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Upcoming **Events**

2025

June 28 - August 9
KC Water Garden Society Tour
Various locations over five weekends
www.kcwatergardens.com

July 31 - August 3
Pond Professionals Alliance Retreat
Stillwater Reserve
Newaygo, Michigan
www.pondprofessionalsalliance.com

August 12 - 16
IWGS Symposiom
New York City, New York
www.iwgs.org

August 22 - 23
Koi Fest 2025 & Tri-State ZNA Koi Show
Fitz's Fish Pond Farm
Milford, New Jersey
www.fitzfishponds.com

August 28 - 31
Rocky Mountain Koi Show
Douglas Couny Fairgrounds
Castle Rock, Colorado
www.rockymountainkoiclub.org

August 29
Pondemonium
Online Training Event
www.aquascapeinc.com

September 22 - 24
South Carolina Koi & Goldfish Show
Kentucky Exposition Center
Simpsonville, Kentucky

September 27 - 28
Fresno Koi Show
Kentucky Exposition Center
Woodward Park-Group Activity Area
Fresno, California
www.cencalkoi.com

October 22 - 24
Hardscapes North America
Kentucky Exposition Center
Louisville, Kentucky
www.hardscapena.com

November 18 - 21
Atlantic- Oase
Atlantic- Oase Headquarters
Aurora, Ohio
www.atlantic-oase.com

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Publisher's Perspective

Sweet Summertime



There's something magical about summer pond season. Whether it's the hum of a well-running pump, the flicker of landscape lights on a warm night, or the quiet joy of watching koi glide through still water, this is the time when all your hard work comes to life. You're the creators of these moments—the ones who bring peace, beauty and balance to backyards across the country. I hope in between jobs, cleanouts, and project builds, you're also able to enjoy a few of those tranquil summer evenings yourselves.

This issue of POND Trade is a celebration of the season's energy and the people who shape it. Larry Carnes kicks us off with a deep dive into the power of micro and nanobubble technology, (p.8) while George Mihalchick lights the way with creative ideas for illuminating ponds and landscapes after dark (p. 14).

Designing with koi in mind? Cooper Sallade brings us inside the creation of a 100,000-gallon formal koi pond (p. 20). For solo contractors, Sean Cudmore shares how the WaterVac has become a game-changer in his clean-out process (p. 27). As koi shows gain momentum, Taro Kodama offers a clear, confident guide to navigating the world of competitive Nishikigoi (p. 32) and Kent Wallace brings us behind the scenes of this year's All-American Koi Show in Las Vegas (p. 38).

Pollinators take center stage in Emily Lane's piece on how a thoughtfully planted pondscape can invite these special guests into your water garden (p. 44). Then, Mike Gannon offers a sweeping historical perspective on water feature design (p. 48).

Finally, if you've ever had that creeping feeling that you're not "really" a business owner, Steve Rozenberg's article on imposter syndrome will hit home (p. 54). Finally, on page 58, we celebrate the 2025 Water Artisans of the Year as they proudly show off their trophies and share what the recognition means to them. It's also your friendly reminder: this year's submission deadline is November 30.

Here's to calm waters, warm nights, and the beautiful spaces you continue to create.

Until the next splash,
Lauren Nolan
Publisher, POND Trade Magazine





Tiny Bubble **Super Powers**

Staring down the bacteria behind algae

by Larry Carnes,
Reflections Water Gardens

Imagine, if you will, that the water pumping through your client's natural pool or pond is so crystal clear you can see the sand-bottom shimmer.

I can see you rolling your eyes.

I don't know about you, but as a professional pond designer and builder, algae is the bane of my existence. Like you, I put everything I have into designing a client's water feature–perfecting the rendering, planning out mechanicals, getting approvals and filing for permits, sourcing supplies, managing truck deliveries, coordinating the team, working through all kinds of challenges and – finally – completing the installation.

I will not be undone by frustrating, ugly, disruptive and unhealthy algae.

So, after 15 years of working through clients' water quality issues, worrying over the health of their aquatic life, and pulling algae clogs from filters and equipment, I'd had enough. I knew there had to be a better way of controlling the algae and I set out to find it.



In Barrington, Ill., this 1,600-square-foot natural swimming pool employs Oxy-Gen by Reflections™ to keep water quality high for a client who requested spa-like benefits at home.

Big Little Miracles: From Theory to Testing

I have always had an interest in the science of biofiltration, but eventually it intersected with another curiosity: bubbles, specifically, microbubbles and nanobubbles. I became eager to examine these tiny, gas-filled spheres that move through water.

My guiding question: what if tiny bubbles were to dance really fast with ultra-biofiltration – would it further remove suspended solids, unhealthy microorganisms and other unwanted organic compounds? Do these tiny bubbles contain properties that have the potential to change how we think about filtration, oxygenation and even pathogen reduction? I think that they do.

Initially, I approached several companies to vet my theory. Unfortunately, the response was less than enthusiastic. So I did what many pond professionals do, I started testing things myself. I have long considered my backyard pool a natural laboratory for assessing my ideas and theories and that is where I installed and tested what would become Oxy-Gen by Reflections™.

After many trials, what I found was stunning. Not only was the water visibly cleaner, but after swimming, my family and I felt rejuvenated in a way we hadn't experienced before.

I'd discovered that tiny bubbles are in fact, big miracles.

Microbubbles and Nanobubbles: What's the Difference?

Microbubbles, which range from 1 to 100 microns in diameter, help alleviate oxygen deficiencies by boosting the amount of dissolved oxygen in water. These bubbles stay suspended longer than larger ones, which means they can aerate an entire water column, even down at the bottom where oxygen levels are typically lowest.

More impressively, they can change the microbial landscape. Increasing oxygen shifts the balance toward beneficial aerobic bacteria and away from anaerobic microorganisms that thrive in low-oxygen conditions—some of which are responsible for foul odors, sludge accumulation and harmful algal blooms.

Nanobubbles are much smaller, typically between 10 and 1,000 nm in diameter and have even more superpowers than microbubbles. Because they boost aerobic processes, nanobubbles remove impurities and contaminations like biofilms, as well as pathogens and other unwanted substances. Their effect is subtle but powerful, contributing to a healthier aquatic environment for fish, plants and us humans, too.

Observations in the Field

In the last few years, I've integrated microbubble technology into several natural swimming pools in Illinois. One of these projects, a 1,600-square-foot pool with a sand bottom and wetland filtration, was designed with two separately built "containers" to hold the lotus and water lily beds, keeping them clean and preventing them from spreading into the pool. A slab stone patio edges the wetland filter



(Top) Larry Carnes uses his backyard swimming pool as a natural laboratory for testing out his pond design, management and maintenance ideas and theories. - (Bottom) Tiny bubbles have super-powers that saturate water with pure oxygen.

at the top of the project. The pond liner forms the header of a 3-foot waterfall, which spills over Wisconsin Lannon Stone and Missouri-weathered limestone boulders and into the 5-foot-deep natural swimming pool. The entire system was engineered for long-term clarity and ecological balance.

In another installation, the goal was more therapeutic. A client recovering from health issues requested a natural pool with spa-like benefits. The pool was heated and fully surrounded by native plantings including existing trees and shrubs. The 6-foot-deep heated pool is super-saturated with oxygen and features two waterfalls that seamlessly appear as one.

Water is fed by two half-horse, 260-gallon-per-minute pumps and a three-horse, 100-gallon-per-minute pump and a 30,000-gallon bead filter works in conjunction with the micro-bubble technology and the pool's natural rocks and pebbles. When the water is still, tiny bubbles visually rise to the surface.



So what are the results? After two years, the clients remain extremely happy, loving the results! The water still remains clear to the bottom—even at depths of 5-6 feet. Sunlight catches flecks of mica in the sand, giving the surface a shimmer that's visible from the patio above. And perhaps most importantly, the pool is chemically free and safe for both swimmers and aquatic life.

Addressing Harmful Algal Blooms

Beyond backyard applications, I'm now exploring how increased oxygenation and biofiltration might reduce Harmful Algal Blooms (HABs), particularly those involving cyanobacteria.

Cyanobacteria, commonly known as blue-green algae, are a natural part of aquatic ecosystems, but when conditions are right (warmth, stagnant water and excess nutrients), they can multiply rapidly. Certain species release cyanotoxins, which can be harmful to people, pets, wildlife and even turfgrass when used in irrigation systems.

One public venue in the Chicago metro area is currently studying how increased oxygenation and improved water flow might reduce the presence of cyanotoxins in its decorative water features and irrigation system. Early results are promising. Increased circulation alone can inhibit cyanobacteria growth by preventing it from settling and forming colonies, while filtration helps remove organic debris and nutrient loads.

This kind of testing may hold great potential for municipalities, golf courses, parks and commercial spaces that struggle with HABs but are hesitant to use chemical treatments.

Toward a More Natural Solution

Whether you're building natural swimming pools, koi ponds or decorative water features, maintaining crystal-clear, healthy water continues to be a common challenge. Mechanical filtration, plant-based wetlands and water changes all help, but understanding the role of oxygenation at the micro and nano level adds a new layer to our toolkit.

Additionally, incorporating microbubble ultra-biofiltration technology to natural swimming pools and ponds offers a number of health benefits. These tiny bubbles can help reduce stress, provide anxiety relief, and help











alleviate pain. Oxygenated water also has cleansing, antibacterial and anti drying properties that may reduce inflammation. Beneficial microbubbles penetrate skin pores, hair follicles and sebaceous glands, which supports hydration. It helps to maintain skin vitality, reducing irritation while smoothing the appearance of fine lines and wrinkles. Additionally, scientists say swimming in oxygenated water can trigger the release of hormones that help you feel more alert and focused.

Final Thoughts

We know how much care and craftsmanship goes into every pond and water feature we build. And we also know how frustrating it is when water clarity and quality don't meet expectations—ours or our clients'.

Technologies that enhance dissolved oxygen levels and support aerobic biological processes may offer solutions to some of the industry's most persistent problems. As professionals, it's our responsibility to explore and test these ideas—to stay curious, to experiment, and to seek nature-based answers wherever possible.

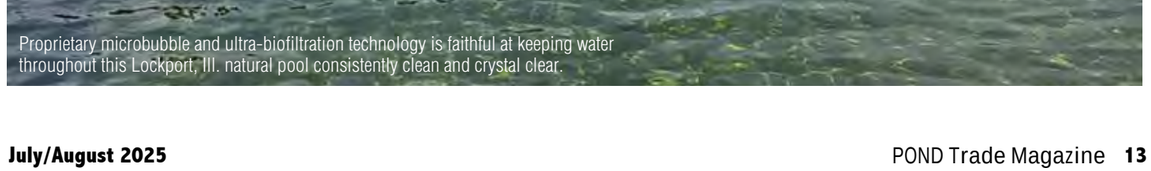
If clear, algae-free, chemical-free water is the goal, then tiny bubbles might just be one of the smartest tools we have.

About the Author

Larry Carnes



is the president of Reflections Water Gardens in West Dundee, Illinois. With a background in art and landscape design, Larry combines creativity and technical skill to craft water features that are both functional and visually striking. His passion for naturalistic watershaping grew after building a custom pond for his own home, and he has since studied under renowned expert Anthony Archer-Wills. Today, his firm specializes in high-end residential and commercial water gardens.



Proprietary microbubble and ultra-biofiltration technology is faithful at keeping water throughout this Lockport, Ill. natural pool consistently clean and crystal clear.



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GLOW UP

Creative lighting ideas for ponds and landscapes

by George Mihalchick
Ponds by George

When you hear the word "lighting," what comes to mind? For me, I immediately smile from ear to ear. I love this stuff.

Yes, my passion is creating all types of water features, but how disappointing would it be to only enjoy them during the day? Just as water feature construction is an art, so is the craft of lighting. Knowing what you're lighting, how to light it and where the feature will be viewed from is essential to creating a nighttime experience that captivates just as much as daylight views.

