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*The Newsletter of the
Pikes Peak Koi and Water Garden Society
Colorado Springs, Colorado*
A Peak at Ponds

Sept 2026

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*Please come join us for our **SECOND TO LAST**
PPKWGS Club Meeting of 2026.*

*Preparing Your Pond for Winter
AND Board Member Elections*



Come and Learn the Tricks to Prepare Your Pond and Koi for Winter

Thursday, Sept 10th, 2026 7:00 PM - 9:00 PM

The church is located at 1080 E La Salle St, Colorado Springs, CO 80907.

President's Ponderings

Things I Never Expected to Say Before I Owned a Pond

Every once in a while, I stop and think about how strange the pond hobby must look to someone who doesn't have a pond.

Before I became a pond owner, I never imagined I'd spend so much time talking about water temperature, algae, pumps, filters, and fish poop. Yet somehow, those things have become perfectly normal parts of my life. I certainly never expected to become genuinely interested in the chemistry of water.



I never expected to say things like:

"Don't feed the fish yet. Check the water temperature first."

"The KH levels are dropping, and the pH is going to crash!"

"I need to get some more beneficial bacteria."

"No, honey, I only paid \$50 for this fish."

Or, when a beautiful heron lands beside the pond:

"That's a beautiful bird... PLEASE GO SOMEWHERE ELSE!"

And then there is the most dangerous sentence a pond owner can utter:

"I think we should make the pond just a little bigger."



Somewhere along the way, what started as a simple water feature became a hobby. We learn our fish's personalities, worry about water quality, get excited about a new Koi or plants, and somehow don't mind spending Saturday morning cleaning a filter.

I think what really happens is that **the pond becomes part of us.**

It's the place where we sit quietly at the end of the day, watch the Koi come rushing over at feeding time, listen to the waterfall, and enjoy a little piece of nature in our own backyard.

And one of the best parts is discovering that we're not alone. Through PPKWGS, we've found a group of people who understand why we can get excited about a fish, worry about a pump, or spend an entire conversation discussing water quality or pond plants.

We simply built a pond, and somewhere along the way, we started speaking a whole new language.

And honestly, I'm pretty happy about that.

Until next time—keep your feet dry, your Koi happy, and your pond just the right size!

Bob

An Evening to Remember

On August 22nd, PPKWGS members gathered for a wonderful Evening Soiree at the beautiful home and Koi pond of **Ray Armstrong**. With approximately 30 members in attendance, it was a wonderful opportunity to relax, enjoy one another's company, and share our appreciation for the hobby we all love.

Ray's amazing home and pond provided the perfect setting for the evening. His beautiful Koi, landscaping, and water features gave everyone plenty to admire and plenty to talk about. We are incredibly grateful to Ray and Nikko for opening their home and sharing their special piece of paradise with our club.

A very special thank-you also goes to **Cathy Bulf**, whose time and effort helped make the evening such an elegant and memorable occasion. From the cake, cheese trays, and finger food to the roses, Cathy's thoughtful work helped create an evening that felt truly special.

Most of all, it was wonderful simply being together. Good friends, beautiful ponds, plenty of conversation, and a memorable evening—what more could a pond club ask for?

Thank you, Ray and Cathy, for making our Evening Soiree a night to remember!

Board Member Elections

At our September meeting, we will be electing board members for 2027.

Bob Oatman, Allen Burbidge, Nicholas Simco, and Robbin Robins have one more year left on their 2-year commitment.

[Bill Griesinger and Ellen Simco](#) were nominated at the last club meeting. Cathy Bulf, Brenda Walth, and Gigi Greer have since then accepted nominations.

We only have openings for 4 board members this year, so we will need to have an election. But, if you know of someone you think would be great at leading our club next year, nominate them. Or, you can certainly nominate yourself.

Once the board has been elected, the board will decide who will fill which officer positions for 2027.

We are still looking for a Newsletter Editor for 2027!

