



OPEN LETTER TO ALL AKCA AFFILIATED CLUBS —*Jerry Kyle*

Koi Health Advisors (KHA) are not Koi EMT's It Is Time To Join The KHA Program!

by Jerold Kyle, KHA

Thinking about being a Koi Health Advisor (KHA)? It is definitely something to consider, a way to learn to be a better keeper of your own Koi, a way to support the AKCA, your local Koi club, your Koi, your friends, and the community. The primary value of a KHA is *not* to be available at 10:00 pm when someone calls in a panic and says, "Help, my Koi is lying on its side and hardly moving - What should I do?" It may sound harsh, but one Fish Veterinarian said to me the reality is that the best thing for the pond owner at that moment is to take two aspirins and go to bed. What! ?? The point is that by the time one got that call it was probably already too late. The whole purpose of becoming a KHA is not to be a Koi EMT but to learn and teach good preventative koi husbandry principals in order to help prevent this kind of situation.

There is no silver bullet and there is no magic wonder drug to learn about so you can always be a heroic Koi EMT and run around saving lives. Koi health is much like people health in that prevention is the best medicine. It is a lot less stressful on both the patient and the KHA. It is about the environment we live in and the air we breathe for both people and Koi. People that eat right, exercise right, get proper rest at night, drink plenty of liquids are generally healthier than those who don't. How does a Koi eat right, you ask? KHA people know. Exercise? Do Koi exercise? The healthy ones do and a KHA knows how. Proper rest and plenty of liquids? I must be kidding with the plenty of liquids, right? Nope, it's called osmoregulation and is just one of the things a KHA learns about. There may be no silver bullets but there is a ton of information in the KHA Program that when put together will make someone much more knowledgeable than the average pond owner. Their Koi will be more healthy and comfortable too.

There is a greater personal comfort level when one understands the ins and outs of water quality and good Koi health along with knowing there is a support group to turn to when one does not have the answers. We don't all have all the answers but KHAs all have the Veterinarians and qualified teachers along with more advanced KHA members who want to help and are part of the KHA support group. It is gratifying to be involved with such a dedicated group of people. Every club needs and prizes the KHA that is part of their group but they need more. Unfortunately, there are still too few KHAs with some clubs doing without altogether. It is an honor and a privilege to be in a position to help other club members by sharing knowledge. It also feels good to be respected. KHA is at the forefront striving to keep up with the newest, ever changing, Koi husbandry information, new meds, and new technology. The KHA Continuing Education Program helps make being and/or having a KHA in a club invaluable.

KHA Classes begin in July and you can sign up from then until the end of November. However, the sooner you get started the more time you have and the easier it may be. It is time to think about being involved in improving your knowledge and value to your club. Except for the final Lab portion of the class, which will be held at the AKCA Annual Seminar May 19-23, 2010, in Nashville TN, everything is handled on line at your own pace. The quizzes are "open book." If you do not know the answer you are directed where to look. There is so much information that the greatest lesson may be in the learning where to look. The admission fee of \$100 will be refunded if one completes the course within two years which means if you stick with it, the course is free as AKCA picks up the tab for you. The KHA Class Coordinator is Tim Czech who can be reached by e-mail at <tim.czech@wel-design.com>. Interested? You should be. Let Tim know if you are considering joining this dedicated group and he will send you the details.