



The Midwest Bonsai Connection

A Newsletter Published by The Midwest Bonsai Society

October 2001

President's Message

With our nation in mourning and preparing for war against an elusive enemy, it was difficult for me to find an appropriate theme for this message. As our country's leadership struggles to develop the rules and norms which must guide a civilized nation's response to acts of terrorism on such a large scale, the concerns of Bonsaists seem insignificant. Thus I think I can safely speak for the entire Society in beginning this message with an expression of our deepest sympathy for the families of the victims in New York and Washington, including the courageous men and women of the New York City Fire and Police Departments and the passengers and crew of the four hijacked aircraft. I think I can safely speak for the entire Society in expressing our firm support for, and faith in, the country's leadership in its determination to eradicate terrorism and to punish the nations who sponsor it.

Believing, however, that President Bush is right and that the healing process must begin with a return to our normal lives and activities, I think that all of us in the society should heed his advice and resume our daily routines as best we can.

This means, of course, that we have to be mindful of the many things which must be done in preparing to over-winter our trees. By the time you receive this newsletter, you should have already switched to a fall fertilizer low in nitrogen and high in phosphorus and potassium.

You should have stopped trimming deciduous trees, in order to prevent the new shoots from dying back during the winter. Last year's needles should have been removed from Japanese white pines, but do not begin reducing this year's growth on Japanese Black Pines until the end of October (the needles are not yet firmly set in their fascicles).

These are but a few of the steps we must take in the maintenance of our trees as we approach winter, based on the species I am familiar with. I encourage you to become knowledgeable about the measures which should be taken in preparing your own trees for the winter. If you need instructional materials, please visit the Society's library during our meeting on October 1 or talk with our local vendors.

Long before winter arrives, you will need to prepare a shelter for your trees. This can be a cold greenhouse, an unheated porch or garage, a window well, a crawlspace, a coldframe or any other form of shelter which will protect the trees from wind and light. Some members in the suburbs use the space under their benches, putting the trees on the ground or in a shallow trench, mulching them up above the soil line, and enclosing the sides with sheets of plastic. In short, many different methods will provide adequate protection, but some make it difficult to work on the trees during the winter. Since this can be an ideal time to needle

prune black pines and do much of your wiring, you might give some thought to a method of over-wintering which gives you reasonable access to your trees. If you have any questions about a particular method, there will be many experienced members at our October meeting who can give you help.

Many different sources are predicting a harsh winter with lower than normal temperatures and less than normal snowfall. I hope these sources are wrong and that we have a mild winter, but I am taking no chances. I urge all of you to prepare for a harsh winter, and to start making those preparations now.

Steve Snoke

Michigan All-State Bonsai Show

Susan Cargill tells me that on July 13 and 14, 2002 there will be a Michigan All-State Bonsai Show at Grand Rapids. This show will represent the Michigan clubs. I think there are at least 6 or 7 of them. These clubs have some of the best Bonsaists in the Midwest so it will be a good show.

The headliner will be the great Ben Oki.

Contact hollar@chartermi.net

Program Chairman

I am glad we watched some of Warren Hill's judging and listened to some of his comments. Sometimes, very subtle changes he suggested would make dramatic changes in the bonsai, for much improvement. I hope we can listen to more of the judging at a latter meeting. Of course, I particularly enjoyed listening to his comments about my raft.

The Yamaji workshop was a great success. Mr. Yamaji worked very hard, even breaking into a sweat several times. He worked around the room, visiting each of us 6 or 8 times, giving us tasks to do before his next visit, leaving us with a very nice tree at the end. I want to express my deep appreciation for his visit, especially his insistence in keeping to the original schedule, despite changes in travel plans. He traveled by overnight by bus, changing buses in the middle of the night to get to Pittsburgh and traveled again by bus to Chicago.

I marveled at the apparent ease of his vision and his enthusiasm for each tree and the progress we saw under his guidance. I truly enjoyed his visit and hope we can do it again.

At the October meeting we will have a visit by Dan Kosta, expert on diseases & insects. He is widely known for his expertise in this area. His presentations are always full of information and insight, providing the guidance we all need to care for our trees. His presentations are lively and you can ask questions afterward.

Jim Fairchild

EDITOR'S COLUMN

I really appreciate what Tom Longfellow did at the judging even though I didn't hear anything about my tree. Just listening to Warren Hill talk about the trees was an education.