The Power of Subtle Illumination

There are many types of lights and countless ways to illuminate a space. Since water features are part of the overall landscape palette, their lighting should act as a complement and not as a competitor to the surrounding environment. In most cases, this means subtle, indirect lighting that blends in rather than overwhelms.

Today's lighting market is dominated by LED technology, and for good reason. LEDs offer

(Left) A well-lit stone path invites exploration. Layered lighting highlights texture and adds drama after dark. - (Right) Creative underwater and landscape lighting brings this pond to life at night.



Thoughtful lighting enhances texture, depth, and movement—transforming this stream surrounding hardscape into an elegant nighttime retreat.

powerful results with remarkably low wattage, often under 10 watts per fixture, making them energy-efficient and long-lasting. And when it comes to lighting water features, brighter isn't always better. In fact, more often than not, less is more.

Of course, there are exceptions. Larger ponds or towering trees may require a higher output. But even then, fixture placement is critical. Always aim lighting away from primary viewing areas. The last thing you want is to blind a guest with a spotlight while they're trying to admire koi swimming beneath a waterfall.

Adding a New Dimension at Night

Ponds are stunning during the day, full of motion and life. At night, however, you have the opportunity to reveal a completely new dimension through lighting.

Take waterfalls, for example. You can illuminate a waterfall with a spotlight shining at it, or use a small, upright puck light placed directly beneath it. Each method offers a different effect: the spotlight highlights the rocks and water around the fall, while the puck light causes the water to glow, almost like it's lit from within.

If angled upward slightly, a spotlight can even create a shimmering effect as the water movement dances onto nearby surfaces—like the canopy of a tree or the wall of a home. It's simple, subtle and powerful.

Driftwood is another great opportunity. At night, a well-placed spotlight on a unique piece of wood can make it stand out in an entirely new way. Shadows cast by twisted roots or gnarled trunks create texture and intrigue not always noticeable in daylight.

Urns, Vases and Bowls: A Lighting Playground

Urns, bubbling vases and decorative bowls are some of my favorite features to light. Most of these elements bubble water from a central point before spilling over the edges, making them ideal candidates for a glowing effect.

A low-wattage puck light or miniature spotlight works perfectly for this. The fixture can be secured with a small amount of foam, hidden from view, while the wire runs discreetly down through the center to exit out the base. Many manufacturers now pre-drill holes in these units to accommodate lighting cables and include watertight cord seal fittings.









Creative lighting brings water features and landscapes to life after dark—highlighting urns, streams, sculptures, and foliage with glowing, color-changing effects.

The result? A glowing, bubbling centerpiece that becomes a focal point in the landscape after sunset.

Integrating Landscape Lighting

Lighting the landscape around your water feature is just as important as lighting the feature itself. During an initial consultation, always take note of nearby trees, sitting areas and potential mounting points for fixtures.

Larger trees are great candidates for moonlighting—a technique where downlights are mounted high in the canopy, casting soft, natural-looking shadows below. When installed properly, the effect mimics the light of a full moon, especially when the light passes through large branches or leaves onto the sitting area or water below.

This contrasts with uplighting, where spotlights are installed in the ground and aimed upward at the trunk, canopy or limbs. Uplighting is ideal for showcasing the grandeur of a tree or structure and works well when combined with shimmer effects from pond lighting.

When uplighting, remember the golden rule: aim lights upward and away from common viewpoints.

Accent Lighting and Path Lights

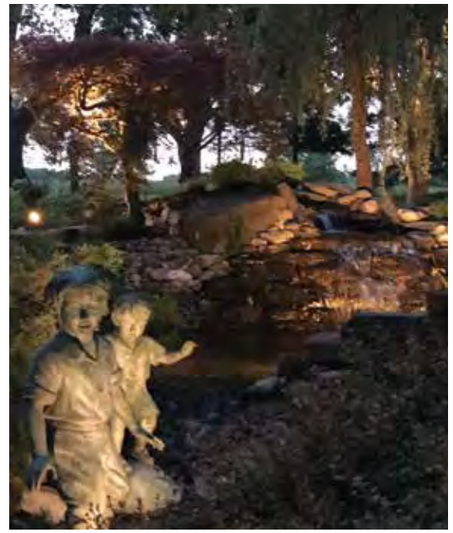
For walkways, patios, and meandering streams, accent lights and path lights offer ideal solutions. These fixtures are typically 12 to 24 inches in height and shine downward, casting soft light across the ground.

Unlike spotlights, which can focus on specific points, path lighting softly outlines curves, textures and transitions in the landscape. It's an elegant way to illuminate streams, stepping stones or sculptural boulders.

Bring on the Color!

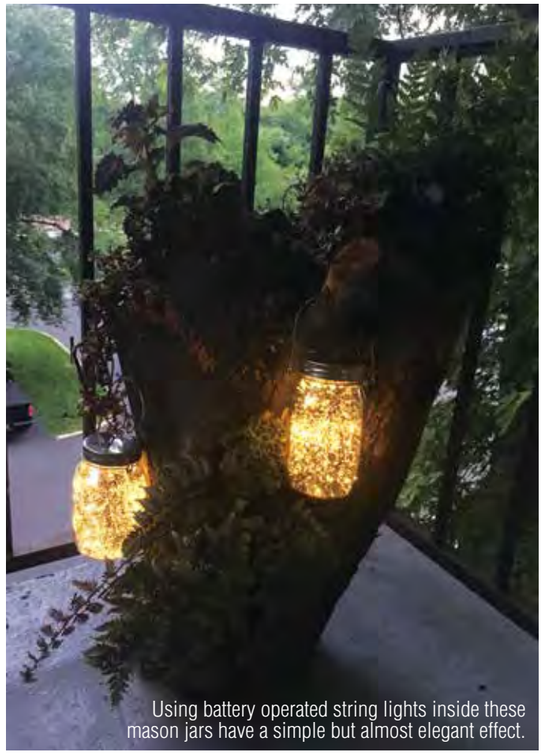
Most of the lighting techniques mentioned so far can be elevated even further with color-changing LED fixtures. These systems are just as easy to install and often come with Bluetooth or Wi-Fi connectivity, giving you full control from your phone or smart device.

Want to light a waterfall in blue while keeping the rest of the pond white? No problem. Want to celebrate a holiday with red, white and blue? You've got it. How about honoring your favorite sports team's colors for game night? The only limit is your imagination.





Expertly placed spotlights transform this bare tree into a glowing centerpiece. It's golden branches are reflected perfectly in the still pond below.



Using battery operated string lights inside these mason jars have a simple but almost elegant effect.

The Final Touch

Lighting is more than just functionality—it's an extension of the artistic vision behind your water feature. It allows clients to enjoy their investment 24 hours a day and turns an already stunning scene into something unforgettable after dark.

When designed thoughtfully, lighting will never steal the show, it enhances it. And when installed with creativity and intention, it brings an entirely new level of emotion and experience to the landscape.

So go ahead and embrace the excitement of lighting. Your clients will thank you, and their water features will shine like never before.

About the Author



George Mihalchick, owner of Ponds by George, founded his company in 1988 to build quality ponds and a supportive team culture. After years of working for others, he was driven to create a business where people and passion came first. With a love for water and the outdoors, George grew his business from installations to a retail store that empowers customers to build their own ponds. He's explored nature across the country—camping, sailing, and hiking—which continues to inspire his work. These experiences shape his naturalistic designs and reflect the company's tagline: "We Create What Nature Forgot."



Formal **Function**

How to design with koi in mind

by Cooper Sallade
Aqua Fauna Ponds

In the heart of Richmond, Virginia, a residential property underwent a remarkable transformation, what began as a maintenance challenge for a koi enthusiast evolved into a full-scale, formal aquatic showcase. At the center of it all: nearly 200 adult koi.

This exceptional home had long featured a large, picturesque pond. However, despite its beauty, the original feature was never designed with koi in mind. It lacked proper filtration, sufficient depth, and predator protection—making it difficult to maintain a secure, healthy environment for such an extensive fish collection.

While exploring ways to retrofit the existing layout, a new idea emerged: construct a purpose-built koi pond from the ground up. We were granted full creative and technical control, resulting in a 100,000-gallon formal koi pond that would become the new home for the client's treasured collection. The original pond was re-imagined as a tranquil water garden, now flourishing with lotus and pond lilies.

First views of the pond as entering the estate.


Precision grading as prepping the site for EPDM lining.

Designed With Purpose, Built for Beauty

This new pond needed to achieve two critical goals: provide a high-quality, sustainable environment for koi and integrate seamlessly into the existing landscape. It needed to be large, crystal clear, easy to maintain and visually compelling from every angle.

After multiple design consultations, the final specifications were set. The pond would span approximately 85 feet in length, 30 feet in width, and reach a depth of 5 to 6 feet. A slightly organic shape was selected to offer dynamic sightlines and a natural aesthetic. With a total volume of roughly 100,000 gallons, the pond comfortably houses the client's current koi collection and offers room to introduce additional high-end Japanese koi over time.

Strategic placement was also important. The location allows for maximum sun exposure, optimal viewing from key points on the property, and a seamless connection to the surrounding landscape design.


The finished pond awaiting the arrival of the first koi.

Precision Timing and Thoughtful Transitions

Construction was strategically scheduled for winter 2023–2024, with completion targeted by Easter. This timing wasn't arbitrary as spring offers ideal conditions for relocating koi, thanks to mild water temperatures that reduce fish stress. Additionally, it allowed the biological filtration system time to mature just in time for the seasonal increase in feeding and fish activity.

While the build was underway, my team and I continued to provide daily care for the client's koi. A key component of the transition involved prophylactic parasite treatments and the relocation of approximately 75 koi to an offsite holding facility. This move helped prepare space for a new shipment of imported Japanese koi scheduled to arrive in April.

Underground Strategy, Above-Ground Elegance

Before breaking ground, the team carefully navigated around existing underground utilities. Rather than incur the costs and delays of relocating infrastructure, the pond's design was adapted to work around it—preserving both the project timeline and budget.

Once excavation began, a frost-depth footer was dug and poured to support the structural walls. The perimeter was built using CMU block walls, which were solid-filled and reinforced with vertical rebar in every other cell. These walls extended 18 inches above grade, ultimately forming a 20-inch seat wall when capped—providing a functional and elegant viewing space for visitors.


Filtration pad on a stand service visit. This system is the backbone of clarity and fish health.

The raised wall also adds an element of formal design, creating clear architectural lines that define the pond's footprint while inviting engagement from guests and family members.

Filtration Powerhouse: Clean Water by Design

The backbone of this pond's performance lies in its carefully engineered filtration system. Ten Evolution Aqua aerated bottom drains were installed across the pond floor to ensure complete debris removal. These drains eliminate the formation of "dead zones" where waste can accumulate.

To complement the bottom intake, four no-niche skimmers were positioned to capture floating debris and organic matter. From there, water travels nearly 80 feet downhill through a network of 4-inch PVC lines to a dedicated 30-by-15-foot filtration pad, discreetly screened by evergreen hedging.

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Aerial view of the original pond, now a water garden, and the new koi pond bringing life and beauty to the front yard of the estate.

At the filtration pad, water is gravity-fed into six independent systems, each composed of:

- Evolution Aqua Cetus Sieve pre-filters
- PerformancePro Artesian2 external pumps
- 36-inch Evolution Aqua K+ Advanced pressure filter
- Dual Evolution Aqua EvoUV 110-watt clarifiers

The combined filtration system provides 1,320 watts of ultraviolet sterilization which is crucial for a pond that sits in full sun. This ensures superior water clarity and prevents the formation of green water or algae blooms. Clean water is then returned through surface and midwater return jets, designed to maintain robust circulation throughout the entire pond.

