

# ATLANTA CLUB



## Koi Chronicles



July 2007

Volume 19, Issue 7

**Dedicated to Sharing the Joy of Keeping Koi**

### By the Pond



David Boyd, President AKC

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It is a beautiful Saturday morning, and I am sitting on the deck waiting for people to show up for today's pond tour. The past three days have been hectic trying to get the yard cleaned up and the pond ready for this segment of the pond tour. I had to rush home on Thursday to mow the yard, then we did a last treatment to our pond with potassium permanganate to remove any organics.

The first part of the pond tour I have heard was a great treat for the people that went on it. I heard there was a bit of excitement at John Turner's pond, as an uninvited guest (a copperhead) showed up. We are enjoying meeting the people as they stop by and talk to us about our pond and yard. I am looking forward to a quiet afternoon of watching the bees visit the lavender and lambs' ears and waiting for more people to visit.

There have already been a number of people from previous years who have come to see our pond again. It has been nice talking to them about the changes that have occurred since they were here last. There have been a number of new faces as well. I had one Asian couple stop by because they had seen the sign and they wanted to know if we were selling koi. It took me a couple minutes to convey to them that it was a tour and not a sale. They had a few more questions that we did our best to answer and hopefully we helped them.

I would like to thank Laura and Steve Castel for hosting our June Social. Laura gets top billing for the great food. Thanks so much!

At the Social, I had the great pleasure to announce that Hal and Susan Brown have established a Scholarship Program in the amount of \$10,000 for members wishing to become Koi Health Advisors. There are certain conditions that will need to be met, but this will hopefully help increase the numbers of KHA's available to the Atlanta area.

The purpose of the scholarship is to encourage more people to become KHA's and to help give Harold Biggio and Joe Hatfield a hand with sick koi. I want to thank both of them at this time for the work they have been doing to help members with injured and ill koi. I know that David and I would have lost more of our kids without their help. With that, I would like to let everyone know that we have been successful in the treatment of the koi kids. We have a couple in the quarantine tank at this time, but their conditions are improving and they will be joining the rest by Tuesday since we will be leaving for Phoenix on Wednesday.

This brings me to the trip to Phoenix. There was some excitement at our June Social and some of our members are getting ready for the upcoming trip to Phoenix for the AKCA Seminar. This will be an exciting trip since a number of our members will be attending. I am looking forward to seeing friends from other clubs and listening to the speakers at the seminar. In addition, Harold Biggio and Joe Hatfield will be receiving

*(Continued on page 2)*



A "Mt. Peggy" sign tops the waterfall at the Fricke's pond.

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## AKC CALENDAR

**June 10**— *Summer Social*, hosts Steve and Laura Castel in Woodstock

**July 7**— Hosts Bill & Peggy Fricke & Marilyn Carrol, **night meeting on Saturday**

**August:12**— Josh & Amanda Bare, Norcross

**September 9**— ???  
Show prep meeting

**October 14**— ???  
Election of Officers

**November 11**: *Winter Social*, Hosts — Michael and Kathy Adkins in Cumming

**To host a meeting contact  
David Marier (770) 995-8984**



(Continued from page 1)  
their certification as Koi Health Advisors. This is a great accomplishment for both them and the Atlanta Koi Club. So when you see them at the July meeting, please congratulate them for the hard work they have done to achieve their certification and the hard work they do for our club.

I look forward to seeing everyone at the July meeting.

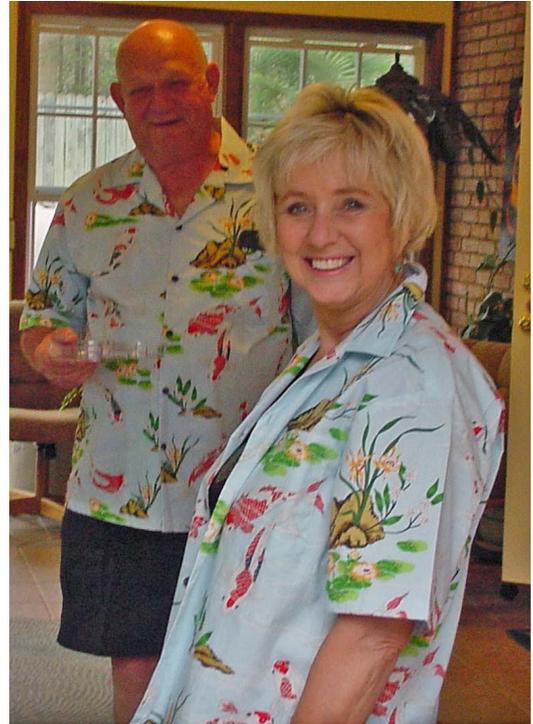


## Upcoming Koi Shows

Here's the skinny on upcoming koi shows. Be sure to mark your calendar.

