



Pittsburgh Bonsai Society

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



December 2008 Newsletter

NEXT EVENT



The Pittsburgh Bonsai Society's HOLIDAY DINNER! !DON'T MISS IT!



Pictures from Holiday Dinner 2007

- Great Food
- Great Company
- White Elephant Exchange
- Door Prize Valued At \$250

Details And Reservation Form On Page 5

Please check our website: <http://pittsburghbonsai.org>

For your Bonsai supplies support
the store that exists for the society



Bonsai In The Burgh

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

Monthly Question And Answer Box

Do you have a bonsai related question?
Mail or E-Mail your question to:

Bob Dietz
1525 Connor Rd.
South Park, Pa.15219
dietz4771@comcast.net



Your question and the answer will
appear in the next news letter



Snips

From The November Meeting

The faithful gathered on the 19th. Cindie Bonomi provided the details for the Holiday Dinner on Tuesday, December 9th at 6:30pm at Phipps Garden Center in Shadyside. Get those reservations in ASAP! The menu looks great and Bonsai in the Burgh (Bob Dietz) is providing an impressive door prize to be raffled off.

Elections were held and the following members comprise the slate of Officers and Committee Chairs for 2009:

- President.....Bob Grealish
- Vice PresidentTommy Kohlmyer
- Treasurer.....Tim Bamford
- Recording Secretary.....John Metcalf
- Corresponding Secretary.....Jay Miller
- MembershipMeg Amoudi
- Newsletter.....Cindie Bonomi
- Spring Show.....Dave Metzgar
- Past President.....Bob Dietz

The Winter Care discussion covered types of shelter, whether to feed or water, in-ground planting, wind and water barriers, anti-critter provisions, and why bonsai enthusiasts take winter vacations!



Mike's Corner

Tips and Suggestions from Mike Stern

Planting Seeds

Twos four weeks before Christmas and the bonsai were snuggled in their winter beds. Visions of football games and Christmas parties danced in my head.

Hearing from the chubby little man in a red suit would also have been nice. Rather an e-mail arrived requesting an article for the newsletter.

What is there to say about bonsai at this time of the year? I just finished putting plastic around my trees and raked up the last few leaves in my yard. I also finished completing fencing around my outdoor trees to ensure there are no small openings for a cunning little rabbit to sneak through. I am fairly confident that I closed off last year's entry ways. Time will tell.

This is the time of the year that you can think about purchasing and/or planting seeds if you have patience. You can go online and look up seed tree companies. One company that I have used in the past is Schumacher Seeds. Also you may be lucky enough to find seeds around trees in your yards or your neighbors' yards. Crabapple seeds are still rather easy to locate. Acorns, Japanese red maple seeds, and pine cones among others may be available.

Each seed has its own way of germinating. American maples produce seed which germinate that same spring. Many other trees do not produce their seeds until the fall. Many of these seeds require a period of freezing before they will germinate. The term of pre-freezing seeds is called stratification. If you purchased your seeds now they will have approximately 3 to 5 months of being frozen

which is necessary for germination. When you purchase your seeds you can place them in moist paper towels and put them in the freezer. You could also purchase seed flats and plant the seed no deeper than its thickness.

You can then place them outside so that they can go through stratification naturally. When you plant them in seed trays, water them so that the seeds are now moist and therefore will germinate in the spring. There are other ways of treating seeds to encourage germination which you can read about on line. However, these strategies mentioned above are the simplest and the least expensive.

When you have your seeds outside make sure that you place a screen over them. This will keep nature's little creatures away from them. If I have a number of seed trays I stack one on top of the other and put a screen on top of the highest flat. I also keep them in the shade so that when spring comes along I can set them out so that the new seedlings are not burned by harsh sun. Finally put fencing around your new seedlings as birds, squirrels, chipmunks and an assorted other creatures are still hungry.

Speaking of hunger, what about the visions of sugar plums.



Early Winter Maintenance



Thanksgiving is over, your trees are put away for the winter, mostly, and you paid attention to the tips you gleaned from the November Meeting. Prune if you must, but read Keith's columns in the Website archives for his lessons learned over a master's career.

Remember that branches become surprisingly brittle when the sap is not flowing. You have to guard your bonsai from freezing winds and heavy rain, whether in a poly house, row planting, a version of a cold frame, or protected on the north side of your house. You did clean the dead leaves and debris from the soil surface, didn't you? You still have time; December is not normally too hard in the Tri-State area on bonsai, but prepare for the really cold months of January and February. Resist the urge to bring in a really fine specimen for display. Beyond three days, even if it's away from a heat source, there's a possibility of encouraging new growth.