First, please contact me if you have any archival material. I just got some from Sam Himoto and Gary Charneia has sent me all the newsletters from 1973-

THE STAND UNDER THE TREE

I hear there has been a little complaint about an action taken by Warren Hill, the judge of the trees entered at the Mid-America Show. The action was a decision not to judge trees that did not have some kind of stand under them.

So there can be no question, I agree with Warren. He is a well established bonsai-ist with a sterling reputation as a teacher and a judge. He is the Curator of the Bonsai Collection at the National Arboretum. He was totally impressed with the quality of the trees in the show and had to have some way to limit the number of awards.

As a photographer, I have been in a lot of judged shows and I have found that judges can and do decide things pretty much the way they want to decide them. I have also noticed this characteristic of judges in traffic court and in circuit court and all the way up to the supreme court.

It is obvious, in their decisions, they tend to follow their own feelings without apparently being concerned to much about mine. Consequently when I enter something into a judged contest or walk into a courtroom or watch a football game, I tend to avoid deciding in advance what the judge or judges are going to determine.

A few years ago, I started to use stands on some of my trees. At the

time, I did this because I thought that it looked "neat" and "sharp". I thought that stands would make up for some weakness in the trees.

I look at this differently now because I realized something about the display of the trees. A Bonsai pot is always smaller at the bottom than at the top. Artistically and visually the pot tends to look a little unstable unless it is set on some kind of base which separates it from the cloth background we use in shows. It looks a little "tippy". A stand finishes off the appearance of the pot and tree.

Ivan Watters gave me another insight into the use of a stand when displaying a tree. A bonsai good enough to show is a living sculpture to which we should show veneration. Putting a proper stand under your tree separates it from the table or bench underneath. It is important to remember that the stand should work with the whole display and not against it.

I must admit, I did have a problem with one of the entries. This was a deciduous forest. The trees had obvious signs of insect infestation and obvious signs of a fungus problem. The trees also had obviously been sprayed for there was a white coating on the tips of many of the leaves. This forest was given a blue ribbon!

-Larry Larimer

1975. I would like to get something from all of you.

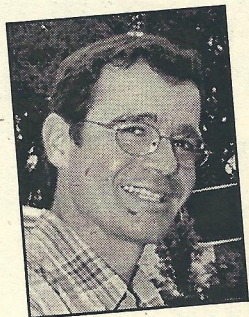
I will not be at the October 1 meeting. I will be leaving for China the day before, I will be gone for almost 3 weeks. Back on October 21. Since I will be back on October 21, I will not feel comfortable pushing the Newsletter off on to someone else. You may not get it until the Saturday before the meeting but you will get it by then.

I have been fortunate in having such a wealth of material to work with that I usually have part or most of a newsletter ready a month before it has to go to the printer.

Don't let that cause you to keep from giving me information.

I must add that Ivan Watters is having a sale right now! It will go on until the end of September.

Meet Brian Clark



I would like you to meet Brian Clark. Brian has been on staff with the Chicago Botanic Garden since 1979 and has been Manager of Plant Production for the last 2 years.

Brian has been responsible for the feeding and watering of the constantly increasing CBG Bonsai Collection for his 22 year tenure. He started nurturing the trees when he first came to the CBG and there were just a few Bonsai. He continued through the period when the Garden almost divested themselves of the collection and is still taking care of them today when the collection is considered to be one of the premier collections in the United States.

Brian went with Jack Thompson and Shig Ito on the 2 car motorcade to Maryland to assist in repotting the Nakamura Donation and bringing those trees back to the Chicago Botanic Garden. Those trees are his responsibility along with the rest of the CBG's collection. Members of the Midwest Bonsai Society volunteer to continue to prune and style and repot the collection.

Brian, who is a trained horticulturist frankly admits that he knows nothing about styling Bonsai. He leaves that up to the volunteers. He does shyly admit that he has a few trees now that he likes to work on, but, he, like most of us has only a few hours a month to work on his own trees.



THE BONSAI BONFIRE

Roy Strauss has arranged for a BONSAI BONFIRE to be held at the Heller Nature Center on November 14 from 6:30 to 9:30PM. The Nature Center is located at 636 Ridge Rd in Highland Park.