**September 28-30, 2007 Koi America 2007**  
Carroll County Shirley Arena  
Westminster, MD.

<http://www.carrollcountygagcenter.com/>



Susan & Hal Brown hosted the Pond Tour Party. Thanks!

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# Pond Tour 2007

Pond Tour – 2007 is just a memory.

We want to extend our gratitude to Atlanta Water Gardens and Pikes for helping to make this tour happen.

A special thank you to all the club members who opened their ponds for this year's event. There were officially 15 ponds on the tour this year. If you missed the opportunity to attend, you will have to wait until 2009, since the club decided to hold this event every other year. Anyone interested in acting as Chairperson for this event in 2009 should contact David Boyd.

### Tour Hosts

A special thanks to Hal and Susan Brown for hosting the VIP Social. Everyone that attended seemed to have a great time enjoying their fantastic pond and hospitality. The evening's success could not have happened with the able assistance of Hal Brown Jr. and Bill Moody.

Harvey Siskin  
John Turner & Robert Clinard  
Bill & Lynn Dowden  
Walter & Cecilia Harrison  
Jan & Wally Speed  
Billy & Brenda Etheridge  
Ron & Robin Scott  
Bill & Peggy Fricke; Marilyn Carroll  
David Pugh & David Boyd  
Gary :& Becky Lee  
Tim & Valerie Kelley  
Michael & Toni Anderson  
Stephen & Laura Castel  
Dave & Gloria Jones  
Carl & Vicki Knill

One final bit of housekeeping to assist the next chairperson – if any of the tour participants (hosts or guests) have any suggestions for improving the tour or if there was something we actually got right send your comments to [doubledavid@aol.com](mailto:doubledavid@aol.com). They can then be summarized and passed on with the other files to the next chairperson.

If you did not receive your hosting gift, please contact David Pugh to arrange delivery.

Respectfully,  
David Pugh and Kathy Adkins  
Pond Tour – 2007

Photo— Vicki Knill



←  
The Brown's fish make a beautiful show.

→  
There was plenty of time to visit near the Sangrial

Photos: Joe Hatfield



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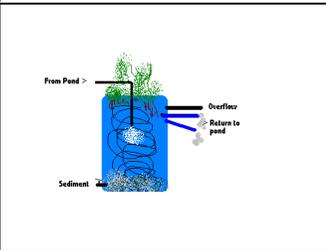
In the last newsletter I described the initial set up of our 2800 gallon holding pool at our new house in Gainesville. The system was cycling beautifully and the time came to fetch our koi from the old house. To play it safe, Nancy and I decided to bring over just half the collection. I also removed an established barrel pre-filter from the old pond to add to the filtering capacity of our new system.

A 1700 gph pump sits inside a small gravel-filled container in the pool and sends water into the center of the blue barrel. This water works its way through tightly wound plastic fence material and is ejected back into the pool via 2 blue hoses. The top of the barrel is filled with plants which grow happily in the rich water. Note: each return hose has a mesh cover inside the barrel to keep smaller debris from returning to the pond. Since this material could potentially get clogged, I've added a third (black) hose as an emergency overflow pipe.



This pump & barrel system has been in operation for over a year at our old house, and has never overflowed, nor needed cleaning. Aside from having to empty the water to facilitate travel to our new house I did my best not to disturb anything else so as to preserve all the "good" bacteria.

Essentially there are 2 stages of pre-filtering taking place: first in the pool itself, where the gravel-covered pump eliminates larger debris; next in the blue tub where sediment is given a chance to settle. At the same time there is plenty of bio filtration taking place at the pump, via the plants, and via the organisms inhabiting the fence-mesh in the barrel.



Later I'll connect the blue hoses to a box-filter for further processing, but for now the combination of the trickle-tower filter + 300 gallon plant filter + the barrel pre-filter, is doing an excellent job of keeping the system clean.