A Touch of Formal Charm

To enhance the pond's visual appeal, a decorative water feature was incorporated at the primary viewing area. This centerpiece serves both aesthetic and functional purposes. It increases aeration, aids in water circulation and elevates the formal feel of the space.

The feature includes a copper-finished scupper wall by Atlantic Water Gardens, flanked by three copper spillway bowls. The motion and sound of cascading water add a sensory dimension to the landscape, while the symmetry and placement of the elements reinforce the pond's classical design.

A Vision That Continues to Grow

Projects of this scale offer more than just a construction opportunity—they mark the beginning of an evolving relationship between the contractor and the client. We believe the completion of a pond is not the end of a project, but the start of a long-term partnership.

Unlike traditional garden ponds, formal koi ponds demand regular, attentive care. As clients develop a deeper appreciation for koi keeping, their interest in water quality, fish health and ongoing upgrades often grows. This can lead to monthly or even weekly service programs, new koi acquisitions, and further enhancements to the pond system.

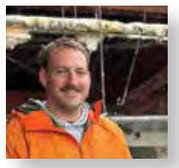
For pond builders and service professionals willing to go the extra mile—sourcing Japanese koi, offering long-term care, and providing advanced filtration expertise—the result is a client relationship built on trust, shared passion and continued investment.

A Living Feature That Redefines the Property

This koi pond is more than a backyard improvement—it's a living, breathing ecosystem designed with care and precision. For the homeowner, it represents a dream fulfilled. For the koi, it offers a sanctuary that meets the highest standards of health and safety. This project demonstrates what's possible when innovation, engineering and artistry converge.



About the Author



Cooper Sallade began working with ponds and water gardens in 2008 as a high school student in Richmond, VA, cleaning ponds during the summer. His early interest quickly grew into a passion, leading him to design and build ponds for both personal and client projects. Cooper founded Aqua Fauna Inc., a full-service construction and maintenance company specializing in water features, and merged with Fin and Feather – The Water Garden Center, a pond specific retail store. Today, his business encompasses custom water feature construction, pond maintenance, retail sales, and koi sourcing trips to Japan. With a commitment to craftsmanship and quality.



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A Solo Contractor's **Secret Weapon**

How the WaterVac makes large cleanouts safer and more efficient

by Sean Cudmore,
Pond Creations by Sean

As a sole proprietor with no employees, tackling pond cleanouts, especially those larger than a few thousand gallons, can be an intimidating task. Over time, I've developed strategies to make the process more manageable. One of the most impactful tools I've added to my routine is the WaterVac.

When maintaining a pond, balancing aquatic health with water conservation is essential. The WaterVac, an innovative pond cleaning system, not only helps keep water features clean but also prioritizes fish safety and contractor well-being. With its efficient design and practical functionality, this tool has reshaped how I approach cleanouts—especially when I'm working alone.

Why Regular Pond Cleaning Matters

Ponds and fountains are more than just beautiful landscape features; they're living ecosystems. These water bodies naturally accumulate debris, algae and organic waste, which can negatively impact both their appearance and the health of their aquatic inhabit-



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ants.

Routine cleaning is vital—not only for visual clarity but also for the well-being of the fish and plants that rely on a balanced environment. Traditional cleaning methods can be disruptive, often involving full drainage, which stresses fish and risks water waste. For solo operators like myself, the risk of fish loss or injury during these jobs can also carry professional consequences.

Poor water quality can lead to cloudy ponds, string algae blooms, and even disease outbreaks among koi and goldfish. As a contractor, it's part of our responsibility to educate clients on the importance of routine maintenance and to ensure that we have the right tools to do it safely and effectively.

How the WaterVac Works

The WaterVac uses a high-powered vacuum system specifically designed for pond environments. What sets it apart is its ability to clean without fully draining the pond. It draws in up to 3,000 gallons per hour and filters particles down to 200–300 microns, depending on the selected filter. The cleaned water is then returned directly to the pond.

The system works continuously, separating solids while maintaining water levels. This means I can complete a full cleanout without ever having to displace the fish or reduce water volume to unsafe levels. For customers who value sustainability or have sensitive fish, this is a major selling point.



With its all stainless construction, it is very durable and easily cleaned after the work is complete.







(Left) One of 2 sock filters on the WaterVac capturing small debris. - (Center) The WaterVac is easily carried in the bed of a truck, or in a van. - (Right) The WaterVac's 15 gallon drum removes the larger debris (down to 5/32") before going through the sock filters.

This not only conserves water but also allows me to clean large ponds without having to constantly climb in and out with buckets—a significant advantage when you're the only one on the job. It's a safer, more efficient way to work, and it lets me take on larger projects that I wouldn't have been able to handle solo just a few years ago.

Key Benefits of The WaterVac

Water Conservation: The WaterVac dramatically reduces water loss compared to traditional drain-and-clean methods. This is especially important in regions with drought conditions, water use restrictions or eco-conscious clients. It also helps contractors keep costs down by reducing time spent refilling ponds and treating water after the fact.

Fish Safety: Because the pond remains full during cleaning, fish and other aquatic life experience minimal disruption. There's no need for temporary holding tanks or stressful fish captures. This significantly lowers the risk of loss and helps maintain a healthy, balanced ecosystem throughout the cleaning process.

Contractor Safety and Efficiency: For solo contractors, the physical demands of a cleanout can be overwhelming. The WaterVac reduces the need for repeated heavy lifting, deep wading and awkward movement, minimizing the risk of injury and fatigue. It also allows for a faster, cleaner process, which means I can book more jobs in a day—and do so with confidence.

Enhanced Visual Appeal: Clean ponds make happy customers. Regular use of the WaterVac keeps water features looking clear and vibrant, ensuring that customers see real, lasting results from professional service. It also builds trust and repeat business.

An Innovative Way to Clean

In an era where water conservation and workplace safety are more important than ever, tools like the WaterVac offer a smart, sustainable solution. Whether you're a one-person business or part of a larger team, adopting equipment that makes your job easier while protecting the environment and the pond's inhabitants is a win all around.

For me, the WaterVac has become more than just a tool—it's a key part of my business model. It allows me to take on bigger projects with less risk, deliver better results to my clients and protect my own health in the process. If you're working alone and looking for a way to grow your pond service business, I highly recommend giving this technology a try.

With the right equipment and a bit of strategy, even the biggest ponds can be cleaned safely, efficiently and sustainably regardless of team size.

About the Author

Sean Cudmore founded Pond Creations by Sean in 2010 after the 2008 construction downturn. Inspired by a backyard project and encouragement from his wife Sandy, he turned his passion into a business. Based in Massachusetts, the company builds full-service, often "impossible," water features. Sean's automotive and construction background helps him deliver architecturally sound, functional designs. He also attends Atlantic-Oase winter training in Ohio as a guest contractor.



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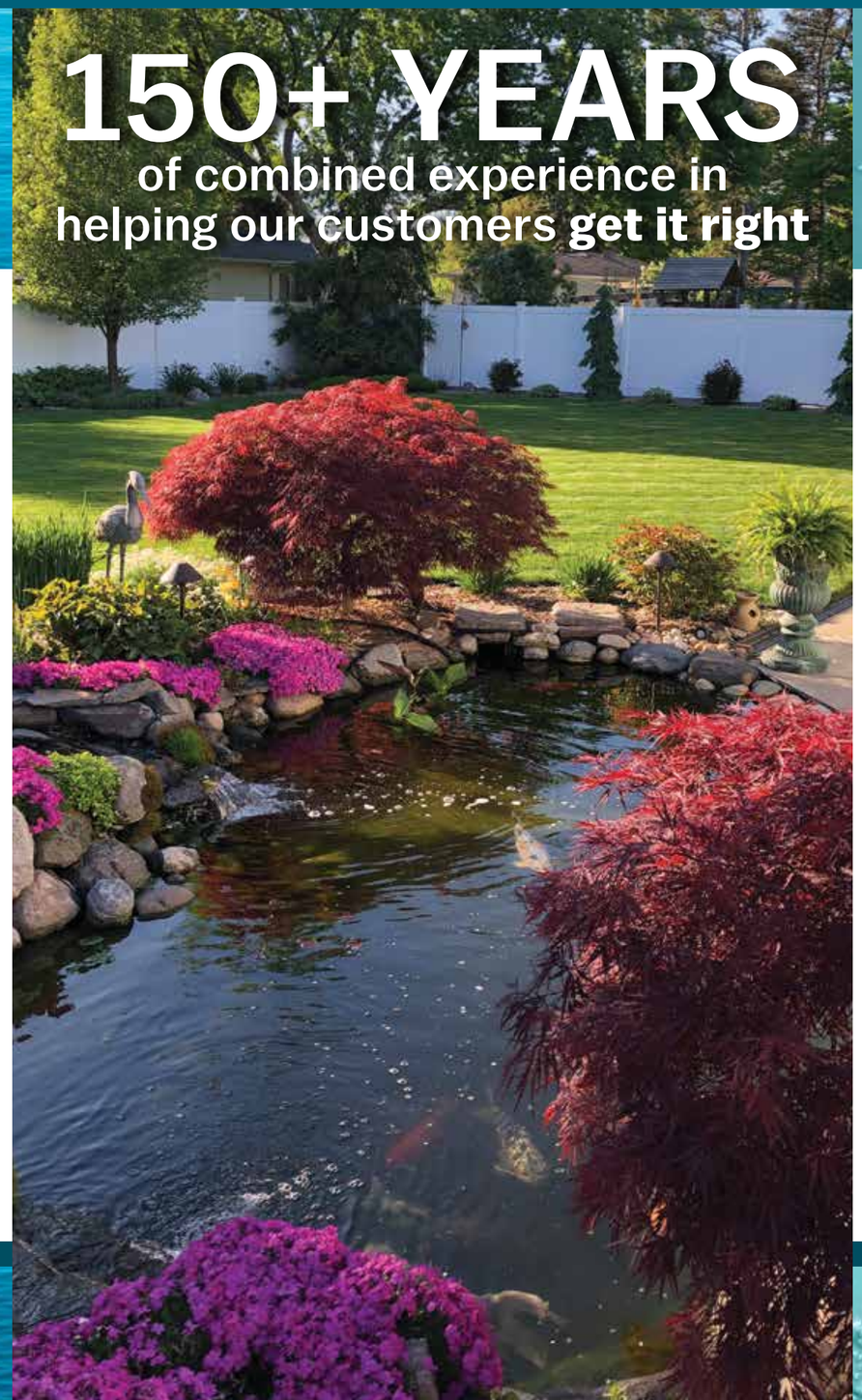
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Understanding Koi Shows

Rules, Organizations, and Prizes

by Taro Kodama,
Kodama Koi Farm

For koi lovers, there is nothing quite like a koi show. It is a special time to meet friends, learn from each other, and celebrate the beauty of koi. Whether you are just starting in this hobby or you have many years of experience, koi shows are a wonderful way to enjoy and grow your passion.

The koi hobby is growing and its presence in the USA is on the rise, this is in part due to koi dealers partnering with the different organizations to host koi shows, such as The All American Koi Show and the Tri-State ZNA Koi Show at Koi Fest as well the Dallas Koi Show held at Aquashella. These recent shows were all partnered with different organizations and if you are heading to a show in the near future, it may be important to know how the organizations, rules and prizes differ. I hope this will help you feel closer to this amazing part of our koi world.

Different Organizations Behind Koi Shows

Many groups around the world host koi shows. Each group has its own history and way of doing things, but all of them share one heart — to promote the love of koi.

In Japan, the most famous organizations are **Zen Nippon Airinkai (ZNA)** and **All Japan Nishikigoi Promotion Association (JNPA aka Shinkokai).** The **ZNA** is one of the oldest and most respected hobbyist groups. They have chapters all over the world and also host the ZNA International Koi Show in Japan, which celebrated it's 60th anniversary this past fall. The **JPNA,** otherwise known as **Shinkokai** is made up of professional breeders and dealers. They host the world renowned All Japan Combined Nishikigoi Show or in short, AJKS (All Japan Koi Show). The AJKS celebrated its 55th anniversary this past winter.


