

BENEATH THE SURFACE

NEWSLETTER FOR EIPS MEMBERS

October 3, 2011

FROM THE EDITOR



Hello fellow members, I hope this newsletter finds you all healthy and happy and enjoying this wonderful Fall weather here in Eastern Iowa. Most of our ponds are still looking pretty good at this point and hopefully this will help us all in getting them ready for (dread and ominous background music) Winter. Typing it is even tough to do, but when you live in area with four seasons, you have to make due.

As you can tell I changed up the design of the newsletter again, I am playing around with it in order to help make it easier to do and also easier to read. We will see how that all pans out.

FROM THE PRESIDENT



Thank you all for helping with the Wine Tasting. It was not exactly the evening we had envisioned in our minds, but after the bonfire got going and of course the wine got going, things heated up pretty well. Kerry and I ended up feeling pretty good about the evening.

The cost of the wine tasting was 525 total but the cost to the society was 350. The difference was underwritten by some members and the gift baskets were donated. I want to thank Jackie and Harry especially for a donated basket and some of the wine to put in to the case of wine to be raffled. This greatly cut down our costs and allowed our club to profit more. I have also received a 25 dollar check from Lauren at Secret Cellar to donate to the club. All and all I think it was a successful event again and it is a good starting off point for whoever may want to organize one in the future. Again thank you for attending, pouring and providing food. I know there has been some mentioning of different pricing in the future and some other wonderful suggestions and the next group can use those in making another successful tasting at a future date.

Personal note from the President

I want to remind everyone that the recognition night will be approaching in November. At this meeting we usually pick new officers for the next year. I am stating now that I think the club truly needs new blood and new ideas to continue to go on and grow. Because of this, I am saying that I do not want to be President again next year if possible. I like doing the newsletter and would like to continue that and trying to do both is very time consuming. I am not saying that I would not do the job if there is no interest but I would do it at a much lesser degree, meaning I could not commit to every meeting. Kerry and I would prefer to be on many committees and help that way. Just wanted to mention this to let anyone know that if they are interested in trying to be an officer, feel free to speak up. I have enjoyed this year very

much and I have actually learned how to be a better communicator myself because of situations that arrive in any organization. Thank you for allowing me to do this and showing me your faith. It has meant quite a bit to me...

MEETING DETAILS

It was discussed in the previous meeting on September 24th about a second October meeting to be held at the Ausdie building by Tim Oberbrockling. Tim and I have discussed it and he would prefer to have a summer meeting and since I have viewed this area myself, it is very pretty in Summer so we are going to do that instead. We will only have one meeting in October.

SATURDAY OCTOBER 22ND Paul and Gerry Dickerson's House
1265 Ivan Lane West Liberty. We will be discussing and possibly voting on the funds to be distributed for this year, so please be sure and attend.

Gerry and Paul have set the time as 5pm and please bring a dish to share. They are providing Hamburgers and Brats. Jackie has arranged for a speaker. Ryan McCaw with Efficient Pond Management will be speaking. Below is a brief bio concerning his company.

My name is Ryan McCaw and I had always had a strong interest in the environment and water quality. My educational background is in the clinical laboratory sciences and I worked for many years in medical research and the clinical laboratory. The skills developed in that field have served me well in this field. Analytical thinking, collecting and using real data, is the only way to improve a pond. Far too often anecdotal evidence was used to make these decisions, often with bad results. I enjoy this work and am motivated to help pond owners make the right choices to improve their pond.

Efficient Pond Management was founded in response to a lack of professional assistance in the Eastern Iowa area for pond owners. Advice was available and retail outlets were more than happy to sell and ship products, but there was not a presence that would come to the pond owner's location to diagnose the problem and create a plan with which they would assist if desired. What started focused on the control and removal of overabundant aquatic plant growth has evolved into a full service business partnered with All Things Water in Elkhart, IN. Services include but are not limited to: pond construction, leak mitigation, aquatic plant removal and control, aeration installation, enzyme utilization, fishery management and much

more. Collectively we have over 18 years of experience and are available for onsite consultations to help you improve your pond.