Bundle up and "eyes up". Consider the big trees during your winter walks. You gain inspiration and perspective as you trudge along.

Resources to Consider

Here are three sources you might want to contact, either online or for catalogs. The Greenhouse Catalog is just that, with some kits that might fit your needs. A.M. Leonard has a variety of tools useful for bonsai, while Gardener's Supply has some unusual stuff for your regular garden.

The Greenhouse Catalog
3740 Brooklake Rd NE
Salem OR 97303
1-800-825-1925
www.greenhousecatalog.com



A. M. Leonard's Gardeners Edge
241 Fox Drive P O Box 816
Piqua OH 45356
888-556-5676
www.gardenersedge.com



Gardener's Supply Company
128 Intervale Road
Burlington VT 05401
1-800-427-3363
www.gardeners.com



Compiled by Jay Miller

The Pittsburgh Bonsai Society's

HOLIDAY DINNER!

The Holiday Dinner will be held at the Phipps Garden Center on Tuesday December 9 at 6:30 pm. The event will be catered so everyone can enjoy the evening with no work. The menu will consist of chicken romano, delmonico steak with sherried mushrooms & onions and oriental shrimp stuffed tilapia. You can sample all of them buffet style, along with a tossed salad, roasted red skinned potatoes, a vegetable medley, rolls and butter. A cake and cookies will be served to satisfy the sweet tooth.

Send reservations with a check for \$10.00 per person.

We will have a door prize that has the value of at least \$250 complements of Bonsai In The Burgh. This door prize will consist of pots, tools, wire, soil, a book and other items.

We will also have the traditional White Elephant Exchange where you bring an item from your home that you no longer wish to see around the house. Wrap or disguise it so some lucky person will be surprised when they pick it.

Please send your reservation in by December 6, make checks payable and mail to:

Cindie Bonomi

335 Newburn Dr.

Pittsburgh, PA 15216



Phone:

(412) 561-2057

BONSAI HOLIDAY DINNER!

\$10 Per Person

Name Number Attending



CUT HERE

TOTAL

\$





Member Survey 2009

Please take a moment and help us with your comments. We want to make your membership year as productive as possible.

How did you originally learn of the Pittsburgh Bonsai Society?

- from a friend
- a flyer
- Bonsai Classes at Phipps
- from a garden center
- newspaper article
- the Internet
- PBS website

Are your bonsai skills beginner intermediate advanced

How many trees are in your collection?

- Do you acquire your bonsai from PBS Picnic and auctions Spring Show
- other members bonsai nurseries beyond Pittsburgh nursery stock



Would you like to receive your newsletters electronically?

If yes, NameE-mail address

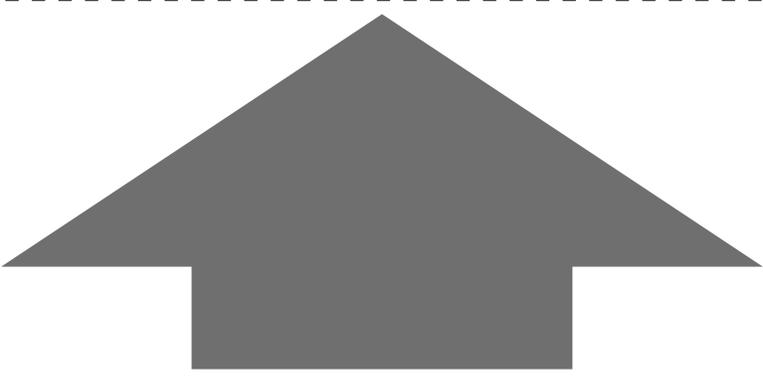
PBS occasionally sponsors bus trips to regional/national bonsai events and to nationally acclaimed bonsai collections.

Would you attend if the trip was overnight Yes No

If you paid for overnight accommodations at a PBS group rate? Yes No

Would you attend if it was a day trip starting about 5:00am, returning at 11:00pm Yes No

Comments:
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.....



Just A Few Photos From October's Meeting: Carving Demonstration And Workshop

With Bob Grealish And Keith Scott





Is older really better?