Judges assess koi at All American Koi Show 2025.

Additionally, in the United States, there are many koi clubs and groups such as the **North America District of ZNA**. They have many koi clubs or chapters across the country. If you are interested in joining a chapter near you, visit their website at https://www.znaamerica.org.

There are also many clubs that do not belong to ZNA such as: the **Mid-Atlantic Koi Club,** the **Central California Koi Society,** the **Washington Koi and Water Garden Society,** the **Texas Koi and Fancy Goldfish Society,** the **Southwest Koi and Pond Association,** the **Florida East Coast Koi and Pond Club,** the **Koi Club of San Diego** and so many more!

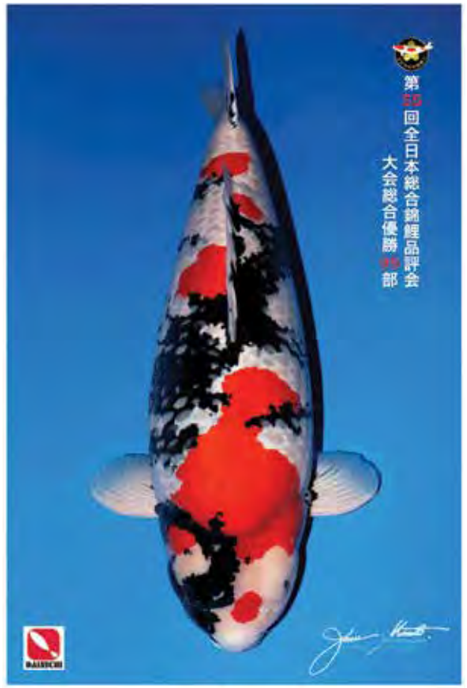
Each group works hard to teach, support, and bring happiness to koi keepers everywhere. If you have a chance to join one near you, I truly recommend it.

Understanding the Rules

Every koi show has rules to make judging fair and to protect the koi. The rules might be a little differ-

This chart shows how the varieties, groups and sizes are structured. It is important to note that varieties are categorized into 4 groups: Miyabi, Sakura, Tsubaki and Botan.

Variety / Size / Prize Chart			Grand champion (Best Koi)																			
			Baby				Young				Adult				Mature				Superior			Collosal
			KOKUGYO Prize in each size																			
			Miyabi / Sakura / Tsubaki / Botan Prize in each size																			
Varieties	Memo	Group	12 Bu	15 Bu	20 Bu	25 Bu	30 Bu	35 Bu	40 Bu	45 Bu	50 Bu	55 Bu	60 Bu	65 Bu	70 Bu	75 Bu	80 Bu	85 Bu	90 Bu	95 Bu		
Kohaku	--	Miyabi	MIYABI CHAMPION (BEST KOI IN THE GROUP)																		BEST IN VARIETY PRIZE (BEST KOI IN EACH VARIETY)	
Taisho Sanke	--																					
Showa	--																					
Shiro Utsuri	--	Sakkura	SAKURA CHAMPION (BEST KOI IN THE GROUP)																			
Goshiki	Includes Goshiki Sanke, Goshiki Showa																					
A Ginrin	Includes Kohaku, Taisho Sanke, Showa																					
B Ginrin	All the other varieties																					
Hikari Kawarigoi	--																					
Kujyaku	Includes Doitsu Kujyaku																					
Kawarigoi	--	Tsubaki	TSUBAKI CHAMPION (BEST KOI IN THE GROUP)																			
Kumonryu	--																					
Doitsu	--																					
Hikari Moyo	--																					
Koromo	Includes Koromo Sanke, Koromo Showa																					
Tancho	--																					
Hikari Utsuri	--	Botan	BOTAN CHAMPION (BEST KOI IN THE GROUP)																			
Hikari Muji	--																					
Shusui	--																					
Asagi	--																					
Bekko	--																					
Hi Utsuri, Ki Utsuri	--																					
Muji	--																					



All Japan Koi Show - 2025 Grand Champion

ent from show to show, but the most important ideas remain the same. Let's examine the All Japan Nishikigoi Show by Shinkokai.

For entries, koi will be separated by size and varieties. In Japan, size typically goes by 5cm or 2 in, while in the United States, it often goes every 10cm or 4 in. “Bu” in Japanese means division or section.

Typically, 15 Bu is for any koi up to 15cm. 20 Bu is for koi from 15 to 20cm. In addition, for koi over 55 Bu (about 22 in.), there are separate male and female divisions that are judged separately. This is because females have more advantages in size and body.

Understanding the Judging

When judges look at koi, they focus on the following 4 main things., body, quality, finish and pattern.

Body: This is the most important item, especially the larger the adult koi, the larger the weight. It is important that there is no distortion and that the body lines are even on both sides. Also, koi that are plump and have a well-balanced amount of meat from the head to the tailpiece are highly valued.

Quality: Although it is difficult to describe in words, judges look for clear colors, for example, they look for a scarlet spot which is thick red, ink that is black, and skin that is white. The more uniform and clear each color is, the higher the evaluation will be.

Finish: This item also depends on the physical condition of the koi at the time. A koi with a shiny red or ink color and a white background as beautiful as white porcelain is said to have a “good finish”.

Pattern: People have their own preference for patterns, but for red and white koi, judges tend to prefer round dots, three-tiered or four-tiered koi, and for Taisho Sanshoku, they tend to prefer koi with shoulder ink.



Different Types of Prizes

At every koi show, there are many different prizes. Taking the All Japan Koi Show by Shinkokai as an example, let me list the prizes and how they are decided.

Champion Prizes: The Champion Prizes are for the best koi in the whole show and there are different levels of koi within this category.

- **Grand Champion:** The best koi in the whole show.
- **Colossal Champion (Reserve Grand Champion):** The best koi among 85 Bu to 95 Bu.
- **Male Colossal Champion:** The best male koi among 85 Bu to 95 Bu.
- **Superior Champion:** The best koi among 75 Bu to 80 Bu.
- **Male Superior Champion**: The best male koi among 75 Bu to 80 Bu.
- **Mature Champion:** The best koi among 60 Bu to 70 Bu.
- **Male Mature Champion:** The best male koi among 60 Bu to 70 Bu.
- **Adult Champion:** The best koi among 45 Bu to 55 Bu
- **Young Champion:** The best koi among 30 Bu to 40 Bu
- **Baby Champion:** Best Koi among 12 Bu to 25 Bu

In most koi shows in the United States, there are no male divisions. Therefore male and female koi will be judged alongside one another. There is also, no Colossal Champion and Superior Champions. Instead, in the United States, there is a Reserve Grand Champion prize to refer to the second best at koi shows.



Award ceremoney at AAKS

Kokugyo (Best in Size) Prizes: In Japan, the judges usually first assess for the best koi at the show, which is, The Grand Champion. Then, they work on selecting the best koi in each size, which is, The Kokugyo Prize. Out of the Kokugyo prize winners, the judges pick all the other champions. Once a Kokugyo prized koi is promoted to a champion, the second best koi in the size will be promoted to win the Kokugyo prize.



- **Best in Size:** For the Best in Size Prizes, the best koi in every size class will be prized, excluding the champions above. In Japanese, Kokugyo means national fish, therefore, prizes are given out for each fish from 12 Bu Kokugyo prize all the way to 95 Bu Kokugyo prize.
- **Miyabi / Sakura / Tsubaki/ Botan Prizes:** After major Champions and Kokugyo (Best in Size) prizes are chosen, the above prizes will be given to the best Koi from each group of Miyabi, Sakura, Tsubaki and Botan. Please refer to the chart (p. 33) to see what varieties are in each group. The Champion title will be given to the best Koi of each group and there will be a Miyabi Champion, Sakura Champion, Tsubaki Champion, and Botan Champion

Best in Variety Prizes: The next set of awards that are judged are for the best koi in each variety: Kohaku, Taisho Sanke, Showa, Shiro Utsuri, Goshiki, A Ginrin, B Ginrin, Hikari Kawarigoi, Kujyaku, Kawarigoi, Kumonryu, Doitsu, Hikari Moyo, Koromo, Tancho, Hikari Utsuri, Hikari Muji, Shusui, Asagi, Bekko, Hi Utsuri/Ki Utsuri, and Muji.

Special Prizes: Often times, there can be special

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(Left) Some Shinkokai USA members at AJKS. - (Right) ZNA judges at a oi show.

prizes as well. If you attend a koi show in the United States, you may see one of these special prizes:

- **Tategoi Prize:** This prize goes to the best koi with future potential.
- **Friendship Prize:** This prize is chosen by other clubs, that are at the show, but are not the host club.
- **President's Prize:** This is a special choice made by the host club's president
- **People's Choice Prize:** This prize is awarded based on a vote by the visitors to the show
- **Best Doitsu Prize:** This prize goes to the best scaleless koi
- **Most Unique Koi Prize:** This prize goes to the most special, exotic, or rare koi.

Every prize tells a story. Sometimes it is the story of a koi raised with so much love for many years. Sometimes it is the story of a young koi with a bright and exciting future. Every trophy, every plaque, every ribbon shows the many hours of love and care from the hobbyist. Viewing all of the different types and quality of koi at a show, always leaves me with a feeling of deep respect.



Judges decide the winners at the All American Koi Show 2025.

Shinkokai USA is Here to Help

If you're inspired to participate in a koi show but don't know where to begin, don't worry—help is available. The Shinkokai, Japan's koi organization of professional breeders and dealers, has an official chapter in the United States made up of experienced, reliable members who are passionate about supporting hobbyists. Whether you have questions about Koi varieties, show preparation, or judging standards, they can point you in the right direction. Visit https://shinkokaiusa.com to learn more and get connected.

Every Show Is a Learning Opportunity

No matter if you win a prize or not, every koi show is a gift. You can learn by seeing great koi. You can meet breeders and hobbyists who have much wisdom. You can feel the spirit of koi keeping.

I hope you will have a chance to attend a show near you and maybe some day, when you feel ready, I hope you will enter your koi. You will make memories you will never forget.

I look forward to seeing you at a koi show someday.

Thank you for always loving koi.

About the Author

Taro Kodama is President of Kodama Koi Farm. They are the largest importer and distributor of quality Japanese Koi in the US. With locations in Japan, Hawaii and New Jersey, Kodama Koi Farm carries 35,000+ Japanese Koi from the top breeders in Japan. Taro Kodama, along with his father, Mamoru Kodama, provide not only winning show koi, they also conduct many koi seminars.



ALL AMERICAN KOI SHOW 2025 RECAP



BIGGER, BETTER AND HERE TO STAY





(Left) The Shinkokai gathers for a photo at the All American Koi Show. - (Right) AAKS 2025 Reserve Grand Champion.

by Kent Wallace
Living Water Solutions

A koi show always seems to make the hobby complete. After all these years in the industry, I still find them fun—but walking up to the show site in the Silverton parking lot in Las Vegas this year was truly exciting. I've never been to a show with more than 100 show tanks before.

Volunteer Power: Setup and Teardown Heroes

It was Thursday, and Hector Mardueno, along with the WLim Corporation crew and family, were already on-site organizing the layout. JR from RNR had set up their five-booth space and was helping Hector with setup. Ben Plonski of Matala USA and Mike Swanson of Koi Acres were also there early to lend a hand. Ben and Mike can always be counted on to help out at any show they attend—it's just what they do.

As I walked through, I saw Wes Glen and his crew from Koi Pros assisting with setup and filling tanks alongside Russell Peters. Andy Moo of Andrew's Koi oversaw water quality and koi health. Greg Wittstock of Aquascape supplied all the tank netting to keep the fish safe. Greg has attended both shows and is clearly enthusiastic about the future. All the tanks were manufactured by Polytank.