An active member of the Midwest Aquatic Plant Management Society. The mission of MAPMS is to promote sound and appropriate technologies for the management of aquatic vegetation, provide opportunities for the educational advancement of its members and encourage relevant scientific research. Among others.

We work closely with government agencies such as the Department of Natural Resources, NRCS, and the Iowa State Agricultural Department among others. We carry licenses and permits to apply pesticides in aquatic environments, survey fish populations in ponds and transport and distribute fish.

Please RSVP to Gerry and Paul

319 930 2566 or Gerry.Dickerson@Pearson.com

Meeting Minutes

EIPS Meeting Minutes September 8, 2011

Connie and Ed Railsback hosted the Thursday, September 8, 2011 in their home beginning with a sensational potluck dinner. Dinner was followed by an entertaining and informative program on Organic Gardening by Master Gardener, Ellen Skripsky. Following dinner and the program, President Jeff Garner called the business portion of the EIPS meeting to order at 7:35 P.M. Twenty-two members and one visitor were in attendance. Minutes of the August 26, 2011 were approved as printed in the September club newsletter.

Old Business

Jeff reminded members of the upcoming Wine Tasting Event to be held on Friday evening, September 16 from 7:00 - 9:00 P.M. at the home of Jeff Garner and Kerry Shaner. Several members have agreed to provide food and/or serve wine at the event. Jeff asked those members who have signed up to pour wine, to arrive that evening at 6:15 P.M. for a briefing on the different wines they will be serving. Tickets are available for sale (\$25 per person or at a special rate of \$10 per person for those members providing food and/or serving wine).

Jackie Allsup reported that she had found the best price for t-shirts through Vista Print. She passed around samples of potential t-shirt designs. Some discussion followed. Members were asked to sign up if they were interested in placing an order.

The dispersal of 2011 Pond Tour proceeds was discussed. Some informal proposals were presented, however additional and more specific details were requested. Ideas presented were as

follows: a minimum request of \$500 for a Kirkwood Community College scholarship, a donation of funds to the Cedar Rapid Library to be used for pond/garden-related books and magazine subscriptions, a donation to the Dubuque Arboretum, a donation of funds and manpower to put in a pond or water feature at the St. Luke's Cancer Center, a donation to the 4-H "H2O Kids" Club, or the use of some of the money to underwrite the cost of renting a bus for a club bus trip. The possibility of holding the dispersal of funds until 2012 was also discussed. This matter was tabled until the next meeting, September 24, 2011.

New Business

The next meeting will be held at the home of Wayne and Pat Beuter.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:50 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,
Kathi Albrecht, Secretary

E.I.P.S. Meeting Minutes Saturday, September 24, 2011

Meeting Start Time: 6:30pm
Meeting End Time: 7:50pm

Jackie Allsup, Treasurer, lead the meeting in the absence of the President and Vice-President, Thanks Jackie!

Wayne and Pat Beuter were hosts for the dinner/meeting. Since it was a chilly evening they provided a nice warm place for the meeting and dinner inside their garage. It was obvious to all that our hosts had spent a lot of time and effort for our enjoyment. The potluck resulted in another exceptional dinner, no one left hungry. It was a small group (approx, 20), but that did not affect the amount of information shared. Wayne shared the history of their pond and their commitment to this pond club over the years.

Treasurer Report:

Jackie Allsup presented a Treasurer's Report. Jackie reported as of September 21:

Checking	\$ 768.61
Savings	\$3,821.68
Total	\$4,590.29

Old Business

Wine Tasting Event:

On Friday, September 16, Jeff and Kerry hosted the Wine Tasting Event. This fund raiser for the pond

club resulted in \$520 in profit for the club.