Surprisingly, we here at A Peak at Ponds have not had the overwhelming barrage of volunteers to take over as editor! What???? The pay is excellent, the benefits are amazing! You are paid in gratitude and appreciation from the several hundred members who read the newsletter each month and, by doing so, are able to learn from and connect with the club. The benefits are that you get an inside scoop on the happenings of the club, you get to share your own interests via the editor's letter and what you choose to focus on each month, and you get to be intimately involved in the behind-the-scenes operations for PPKWGS. It's really a lot of fun and doesn't take up much time.

If you are interested in sharing your creative voice and want to learn more about the position, contact Bob at President@ppwgs.org

Don't Let Fall Sneak Up on Your Pond!

A Little September Preparation Can Save a Lot of Springtime Headaches

It seems like summer just got here, and already the days are getting shorter. The evenings have a little more chill in the air, the plants are slowing down, and those first few leaves are beginning to find their way toward the pond.

Before we know it, we'll be standing outside on a cold spring morning wondering, **"Why didn't I take care of that last fall?"**

September is a great time to give your pond a little attention before winter arrives. Nothing too dramatic—just a few simple things that can make the next couple of months easier and help your Koi make it through winter in good shape.

Feed Less as the Water Cools

As water temperatures drop, your Koi's metabolism slows down, so gradually reduce their food. Pay attention to water temperature rather than the calendar, and eventually stop feeding when the water becomes cold enough.

And remember, Koi don't need to be fed just because they're begging! If you've kept Koi for any length of time, you know they can make a very convincing argument for another handful of food.

Give Your Pond a Fall Checkup

September is an excellent time to test your water. Check ammonia, KH, nitrite, pH, and other important water parameters. A pond can look perfectly clear and still have a water-quality problem brewing beneath the surface.

While you're at it, inspect your pumps, filters, aeration systems, UV units, and other equipment. There is an old pond-keeping rule that seems to hold true every year:

Equipment always fails at the least convenient possible time.

It's much easier to fix a pump on a beautiful September afternoon than while standing beside a frozen pond in January.



The Leaves Are Coming!

If you have trees anywhere near your pond, you already know what happens next. One leaf becomes ten, ten become a hundred, and suddenly you're wondering where they all came from—and why so many came from your neighbor's yard!

Start removing leaves and debris before they sink and begin decomposing. If you use a pond net, now is a good time to inspect it and get it ready for the big leaf drop.

Give your pond plants some attention, too. Trim dead or dying foliage and remove excessive plant material. A little cleanup now means less organic material to deal with later.

(Continued next page)

Take a Good Look at Your Koi

September is also a good time to really look at your fish. Are they swimming normally? Are they eating? Do you see sores, damaged fins, unusual spots, or fish isolating themselves?

If something doesn't look right, investigate it now while the water is still relatively warm and the fish are active. Healthy Koi going into winter have a much better chance of coming through it ready to greet you in the spring.

And Don't Forget to Enjoy It!

With all this talk about maintenance, it's easy to forget the most important part of owning a pond.

Enjoying it!

September can be one of the nicest months to sit beside your pond. Grab a chair, watch your Koi, listen to the waterfall, and enjoy those last wonderful days of summer. After all, we don't spend all this time, money, and effort maintaining our ponds just so we can test water and clean filters. We do it because there is something pretty special about sitting beside a pond filled with healthy Koi and listening to the sound of moving water.

Fall preparation doesn't have to be a major project. A little attention each week can keep small problems from becoming big ones.

From all of us at PPKWGS—happy pond keeping, and enjoy the changing season!

Bob Oatman

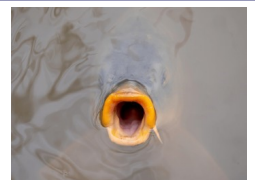
The Humane Society Workshop is September 26th, 2026 from 9 AM until about Noon

As a community service project, the Pikes Peak Water Garden Society has volunteered to help the Pikes Peak Humane Society maintain their pond. This pond and the surrounding gardens were installed so the Humane Society and the El Paso County Division of Animal Law Enforcement have a secure place to walk their dogs.