The setup—and eventual teardown—of a show like this is nearly impossible without volunteer support. So let me call out the teardown crew now: Mr. Chen Li of Nijikawa, along with Mikki and Devin Swanson, stayed behind to help the WLim and Stonewall Creek teams break everything down. Shawn Rosen of Koi Market helped pack up all the tanks.

A True Shinkokai Show

The All-American Koi Show is a Shinkokai show, meaning it showcases breeders. "Shinkokai" refers to an association of dealers, in contrast to AKCA and ZNA shows that are club-oriented and focus on the owners rather than the breeders or the industry at large.

There are nine Shinkokai chapters in Japan—and only one outside of Japan, here in the United States. The presidential chairman of the U.S. chapter is Shawn McHenry of Mystic Koi, who worked tirelessly behind the scenes to help make this event possible.

Why Las Vegas?

The Japanese love Las Vegas, and the Shinkokai organization is no exception. If you gave them a list of 10 U.S. cities to hold a show, and Las Vegas was on that list, they'd choose Vegas every time. They actually wanted to do it 15



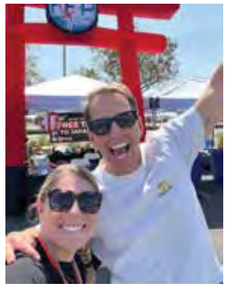












Miyabi Campion 94cm Momotoro Kohaku



years ago, but the economic collapse derailed that plan. Now they're back—bigger and better than ever—for their second show in two years, made possible by Hector Marduenо and WLim Corporation in partnership with Shawn McHenry and Mystic Koi.

I spoke with William Lim about the show. Although his health prevented him from attending, he told me he's very proud of what's become of his namesake company. It's a perfect capstone to his groundbreaking career in the koi industry.

Sponsors Step Up

Major sponsorships in the koi world are rare, but this show is gaining momentum. I'm sure I'll miss a few names, but here's what I know:

Brian Fitzsimmons and **Fitz's Fish Ponds** sponsored the banque. **EasyPro** sponsored the water. **Grand Koi** sponsored the event tent. **JPD** was the official koi food sponsor of the show. **Matala** handled aeration. **AquaMeds** supplied water treatment and fish health products.

Tomigai Koi Food and **Demi Koi** sponsored benching, judging and certificates.

Pacific West Injury Law served as the premium media sponsor. Additional media sponsors included **Sera, Merck Animal Health** and **Filtreau.**

Platinum sponsors were **Aquascape** and **Stonewall Creek**.

Gold sponsors included **Atlantic-Oase, Kodama Koi Farm, Sunfish Fish Farms, Koi Pharma, Champion Nishikigoi** and **RNR Koi**.

Bronze sponsors were **Nijikawa, Bristol Koi Farm**, **Barstow Koi** and **PS Koi.**

WLim Corporation made a serious long-term commitment by purchasing the show tanks from **Polytank** for $121,000 instead of renting them. This tells me they're planning to keep this event going for years to come.

Vendors From Near and Far

Walking the show floor was a great mix of familiar faces and new ones. It's always a pleasure to see Taro Kodama translating throughout the event. Ken Lu from Barstow Koi is always great to catch up with. My close friend Eric Triplett, The Pond Digger, had a booth to introduce his new skimmer. Shawn Rosen of Koi Market was in a booth showcasing a new filter system he's developing. Gary Cryer of GC Tek had a booth packed with filtration equipment.



Takahiro Koga - Japanese Ceramic Artist

Ceramic artist Takahiro Koga from Tokyo, whose art mimics the legend of the koi transformation into the dragon, made an impressive $75,000 in sales—unheard of at any other koi show I've attended. Paul Parszik of Artisan Aquatics shared a booth with Joe Acevedo of Hanako Koi Ponds, two more close friends of mine. Paul specializes in polyurea coatings, while Joe builds ponds using polyurea.

Fitz's Fish Ponds had their team on site throughout the weekend and their booth was marked by a massive red inflatable torii gate arch gate. Fitz's also sponsored the Saturday evening banquet, reinforcing their role in the national koi scene.

Most koi shows feature vendors with one booth, maybe two. This






2025 AAKS Grand Champion.

























show had multiple vendors occupying four and five booths, and several with two or three. There were even vendors from outside the country, and "show fish" from four different countries—clear signs that this event is here to stay. I've already spoken with vendors who missed this year's show but plan to be there next year.

Healthy Hobby Practices

My wife, Janon, couldn't resist buying a couple of fish, which are now in quarantine until she finishes getting them tested. I hope everyone who buys new fish follows quarantine procedures before adding them to their main pond—it's just good practice.

Quality AND Quantity

The quality of koi at the All American Koi Show was nothing short of world-class, with an exceptional lineup of specimens representing the highest standards in color, conformation and pattern. From young prospects to mature Grand Champion contenders, each tank reflected the dedication of top hobbyists and breeders from across the country—and beyond. As the show continues to grow, it's quickly establishing itself as a premier international event, drawing global attention and participation from renowned dealers and judges. This momentum signals a bright future for the All American Koi Show on the world stage.

Celebrating Champions

The banquet was a hit, with a packed house and plenty of excitement. The Grand Champion was owned by Herbert Fritch. The Reserve Grand Champion went to Andrew Sandler. A special "judge's favorite" category was added this year. My local client, Chad Roy, won the Ogata Award (one of the judge's favorites), Botan Champion, Adult Champion and more. I was thrilled. Woo hoo!

As the show wrapped up, it was great to see Taro Kodama going tank to tank with the judges, translating for the cameras as they explained why they chose each winning fish.

Looking Ahead

Breeders, hobbyists and vendors came from around the world—not just to compete or sell, but to connect. Shows like this aren't just about trophies; they're about coming together as koi hobbyists to share knowledge, celebrate craftsmanship and support the industry as a whole. It's this kind of unity that helps the hobby thrive and keeps the passion alive for generations to come. This year's show was about 30% larger than last year's—and I can't wait to see what happens next.

ALL-AMERICAN KOI SHOW 2025 WINNERS

MAJOR AWARDS	AWARD	KOI ENTRY	ENTRANT	BREEDER	DEALER	SIZE
167	GRAND CHAMPION	90-363	HERBERT FRITCH	DIANICHI	GRAND KOI LLC	9
252	RESERVE CHAMPION	54-265	ANDREW SANDLER (POLO REEF)	SAKAI FISH FARM	FITZ'S FISH PONDS	9
137	BABY CHAMPION	10-138	HERBERT FRITCH	SAKAI CO LTD	MYSTIC KOI	2
142	YOUNG CHAMPION	8-124	HERBERT FRITCH	MOMMOTARO	MYSTIC KOI	3
143	MATURE CHAMPION	94-381	HERBERT FRITCH	SAKAI FISH FARM	MYSTIC KOI	8
250	ADULT CHAMPION	73-309	CHAD ROY	AOKI	MYSTIC KOI	6
19	KOKUGYO SIZE 1	67-152	CINDY BERGMAN	TORAZO	RNR KOI	1
20	KOKUGYO SIZE 2	41-186	KHUONG DOAN	MARUYAMA KOI FARM	CHAMPION NISHIKIGOI	2
138	KOKUGYO SIZE 3	8-125	HERBERT FRITCH	MOMOTARO	MYSTIC KOI	3
139	KOKUGYO SIZE 4	36-47	JAYDEE DARGIS	KANNO	CHILDREN OF THE SUN KOI	4
140	KOKUGYO SIZE 5	11-175	HERBERT FRITCH	KANNO	MYSTIC KOI	5
141	KOKUGYO SIZE 6	12-177	HERBERT FRITCH	FUKUZAWA	MYSTIC KOI	6
240	KOKUGYO SIZE 7	24-80	MIKE & BONNIE GLEFKE	TAKANO	MYSTIC KOI	7
246	KOKUGYO SIZE 8	62-297	JAMES PROFANATO	ISA KOI FARM	FITZ'S FISH PONDS	8
249	KOKUGYO SIZE 9	18-78	MIKE & BONNIE GLEFKE	SAKAI FISH FARM	MYSTIC KOI	9
174	JUMBO KOI AWARD	55-268	ANDREW SANDLER (POLO REEF)	DAINICHI KOI FARM	FIT'S FISH PONDS	9
144	MIYABI CHAMPION	77-342	JASON YATES	MOMOTARO KOI FARM	KODAMA KOI FARM	9
152	SAKURA CHAMPION	15-87	ARTHUR KAI - TESAR GUSMAWAN	MONOTARO	MYSTIC KOI	9

About the Author



Kent Wallace was born and raised in Las Vegas, Nevada. Kent spent most of his adult life in the automobile industry at independent shops and dealerships, along with working at his own shop as a race car fabricator at age 24. Then, in 2001 a neighbor asked Kent if he could build her a koi pond like the one Kent's father had. From that point on pond building became his new passion. This first pond he built was submitted to Better Homes & Gardens Magazine and won Best Courtyard Nationwide in their special interest publication.

ATTRACTING POLLINATORS to your POND





by Emily Lane
Fitz's Fish Ponds Plant Specialist

A well-planted water garden is an oasis of peace and stillness. But take a closer look and you'll find a vibrant, breathing ecosystem supporting a dazzling array of life. Some of that life has been intentionally added—fish, aquatic plants, maybe even turtles. But what about the unsung heroes responsible for the bursting blooms? These visitors often go unnoticed, sometimes mistaken for pests, yet they play a vital role in your pond's beauty and balance. They are the pollinators.

What Are Pollinators?

Pollinators are animals—primarily insects and birds—that move pollen from one flower to another, encouraging plant reproduction and biodiversity. While honeybees are the most well-known, many creatures contribute to pollination, including native bees, butterflies, moths, flies, beetles and hummingbirds. No matter how small, these animals are essential to maintaining ecological harmony in and around your pond.



The Cardinal Flower with its striking red attracts hummingbirds easily, providing them with sweet nectar in exchange for pollination.

Why Pollinators Matter

Pollinators form the backbone of healthy ecosystems, including your backyard water garden. While aquatic plants are often chosen for their aesthetic value, they also serve essential functions such as stabilizing soil, filtering toxins, producing oxygen and offering shade and shelter to aquatic life. Pollinators enable these plants to reproduce and thrive, creating a symbiotic relationship that enhances the pond's natural resilience. Where plants grow, pollinators should follow. Without them, blooms fade, biodiversity declines, and the overall system weakens.

How to Attract Pollinators to Your Pond

Unlike koi or water lilies, pollinators can't simply be purchased and added to your pond—they have to be invited. Fortunately, many ponds already attract pollinators by default. But if you're looking to enhance their presence, a few thoughtful design choices can make your pond irresistible to these helpful guests.

Avoid using chemical pesticides around the pond, as they deter both harmful pests and beneficial pollinators. Opt instead for organic landscaping methods. Provide a diverse palette of plants to attract a variety of pollinators. For example, a pond planted with iris, swamp milkweed

Pollinator-Friendly Pond Plants

Add color and attract beneficial visitors with these top-performing blooms:

- **Pickerel Rush** – Striking purple blooms that thrive in shallow water and keep pollinators active all summer.
- **Iris** – A pond-edge favorite that attracts a wide range of pollinators with elegant, showy flowers.
- **Swamp Milkweed** – A monarch magnet, this native variety offers nectar and a nursery for caterpillars.
- **Arrowhead** – Recognized by its distinct leaf shape and white blooms, bees love its nectar-rich flowers.
- **Cardinal Flower** – Bold red blossoms make this a hummingbird favorite.
- **Bog Bean** – Crawls along the pond's edge and attracts bees, hoverflies and butterflies.
- **Blue Moneywort** – Low-growing and spreading, its tiny blue flowers attract hoverflies and bees.
- **Water Lilies** – A pond classic, these floating blooms welcome beetles, moths and bees.
- **Lotus** – Eye-catching blooms that draw in bees and beetles, adding drama and ecological value.



