



Pittsburgh Bonsai Society

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



May 2011 Newsletter



NEXT EVENT

Phipps Garden Center, Shadyside

Annual Spring Bonsai Weekend

Friday..... Setup: May 20 12-8pm Bring your Trees!

Saturday..... May 21 Showtime! 10am-5pm

Sunday..... May 22 10am-4pm Show, Demos and Tear-down



NEXT MEETING

Workshop

Wednesday
June 15, 2011
7pm

Details
TBA

Phipps Garden Center, Shadyside

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



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:



Your trees have been waiting all year, and it's finally here. The Spring Show will be held at Phipps Garden Center on Saturday and Sunday, May 21 and 22. Setup will be Friday from noon until 8 PM, so please have them here early. We are expecting a large showing this year, with many varieties and styles. If you have something that you haven't displayed in a while, please bring it in.

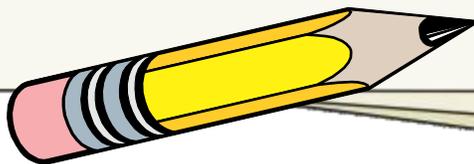


Photo by Cindie Bonomi

For the best display possible, trees should be in excellent shape. Remove any dead leaves and branches, and wire any branches that need re-positioning. The pots should be cleaned too. Bring along any accent plants or stands that you'd like your trees to be displayed upon.

Unfortunately, we won't be having Meehan's Miniatures this year due to another commitment, so the more consignment items, the better. We are trying to bring in some other plant material, since everybody likes to take something new home to play with. Don't forget to bring in some bonsai related items for the Chinese Auction. There will be food available, and as always, you can donate baked goods for re-sale. Anyone interested in helping with the setup or take down, please show up early and stay late. See you at the show.

Dave Metzgar



For your Bonsai supplies support

the store that exists for the society



Bonsai In The Burgh

724-348-4771

Pots, wire, tools, soil, plants

April's Juniper Workshop Meeting

by Dave Steidl



photo by Dave Steidl

Our juniper workshop was well attended at the April meeting on the 20th. Over a dozen members participated in the workshop and were able to select their tree of choice from over 50 specimens that Bob Dietz had purchased from a southern nursery. Juniperus procumbens 'Nana' or as it is commonly known Dwarf Japanese Garden Juniper was the species of choice for this spring workshop. The trees were all staked to allow the trunk to grow more vertically as opposed to its normal low spreading habit of nearly laying on the ground. The species lends itself to informal, cascade and semi-cascade styles. This is one plant you don't have to wire the branches downward in order to create that "older tree" look. The staked versions of this tree often create an excellent starting point for a good bonsai composition.

Dave Metzgar gave a brief explanation of what was needed to get these trees analyzed, root pruned and into a new pot. He showed the preferred pruning technique which is pinching for this type of foliage. And he described the need for good drainage, attaching screens to the holes in the pots and a drier potting mix of 4 parts haydite (or course sand) and 1 part pine bark. It's a good idea to wire the tree into the pot so that newly developing roots won't get damaged if the tree moves in the wind. One good rule for any tree is to try to keep the major insults to one per year. Major insults would include root pruning, a significant restyling, and collecting a tree in the wild.

Bob Dietz also brought a large Trident Maple that grew for a number of years untouched. Using a large pair of concave cutters and a "take no prisoners" attitude, he showed us just how many and which branches needed to be cut away in order to move the tree toward a more reasonable form for a future bonsai. The stage was now set for everyone to choose a tree with potential and begin the work.

Bob and Dave offered good advice as they both moved among the members who were busy repotting and styling their new bonsai. Everyone was pleased with the materials, guidance and results.