By now the pool was circled and covered with bamboo - both for esthetic reasons and more practically to shield it from the sun. Heavy-gauge steel wires run between the posts to support the bamboo canopy. The combination of vigorous plantings in the filters and the bamboo cover have made it unnecessary to run UV light(s).

We've also found it unnecessary to put a net over the pool since we've observed that the concave shape of the pool has discouraged jumpers, and the low-hanging cover has provided adequate camouflage against over-flying predators (so far!).

After catching the fish and distributing them among 3 large Tupperware containers we drove carefully 1-1/2 hours to the new house and transferred them to the pool. It was sad to note that



(Continued on page 6)

## Basic Water Chemistry

Michael Anderson

**pH** is a chemical term for the potential of hydrogen. Yeah, I know. Learning that piece of trivia does not help a dang thing. In practical terms, pH is the range of values (0 to 15) that means the acidity or alkalinity of a solution. The value seven is neutral. Values below seven are stronger acids as then number decreases. An acid with pH of 2 is much stronger than an acid with pH of 5. Conversely, alkalinity gets stronger as the number increases from 7 towards 15.

Koi do best at stable pH of 7.2 to 7.5. So, they like a slightly alkaloid water. But, note I mentioned stable. Koi can certainly survive in pHs from slightly below 7 to 8 or more. The key is that pH is not bouncing. Some of the key things that can cause pH to change rapidly are the addition of chemicals (or even fresh water) and the photosynthesis action of plants. Plants move oxygen or carbon dioxide in and out depending on if it is day or night. When plants release carbon dioxide, that can cause some carbonic acid to form and cause the pH to decrease. The plants can be ones added by the owner or naturally occurring algae. **KH** comes from the German term for chalk water. Think of this as the measurement of how much lime/calcium is dissolved in the water. It is the measurement of the carbonates and/or bicarbonates in the solution. KH levels can be expressed in parts per million (PPM) or in German degrees (some drop test such as Tetra from Germany uses the dH scale). Low KH values would be 0 to 75. Medium values would be 75 to 200. High levels would be 200+. Koi tend to do best in relatively low-medium KH water with value in the 75-100 range.

What is the connection between pH and KH? When you have a pond or tank with fish and filter, the biological processes in the fish and filter bacteria give off acids as by product. Those acids tend to drive the pH south unless something intervenes. If the pH gets down to the 6 level, both the fish and the filter bacteria are stressed. If the slide into acidity goes unchecked, the bacteria give up, the ammonia and nitrite levels peak...and stressed fish start to die off. How we prevent such a "pH crash"? We can and should take a couple of parallel approaches:

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We hope everyone enjoyed the pond tour and the great weather we had for our two weekends. This article will be more of a vent of frustration rather than what you have seen in the past from your Koisan's. So here goes.

The names have been change to protect the innocent. Just the facts please, just the facts.

Over the past few weeks both KHAs have visited almost a dozen ponds. Some club members some not. Folks are experiencing some problems out there. Mostly we heard "Help us, our fish are dying and I don't know what to do."

Upon evaluation a lot of similarity has existed in quite a few places. When you get down to the bottom line the problems have all stemmed from not performing a proper quarantine. Hey, didn't any one read the article written back in the spring on quarantine? Guess not. Shame, Shame, Shame on you. So here is a short reminder. If you do not quarantine your new fish, you run the explicit risk of **KILLING ALL YOU FISH**.

Here is our vent. When the KHAs come to your pond they try to access problems and ask a lot of silly questions. When asked about what has been going on with ponds and fish we heard some good excuses. "I got them from a reputable source". "I don't have a quarantine tank." "My fish are very strong and have never been sick." "I have never had problems before." Give me a break. *(Better yet, give your KOI a break — Editor)*

People, the pathogens (bugs) that came on those new fish you got from a "reputable source" can be ones your existing fish have never been exposed to and vice versa. After you dump the new fish into your pond, in a few short days all hell breaks loose. Those bugs get in the new pond water and find fresh meat. **They go nuts**. The fish start to flash, some sit on the bottom, others isolate under the water falls, a whole host of things that tell you they are in trouble. As part of the proper quarantine you should have slowly introduced those new pathogens via an addition of your own ponds water and maybe one of the existing pond fish to check for the problems slowly. That way only one fish will be exposed and not your entire pond.

