



Pittsburgh Bonsai Society

...to disseminate knowledge, encourage others and create interest in the art of bonsai

April 2015 Newsletter

Scots Pine Literati Workshop!

APRIL

Members can purchase a Scots Pine for \$35.00 following a presentation from Bob Dietz and shape it in the Literati style. You can do preliminary work on your pine, then bring it back for Part 2 later in the year. As always, soil, wire and tools are provided. Trees will be selected and paid for at the meeting.



April 15, 2015 • Wednesday • 6:30pm • Phipps Garden Center • Shadyside

MAY



Pre-Show Theme

For additional information please check our website

May 20, 2015 • Wed. • 6:30pm • Phipps Garden Center • Shadyside

34th Annual Spring Show

May 28 & 29 • Phipps Garden Center • Shadyside!

Please check our ever-evolving website: <http://pittsburghbonsai.org>
Also visit us on Facebook: www.facebook.com/pittsburghbonsai



The Pittsburgh Bonsai Society Newsletter

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Published periodically (10 issues a year) by PBS for members and other bonsai enthusiasts. It's our sixth decade of advancing the art of bonsai in the Tri-State area.

Deadlines:
Generally one month prior to issue date.

Submissions:
Please submit Photos or Artwork in JPG format and Copy in Microsoft Word.



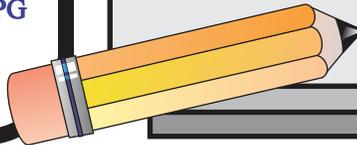
A Note From Dave:



~photo by Cindie Bonomi

In the bonsai world, April seems to be one of the busiest times of the year. After a long winter of doing nothing, it's time to pull your trees out of hibernation and figure out what to do with which trees. If you are repotting deciduous, look for signs that the buds are swelling. You can safely take them out of the old pot and root-trim them. If you haven't checked the website in a while, take a look at the Tree Calendar link. It tells you what to look for and what to do when re-potting. Bob Grealish's online book, "Beginning Bonsai", is a great resource for year round tasks. Any PBS members can take advantage of the Bonsai Barn link to buy, sell, ask questions or announce other bonsai events. All of the dates for this year's happenings are listed under Events, including the auction, picnic and holiday party. We are just getting started with the season and there's plenty more to come.

Dave Metzgar
bannerdave@aol 412-956-2482



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Haiku Corner

Not very anxious
to bloom,
my plum tree.

- Issa

Repotting Deciduous Trees, Advanced Soil Theory, Pot Selection

~ By Chris Treloar

Our March Meeting

Our first meeting of the year was a busy one, beginning with our President (for life) Dave Metzgar introducing the new officers in attendance, and concluding with not one but two informative presentations.

Dan Yobp gave a very detailed talk on soil, covering a variety of aspects under both the organic and inorganic subtypes. Dan went over the advantages and disadvantages of each soil option and even offered suggestions on where to obtain them. The recommended mixture of 60% inorganic to 40% organic for conifers and 50/50 for deciduous trees was also discussed. People asked about sifting the soil and Dan explained the rationale behind having a uniform soil size somewhere in the 3/8" to 1/4" range. Finally Dan reminded us that this is a good time to go out and collect trees from

nature, removing most of the soil before potting, except for the soil attached to the smaller roots, and potting them in an 80-100% inorganic mixture.



~ Photo by Chris Treloar

Bob Grealish and Bob Dietz then gave us some examples of repotting deciduous trees, specifically maples. This is the perfect time of year to do this as the buds are beginning to form, but have not yet opened. Bob G. stressed the importance of having everything in place and the new pot properly prepared before you actually begin working on the trees. Both Bobs demonstrated the techniques using a variety of tools, including root hooks, sickles, and root cutters.



Three Life Members Announced!

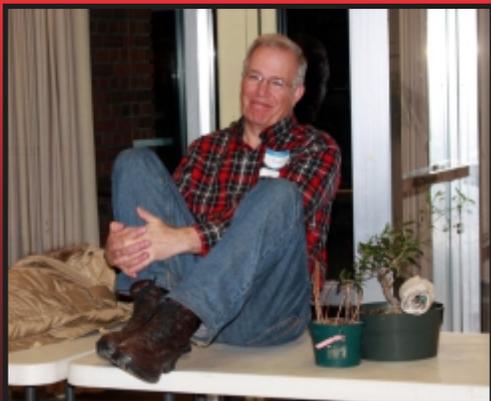
~by Jay Miller



The Board of Directors of The Pittsburgh Bonsai Society have selected three dedicated people as Life Members: Bob Dietz, Bob Grealish and Norbert Pietrzak. To list all their contributions to PBS would require three additional Newsletters.

~photos by Cindie Bonomi

Each has served as officers, committee chairs and teachers, lecturing at garden centers, Phipps Conservatory and innumerable times at PBS general meetings and Spring Shows. All have contributed to the growth of our Society over six decades, fostering an appreciation of the art of bonsai and sharing their knowledge whenever asked. Three long-time members have shared their personal thoughts of these three remarkable honorees.



