunches were split.

• Our Treasury has taken a serious hit in the year-and-a-half of no meetings and no fundraising events, especially as we now have to pay dearly for a storage unit. We are searching for a less expensive storage location; currently it costs \$370 every two months (\$2220 a year!!). If anyone has space and is willing to keep a storage POD on their property, please call one of the officers.

Members Note: All koi in QT are available for purchase, \$50-\$200 depending on size and quality...less than retail. Contact Ed Kushner.

• **Membership Renewals** We will mail the preprinted Renewal Forms, as usual, in November. Unfortunately we can no longer offer name badges (unless we can find a new source or opt for a different style) or the KoiUSA magazine.

• **Norco High School:** School is back in session.... We'll see what happens with planning a meeting there. . Maybe next year....

• **Koi Auction:** Praying we'll be able to host an auction in 2022... of course, COVID-19 is still the determining factor.

• **Elections:** About this time of year we usually name a nominating committee to begin the process of filling a slate of new officers and directors for the next term. We have appointed Brenda Aker as the new VP and voted to have Scott Zehm fill her vacancy among the directors. As so little has been done in 2020 and this year, the board proposed and agreed to continue to serve for the 2022 term.

Nevertheless, we would like to hear from any member who has a desire to serve and in what capacity; there is always the possibility of someone needing to step down sooner than later. 🐾

~ **RENEWALS** ~

Aker	Hoffman	Painter
Alexander	Howo	Parks
Atkiss	Hunter	Pollock
Blais	Hurley	Poyle
Broomfield	James	Rein
Chandler	Kushner	Rhodes
Coby	Leever	Richardson
Cover	Lei	Ross
Dirac	Leverett	Thompson
Fales	MacLaren	Walters
Frady	Mall	Watson
Halterman	Marrin	Wolf
Hamilton	McClain	Wright
Hanson	McHan	Zoetemelk
Henry (Bob)	Milfeld	Zehm
Henry (Rich)	Nyirady	<i>Are you here?</i>

Welcome to our Newest Members

David & Belinda San Jose
Rowland Heights CA 91748

We look forward to meeting you in person at a meeting soon!

2021 OFFICERS & DIRECTORS

Officers

Ed Kushner , President	951.520.0092
<i>Koi Re-Homing ~ Web Liaison</i>	
Brenda Aker , V.P.	951.316.0263
<i>Meeting Sites & Speakers</i>	
Monica Dirac , Secretary	909.887.7497
Nick Milfeld , Treasurer	951.780.7395
<i>Membership</i>	
Peggy Milfeld , Editor	951.780.7395

Directors

Rob & Deanna Fales	951.279.0181
<i>Raffles ~ Koi Re-Homing</i>	
Larry Leverett	951.781.3887
<i>Properties Manager</i>	
Linda Kushner	951.520.0092
Alvin Watson	951.764.6387
Scott Zehm	951.237.2508
Theo Zoetemelk	951.735.9896
<i>Buffet & Banquet Supplies</i>	

[I appreciate the help of Alvin Watson in writing this article: he interviewed Ed and searched older newsletter issues to learn about the Kushners. ~ed.

Ed & Linda Kushner purchased their flag lot in 2001; they were attracted by its privacy, elevation, views, and the borrowed landscape afforded by being bordered on two sides by Cleveland National Forest. Building a pond with that backdrop seemed natural, like fencing off a riparian pool to build your home around. The area isn't truly forested —no trees in sight, just open space.

The house sits behind a street-level neighbor: look for the long driveway. **Please park on the street, but feel free to drop people or things off at the top and then move back to the street.** Come through the gate to meet around the pond.

The Kushners started in the koi hobby in 2003 when their first pond was built by Kan-Do Ponds*; it was featured on our 2008 Pond Tour. It was full of rocks and lacked bottom drains. Ed's learning curve ran the gamut of removing the rocks, adding bottom drains, protecting against local predators, and planning a remake; finished in 2016, it was showcased on our 2018 Tour. What a difference a decade makes!