Your KHAs show up, **at their own expense**, dedicate a lot of personnel time and energy to your pond, and make *educated recommendations* for a treatment to aid your pond and fish. After a lengthy evaluation, instructions to perform a potassium permanganate (PP) treatment over the next 4-5 days are left for the pond owner. We even leave the PP to do the job. Later, the pond owner talks to several of his buddies and decides to add peroxide at the end of each treatment so the water will be pretty and clear. **WRONG!** Peroxide counteracts the PP treatment and stays in the water for at least 3 days. So, all the rest of the PP treatments the pond owner is performing are not doing a thing to help his fish or overall pond water quality. The pond owner doesn't know why his fish are still flashing and dying off. He didn't follow the recommendation, his fish still have flukes and trich.

Another pond owner decides that he would rather go with a salt treatment instead of a recommended PP treatment. The pond owner did not tell the KHA that he was not going to perform the recommended treatment. Not a problem. It's his pond and his fish. However, the pond owner doesn't understand that salt will not kill the bugs his fish have that the KHA found during a scrape and scope. The salt at best will take 14 to 21 days to do its job. In the mean time the fish continue to have severe problems. Salt is great, but you have to know what it will work on. Also, you should not dump 100 lbs of salt into your pond and not know the exact number of gallons in the pond. The improper addition of salt will **KILL** fish. If you don't know your pond's volume or perform salinity testing, don't add salt.

Another pond owner has learned how to treat ulcers...but, the ulcers don't seem to heal. Upon investigation we find out the pond owner makes a very common mistake. After the initial wound cleaning and treatment, the pond owner decides to do the cleaning and treatment every day for a week. More is better, right? **NOT!** The ulcer never has a chance to heal. *The healing skin is cleaned away with every application of medication.* These good intentions that the pond owner has as he continues to add peroxide on the wound every day has a very negative effect. The wound never has a chance to heal and the fish is more likely to get additional infection both externally and internally. When we return to check the critter's progress we can't figure out why we still have a problem. Owner does not tell the KHA of his new found skills until questioned days later.

When the KHAs show up to evaluate the pond, there is a method to the massive amounts of questions asked, tests taken, and observation of the fishes that are done. When we ask what has been put into the pond recently, and the pond owner says "Nothing", yet we see three bottles of Melafix, three bottles of Pimafix, and six empty bottles of the

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(Continued from page 5)

slew juice concocted by that reputable source lying near by ...we wonder what is really going on. Pond owners have to be honest and forthright with the KHAs and tell them what they have done in order for the KHAs to get a complete understanding of the overall health situation. Not knowing the addition of a simple thing can mean the difference between fish living and dying. It is the pond owner's responsibility. KHAs are not good at mind reading.

Pond owners have the right to do as they see fit with their pond and fish. However, after the KHA has made an educated assessment and gives a recommendation to that pond owner and the pond owner chooses not to follow recommendations, the KHAs have no obligation to continue to visit and provide advice, especially if it is not being utilized. Time and efforts can be spent where needed elsewhere.

KHAs performed this service because they love the hobby and want to help people. They utilize their personal time, energy, gasoline, wear and tear on their vehicles, and personal equipment to help fellow Koi Kichi People.

Help Us Help You.



Koisan Joe

(Continued from page 4)

one of the smaller kohakus had beaten himself up during the trip and regrettable succumbed a few hours later. The lesson here is that it pays to bag each fish individually before a long trip!



A few hours later the koi settled into their new environment and we retired for the night with hopeful optimism that all would be well the next morning ...

at all  
sant pursuit

Actually, all was more than well. In fact we had a regular Roman orgy on our hands! Our initial amusement the splashing and cajoling in the pool was quickly replaced with apprehension as we watched the incessant pursuit by the aggressive males of the fleeing females. Our apprehension turned to horror as the previously crystal clear water turned to swirling turbidity. Ay yay yay, what a mess! Quickly the hose was put on full blast as we implemented a most important rule of koi-keeping-dynamics: the solution to pollution is dilution. Much dilution was certainly required. By the way, this didn't deter the fish. They continued their spawning endeavors with unwavering energy.

After 2 days of this nonsense, we brought over the remainder of our fish so that they could join the raucous party in progress. We figured we might as well give all the fish a chance to indulge their hormonal urges before we took on the task of a thorough cleaning ... and boy did they! Enthusiasm was re-ignited and resulted in another cauldron of organic muck. It took 4 days for the koi to finally settle down. I fished out the egg-laden floating plants and tossed some in the 300 gallon filter, a few sprigs into an aquarium, and I took several bunches over to our old house and threw them in the vacant ponds.