Blue Flag Iris grows and seeds prolifically around the edges of natural and manmade ponds, and is widely loved by humans and pollinators alike



Cold-hardy pink water lilies provide a pop of color to your water garden throughout the blooming season, while they survive winters and re-grow each spring.



This Banana Split Lotus, cultivated by Aquascapes Unlimited in Pennsylvania, is a variety of the American Lotus and produces massive blooms.

Pollinator Fun Facts: Small Creatures, Big Impact

- A single **honeybee** can visit up to 5,000 flowers in one day.
- **Monarch butterflies** migrate as far as 3,000 miles to overwinter in Mexico.
- Some pollinators, like **moths**, are active at night.
- **Hummingbirds** can flap their wings over 50 times per second.
- **Beetles** are among the oldest pollinators on Earth.
- **Swamp milkweed** serves as both nectar source and nursery for monarch caterpillars.
- **Hoverflies** mimic bees and wasps—but don't sting.
- Some **water lilies** trap pollinators overnight, releasing them the next day coated in pollen.
- **Hummingbirds** remember which flowers offer the most nectar—and return often.
- **Solitary bees** may build ground nests near ponds and prefer open, undisturbed soil.

and cardinal flower will support bees, butterflies and hummingbirds alike. Native plants are especially effective, as they've evolved alongside local pollinators and tend to require less maintenance and replanting.

Group flowers in clusters, making it easier for pollinators to forage efficiently. Offer shallow water access so they can drink during hot days, and ensure your pond gets ample sunlight to encourage blooms and activity. Add simple shelter features like rocks, grasses and logs to provide resting spots and nesting areas. Growing herbs around your pond—such as mint, basil or thyme—can also help attract pollinators while offering culinary uses for you.

Pond Plants That Pollinators Love

Several pond-friendly plants are especially attractive to pollinators. Pickerel rush and swamp milkweed are favorites of bees and butterflies. Cardinal flower and iris pull in hummingbirds and pollinating insects. Water lilies, lotus and blue moneywort not only enhance pond beauty but also draw in beetles, hoverflies and moths. By creating a thoughtful and



Cold-hardy pink water lilie.

varied plant selection, you're inviting a host of beneficial visitors to your garden.

The Pollinator Payoff

A pond designed with pollinators in mind becomes more than just a water feature—it becomes a living, breathing ecosystem full of color, movement and biodiversity. Pollinators support the health of plants, which in turn stabilize pond edges, improve water quality and provide habitat for a range of wildlife. These cascading benefits enhance both the pond's beauty and its long-term functionality.

About the Author



Emily Lane was born and raised in Northern New Jersey, Emily always found refuge outdoors surrounded by plants, animals, and water. She discovered her passion for gardening while attending college, which led her to working in horticulture after graduation. When she moved back to New Jersey, Emily was introduced to Fitz's Fish Ponds and found a new path managing the aquatic plant nursery at the Milford Farm. Here, she fell more in love with the world of pond plants and the magic that can be created by a well cultivated water garden. During her first year at FFP, Emily's role split into two as she also discovered a passion for Fish Health, and began coordinating FFP's aquatic veterinarian appointments and working with the Fish Health Team. Having found multiple role models within the pond community, she is excited to keep learning and exploring all aspects of pond, koi, and plant keeping!







Fountains like the famous Trevi Fountain are wonders of design, hydraulics, history, and religion; while at the same time, it displays an advanced understanding of hydraulics, and conveys a message of fabulous wealth.

Water Feature Design
A HISTORICAL CONTEXT

by Mike Gannon
That Pond Place

Creating lasting experiences for clients is one of the key driving forces behind the water feature design profession. Water features offer a form of artistic expression that may outlast nearly every other type of human-crafted art. Shaping water, whether through ponds, waterfalls, fountains, streams, canals, aqueducts or lakes is a high-level craft practiced by societies that have moved beyond mere survival and into the realm of refinement.

From Genesis to the Age of Aquarius

Modern water feature designers are in good company historically. From the very beginning—literally—fountains were part of creation's grand design, even referenced in the Book of Genesis (Gen 7:11). God's plan included fountains. The "fountains of the great deep" became something for humanity to contend with. Just ask Noah.

As we spin through the procession of time, today's water shaping artisans find themselves at the dawn of the Age of Aquarius—an era astrologically tied to the bearer of water. The skies now align with Aquarius, promising a favorable cosmic backdrop for the next 2,000 years of water shaping. But when we peer into the waters of the past, we find some massive shoes to fill. The ancients mastered water feature design at levels of scale and sophistication that continue to challenge and inspire modern artisans.







(Left) - Aquarius the water bearer symbolizes the comic origins of water shaping. (Center) - An ancient Roman aqueduct illustrates early engineering mastery. (Right) - The Taj Mahal showcases the pinnacle of artistic and hydraulic design in water features.

Megalithic Marvels and Ancient Genius

The historical record is full of water features—both well-known and obscure, dating back thousands of years. Even in prehistoric, pre-biblical eras, archaeological wonders of aquatic engineering emerged. Massive stone basins and channels were carved and placed with a precision that modern machinery would struggle to replicate.

How did they do it? These feats of engineering, often achieved without electricity, power tools or even wheels, beg the question: Was ancient technology more advanced than we've been taught to believe? Massive megalithic structures with functional and decorative water displays continue to defy modern understanding.

Myth, Legend and the Search for Immortality

Water features also hold a deep place in human myth and religion. We've all heard tales of the elusive Fountain of Youth—sought by adventurers and explorers alike. In April 1513, Spanish conquistador Juan Ponce de León became the first documented European to set foot in North America. His purpose? Among other things, he was searching for a legendary fountain from a lost civilization.



Baths of Caracalla, Rome, Italy

He left behind the masterful water features of Europe: majestic fountains, canals, and aqueducts found in countries like Germany, Spain, Greece, England, France, Serbia and Italy. One standout example is the Trevi Fountain of Rome, which showcases incredible artistry, design, and engineering—all without modern pumps. At its peak 2,000 years ago, ancient Rome boasted more than 2,000 fountains and earned its name: the City of Fountains. Today, Kansas City, Missouri, proudly carries that title in the United States.

The Oldest Profession? Designing Water

Ancient water features scattered across the globe suggest the profession of water feature design stretches back farther than most assume. While pyramid-building 5,000 years ago was impressive, pyramid-building with pools, canals, basins, and water gardens? That took it to a whole other level.

Recent excavations at Göbekli Tepe in Turkey, dating back nearly 12,000 years, revealed basins and rain channels clearly designed for aesthetic and ritual use—predating ancient Egyptian, Greek and Roman features by millennia. These discoveries push the origins of water design into a far more ancient context.



Malvinha Fountain:There is cultural, religious, and astronomic symbolism covering this feature. Water features always tell stories to those that take the time listen.

Egypt's Temple of Osireion (circa 1300 B.C.), Jordan's grand Nymphaeum of Jerash (A.D. 190), and Greece's ornate Spring of Peirene all now seem like relatively recent additions to a long timeline of hydraulic art.

Water Shaping in the Ancient Americas

While civilizations in the East and Middle East were developing complex water features, their contemporaries in the Americas were doing the same. The Mayans, Incans and Aztecs engineered fish ponds, floating islands, aqueducts, and elaborate canal systems.

In the high elevations of Peru, the Inca city of Machu Picchu holds 16 interconnected fountains built more than 600 years ago. Equally remarkable is the Cumbemayo Aqueduct—an intricate five-mile water distribution system mixing art, spirituality and functionality, carved into stone with zigzagging channels, petroglyphs and ceremonial chambers.

Farther north, the Aztec capital of Tenochtitlán (present-day Mexico City) featured an extraordinary array of aqueducts, baths, royal aquariums, fountains and water gardens—all fed by mountain springs through a meticulously engineered delivery system.

Water Wisdom Across Asia

The ancient Chinese were also masterful designers of enduring water features. The Daming Palace, constructed in A.D. 600, contained elaborate fountain displays and contemplative garden ponds filled with koi and wildlife. These water environments were designed not just for function but to support long-term peace and reflection.

Japanese water design took on a distinctly spiritual aesthetic, favoring minimalism and symbolism. Rocks stood for mountains. Ponds and moving water represented rivers and lakes. Japanese gardens incorporated bowls, urns, bamboo fountains and naturalistic forms that still influence modern designers.

In ancient India, water design was equally revered. The Taj Mahal, completed in the 1600s, is world-famous not just for its structure but for its integration of lotus fountains, reflecting pools, channels and sprawling water gardens—all meant to evoke paradise. The Taj's symmetry and reverence for water remain unmatched in landscape design.



Nan Lian Garden Pavilion Bridge: A tranquil pavilion bridge reflects harmony between nature and traditional Chinese design.

A Legacy of Abundance and Intention

Few cultures ignored the design of water once they reached a level of abundance. Designing water features was not a priority for hunter-gatherer societies. When survival was the goal, sharpening a spear took precedence over foaming a waterfall.

But as civilizations stabilized, water shaping became a higher art form. It offered peace, power, wonder and spiritual connection. From sacred basins to extravagant cascades, our collective past tells us this: The design and shaping of water is an intrinsic, timeless human behavior.

The Future Is Fluid

Modern water feature designers, our era's water bearers, have a rare opportunity to carry forward this 12,000-year-old tradition. With modern tools and historical inspiration, we can continue shaping water to foster beauty, balance and peace for



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generations to come.

Looking to the past isn't just an exercise in admiration—it's a wellspring of inspiration. The ancients didn't have access to modern materials or machinery, yet they achieved timeless beauty, deep functionality and spiritual resonance through their designs. Today's pond builders and water feature designers would do well to study these ancient works, not to replicate them, but to reconnect with the values they embodied: harmony with nature, precision in craftsmanship, and reverence for water as a life-giving force. By grounding modern innovation in historical wisdom, we can create features that don't just last—but truly matter.

The world today needs more harmony. The thoughtful shaping of water may not solve every global issue, but it can create spaces of serenity, healing and connection. Our responsibility as modern artisans is to respect the past and help shape a more peaceful future—one water feature at a time.





(Left) This fountains age, location, and design defy logic, yet it exists in the altitudes of Peru. The flow rate of this feature can be increased and decreased by swiping a finger across the spillway. - (Right) A traditional Japanese shishi-odoshi.

About the Author



Mike Gannon, life-long fish and plant hobbyist, 30+ year award winning pond professional. Owner of New Jersey based That Pond Place and Full Service Aquatics. Mike has been building and servicing ponds and water features in NJ and around the US, taking his company international in 2021. Mike is host of The Koi Pond Watergarden Podcast, author of Love Your Pond blog, his YouTube channel The Pond Hunter. Always "In the pursuit of all things aquatic".

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IMPOSTER SYNDROME in the Trades

Why contractors feel like frauds and what to do about it



by Steve Rozenberg
The Rozenberg Group

Have you ever stood on a job site, glanced at your crew, your equipment, and your packed schedule, and still thought to yourself, "I don't know what I'm doing"?

Maybe you've hit a big milestone, your calendar's booked out for months, you've added trucks to your fleet, and your team's growing, but somewhere deep down, a small voice creeps in. It tells you that your success is just luck. That one bad review, one lost job, or one misstep might bring it all crashing down. That sooner or later, someone's going to figure out you're "just a guy with a truck."

If any of that resonates, let me assure you: You're not alone. And you're not broken.

That voice of self-doubt has a name. It's called imposter syndrome, and it's far more common in the trades than you might expect.

What Is Imposter Syndrome?

Imposter syndrome is the psychological pattern in which an individual doubts their skills, talents or accomplishments and has a persistent internalized fear of being exposed as a fraud. It doesn't matter how much you've achieved or how many customers are happy—you still feel like you're faking it.