Bob Dietz



Bob Grealish



Norbert Pietrzak

Some thoughts by Evelyn Christie

~by Evelyn Christie



~photos by Cindie Bonomi

I don't know when Bob's interest in bonsai started. However, when Phipps started the Japanese Garden in 1988, and we bonsai people were allowed to volunteer, Bob was there. We all took the Tuesday night classes from Ralph Lang and then of course, Keith Scott at the King Estate, then Swissvale Senior Center and later at Keith's garage. So Bob has been doing bonsai for at least 25 years. When I opened Mizuki Bonsai in '92 he always

helped me at the Spring Shows. Bob was there to help set up, sell and tear down. Bob was a natural when it came time for me to sell my business in 2005. That is when Bonsai In The Burgh was born. Here we are in 2015, Bob has retired from his paying job but still has his love for bonsai and Bonsai In The Burgh. The Pittsburgh Bonsai Society has been very fortunate to have Bob sharing his time and talents. He is a very special person.



The Late Keith Scott



Bonsai In The Burgh



Bob Dietz

Some thoughts by Mike Stern

~by Mike Stern



~photos by Cindie Bonomi

Bob is the consummate artist in all of his endeavors. Whether it be bonsai, woodworking, or making flutes, he creates finely crafted material that is always artistically appealing. He spends time reading, learning, and practicing his art to be able to create trees that are striking. Not only does he create wonderful bonsai, but he also has been available to share his knowledge and talents throughout the years. Bob is always available to answer questions, provide advice, and assist with members' trees. From styling, timing of tasks, soil mix, potting, feeding, disease and insect control, and anything bonsai related, he is a wealth of information. He has generously scheduled a regular time at his home so members can bring their trees to better learn the care and art of bonsai. He has also made himself available on an as needed

basis to myself and others throughout the years. After spending time working with Bob and/or just admiring his trees, I always feel inspired and reinvigorated to improve the quality of the trees in my collection. Having someone as talented as Bob has been and continues to be a

valuable asset for the Pittsburgh Bonsai Society. He raises the level of bonsai practiced by all of the other members of the Society.



Bob Grealish



Bob Grealish Helping Folks With Their trees



Some thoughts by Herb Geissler

~by Herb Geissler



~photo by Herb Geissler

For more decades than I wish to count, Norb Pietrzak has been an inspiration, mentor, and friend to so many of us struggling to master the joys of bonsai. His own bonsai, displayed beautifully at our annual Bonsai Shows, were inspiring as living proof of what could be accomplished with applied knowledge and patient work. The workshops that he conducted at those Shows provided basic know-how to many newcomers, while sharpening the skills of the more experienced. His leadership of the PBS, in its formative years and again in recent years, kept us together and moving forward. And his warm good nature made friendships quickly, even if his cute little dog

protectively discouraged handshakes. Norb's generous sharing of his knowledge and talent helped me, and so

many others, enjoy creating bonsai. Thank you so much, Norb, for all that you have done for us and our Pittsburgh Bonsai Society.



Norbert Pietrzak And Our Little Bonsai Mascot



Norb

~photos by Cindie Bonomi



~photo by Cindie Bonomi

An Almost Famous Tree

It was a cold February afternoon as I pulled into the parking lot of my daughter's school to pick her up from a late day activity. My cell phone rang and displayed a number from an unfamiliar area code. An out of town number usually meant that it was a salesman with a great offer on

personalized pens or a fabulous Florida vacation trip, so I answered with an impatient, "Hello?"

Through static and other strange noises, I heard a voice asking, "Mr. Dave? Is this Mr. Dave?" It was a male voice with a strong southern accent. Oh good, it's the Florida vacation, I thought. I was about to put the phone next to the radio so he could enjoy some "stand-by music", when I caught a phrase through the static that made me stop. "I got your name from the Pittsburgh Bonsai website. I am looking for a bonsai".

Still not convinced this wasn't a crank call, I kept the phone to my ear and said, "Oh, okay. What are you looking for?" "Garth Brooks is playing a few concerts in town this weekend and I wanted to get him a bonsai." Ahhh. This is a joke, I thought.

Sounds like my friend, Mike who usually tries something like this when he calls.

I decided to play along and to see where this was going.

"My name is Jody Wood and I am calling y'all from South America through a Skype connection. I am looking to get a present for Garth because his birthday is this weekend. We wanted to get him a personal gift and someone here suggested a bonsai tree."

Talk about a far-fetched joke. But something in his voice kept me on the line. He explained that Garth was playing a benefit concert for a hospital in South America in a few months, which was where Jody was calling from. The staff wanted to get a gift and someone had suggested the bonsai. He had already looked online and found some small, cheap bonsai, but they wanted to give something more impressive befitting a gracious singing legend. Jody ended up contacting me from the Pittsburgh Bonsai Society website. He needed to have the tree delivered to the concert venue in a few days and would be willing to pay with a credit card. I guess I was starting to believe him...