By Jim Behrenberg

Somewhere around 33 years ago our three kids gave my wife a cute little bonsai plant, in a kit, for her birthday. It was a Juniper of some sort and we were real pleased with her little “bon zai” plant. And it really looked nice in the living room on the coffee table. Well, that was the start of something that has consumed our lives for the past, yep, 33 years. Wanting to find out more about our little plant in a pot we heard there was a club for bonsai. Like the computer says all too frequently, “fatal error” and that club, of course, was the Pittsburgh Bonsai Society. At that time, September of 1976, the president was Ralph Lange, and his sister Orla greeted us at the door to introduce us to the group. We were a little intimidated at first but soon found that the members were really not all so uppity that we could not fit in. I guess the “Society” in the name scared us a little, because we sure weren’t “uppity classers”. We also learned that our little plant was a “bone sai”, not a “bon zai”.

In fact, we very soon found ourselves in the middle of all the activities and events put on by the “Society”. The very first show we attended, and put the new little plant in, was held on the top floor of Kaufman’s, on 5th Ave. in Pittsburgh. They had done this for the past several years and it was a very nice presentation of the plants. In the years to follow we showed and sold in the May Market, at the Garden Center in, of course, May. Do you know what May weather is like? Well in case you don’t, it’s rainy, and especially rainy for the May Market, put on by the Pittsburgh Garden Center each year. It should have been called “The Mud Market”. Our second year there I was in charge and the sale part of the show was very meager, due to the awful weather. In my report to the Garden Center, for their cut of the sales, I told them that all those water marks on my report were a mixture of rain and tears, and suggested they have a “June Market” instead.

The next two years we held our Spring show, soon coined “Spring Thing”, in the Monroeville Mall. Right, since I lived so close to it, I got to be in

charge of that too. Now in those days we did the shows far differently than we do today. We were the sole sales entity, as well as show. The plants we sold were all purchased by us and potted by us. That is how I got my first exposure to Keith Scott, as well as Tony Mihalic and several nursery’s. The system was, a group of maybe 6 or 8 of us would make the trip to Keith’s yard in Bainbridge, OH and on to Tony’s in Chardon, OH. We would buy up as many little plants as we had allotted money for, and that my station wagon and their cars would hold. Leaving some space for a stop at Garrards Nursery in Geneva before returning home with our gems. Of course, now they all needed potted and pruned, and priced. Naturally we had to purchase our own pots to put these little gems into. That was handled by Della Griffiths, who was also the next president after Ralph. As a matter of history, her own father was one of the original presidents of the society some 25 years before. Norbert Peterzak was among those early leaders as well.

To make a long story shorter, that was the start of the evolution of the our now “Spring Show”, which has evolved into a much more professional affair. I am not quite sure of the original date of origin for the “Society”, but I do know that the Pittsburgh group is one of the oldest in the country and is nearing, if not past it’s 50th year. Meetings are much the same, with the possible exception that we had more nationally known speakers, including Keith Scott (always a favorite-still is), Chase Rosade, Marion Gyllenswan, John Naka, Frank Okamora, Peter Adams from England, Cliff Pottberg, Ugi Yoshamora, Toshio Suboramoru, Bill Valavanis, Kelly Atkins and others.

It has been a great trip for Jan and me, but after not having taken a Summer vacation in 33 years (Hooray for family in Florida, for Winters) I have sold the last of my collection and am rearranging my back yard. Might even try a Summer trip to uh, to uh..... Hey, where do you go to vacation in the Summer?



Pittsburgh Bonsai Society
c/o Cindie Bonomi (Editor)
335 Newburn Drive
Pittsburgh, PA 15216

Calendar of Events

Dec 9 2008.....Tue 6:30pmAnnual Holiday PartyPGC

Jan-Feb 2009.....No Events Scheduled: It's too cold for workshops!!

March 2009.....DateTBA.....Program TBA.....PGC

Other Events

March 19-23 2009 Orlando FL Bonsai Societies of Florida (BSF)
"Bonsai in Florida Through the Years" 2009 Convention
www.bonsai-bsf.com

April 17-19 2009 Kerhonkson NY MidAtlantic Bonsai Societies
26th Spring Festival www.midatlanticbonsai@freeservers.com

June 11-14 2009 Boise Idaho ABS 2009 Learning Seminars
"American Bonsai Spirit"
www.absbonsai.org/event

All PBS meetings, unless otherwise noted, will be held at the Phipps Garden Center, (PGC), starting at 7:00pm. Phipps Garden Center 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.