Please come and join us for these workshops. It really is a fun time to be together, to talk about our ponds, and do some community service for others in need. Bring some scissors, garden gloves, buckets, and a garden cart or wheelbarrow if you can. We would love to have you there! Please sign up for these workshops from each workshop...page on our website calendar (You must log in to sign up).

Did You Know...koi have teeth? They are called pharyngeal teeth and are located in their throats. They are used to grind down food, not for biting or attacking. Even if they lock onto your finger, due to how far back they are and the fact that they are more like plates than sharp canines, you won't be "bit." These teeth continue to grow, fall out and regrow throughout their life, so you may actually find little white pieces of old teeth at the bottom of the pond. Don't worry, new ones will grow back!



Pond Tour 2026

PPKWGS extends a hearty, heart felt thank you to all the member who participated in this year's Annual Pond Tour. It was a huge success, with over 200 attendees! It's such a joy to be able to host this event for 37 years running - we couldn't do it without you!

Here's a recap of all the gorgeous ponds that were on the tour this year.



Malissa Jackson &
Fred Ramirez



Christina Ansel



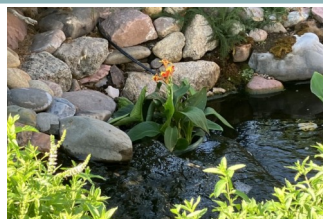
Erwin & Simha Freund

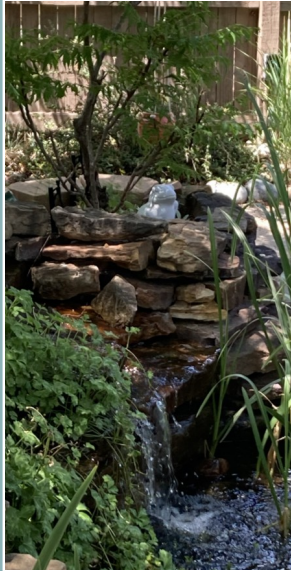


Sherry Bretton

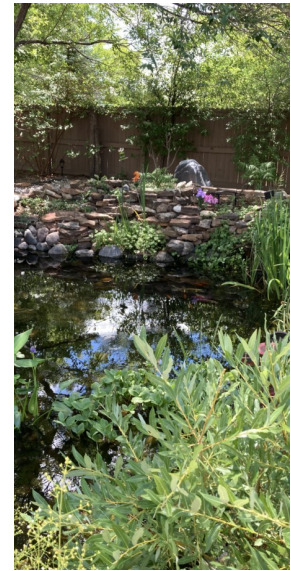


Henry Gonzales & Lucy Valdez





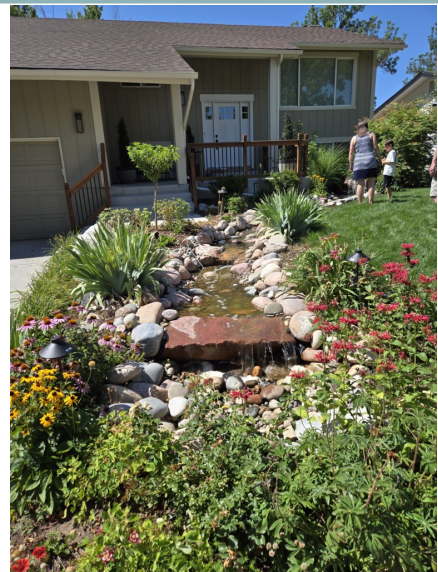
Peter & Heidi Meinig



Todd & Leah Saucier



Richard &
Kristy Hooper



PPKWGS Important Dates for 2026

Board Meetings are held on the Thursday after club meetings.
You are welcome to join us. Ask any board member for more information.