It was discussed that perhaps in the future we should consider lowering the price of the tickets and providing a discounted price per couple. With the amount of food being provided, perhaps this can be sold as a dinner/wine tasting event in the future. With so many basket prizes, perhaps chances to win could be sold ahead of time to those not attending the event. If we sold those outside of the event, we could afford to lower the price on these chances as well.

As discussed in the past, a document needs to be prepared that lists all expenses and income associated with this event. This document should also contain an overview of what worked, what could be improved and what did not work. This will help future consideration and new committee members.

Special thanks to Jeff and Kerry for hosting this event, those that contributed all the delicious food, those that purchased and sold tickets, and the wine tasting event committee for their organization!!

Donation of 2011 Profits:

Suggested ideas:

1. Scholarship to Kirkwood student in horticulture
2. Library books for Cedar Rapids and Marion library
3. Cancer Center pond less waterfall
4. 4H Pond Group shirts

Discussion:

Scholarships should be consistent from year to year so Kirkwood can plan on our participation. Scholarship recipients should be encouraged to attend Pond Club meeting(s) to communicate their progress in their career choice.

Whatever is decided should be "In Memory of Dorothy Helms".

Consideration to keep the bulk of funds to "roll over" into 2012 was suggested. This would support any new event ideas that we do not even comprehend at this time. It would also allow for a larger donation in years to come if a percent of profit is identified to "roll over" to the following year.

New Business

October Pond Club Meeting:

Next Saturday Pond Club Meeting will be held on October 22 at:

Paul and Gerry Dickerson

1265 Ivan LN

West Liberty, IA

What for details in the newsletter

Pond Winterization Discussion:

Everyone described the activities they do when winterizing their individual ponds. The depth, location and availability of resources all contribute to what is done for ensuring fish and plants are well taken care of over the cold winter months to come (oh what a thought). Water temperatures are ranging from 50-60 degrees now so we need to be prepared.

Activities:

1. Those with no fish are taking out their plants and putting them in a secure place for winter. No other activities are needed to preserve the pond environment.
2. Put firewood (2 pieces) into the pond – as you can expect there was a lot of spirited discussion around this one.
3. Give away unwanted fish.
4. Hardy water lilies moved to bottom of pond to winter over.
5. Remove unwanted gravel from the bottom of pond to allow for maximum depth for the fish.
6. Float heater to allow for air to be in contact with the water.
7. Leave fish in the pond
8. Take fish into an indoor pond
9. Cut down hardy water lilies before placing at a lower depth
10. Preparation of the water in indoor ponds to support the fish when they are moved inside
11. Remove the pump and drain water lines if using indoor pond and removing all fish
12. String small rubber footballs across the top of the pond
13. Add rubber football to skimmer
14. Setup a shelter over the entire pond
15. Continue to run waterfall and bubblers through winter months
16. Clean out leaves from pond
17. Take tropical plants inside

St. Louis Pond Tour Bus Trip

If EIPS organizes a bus trip the Northern Iowa Pond Club would like to participate.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,
Connie Railsback, backup for Kathi Albrecht, Secretary

FROM THE MEMBERS

Jackie has some koi to give away. Here is the info in her own words.
Free to a good home: qty 5-6 8-10 inch Matsukawabaki koi (scaled-black with white stomachs) Every pond needs a black Koi for good luck! Last year's babies that I'd like to get out of my pond before winter. Her phone number **319-934-3665**

With winter approaching, and the discussion at the previous meeting concerning that, I found some articles concerning winterizing the ponds and plants. Read away if you like.

Temperature Checklist

Those in USDA zone 3 will find water temperatures going down much faster than gardens in USDA zone 7. The timing is going to be much more critical. But here are the recommendations. When the water temperatures start to drop in the fall (around 70-72F change approximately half of your water. This is an older recommendation that is sometimes ignored by modern pond gardeners.

It doesn't hurt to do this and it might just help. When the water temperature drops to 60F, bring in the tropical water plants or be prepared to toss them away as they won't be growing anymore.