The MidAtlantic Bonsai Society Annual Spring Festival

by Dave Steidl



photo by Dave Steidl

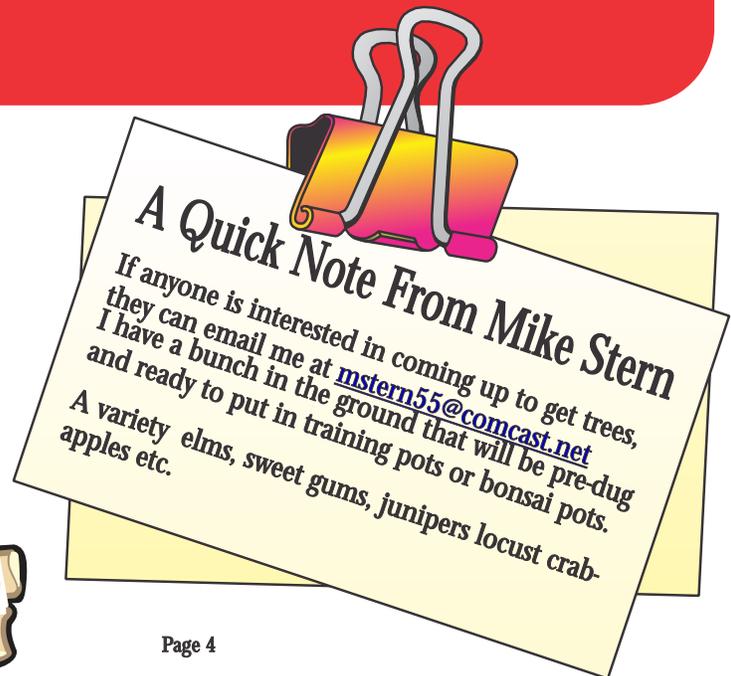
The MidAtlantic Bonsai Societies held their annual Spring Festival the weekend of April 16-17. Since it was held closer to Pittsburgh this year I decided to make the 3.5 hour drive to Grantville, PA. It was well worth the trip! Being just 15 minutes north of Hershey PA, I was able to drop family and friends in the world of chocolate and I continued on to a world of Bonsai—some of the best I've ever seen.



photo from the Invitational Show complements of the web

This was not to be an expensive trip, so I chose to just see exhibits and vendors for the \$10 fee. There were 2 great shows, the Society's member show and a smaller Invitational Show. The member show included 3 trees selected from each of 8 Societies in PA, NY, OH, NJ and CT. The professional show was the first of its kind for MidAtlantic and included 16 outstanding trees, each presented with companion plants, and scrolls. The vendors filled a large ballroom. There were area potters and pot distributors, many plants for sale as well as tools and small figurines. It didn't turn out quite as cheap as I originally planned.

I was told by one of the organizers that the show would probably be held at the same Grantville Holiday Inn next spring because of this years success.



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Membership Application
or Renewal Form



Pittsburgh Bonsai Society

Membership Year: January 1 to December 31 Your continuing support is greatly appreciated

PLEASE PRINT NEATLY

Name (One Letter or Number Per Box)

Address (Number and Street, Rural Route or Post Office Box)

City or Town

State

Zip

Phone

Individual Membership.....\$30.00

Family Membership.....\$40.00

E-Mail (Email address is used for membership database and member correspondence only. The Society will keep this info **CONFIDENTIAL**. (Please include!))

Date

Signature

I am a New Member

I am Renewing my Membership

Make your dues check payable to the Pittsburgh Bonsai Society and send it to:

Membership Chair
Meg Vates-Amoudi
Email: meg_bonsai@hotmail.com

544 Overlook Drive
Pittsburgh PA 15216
Phone: 412 477-7231

Membership Year:
January 1 to December 31

MEMBER PROFILE: MARK BERBACH

by Dave Metzgar



photo by Cindie Bonomi

Family, home life, occupation: I grew up in the south hills of Pittsburgh. At Edinboro University, I received degrees in Biology and Business. After college I became a diagnostic imaging technician and I've been at that job ever since. Leigh is my wife and we have a four year old and a two year old with one more on the way soon.

Other interests: I used to grow more cacti and succulents than bonsai, but I've given a lot away to friends and family that could grow them much better in the south.

How many years interested in bonsai: I grew up in a family of green thumbs and as far as I can remember I've always known of and admired the bonsai style. I took my first class with Keith Scott at Phipps Conservatory when he was still working there. We received three trees that day and they have all died. Years later I decided I was going to try a little harder at this bonsai thing and I found the Pittsburgh Bonsai Society on the web and I've been involved since then.

First tree: A friend in college gave me a "malsa" juniper; it was already dead when he bought it.

Favorite variety/style: Pines and Japanese maples were the first styles that I wanted to recreate for myself.

How many in your collection: I have a handful of trees I'd call bonsai and about 70 potential trees at various stages.

Anything new/experimental? This year I made my first attempt at grafting pines, making 6 low grafts of a cork bark pine.

Any trips to see bonsai elsewhere: While in Boston I visited a few bonsai nurseries and had taken an approach grafting class with John Romano.