Special Dates are highlighted and linked to the website

[10 Sept - 7th Club Meeting](#)

[26 Sept Humane Society Fall Workshop](#)

[08 Oct - 8th & Final Club Meeting - Annual BBQ \(6:30PM start time\)](#)

Board Meetings are held virtually on Thursdays, one week after the regular monthly meeting. Everyone is welcome at the board meetings. Ask a board member for more information.

Print out this page and post it somewhere so you can keep track of our events!

(Paid members will receive a personal, pre-printed copy of this in the mail)

How is everyone liking the Door Prizes at the club meetings? I know I've won some great items over the years; hopefully you all have too! In particular, I really like the set of pale blue koi statues that I won last year. Thanks to Allen and Linda for finding those little treasures. It's kind of a weird concept to have fish inside the house, living on the two shelves beneath my enormous Philodendron, but sometimes life is kind of weird, and things from very different backgrounds find common ground and beautiful friendships are born. I like to think my terrestrial plant and watery fish are great friends, and they support one another during such frightening and noisy experiences such as the vacuum cleaner or large family get-togethers.

Highlighted Plant of the Month



Water Canna—Yellow

Canna Glauca 'Ra'

Tropical Marginal

Aquatic canna is a tropical marginal variety that provides summer long color with its bold yellow flowers atop tall, narrow foliage. Long blooming season.

Hardy to Zone 8. Plant 0-6" depth, Full Sun, 2-3' height.

Treat as an annual, or bring it inside for the winter.

Club News



Discover the Convenience of Club-Owned Oase PondoVac 5's

As proud owners of two of these powerful pond vacuums, we're excited to offer them exclusively to our paid club members. If you're planning to clean out your pond and don't have your own pond vac, worry not! Borrow ours and simplify your pond maintenance. These professional-grade vacuums make the task a breeze.

Do you need a pond vac to help clean out your pond before winter? We have an Oase PondoVac 5 you can borrow for free.

To reserve it, reach out to Allen Burbidge at (719) 574-5176.

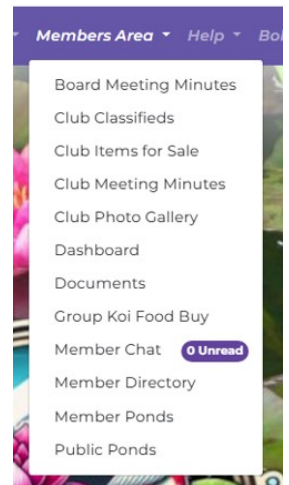
Website Spotlight

Website Spotlight

You may have noticed a new badge next to the Member Chat link in our Members Area dropdown menu.

This is a count of all the chat messages that you haven't read.

If you simply open each unread chat, you can work the count down to zero. Then if anyone enters a NEW chat message, you'll see this badge count up, and you can check it out.







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Please call to confirm open hours.
Appointments always available.
Active PPKWGS members receive 5% discount.





New Membership Applications and Membership Dues can be submitted via our website at PPKWGS.ORG . Or, you can fill out the Application/Renewal form below and mail it and your payment to the address listed.

Memberships are considered inactive if dues are not paid by May of the current year. (Remember, if you purchased your membership after the pond tour, your membership includes the rest of that year and all of the next year.)

Please continue supporting your club by continuing to pay your membership dues.