In practical terms, the tender tropical's I'm not saving get to stay in their pots until it gets really cold or frosty. These plants don't grow much anymore but they still look attractive. When the cold kills them, then I toss them onto the compost pile. Those I'm keeping over will go into the house when the water temperatures go below Winterizing ponds means following a few simple guidelines (and it really isn't all that difficult).

When water temperatures go down to 45F, our winterizing ponds schedule calls for putting the hardy water lilies at the bottom of the deepest part of the pond. Before you do this, trim off any leaves and stems.

Clean up the plants and then dump them deep. They'll stay there quite happily until spring and the return of 60F water temperatures.

Once temperatures go below 40F, the fish need attention. If you didn't stop feeding in September, definitely stop now. If you're taking them inside – do it now. If you're leaving them outdoors in deep water ponds, then you don't have to do anything.

Winterizing Pond Pumps

Temperatures below 40F mean that the pond pumps require attention and any de-icing equipment should be installed. If you're taking the pump out of the pond, do put it into a bucket of water to keep the seals soft and prevent them from drying out and cracking. If you live in an area where it doesn't freeze, then the pond pumps can be left running year round. If you're keeping fish in the pond over the winter, you may want to investigate either the pond heaters or air bubblers below.

Pond Heaters

Pond heaters don't heat the pond water – what they do is prevent a small area of water surface from icing over. This free area continues to exchange gas exchange all winter – keeping fish alive. If you don't overwinter fish in the pond, then a pond heater isn't necessary. There are other options to running a pond heater.

Pond Air Bubblers

Many ponders use large aquarium pond bubblers to keep an area of the pond open in the winter. These work nicely in all areas except during the coldest times in small ponds (but then you shouldn't be keeping fish in small ponds over the winter anyway)



Pumps to Keep the Ice Clear

Some fish lovers run their pumps year round in cold climates (you do this automatically in warmer areas). But the difference is that the pump is disconnected from the filter and allowed to sit on the bottom with the discharge pointed to the side of the pond. The circulation of water acts like a bubbler or heater and keeps an area of the surface ice-free. Some fish lovers have warned that doing this makes the pond water colder and reduces fish survival. But generally speaking, as long as the water doesn't freeze, fish will be fine in my opinion. I suspect more fish are killed from variations in temperature and reduced gas exchange than by colder water.

Fall Clean Out

Part of winterizing ponds involves using a long-handled net/scoop to clean out the dead leaves and gunk from the bottom of the pond. Leaving it there allows it to rot (consuming pond oxygen in the process) and make a mess of the pond. Allowing debris to remain in the pond reduces the survival rate of fish and frogs (that overwinter in the pond) There are few worse things in the pond world than having a pond that smells like sewer gas in the spring because rotting vegetation has eliminated the oxygen and killed off the frogs and fish. Gross!

Winter Ponds

If you want to run your pond all winter long and your area freezes solid, here's a rule of thumb you should consider. If your pump is moving 2800 gallons/hour you can do this in a USDA zone 4/5. If your pump is smaller or you live in a colder area, your pond will freeze and you won't like the result. Winter ponds require someone making sure waterfalls don't ice up so that water flows out of the pond. Ponds also require constant attention to water evaporation and water levels that are too low during winter months. You can't run the hose out there so you'll have to hand-bomb several 5 gallon pails a month to keep the pond topped off. (or more) A last note, because ice will form in front of the skimmer, most ponders remove the skimmer gate allowing free flow of water into the skimmer and pump. This increases the water flow and reduces the likelihood of ice buildup in front of the skimmer. If ice does build up and stop water flow, your pump will burn out. I live in an area of winter cold so I have never run my pond during the winter preferring to wintering ponds rather than maintain them all winter. I rather like frozen ponds as part of the natural cycle in the garden.