And if you had to do it all over again? Bigger! The pond can never be big enough.... Tom Ross and Tom Wright helped a lot with the new pond, and Tom was at the house almost every other day telling the men, "Make it deeper." It's almost triple what it was.

If you are considering solar power to operate your pond, consider this: When the 2003 pond was "turned on", the electric bill jumped from \$100 to \$700 a month. The electric company said the bill would go up a little with a pond, but that was one of the biggest surprises and the reason for solar. The bill runs between nothing and \$100 a month now.

Ed considers a backup generator and backup pumps a must: one failure can cause all the koi in a pond to die within 24 hours. He believes in having multiple pumps running on separate circuits so that one circuit breaker failing doesn't shut down the entire system. He has 3 pumps and can lose any two of them and his koi will survive. Asked to recommend an efficient pump for a beginner, Ed counseled that a good pump will pay for itself. His first pond had an internal (submersible) pump, which was the least efficient option and another cause of the high power bill. He uses *Sequence* pumps now which are efficient and durable.

The Kushners joined IKS in 2004, admitting that they didn't know much when they began, but now Ed is one of our club experts, managing our Koi Rescue program for several years. His own 1400-gallon QT tank, built in the 'dead-end' behind the house, is used year-round for rescues. You may recognize the water bar (filtration return): it's similar to those in every tank at Inland Koi.

See you there; bring a chair and food for the buffet. 🍴



Ask Ed about pond construction and if size matters and he'll explain that the original was a liner pond and it had a lot of problems with losing water. That was the reason for the redo in 2015 that made it a cement pond.



How exciting finally to gather again as a club and have so many people turn out for it! The Milfelds' yard allowed us to keep social distancing as much as we chose. Hugs and smiles were abundant and catching up was the order of the day for the first hour; people explored the yard, found comfortable seating and enjoyed boxed sub sandwiches. It was a surprisingly and blessedly cool day — almost 'June gloom' in late August — so cool we didn't use the EZ-ups.

President Ed Kushner opened the meeting by introducing the 2020-2021 Board, noting that Brenda Aker had taken over the VP position, and Scott Zehm had been appointed to fill Brenda vacancy as a director. Our host, Nick Milfeld, introduced his pond, sharing the history and info about the plumbing and filtration, plus problems he's encountered in the last 32 years.

After a bit of club business, polling the members about how often to meet in the future [monthly!] and what to do about lunches, Ed called on some of our resident 'experts' to answer questions. Nick, Larry Leverett, Tom Wright and Ed Broomfield took their places between the pond and pool, and Ed acted as moderator. Let's look at some of the topics addressed.

• Bottom drains...Necessary? Concerns? Tips?

Unanimously yes, they're necessary: it's the only way to remove all the debris (mulm) that settles to the pond bottom that skimmers never collect. Good water circulation is important too, as well as designing the pond to have low spots where the bottom drains are placed. If not plumbed in with the original construction, drains can be added later, as in Nick's pond.

In Nick's case, that meant creating a new separate gravity-fed filter system by the garage, quite a ways from the pond. A 4" pipe is good for about 10 feet — need more for a greater distance — otherwise, keep the filters closer to the pond. One issue with gravity feed is that you don't want any low spots in the pipe. You have to be able to clean out the pipe regularly because algae will grow in it and heavy debris will settle in low spots. Nick connects one of his filter brushes to nylon string and a bobber, feeds the bobber and line into the drain pipe, and sucks it up into the settling tank; then he manually pulls the brush through the pipe to clean it...just like a bottle brush.



• What's the life expectancy of a pond?

This depends on the construction, maintenance, etc. A rubber liner is usually guaranteed for 20 years, so you may get 25 years, but if it isn't properly installed it may fail much sooner. Concrete might last forever, but that's no to say that big tree roots can't crack it and cause water losses with seemingly no explanation....

• Do you need back-up power or equipment?

Definitely! A generator is a good investment, plus an extra pump and an air pump. You can get by without a pump for a while, but no without air. If you lose power for 24 hours, when it starts up again you'll be pumping toxic water into your pond and may lose some fish.