Pikes Peak Koi & Water Garden Society 2026 Membership Application / Renewal

- DATE _____ RENEWAL _____ NEW _____ (Please write legibly)
- NAME _____ NAME _____
- EMAIL _____ EMAIL _____
- HOME PHONE (____) _____ HOME PHONE (____) _____
- MOBILE PHONE (____) _____ MOBILE PHONE (____) _____
- MAILING ADDRESS _____
- CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____
- LIST PROGRAMS that would be of interest to you _____
- YES! I would like to help with PLANT SALE _____ POND TOUR _____ TOUR EXHIBITOR _____
CLUB MEETINGS _____ WORKSHOPS _____ OTHER _____
- ANNUAL DUES INDIVIDUAL \$10 _____ FAMILY \$15 _____
- PAY TO: PIKES PEAK KOI & WATER GARDEN SOCIETY
- **MAIL TO:** PPKWGS Membership - c/o Allen Burbidge, 4314 Meadowview Court, Colorado Springs, CO 80918
- Phone: 719-574-5176 Email: membership@ppkwgs.org WEB: www.ppkwgs.org
- For PPWGS Use: Cash \$ _____ Check \$ _____ # _____ Membership # _____ Card Y N

Peak at Ponds

Is published monthly during the summer months and is the official newsletter of the Pikes Peak Koi & Water Garden Society (PPKWGS)

PPKWGS Board of Directors for 2026

President:

Bob Oatman

President@ppwgs.org

Vice President:

Cathy Bulf

VicePresident@ppwgs.org

Treasurer:

Brenda Walth

Treasurer@ppwgs.org

Secretary:

tbd

Secretary@ppwgs.org

Member at Large:

Allen Burbidge

Memberatlarge@ppwgs.org

Ellen Simco

Memberatlarge@ppwgs.org

Nicholas Simco

Memberatlarge@ppwgs.org

Robin Robbins

Memberatlarge@ppwgs.org

PPKWGS Coordinators

Fund Raiser:

Allen Burbidge

Refreshments:

Robin Robbins

Membership:

Allen Burbidge

Door Prizes:

Allen & Linda Burbidge

Koi Food Buy:

Phil Goulding

Rehoming Auction:

Cathy Bluff

Plant Sale:

Bob Oatman

Koi Auction:

Tim Jardeleza

Pond Tour:

Allen Burbidge

Webmaster:

Bob Oatman

Newsletter Editor

Rachel Lentz

Social Media Coordinator:

Jonah Macaspac



Peak at Ponds Submissions

The deadline for contributions to the Newsletter is the **20th day of the month prior** to distribution. Please submit all articles for publication in the newsletter via email to:

editor@ppwgs.org

Your contributions are always welcome and encouraged. Editing of your submission may occur as content is reviewed and as space permits.



From the Editor

Happy– Welcome to– Here we are again– How did we get to– September, 2026!

As I'm sitting here preparing the September newsletter, it's only 19:30, and already the sun is setting. It's a little cooler, a little wetter, and a little easier to get out and about now than it was a month or two ago, to be sure. It's easier to sleep in with sunrise being a little delayed, the fish don't eat quite as greedily at the morning feeding as they did in July, and thankfully the dreaded string algae isn't growing at supersonic rates anymore. I guess we are approaching Fall.

There are certainly tasks to accomplish in the Fall, both pond and PPKWGS related. The September meeting will have all the information you need about preparing your ponds for the cooler weather, and you will be asked to vote for Executive Board members.

A vote! Wow! It seems like it's been forever since we have had enough interest in Board positions to require a vote! Oooh, the stakes are high, the candidates are preparing their campaign speeches (or at least are practicing their nods to indicate they are indeed running for the positions), and you—yes, YOU! - are being asked to come and vote for the next Executive Board members. It will be tense, nail-biting excitement for all.

And please don't forget that if anyone wants to take over my position as editor, let your interest be known! I'm sad to leave, but with all the time I am devoting to the new house and greenhouse/koi pond building, followed by the inevitable moving out of town, and all the tasks that entire process involves, my extra time is limited. I'll continue to work on the newsletter until my replacement lets themselves be known to me, but please don't hesitate if you want the job. It's a lot of fun, and you get to know the workings of the club a lot deeper than you do as just a member.

In any case, I hope you all are doing well this year and that your fish are starting to get fat and just a little sleepy!

Until next time, Rachel