[Do you have a question about winterizing ponds?](#)

Read more: <http://www.water-gardens-information.com/winterizing-ponds.html#ixzz1ZmRV3ign>

Getting Your Pond Ready for Winter

by Sue Speichert

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Aquarticles

Here's a checklist of things to do to make sure that you and your pond are all set for the cold winter months ahead.

1. Clean all the crud out of your pond. No algae. No fish waste. No leaves from trees or plants. All of this will decompose in the bottom of the pond during the winter. As it breaks down it will draw precious oxygen out of the pond water, robbing it from fish and other aquatic wildlife. Decaying organic matter is also prime ground for harmful bacteria, parasites, and protozoa to spend the winter. During a warm spell, they can quickly attack your fish before your fish's immune system is prepared to fight them off. You'll have a pond full of stinky, slimy sludge as well as sick and poorly fish. Is this the way to you want to start your spring?

2. Consider whether you want to vacuum out the scum in the bottom of the pond, or whether you should drain and clean the pond instead. Generally, it's advisable to drain and clean the pond if there's more than 2 inches or so of debris in the bottom. Set up a kiddie pool with clean pond water to hold your fish and make sure to put a net over it to keep the fish from jumping out. You can use spare pond water to hold your water plants in temporary quarters, too. If you just vacuum out the pond and do a partial water change, or if you do a pond drain, clean-up and refill, make sure to add dechlorinator so your fish won't be harmed by the chlorine and heavy metals in the new tap water.

3. Clean up around the pond, too. Leaves and other plant debris that's left on the edge can make its way into the pond. Insects and other harmful organisms can overwinter in the dead vegetation and wreak havoc on your pond plants once warm weather returns.

4. If you're in an area with lots of trees, put a netting over your pond to catch the leaves before they fall into your pond. Try to use the largest weave possible, so that frogs aren't suddenly left out of the pond or aren't caught in it. You can use a floating plastic ball to hold the net out of the water. For better support, use wooden planks or plastic rods to hold the netting. Clean off fallen leaves often. It's no use to have a netting if the leaves are still going to lay in the water, steeping like tea leaves.

5. Take a weekly measurement of your water quality. If it's off, you'll want to fix it now. The last thing you want is green water in the fall going into winter. The algae will die and decompose in the pond during the winter, drawing oxygen that your fish and wildlife need to survive. Come spring, you'll have a real mess on your hands.

6. Add beneficial bacteria according to your regular routine until the water temperature dips below 45F. Below that temperature, the nitrifying bacteria slows down, waiting for the return of

spring. If you use barley straw, put in a fresh bale for a few weeks to let it cure until you remove the old one that you've had in the pond all summer.

7. If you're in an area where ice is likely, plan for it now. It's usually best to leave water in the pond, regardless of whether you have a flexible liner or a fiberglass, pre-formed pond. The cold winter weather may cause the soil to expand as it freezes, and a pond barren of water may shift, heave, or partially pop out of the ground. Leaving water in the pond during the winter will prevent this.

8. In climates with only an occasional ice-over, a floating plastic ball or Styrofoam may be enough to guard against damage from winter freeze and ice-overs. Simply placing a plastic cover over the pond for the odd days of really cold weather will probably be sufficient, too.

9. In very cold environments, though, the best solution is a floating deicer with a thermostat. A floating deicer will thaw a hole in the ice so that oxygen can reach the water and toxic gasses can escape. Put the deicer in the water before ice begins to form on the pond. You don't have to plug it in until a few inches have formed over the pond, though. Once the deicer has thawed a hole a foot or so wide in the ice, you can turn it off again. Using the deicer intermittently during the winter reduces the electricity cost; most deicers pull 1,000 or 1,500 watts and can be expensive to run continuously. If you have a flexible rubber liner, invest in a guard that will prevent the heating element from burning a hole in your liner.

**WELL THAT IS IT FOR ME AND THE OCTOBER NEWSLETTER.
SEE YOU ALL AT THE OCTOBER 22ND MEETING. JEFF**