To be continued online, at www.pittsburghbonsai



PLANT CARE TIPS FOR APRIL



Ready, set, GO! April is still a decent month for root-pruning, and for digging trees from yard or field. As the weather finally settles into "normal" springtime mode-that is to say, temperatures climb into the 50s and 60s, and stay there-begin your feeding, pinching, watering, and pruning

schedules in earnest. Of course, be mindful of potential cold snaps, and be ready to protect vulnerable plants. The very hard winter we have just experienced lingers on, in the form of late bud-break, so watch your trees for signs of genuine activity before throwing on the fertilizer. This is the time we've all been waiting for! [JM]

(Courtesy of The Great Swamp Bonsai Society)

Your Bonsai Newsletter Needs YOU!

After eleven years and 110 newsletter issues as Co-Editor, Copy Editor and Publisher, it's time to retire. I'll continue until November, but it would be nice to have a successor onboard by summer. Cindie Bonomi is willing to continue doing the design and creative graphics forever.

My jobs cover three areas. One member could create and organize an outline of each issue; write articles as needed and proof read the final layout from Cindie.

A second person needs to maintain a regular and electronic Distribution List and supply mailing labels.

A third volunteer could handle the publishing tasks; picking up the

newsletter from the printer, prepping it for mailing and delivering it to the Post Office.

Interested in all or part of this process? Contact Jay Miller at: suisekijay@gmail.com



For your Bonsai supplies support

the store that exists for the society



Bob Dietz



Bonsai In The Burgh

724-348-4771
Pots, wire, tools, soil, plants

Yea! We Got Shirts! Good Shirts!



Now you can proudly show your enthusiasm for Bonsai and the Pittsburgh Bonsai Society with golf shirts from members Anna and Cliff Domasky.

Available in white, tan and taupe. \$25 each, including three-color embroidery.

You can also supply your own quality shirt; have it embroidered for a modest \$10 charge. For more details contact Cliff or Anna at:

annaclaus55@hotmail.com

-photos by Cindie Bonomi and Anna Domasky

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Coming Events:

32nd Annual Spring Festival - MABS April 24-26 2015 The Spring Festival of the MidAtlantic Bonsai Societies will commence Friday evening, April 24, 2015 and run through Sunday afternoon, April 26, at the Fairbridge Inn (formerly Ramada Hotel) in East Hanover, NJ. www.midatlanticbonsai.org
More information to come.

NO Potomac Bonsai Festival at the National Arboretum this year. See the ABS "Capital Collections" June 11, 2015-June 14, 2015 contact: johnruth222@gmail.com

38th Annual Mid-America Bonsai Exhibit August 14-16 2015 Their August show has the longest history, going into year 38 in 2015. It is one of the biggest regional shows in the nation. Centered on the Chicago Botanic Garden's Permanent Collection, featuring almost 50 world-class trees, it's a showplace of trees from across the midwest. Enthusiasts from five states bring their trees to be judged in the main hall at the Garden's Regenstein Center. There are no residency or membership restrictions for entering the show - any tree that can make it to Chicago is welcome to be entered. Along with this fabulous display of regional talent, there are over a dozen national vendors, workshops, free demonstrations, and a banquet with a silent auction. For more information go to: <http://www.midwestbonsai.org>

2015 Calendar Note:

Artisans Cup of Portland, "American Bonsai Reforged and Refined", Portland OR September 26th-28th 2015, Portland Art Museum, 8:00am - 5:00pm; 1219 SW Park Avenue, Portland. The Artisans Cup of Portland Bonsai Exhibition is the showcase of America's new movement to raise aesthetic appreciation and craftsmanship in the art of bonsai. The show's venue in the renowned Portland Art Museum catapults bonsai into the world of fine art. Event Website: <http://www.artisanscupofportland.com/>

May 2015 Issue Deadline:

Submissions for the May 2015 PBS Newsletter are due no later than April 17, 2015.

Compiled by Jay Miller

suisekijay@gmail.com

Note: the NEW E-Mail Address





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DUES ARE DUE! RENEW NOW!

Pittsburgh Bonsai Society • 2015 Calendar of Events

April 15	Wed.	7:00 PM Scots Pine Literati Workshop
May 20	Wed.	7:00 PM
May 29-30-31	Fri. Sat. & Sun.	34th Spring Show
June 17	Wed.	7:00 PM
July 15	Wed.	7:00 PM
July 25	Sat.	Auction@ Phipps Garden Center
Aug. 8	Sat.	Annual Picnic at the Grealish Farm
Sept. 16	Wed.	7:00 PM
Oct. 21	Wed.	7:00 PM
Nov. 18	Wed.	7:00 PM
Dec. 16	Wed.	Holiday Party



All events, unless otherwise noted, will be held at the Phipps Garden Center, starting at 7:00pm Phipps. Garden Center, 1059 Shady Avenue, is located at the edge of Mellon Park in the Shadyside section of Pittsburgh. At the Phipps Garden Center sign on Shady Avenue, just south of the intersection of Fifth and Shady Avenues, turn into the cobblestone driveway. Park in the metered lot. Walk 50 yards farther down the cobblestone lane. The Garden Center is the red brick building on your left.

Severe Weather & Emergency Information: PBS Meetings and Special Events at Phipps Garden Center will take place as scheduled except in the event of severe weather or emergency. Unsure? Call their Emergency Phone Number: 412 441-4442 for updates.