Bring your defunct trees in order to give them a proper cremation along with their peers. Also bring your own refreshments. Sorry - no alcohol.



BONSAI CLASS

Taught at Hinsdale
Central High School
55th and Grant Street
Hinsdale
offered by the College of DuPage

Wednesday nights
7:30 to 9:30 p.m.
Register through the college
or contact
Gary Charneia, Instructor
at 630-654-0961

MID-AMERICA BONSAI SHOW 2002 will be held

Thurs., August 15, 2002 to Sun., August 18, 2002
at the Chicago Botanic Garden

Chief Judge and Headliner to be Hatsumi Terakawa,
Internationnally famous teacher and bonsai artist.

In addition there will be a special workshop on shari and jin given
by David Knittle of Tansu Woodworking

COME ONE! COME ALL!

Enjoy the culinary side of our bonsai artists! The Annual Holiday Party will be held at the Winnetka Community Center on Saturday December 8 at 6:00 p.m. Please bring a dish to share. We will need main courses, appetizers and desserts. Liquid refreshments will be provided.

A free raffle of bonsai and non-bonsai related items will be offered. Enjoy a warm, inviting, and delicious evening with your fellow bonsai artists.

-Liz Ostman



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Calendar of Events

September 29 & 30
**Prairie States
Bonsai Show**
Cantigny

October 1 - 7:00 p.m.
**Midwest Bonsai
Society Meeting**
The Chicago Botanic
Garden in Education Bldg.

November 5 - 7:00 p.m.
**Midwest Bonsai
Society Meeting**
The Chicago Botanic
Garden in Education Bldg.

December 8 - 6:00 p.m.
Christmas Party
Winnetka
Community House

November 14
9:30 - 9:30 p.m.
**1st Annual
Bonsai Fire**
Heller Nature Center
636 Ridge • Highland Park

FALL CLASS SCHEDULE - OCTOBER 2001

FALL CLASSES WILL START DURING THE WEEK BEGINNING TUESDAY, OCTOBER 9, AND WILL MEET FOR THE NEXT SIX WEEKS.

SCHEDULE AND FEES

LEVEL	DAY	TIME	DATES	COST
BEGINNER	TUESDAYS	6:30 - 9:30 P.M.	10/09-11/13	\$130 *
BEGINNER	WEDNESDAYS	1:00 - 4:00 P.M.	10/10-11/14	\$130 ☆
BEGINNER	THURSDAYS	6:30 - 9:30 P.M.	10/11-11/15	\$130 *
BEGINNER	SUNDAYS	1:00 - 4:00 P.M.	10/14-11/18	\$130 ◆
BEG/NOVICE	SATURDAYS	1:00 - 4:00 P.M.	10/13-11/17	\$150 ☆
NOV/INTERM	WEDNESDAYS	6:30 - 9:30 P.M.	10/10-11/14	\$150 ☆
INTERMEDIATE	SATURDAYS	9:00-NOON	10/13-11/17	\$165 ☆
ADVANCED	SUNDAYS	9:00-NOON	10/14-11/19	\$175 ☆

☆ IVAN WATERS * ALEX PEREZ ◆ TOM LONGFELLOW

EACH CLASS IS LIMITED TO 12 STUDENTS. FOR INFORMATION OR TO REGISTER, CALL 847-966-5142. TUITION IS PAYABLE AT TIME OF REGISTRATION. WE WILL BEGIN A WAIT LIST ONLY AFTER A CLASS IS FILLED WITH PAID REGISTRATIONS. STUDENTS RECEIVE A 10% DISCOUNT ON ALL PURCHASES WHEN REGISTERED FOR ANY CLASS.

SOME USEFUL DEFINITIONS:

BEGINNER: ONE WHO HAS NEVER TAKEN A CLASS (WORKSHOPS & DEMONSTRATIONS DON'T COUNT).
NOVICE: ONE WHO HAS COMPLETED THE BEGINNER CLASS BUT WANTS MORE COACHING IN FUNDAMENTALS.
INTERMEDIATE: WANTS MORE COACHING IN HORTICULTURAL AND ARTISTIC TECHNIQUES BEYOND THE BASICS.
ADVANCED: WANTS COACHING IN STYLING AND REFINEMENT.

NEXT COURSE OFFERINGS BEGINS APRIL 14, 2002