For contractors, imposter syndrome often sounds like: "You're not really a business owner." "You're not qualified to lead a team." "You're just a contractor, not a CEO."

It usually shows up when things are going well. You land a high-ticket project, hit a major revenue goal or make a key hire. But instead of celebrating, you start second-guessing yourself. The doubt creeps in—not because you're not capable, but because your identity hasn't caught up with your reality.

Why Contractors Are Especially Prone to It

Imposter syndrome doesn't just affect white-collar professionals or corporate executives. It hits hard in the trades, and it makes sense when you think about it.

Most of us didn't come from business backgrounds. We didn't graduate from MBA programs or inherit turnkey companies. We built our businesses from scratch—often with little more than a set of tools, a truck and a vision. We learned by doing. We failed, adjusted, tried again and kept swinging.



That's what makes the trade world special. It's full of problem-solvers, innovators and people who grind through adversity.

But here's the catch: when the business actually starts working—when the calls are coming in, the crew is growing, and customers are giving five-star reviews—it can feel like we somehow don't deserve it.

That little voice says, "You're not a real business owner. You're just winging it."

It's a lie, of course. If you're managing cash flow, winning contracts, navigating chaos and still showing up for your clients—you're not an imposter. You're a leader.

The Hidden Cost of Imposter Syndrome

Imposter syndrome isn't just a mindset problem, it's a bottom-line problem. When you believe you're not qualified or not good enough,





it quietly affects how you operate your business.

It shows up in your pricing. You lowball your bids because you're afraid to charge what you're worth. You convince yourself that clients won't pay more, even when your work justifies it.

It shows up in your leadership. You hesitate to make decisions, defer to others, or overthink every move because you're afraid of being "found out."

It shows up in your sales. You don't follow up with leads. You under-sell your services. You avoid talking about money. Not because you don't believe in your work—but because you don't believe in yourself.

It also affects your growth. You resist hiring help, avoid investing in tools or training, and hesitate to take the next step—because you don't feel "ready."

And the worst part? It becomes a self-fulfilling cycle. You feel like a fraud, so you play small. The business stalls, reinforcing the belief that you're not cut out for this. And round and round it goes.

How to Overcome Imposter Syndrome—Step by Step

Here's the truth: imposter syndrome doesn't just disappear. It shows up every time you level up. But you can learn to manage it, move through it, and stop letting it hold you back.

Let's walk through a few simple but powerful steps to take control.

STEP 1: Document Your Wins

Our brains are wired to remember mistakes and forget wins. That's why you need to deliberately remind yourself of your progress.

Start by writing down five wins from the past 30 days. They don't need to be huge.

Did you land a tough client? Handle a complicated repair? Train a new hire successfully? Keep operations going during a chaotic week?

Write it all down. Then say it out loud: "I did that. I earned that."

That's not luck. That's leadership.

STEP 2: Counter Feelings with Facts

Feelings can be misleading. They tell us we're not ready, smart enough, or experienced enough. But facts are objective—and they don't lie.

So next time the imposter voice pops up, counter it with facts: "I've helped 25 customers this quarter." "Revenue is up 30 percent year-over-year." "I've built this business from the ground up."

Facts provide grounding. They remind you that your success isn't a fluke—it's earned.

STEP 3: Step Into the Role of CEO

Here's something nobody tells you: You won't feel ready until after you take the leap. Confidence doesn't come before action, it's the result of action.

Want to feel more like a business owner? Start acting like one.

Ask yourself: What's one decision "imposter you" would avoid?

Maybe it's raising your rates. Maybe it's hiring a second crew. Maybe it's following up with that lead who ghosted you.

Whatever it is—do it today. That's how you build confidence. Not by waiting to feel ready, but by moving forward anyway.

STEP 4: Lead Boldly, Even in the Uncertainty

As a business owner, your crew watches how you lead. If you move with doubt, hesitation or anxiety, your team will mirror that energy.

But if you lead with purpose (even if you're figuring it out as you go) they'll follow with confidence.

You don't need all the answers. You just need to keep showing up with courage. Boldness is contagious.

STEP 5: Connect With Other Business Owners

The biggest lie imposter syndrome tells us is that we're alone. But in truth, almost every contractor has felt this way at some point. We just don't talk about it.

That's why I facilitate group coaching calls for contractors—to create space for these conversations. We discuss the real stuff:

- How to shift your mindset from "technician" to "owner"
- How to charge what you're worth
- How to lead a team with clarity and confidence
- How to stop feeling like a fake when you're already winning
- Because here's the reality: You're not faking anything. You're building something.

What Growth Actually Feels Like

If you're feeling imposter syndrome right now, that's actually a sign of growth. It means you're stepping outside your comfort zone. It means you're doing something bigger than before. And yes—it's going to feel messy, awkward and uncertain.

But that's exactly what growth feels like.

It's not polished. It's not perfect. It's real. It's risky. And it's worth it.

Own What You've Built

Think back to where you started.

Maybe it was a one-man operation, fixing pumps out of your garage. Maybe it was a truck, a shovel and a dream. Maybe it was nights and weekends after your day job.

And now? You've got a team. Systems. A reputation. A steady book of business. A future.

That didn't happen by accident.

You didn't get lucky. You didn't stumble into it.

You built it.

So the next time the voice says you're not qualified, remember this: You're not pretending. You're becoming.

Every job you take, every hire you make, every tough season you push through—that's growth. That's proof.

You are not "just a guy with a truck."

You are a business owner. A problem-solver. A leader.

Start believing it.

About the Author



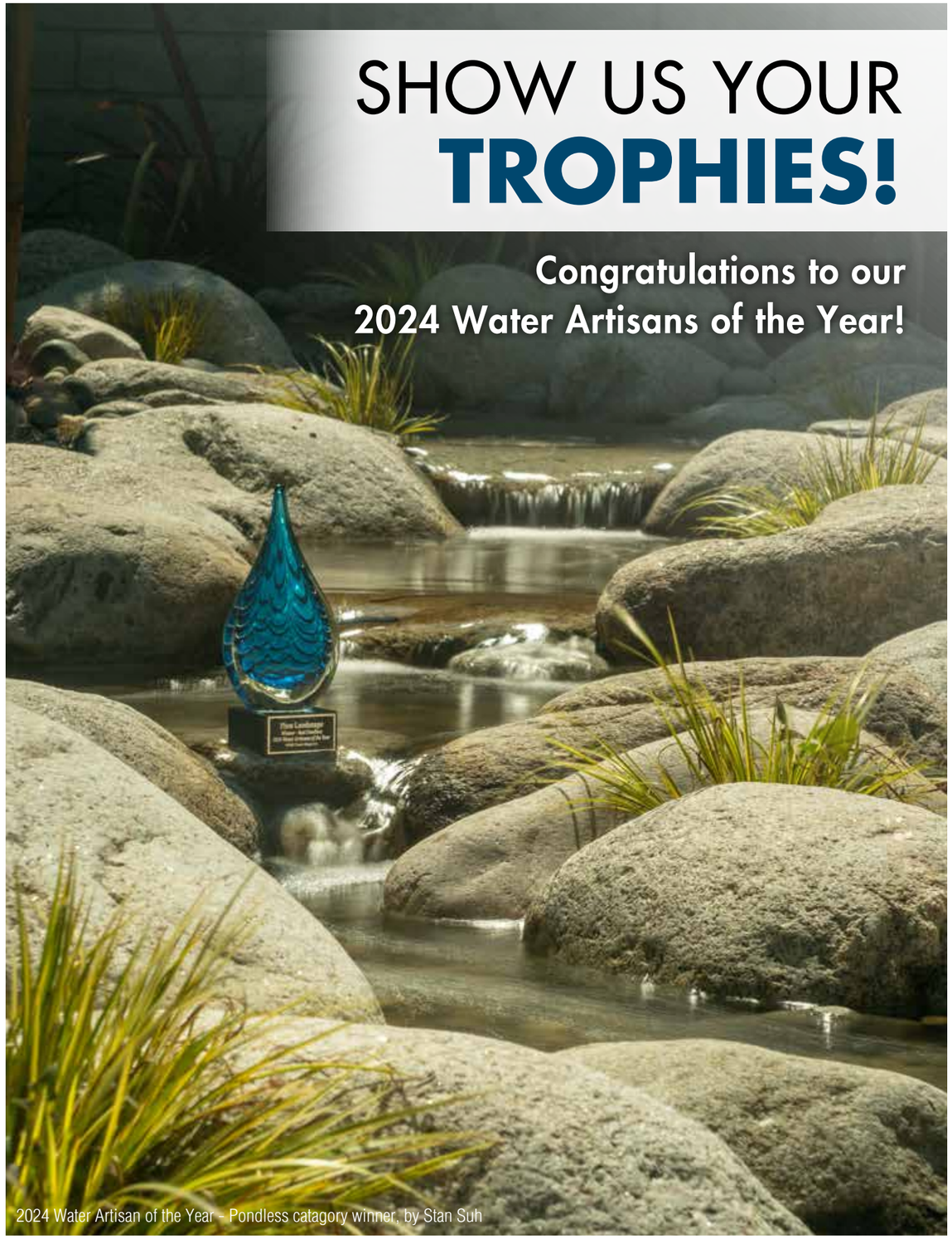
Steve Rozenberg is an international airline pilot who flies the Boeing 777 and a successful entrepreneur and business coach. He helps contractors shift their mindset from technician to CEO, teaching them how to lead with confidence, close high-value deals and scale their businesses with purpose. Through his Daily Sales Accelerator and weekly coaching calls, Rozenberg equips tradespeople with the tools and strategies they need to grow—both professionally and personally.





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Congratulations to our 2024 Water Artisans of the Year!



2024 Water Artisan of the Year - Pondless catagory winner, by Stan Suh



Stan Suh, Flow Aquascapes
Pondless - Water Artisan of the Year

"Thank you to POND Trade Magazine and the judges for this honor. A special thanks as well to our incredible team, supportive families, and valued clients for allowing us the opportunity to practice and grow our craft."



Ryan Farnol, Platinum Ponds and Landscaping
Formal Fountains and Features - Water Artisan of the Year

"We are so honored to be recognized by POND Trade Magazine and our peers for living our passion of building Ponds, Water Features, & Outdoor Spaces that bring joy and serenity to our customers. We are truly grateful and blessed to receive this award!"



Eric Arnston, Stonebridge Pond & Waterfall
Most Naturalistic- Water Artisan of the Year

"Gratitude is the fuel behind my passion, and the pressure I place on myself to create something extraordinary is what keeps me moving forward. I'm deeply thankful to everyone who's been part of this journey—it means more than words can express."



Chris Thompson, Just Add Water
Recreational Pond - Water Artisan of the Year

"We're big fans of the POND Trade Magazine Water Artisan of the Year awards and love being part of a great cause with entry fees going to St. Jude. We were ecstatic to hear we won the Recreational Pond category this year! Congrats to all the winners—what an awesome group to be part of!"

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The First-Ever Dallas Koi Show at Aquashella Makes a Splash

By Marlon Ngo





Every great journey begins with a single step. For the koi hobby, that step took place May 18–19, 2025, with the inaugural koi show at Aquashella Dallas—a landmark event that marked the first time koi were showcased at one of the nation's largest aquatic expos.

The idea first took root months earlier, when I traveled to Aquashella Daytona in November 2024 to promote the hobby and connect with clients. There, I met George Mavrakis, a 27-year-old aquatic visionary and founder of Aquashella. We struck up a conversation about koi, our company's mission, and how we could introduce this centuries-old tradition to a broader aquatic audience.

Then, in January 2025—while I was in Japan sourcing koi—George reached out with an unexpected proposal: "Marlon, I want to incorporate a koi show into the 2025 Dallas Aquashella in May."



