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## October 2022

### By the Pond

Afternoon Members,

We have some very important business to attend to at this month's meeting! Elections will be held at our meeting this Sunday and I would like to announce the Nomination Committee results, which are as follows:

**President: Diane Giangrande**

**Secretary: Robb Phillips**

**Equipment Manager: Neal Phelps**

Again, if you are able, please make it a point to attend as a quorum is needed for the voting process. We will also be taking nominations from the floor for anyone that is interested in running for any of the above positions.

Jim Dricker & Elaine Zitomer will be hosting our meeting this month. Details for the meeting are as follows:

**When: Sunday, October 23rd @ 3 PM - Board meeting @ 2 PM**

See you all soon!

Marlon Tiller

Vice President

For those of you who haven't heard, Carl Forss died in a car accident September 12th.

This is a devastating loss for the club and the koi community. Carl was always willing to help the club in any way he could. From sponsoring the show, handling the air at the auction, hauling our trailers, to hosting meetings and events - he was there when needed. Carl's knowledge on koi and pond building was second to none and he had an amazing eye for quality fish. There was no problem, big or small, that he couldn't fix. His sense of humor and generosity will be deeply missed.

## How Many Koi?

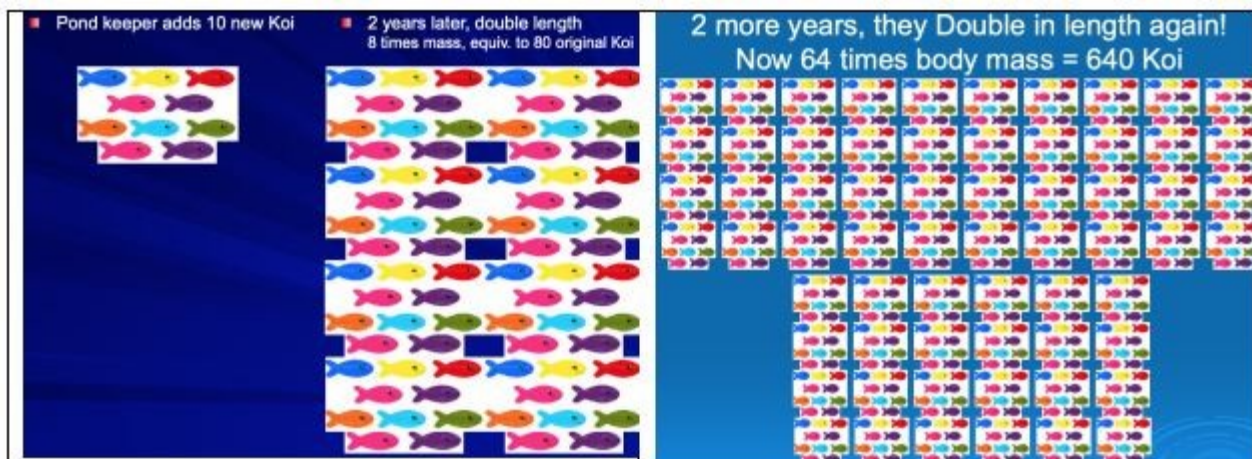
*Sue Kingston, Certified Koi Keeper  
Washington Koi & Water Garden Society*

If you're new to koi keeping, it's easy to get excited about buying your first koi. Experienced koi keepers know how many fish their pond can handle based on their goals, pond size and filtration set-up. But if you are just starting out in the koi hobby, you need to know what an appropriate "fish load" for your size pond. And unless you are planning to show your fish in competitions, you can use a hobbyist rule of 250 US gallons per koi. This approach is derived from the S.A.F.E pond limits which cover Safe gallons of water for every linear inch of fish, plus Aeration capability, Flow rate and Emergency capacity for life support. \*)

The first step is you need to know how many gallons of water your pond holds. Let's say your pond holds 1,800 gallons. If you apply the rule of 250 US gallons per koi, it equates 7.2 fish.

That doesn't sound like a lot of fish and it's tempting to buy more than seven. But koi grow, and they can grow fast. To put it in perspective, if you buy 10 little 5" koi, two years later when they hit 10", it's like you put 80 of the original 5" koi in the pond. Yes, you read that right. Those original ten koi now use eighty times the oxygen and put out eight times the ammonia they did just two years ago.

But it gets worse. If those original ten fish make it to 20" in length . . . It's like you originally stocked with 640 fish! You'll find yourself fighting to keep the water quality up and the parasite load down. The pictures below show the (frightening) impact:



Source: Koi Organisation International

Koi can easily grow to 25" and 250 US gallons per koi allows for the future growth shown above. Some fish may not reach that length, and some may grow bigger, so it provides a safe limit for the average koi keeper. Koi keepers who are raising koi for competitions will allocate more



water, up to 500 or even 1,000 gallons per fish, and heavily increase their filtration equipment to provide better grow-out conditions for their prize koi.

So instead of overstocking at the beginning, here's a better way to build your collection:

- Start with the "250 US gallons per fish" rule
- Establish your maximum number of koi
- Buy less than the maximum to start
- Consider buying fewer koi initially, for example 9-10" rather than 5-6" ones
- Think ahead to what variety of koi (colors and patterns) you like
  - Do you want a mix of varieties?
  - Or do you love just one or two types?
  - How do they look together?
- As you gain experience, add additional fish over the next year or so to reach your maximum

**Size:** Large koi are truly "living jewels." You need less fish to make an impact. Rather than waiting two to three years to grow out fish, consider purchasing fewer fish in the 9-10" range to start. A year later they will be 15-16" fish and your pond will hum with their activities.

**Varieties:** Before I learned about the limits of my pond, I added varieties of koi that were less colorful. Over time I've learned that "bright, white and sparkling" show up best against my black liner. Solid or patterned koi – yellow Kigoi and Hariwakes and red, white and black Sankes - provide wonderful swirls of color and light as they roam the pond. Several are Gin Rins with sparkling scales. I love Ochiba Shigure and Chagoi koi. They are beautiful and super friendly, but their grey or brown coloration just doesn't show well against the black liner of my pond. And beware of "free fish." One "free with purchase fish" an online dealer sent was an ugly (to me) blunt-nosed fluorescent orange koi. Fortunately, my neighbor loved him. So now he lives next door.

Fewer fish are easier to care and to account for. When my pond held 13, I was always triple counting to see who was missing. With nine, it's easy to confirm all is well. The fish are much calmer. There's less competition for food and space, they are less stressed, and the smaller ones are now growing faster.

Now you notice I said I have nine. That's two more than I should have in my 1,800-gallon pond. I initially overstocked and had thirteen but was able to rehome four of them. It's breaking my heart that I need to rehome two more. And that's the best reason not to overstock in the first place.

*\*For more information, see "Koi Overcrowding" by Karen Pattist at <https://koioorganisationinternational.org/koi-articles/overcrowding-koi>.*



For September's meeting, Randy's Perennials and Water Gardens was our host, while our very own Melanie Onushko was our speaker! Her topic was "Do It Yourself Ponds and Quarantine Tanks"!



### For Sale by/for Members

Cleaning out our shed..... Free to members: Two enclosures for baby fish and one collapsible fish hiding cave. Contact Bob Chaffer if interested at [rchaffer@comcast.net](mailto:rchaffer@comcast.net) I will bring these to the October meeting.





## A few shots of our Koi show of October 8,9, 2022

Here are some photos of Sunday's and Monday's auction, layout, and teardown



## Please remember our Sponsors:

Randy's Perennials, Kol Koi Pondscapes,  
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