The result? We've got baby koi everywhere!

2-week old fry, not quite an inch long, swimming in the plant filter.

There are hundreds of fry in the filter, thousands in our old ponds, and at least 50 in the aquarium. One interesting observa-

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tion: the fry that I'm feeding and caring for in the aquarium are the size of tiny eye-lashes. Those living in the ponds & filters, and having to fend for themselves in their Darwinian struggle for survival, are much larger!

At the time of this writing we are into week 3 of the koi migration. All appear healthy and have readily adapted to their new surroundings. The water quality is excellent and remains stable.

Any remaining concerns we have center on things that might damage the vinyl liner of the pool: predators with sharp claws such as racoons, or falling tree limbs.

The system will probably require added filtration over time to cope with the growing load during summer, but for the time being we are quite happy with the results of this temporary boarding solution.

"Spike" - named for his pointy dorsal fin - greedily seeks more food!



(Continued from page 4)

- Remove/dilute the acids by doing more water changes (provided the new water isn't acidic)
- Reduce the creation of acids by lowering the stocking levels and/or lowering the feeding level
- Increase the KH of the water.

We can increase the KH (and therefore pH) with two different approaches:

Short term: add baking soda very slowly to bring the KH up to at least 100PPM. This is done slowly to reduce the stress of a rapid pH change. Measure both KH and pH during this process. Also watch the koi for signs of stress.

Long term: use crushed oyster shells (chicken scratch), powdered limestone, crushed marble or other chunks of calcium in the water column (perhaps in the filters or streams where the koi can't get to it) to slowly dissolve and release the carbonates that will offset the acids.



**GH** is the general hardness of the solution. This is the measurement of the minerals (i.e., magnesium, iron) dissolved in the solution. GH levels can be expressed in parts per million (PPM). Low GH values would be 0 to 75 and is what folks mean by "soft water". Medium values would be 75 to 200. High levels would be 200+ and are what folks mean by "hard water". Koi tend to do best in low-medium GH water with a value in the 75-100 range. High GH levels can cause some koi to develop shimmies...or black spots on top of their scales.

You can in theory have supply water that is any combination of low to high KH and low to high GH. The KH and GH values can be totally independent. Most of public water in the north Georgia area seems to be relatively low KH and low GH. Depending on the stocking levels, feeding levels, water changes, and source water....you may want to increase the KH (short term: baking soda,

Don't EVEN ask what that joke was...Not Even.

(Continued on page 8)

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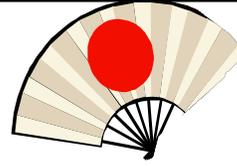
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# Treasurer's Report

Ron Scott



## Atlanta Koi Club Regular Monthly Meeting

### June 10<sup>th</sup> Meeting Minutes

Executive members present were: David Boyd, David Marier, Ron Scott and Peggy Fricke.

Club President David Boyd called the meeting to order and announced that the Koi Auction was a big success! Ron Scott is still working on the final figures. Everyone agreed that the auction was the best yet. Everyone in the club extends a BIG thanks to Jay Drew, Koi Chairperson and all the volunteers that helped make it so successful.

Thirty new hard shell tanks have been ordered and should arrive in plenty of time for the Koi show in September. YEA!!

Ron Scott, Treasurer reported that the club has approximately \$19,000 in savings and approximately \$17,000 in checking. These balances do not reflect the disbursements for the auction or the tank purchases.

Susan Brown, Membership Chairperson welcomed new member Ron Novak.

David announced that the leftover Romit medicated fish food would be donated to Harold Biggio and Joe Hatfield our resident Koi Health Advisors for use when they make visits to club members.

The Executive committee motioned and voted to purchase additional Friendship awards for upcoming events.

David then made a very special announcement!

Hal and Susan Brown have donated \$10,000 to a Koi Health Advisor Scholarship Program. The program will pay up to \$2,000 per club member upon completion and certification of their KHA training. A board of directors will be established and the details will be worked out and be reported to the club at a future meeting.

THANK YOU HAL AND SUSAN!!!!

The Meeting concluded and the club enjoyed great food and drink at our summer social at the home and beautiful pond of Stephen and Laura Castel.