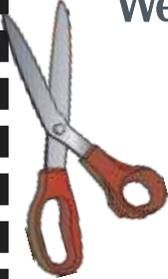
Best source of inspiration/information: Anything to do with bonsai is inspirational for me but the one thing I look forward to is the newest Bonsai Focus magazine.

Anything you'd like to see the society do in the future: I joined the club to learn from the local people. I would like to see everyone get involved in the pre-meeting membership tree spot light so we can learn from others experiences.



Member Survey

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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
- newspaper article
- PBS website
- the Internet
- Bonsai Classes at Phipps
- a flyer
- from a Garden Center

Would you like to receive your newsletters electronically? yes no

If yes, Name

E-mail Address

Are your bonsai skills: beginner intermediate advanced

Please tell us what programs you'd prefer:

- lectures
- workshops with your trees
- demonstration & workshops
- Bonsai Basics

Questions:

The Pittsburgh Bonsai Society's 2011 Calendar Of Events

- May 20-22..... Fri-Sun Spring Bonsai Weekend
- Jun 15..... Wed 7pm Workshop: Trident Maples (tent.)
- Jul 20..... Wed 7pm Auction!!
- Aug TBA..... Sat 11am Picnic at the Grealish Farm
- Sep 21..... Wed 7pm Workshop: "Trash to Treasure"
(working with orphans, strays and castoffs)
- Oct 19..... Wed 7pm TBA
- Nov 16..... Wed 7pm TBA plus Elections
- Dec 7..... Wed 6:30pm Annual Holiday Party



All events, unless otherwise noted, will be held at the Phipps Garden Center, 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.

Late Spring: Tweaking & Pruning

by Jay Miller



Photo by Cindie Bonomi

Take an inventory of your favorite hardy azaleas. You should be thinking about taking cuttings, even from the late blooming Kurume and Satsuki varieties. Take more cuttings than you need. They won't all sprout, trust me. The survivors will root successfully in about a month. Pinch any seed pods or flower remnants from the cuttings. After about 8 weeks or so, when the new roots are about 1-1/2" long, it's safe to transplant them.

If you are considering additional azaleas from nursery stock, evergreen hybrid azaleas are a good choice, with two old favorite types for your list, Gable hybrids, hardy to -10 degrees F. and Girard Hybrids.

PBS members who selected azalea workshop trees from Bob Dietz over the years probably received R. 'Stewartsonia', a Gable hybrid, with prolific blooms and very hardy nature. Peter Girard, Sr. was a nurseryman from nearby Geneva, Ohio who obsessively developed a notable series of azaleas, noted for their hardiness and compact growth.

All the Girard varieties are hardy to about -15 degrees F. It's worth a drive, an easy day-trip to Northeast Ohio to Girard Nurseries. Plants that can survive their weather conditions can survive bonsai styling, no matter how severe.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Bonsai Workgroup:

The work group will meet every other Thursday at Bob Grealish's farm 6-10pm. The first session is May 5. If you are interested in sharpening your skills, call Bob at 412 977-0077.

Coming Events:

16-19 June 2011 Louisville KY "Bonsai in the Bluegrass" ABS Convention & Learning Seminar; Fern Valley Hotel and Convention Center, Louisville
www.bonsaiinthebluegrass.com

A Reminder about Annual Dues:

You'll find a "short form" dues renewal notice in this issue. Our Membership Year is January 1 to December 31. Your Society relies on your support and participation in order to bring the programs that we all enjoy. (Dues remain: \$30 individual and \$40 per family).

Last Newsletter Notice:

If there is a check mark in the box next to your address label on the back cover, our records indicate that you have not paid your dues for 2011. This is your last newsletter. To avoid missing a newsletter and losing your other membership benefits, send your dues to the Pittsburgh Bonsai Society, c/o Membership Chair Meg Vates-Amoudi, 544 Overlook Drive, Pittsburgh PA 15216, Phone: 412 477-7231
Email: meg_bonsai@hotmail.com
Checks should be made payable to the Pittsburgh Bonsai Society. Individual \$30, Family \$40.

June 2011 Issue Deadline:

Submissions for the June 2011 Newsletter are due no later than May 23, 2011.

Compiled by Jay Miller



Graphic Design Geeks

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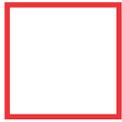
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This is your last
Newsletter if there
is a check mark in
the box to the left.