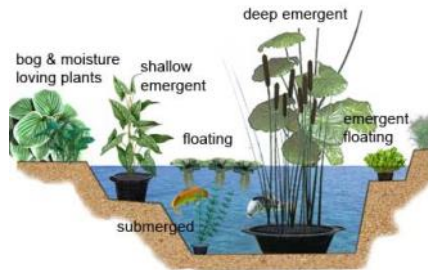
During rescues, our team has an inverter that can convert a vehicle's 12-volt to 110-120 to run an air pump in the transport tank for a safe drive home. The old-fashioned way of rescuing is to bag the koi and provide oxygen, as we do during our auctions.

• How long can fish survive without power?

"That depends on the number of fish (and most of us have too many) and how easily you can catch them." You can add hydrogen peroxide to the water to keep O₂ levels up; for a 6000-gallon pond you would use two quart-sized bottles (or 1/2 cup of 3% hydrogen peroxide per 100 gallons); it will take effect within an hour and last about four hours. Remember that in Summer the O₂ level is lowest and power outages are most common (in Winter the O₂ levels are highest and koi are mostly dormant). Hence the importance of being prepared with a back-up generator to keep the pond (and your kitchen!) running.

• What are the pros and cons of pond plants?

There are two schools of thought on this one, but the common advice is to keep plants in a separate area, whether in a bog above a waterfall or in plant shelves around the edge, so the koi don't eat them, especially the roots. Also, if your koi tend to spawn they will thrash any plants in the main pond. In a bog setting, the plants become part of the filtration system.



• Do you change feeding as weather cools?

This is a major topic we may address later, but you can always tell how much your koi are eating, and it should be no more than they will consume in about five minutes, regardless of the weather. When water temperatures start to drop, you start changing their diet: at 55°F you start cutting back; at 49-50°F I quit altogether. There are a lot of natural treats for koi, too, like a big round slice of watermelon, which they will chase around the pond eating the inside. You can give it diced, too. Larry has steamed chunks of zucchini until fairly soft and thrown it in....

• When does the immune system slow down?

Some say 70°F, but it's more like 60° or less, but as the temperature goes down and the immune system weakens, the problem 'bugs' are also disappearing. We could have another discussion of 'Aeromonas Alley' — that season when the bad bugs are waking up earlier than the koi are and the fish immune system isn't fully ready to fight them off — and the preventative measures you could take, but if you have an otherwise healthy pond and fish, let 'em be and don't treat them if they're not sick.

• How to keep raccoons, cats, herons away?



By design: minimum of 3 feet deep with straight sides and no place to land. Herons won't dive into 3' of water, and raccoons can't swim. Cats can swim, but not generally by choice. Nick's pond had something of natural protection once the trees reached full height — herons could drop in but had no room to take off.

Several members have used a "scarecrow," a rainbird sprinkler with a motion detector; beast or man that got caught in its crosshairs got a blast of cold water. Larry told of a video of a heron that set it off and got himself hit in the chest. He studied it and tried again, and got hit again. After the third time he gave up, but he was so wet he couldn't fly and just walked away hungry.



• Water changes: How often? How much?

Tom disqualified himself from answering, admitting that he wastes a lot of water. With a 6000-gallon pond and 50 large fish, he dumps 50% a week

Nick cleans his big filter monthly, dropping about 1" of water; the secondary filter uses about 1000 gallons a month. He does have to treat fresh water to remove chlorine, and while refilling the pond he props the hose with a spray nozzle so it shoots high to allow chlorine to dissipate in the air. It was noted that research shows you can change 20% every 24 hours without adding dechlor. Ed cautioned to be sure you have an alarm or something to turn the water off before you let it overflow, and Nick reminded us to be sure valves are fully closed and locked so you don't accidentally drain the pond overnight.

• Importance of Maintaining KH

I left this one to Ed Broomfield; thank you!