Peggy Fricke

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Treasurer's Report - Checking			
by Ron Scott		For: <b>May</b>	
<b>Beginning balance:</b>		<b>\$4,432.48</b>	
<b>Income Categories:</b>			
2100	Club Store		\$1,703.00
2300	Koi Show		\$100.00
2400	Koi Auction		\$12,700.00
2600	Pond Tour		\$350.00
2700	Membership		\$55.00
	Member Badges	\$5.00	
	Membership Dues	\$30.00	
	Koi USA Subscription	\$20.00	
		<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$14,908.00</b>
<b>Expense Categories:</b>			
100	AKCA Dues		\$100.00
500	Koi Show		\$427.67
600	Koi Auction		\$583.37
900	Pond Tour		\$795.61
1300	Membership		\$20.00
	KoiUSA Subscription	\$20.00	
		<b>Total Ex-penses</b>	<b>\$1,926.65</b>
<b>NET</b>			<b>\$12,981.35</b>
	Checkbook Ending Balance		<b>\$17,413.83</b>
	Uncleared Transactions		<b>\$20.00</b>
	Bank Statement		<b>\$17,433.83</b>

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long term: oyster shells or powdered limestone) or GH (koi clay, Epsom salts). Just add the amendments slowly, measure the water parameters often, and watch the koi like a hawk!



# Membership

Susan Brown

I am delighted to welcome Clay and Julie Melancon, Mike Roach and Adam Therrell and Ron Nowak. Don't forget to look me up at a meeting to get your decals of our club logo.

The July social was great. Thanks go to Laura and Steve Castel for being such gracious hosts. We had 37 members and 4 guests attend. We now have 134 members and 9 sponsors in our club.

I also want to thank and congratulate Harold Biggio and Joe Hatfield who have finished (or are extremely close to finishing) the Koi Health Advisor's (KHA) course for all the help and advice they have given us and other members of the AKC. We are so lucky to have them in our club. Hal and I feel very strongly about this program and hope other members might consider becoming Koi Health Advisors. What a wonderful benefit to have members in our club sharing their time and knowledge with the rest of the membership.

Hope to see you at the next meeting.

## MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION ATLANTA KOI CLUB

"Dedicated to Sharing the Joy of Keeping Koi"

[www.AtlantaKoiClub.org](http://www.AtlantaKoiClub.org)



Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Check No.: \_\_\_\_\_ Check Amount: \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Membership: **Household:** \$50 for 1 Yr. \_\_\_\_\_; \$90 for 2 Yrs. \_\_\_\_\_  
**(Check One)** **Individual:** \$30 for 1 Yr. \_\_\_\_\_; \$54 for 2 Yrs. \_\_\_\_\_  
**Sponsor:** \$150 for 1 Yr. \_\_\_\_\_

Other: KOI USA Magazine Subscription: \$20 for 1 Yr. \_\_\_\_\_  
 \*Name Badges: \$5 each. \_\_\_\_\_

Names: \_\_\_\_\_ & \_\_\_\_\_  
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Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Best Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Best Email: \_\_\_\_\_

AKC is a volunteer organization. We need as much help and support as you can provide, no matter how insignificant. In which of the following areas can you help?

Host Meeting \_\_\_\_, Pond Tour \_\_\_\_, Auction \_\_\_\_, Koi Show \_\_\_\_, Hold Office \_\_\_\_, Flower Show \_\_\_\_

To save money, we provide our newsletter in color via email several days earlier than mailed copies.

Would you like to receive your newsletter via email? Yes or No.

We try to publish a membership roster annually. It is given only to club members and AKCA, the Associated Koi Clubs of America. May we publish your address, phone number and email? Yes or No.

Make checks payable to **Atlanta Koi Club** and submit with application to:  
Susan G. Brown, 191 Kings Row, Marietta, GA 30067.

\* Please consider buying **Name Badges**. For only \$5, you will get to know and be known by everyone and also receive a free raffle ticket every time you wear your badge to a Club Meeting.

## **July Meeting — Saturday Evening, July 7, 2007**

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Executives meet at 6 P.M. and Members meet at 7 P.M.

In order to protect our members' privacy, we do not post the directions to the meetings on the web-site.

Directions to the meetings will be found in the e-mail announcement.

Be sure to bring your lawn chairs.



410 Carybell Lane  
Alpharetta GA 30004

**DEDICATED TO SHARING THE JOY OF KEEPING KOI.**