It was ambitious. A koi show of that size typically takes a year to plan. We had four months. I was excited but honest about the challenge. Organizing an event like this meant securing vendors, recruiting exhibitors, lining up judges, coordinating travel, and ensuring space, tanks, and water quality were all accounted for.

To test the waters, I reached out to the Dallas Koi Kichi Club and spoke with co-chairs John Ahmes and Michael Motif. Both were immediately intrigued. "If we can pull this off," Michael said, "it'll be nothing short of a miracle."

A Show is Born

By Thursday of show week, tanks began to arrive. The Dallas Koi Kichi Club worked tirelessly to set up, troubleshoot logistics, and await final clearance to fill the tanks. Time was tight, but once we were given the green light, everything moved fast.

Friday saw a steady influx of koi, exhibitors, and vendors. Many participants brought thousands of dollars in fish and equipment, trusting in a show that had never existed before. That leap of faith from hobbyists and businesses alike underscored a shared belief: this show was something special.

Crowds, Competition & Community

Saturday morning opened with judging led by two world-renowned senior judges. Hobbyists watched with anticipation as tanks were evaluated. The crowd was astounding—thousands of attendees packed the show floor, with a line forming outside the venue and stretching to the road.

By 2 p.m., judging wrapped, and results were revealed later that night during the show banquet. From first-time entrants to seasoned competitors, hobbyists were recognized for their dedication and excellence.

An Unforgettable Finish

The evening banquet was more than an awards ceremony—it was a celebration of resilience, teamwork and the future of the koi hobby. Smiles, hugs and sighs of relief swept the room, especially among members of the Dallas Koi Kichi Club, whose tireless work made the entire event possible. Special credit is due to Michael Motif, who managed logistics from beginning to end with extraordinary determination.

What unfolded in Dallas was more than just a koi show. It was a historic breakthrough for the hobby—a successful fusion of traditional Japanese koi appreciation with modern aquatic culture. The Aquashella Dallas Koi Show proved that koi can find a home within mainstream aquatic expos, and that with the right team, anything is possible.

This was only the beginning.



Fitz's Fish Ponds Revives Historic Waterford Gardens with New Saddle River Location

Fitz's Fish Ponds has officially opened its newest retail location at the former site of Waterford Gardens, one of the oldest water gardening properties in the country.

Originally founded in 1895 by William Tricker, Waterford Gardens was once among the first water lily farms in America. After years of decline, the site was acquired and revitalized by Fitz's Fish Ponds, which restored its ponds, greenhouse and infrastructure while preserving its historic legacy.

"We knew how important this place was to so many people," said Fitz's Fish Ponds founder Brian Fitzsimmons. "Our goal was to respect that history while creating something that could thrive today."

The grand opening celebration drew hundreds of visitors over two days and featured koi and product giveaways, educational seminars, and aquascaping demonstrations. Saddle River Mayor Albert Kurpis praised the transformation, calling it "a continuation of a legacy the community values deeply."

Educational highlights included fish health seminars with aquatic veterinarian Dr. Ben Rosenbloom and a live tank aquascaping demo led by Jennifer Bujalski, manager of FFP Aquariums and Aquascaping. The custom aquascape created during the event is now on permanent display at the store.

Now fully operational, the Saddle River location offers Japanese koi, aquatic plants, pond equipment and supplies. The restoration blends history with modern functionality, creating a full-service destination for pond enthusiasts in the region.

"This is more than a store—it's a place where people connect over a shared passion for ponds, plants and fish," Fitzsimmons said.

For more information, visit www.fitzfishponds.com or view the grand opening recap at youtube.com/watch?v=achAtGDIDa8.



Oxy-Gen by Reflections™ Debuts in Oklahoma Swim Pond, Draws Industry Interest

This summer, Larry Carnes of Reflections Water Gardens is proud to introduce Oxy-Gen by Reflections™. Larry has developed a technology that relies on tiny bubbles that work in partnership with the company's proprietary ultra-biofiltration system. Reflections Water Gardens used this year's Professional Pond Alliance Advanced Swim Pond Build in Oklahoma as a proving ground for its new Oxy-Gen by Reflections™ water-quality system. Installed in a residential swim pond during the multi-day training event, the equipment has been running for several months.

"The photos and videos we're receiving show pure, crystal-clear water," said Reflections founder Larry Carnes. "That real-world performance—and the feedback from colleagues who helped with the build—tells us we're on the right track."

Oxy-Gen by Reflections™ is designed to boost dissolved oxygen, improve circulation and suppress nuisance algae in natural swimming pools and large koi ponds. Carnes said early demand from contractors is strong, but full-scale manufacturing and distribution are still ramping up. For now, units are being built to order.

"We're supplying Oxy-Gen by Reflections™ one at a time for contractors and installing it à la carte for homeowners, or bundling it into renovation and expansion projects," he said. "Our goal is to make the system an affordable, off-the-shelf, value-added tool for the entire industry."

Carnes is seeking additional field feedback as production scales. Contractors interested in testing or purchasing Oxy-Gen by Reflections™ can contact him directly at larry@reflectionswatergardens.com.

New Water Feature Training Dates Announced for 2025–2026 Winter Season

Atlantic-Oase has announced new dates for its annual Winter Water Feature Training series, returning for the 2025–2026 season. This three-day, hands-on training takes place at Atlantic-Oase headquarters in Aurora, Ohio, and is designed to help professional contractors learn about water feature products, best installation practices and how to grow profitability through water features.

This year, Atlantic-Oase will offer four different sessions across eight total dates, with options tailored to a range of experience levels and specialties. Contractors can select the session that best fits their goals.

Session 1: Fountains, Formal Spillways & Pond-Free Systems

Learn how to install high-profit, easy add-ons like fountains set in basins, formal spillways built into hardscape walls, and pond-free waterfalls.

Session 2: Water Garden Systems, Pumps & Maintenance

This session focuses on water gardens and koi ponds, including pond filtration and four-season maintenance. Attendees will build a pond using multiple filtration options.

Session 3: Advanced Systems & Filtration

Take your filtration expertise to the next level by exploring and installing a variety of systems in a demonstration pond. The course focuses on plumbing, power and smart control of high-end koi and recreational ponds.



Session 4: Hardscape & Formal Spillway Systems

Perfect for hardscapers, this session covers water features that enhance both new and existing hardscape designs. Attendees will construct multiple features, including fountain bowls, vases, spillways and spouts—some freestanding, others integrated into existing walls.

Registration is open now, and spots are limited. Don't miss this opportunity to learn, dig in the dirt and network with fellow water feature pros.

Register today at www.atlantic-oase.com/trainings.





Aquascape Launches Powerful Duo for Pond Plant Success: New Heavy-Duty Aquatic Plant Pots and Once-A-Year Pond Plant Fertilizer

Aquascape, Inc. has launched two new products aimed at improving aquatic plant care: the Heavy-Duty Aquatic Plant Pots and Once-A-Year Pond Plant Fertilizer. Together, the products are designed to simplify planting and feeding while delivering professional-level results for pond owners.

The Once-A-Year Pond Plant Fertilizer is a time-released formula that feeds aquatic plants for up to 180 days with a single application. Its low-phosphorus, low-nitrogen formula reduces algae and plant stress, while high potassium levels encourage strong flowering in waterlilies, lotus and other pond plants. The fertilizer is available in both capsule and granular formats.

Aquascape's new Heavy-Duty Aquatic Plant Pots are made from durable, non-woven geotextile fabric that promotes healthy root growth and oxygen exchange. Unlike rigid plastic pots, these flexible containers hold their shape while allowing roots to breathe. Reinforced nylon handles make them easy to move. Pots are available in 12-, 16- and 20-inch diameters.

"These new offerings are designed to take the guesswork out of pond plant care," said Greg Wittstock, owner and CEO of Aquascape, Inc. "With just one fertilizer application per year and long-lasting, professional-quality planters, pond owners can expect healthy pond plants all season long."

Both products are available through Aquascape's website and network of authorized distributors and retailers. For more information, visit aquascapeinc.com.



2025 HNA Awards Now Open for Entries

The Concrete Masonry & Hardscapes Association (CMHA) has opened entries for the 2025 Hardscape North America (HNA) Awards, honoring outstanding design, craftsmanship and innovation in residential and commercial hardscape projects.

Submissions will be accepted through Aug. 13. Winners will be recognized during the HNA Awards Ceremony on Oct. 24 at the Kentucky Exposition Center in Louisville, Kentucky, held in conjunction with the Hardscape North America trade show, Oct. 22–24.

"The HNA Awards shine a light on the incredible creativity and skill across our industry," said Robert Thomas, CMHA president and CEO. "This program not only recognizes technical expertise and design ingenuity, it also showcases how hardscape installations enhance built environments across the U.S. and Canada."

Awards will be presented across nine project categories:

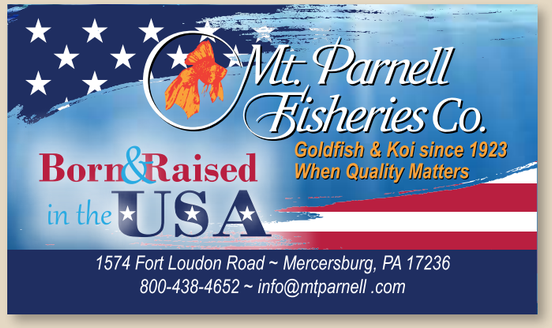
- Segmental concrete pavement
- Clay brick pavement
- Porcelain paver pavement
- Retaining walls
- Adhered thin veneers
- Combination of hardscape products
- Natural stone pavement
- Outdoor living features
- Vintage installation

Each entry will be judged by a panel of industry experts on design, construction quality, craftsmanship, material compatibility and achievement of project goals.

The HNA Awards are produced by CMHA and endorsed by the Brick Industry Association (BIA) and the Natural Stone Institute (NSI).

For entry guidelines and submission details, visit HardscapeNA.com/hnaawards.

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Model	Max. pond size	Max. flow rate	Bulb power	Inlet / Outlet		Dimensions (Excluding hosetails)	Dimensions (Inlet to outlet)
evo15	4,000 US gallons	1,800 US gallons/hr	15W (1 x 15W T8)	1½" Comes with hosetails	2" fittings can fit over inlet / outlet	21.25" (l) 4.5" (w) 6" (h)	12.5" Centre of inlet to centre of outlet
evo25	5,300 US gallons	2,500 US gallons/hr	25W (1 x 25W T8)	1½" Comes with hosetails	2" fittings can fit over inlet / outlet	21.25" (l) 4.5" (w) 6" (h)	12.5" Centre of inlet to centre of outlet
evo30	7,900 US gallons	3,500 US gallons/hr	30W (1 x 30W T8)	1½" Comes with hosetails	2" fittings can fit over inlet / outlet	38.9" (l) 3.35" (w) 6" (h)	30.2" Centre of inlet to centre of outlet
evo55	14,500 US gallons	5,000 US gallons/hr	55W (1 X 55W T8)	1½" Comes with hosetails	2" fittings can fit over inlet / outlet	38.9" (l) 3.35" (w) 6" (h)	30.2" Centre of inlet to centre of outlet
evo110	19,500 US gallons	6,000 US gallons/hr	110W (2 X 55W T8)	2" No fittings supplied	2" No fittings supplied	38.9" (l) 7.7" (w) 11" (h)	30.2" Centre of inlet to centre of outlet

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Model	Max. Pond Size	Optimum Flow Rate	Max. Flow Rate	Bulb Power	Inlet / Outlet
evo55 Ti	14,500 US gallons	4,000 US gallons/hr	5,000 US gallons/hr	55W (1 X 55W T8)	1½" Comes with hosetails — 2" fittings can fit over inlet / outlet
evo110 Ti	19,500 US gallons	5,000 US gallons/hr	6,000 US gallons/hr	110W (2 X 55W T8)	2" No fittings supplied

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