KH – What It Is and What I Need to Know

KH (carbonate hardness) is important to koi keepers for two reasons. First, it creates a stable environment by buffering the water, which are fancy words for *it prevents pH crashes*. Second, the nitrifying bacteria in our biofilters use carbon in the conversion of ammonia (fish waste) to nitrate. Seven carbon molecules are needed to convert one ammonia molecule to nitrate.

When we test for KH we are measuring the amount of carbon available to buffer water and convert ammonia to nitrate. KH is measured in parts per million (PPM). A reading below 60 ppm means you're extremely vulnerable to a pH crash. It is best to maintain a KH level of at least 100 ppm. Pressurized plastic media filters can have KH levels as high as 180 ppm, and non-pressurized filters can have readings up to 200ppm.

Ever wonder why a "K" is used for carbonate hardness? The "K" stands for *karbonathärte*, which is the German word for carbon. I guess if you discover it, you get to name it.

By this time, my head was throbbing — info overload! But how refreshing to hear koi talk again and see people's interest Looking forward to next month. 🐾



K.O.I. News!

Koi Organisation International

Current Accurate Useful

September 2021

Looking for more knowledge or just fun facts on the hobby of koi keeping?



Go To K.O.I. Blog

<https://koiorganisationinternational.org/blog>



Blog

New blog articles are added each week!

The short articles found here may be descriptions of techniques that have proved effective, an introduction to new fish research, research papers, facts, graphs or just something FUN about fish!

Congratulations to our Newest Certified Koi Keepers

To earn K.O.I. Certified Koi Keeper (CKK) a person must take and pass all 9 courses in the CKK curriculum. Congrats to:

- Sue Kingston - Washington, USA
- ~~Richard Kosolobovskiy~~ - Bangkok, Thailand

Upcoming

PONDSIDE CHAT with Monte McQuade

- > Koi keepers dialog: terms and measurements.
- > Do filtration manufacturers lie?
- > What are the six levels in the lives of koi?
- > Tying it all together as the temperature drops.

October 9th 2021, Noon EST 9am PST!

SCHOLARSHIPS FOR CERTIFIED KOI KEEPER COURSE



K.O.I. and WWKC will again offer scholarships for the Certified Koi Keeper course each year. **20 scholarships are being offered:**

- 10 by Koi Organization International (K.O.I.)
- 10 by the WorldWide Koi Club (WWKC);

Watch for details in the October newsletter.

For in-depth knowledge on koi keeping take a course. These affordable classes have been created for you by pros and top koi hobbyists from around the world.



<https://koiorganisationinternational.org/courses>

TIPOF THE MONTH

DID YOU KNOW ?

Don't skip your weekly water changes as this routine will keep your fish healthy and stronger.

Large ponds – over 5,000 gals (20,000 liters) change out at least 5 to 10%.

Small ponds – under 5,000 gals, change 10% or more.

Use a water meter to measure instead of guessing. There are many types of meters available.



Can the Homeless Problem Be Solved?

Part of the appeal of meeting around members' ponds is that we get to know them on a much different level. Invading their privacy as we do, we see their passions... interests we might never imagine are revealed, shared unapologetically.

Ed is passionate about saving koi from abandonment and trying to find new homes for them. And he has a team of equally dedicated helpers who think nothing of getting down and dirty while pulling fish out of muck-filled ponds. It costs them many a weekend, and then Ed provides 24/7 care and feeding until they can be re-homed.

A recent rescue in Palm Springs brought in 18 koi over 24" long (and one close to 36"); many of them were purchased from Mystic Koi. Ed will have a selection of some of the nicest on display in a 5' tub, hoping some will be sold during the meeting. Seriously consider whether you have room in your pond for one more fish; Ed has bags and O₂ for them, but you could bring a box to support a bag on the drive home.

These are **big** fish being offered at very reasonable prices (cash or check). Will you take one home?

Is there room in your pond for one of us?





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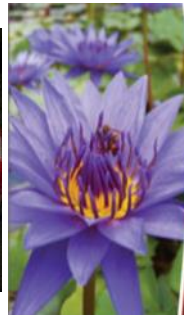


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