



Pittsburgh Bonsai Society

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

MAY 2014 NEWSLETTER

MAY

Spring Show Prep!



~Photo by Cindie Bonomi from last year's show

Despite The Winter That Wouldn't Leave, the 33rd Annual PBS Spring Show is right around the corner. After spending considerable time and effort creating your bonsai, it's time to exhibit that living art in our Spring Show. The May program promises tips and techniques to enhance your choice tree to Show readiness! Bring your exhibit tree(s) and tools. As always, the Society has tools and wire available.

May 21, 2014 Wed. • 7:00pm • Phipps Garden Center • Shadyside

OUR 33RD ANNUAL SPRING BONSAI SHOW

JUNE

THEN...

Dave Metzgar and his team have a great Spring Bonsai Weekend planned, with super trees, vendors, demonstrations, consignment sales and lots more.

Setup: Friday 12-8pm (Bring your Trees!)

Showtime: .. Saturday 10-5, Sunday 10-4 Show, Demos

Tear Down: Sunday after 4pm

June 6, 7, 8 2014: Phipps Garden Center, Shadyside

Bring in your (new tree treasure) from the Spring Show for survival and care tips; plus a gentle critique on possible styling directions.

June 18, 2014 Wednesday 7:00pm:
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.

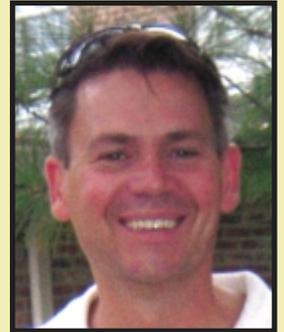


A Note From Dave:



YouTube Lessons

As I sat on my living room couch one evening I picked up the iPad with the intention of catching up an episode of "Mad Men" on Netflix. While out on my garage bench sat a huge Japanese black pine that I had dug out of Bob Grealish's field last year. It had no interest in "Mad Men" but it did beg for some attention. So instead of Netflix, I went to YouTube first and searched for black pine bonsai. I ended up watching a forty-two minute video of Ryan Neil discussing the seasonal care of pines. Just what I was looking for! He talked about the vigorousness of this tree and when to fertilize, when to cut candles and when to needle pluck. I found this video just in time to take the first steps in caring for my tree this year.

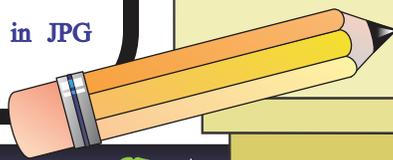


~Photo by Cindie Bonomi

If you have a particular tree that you don't know what to do with, go online. There is so much more information than ever before. The May meeting will focus on getting your trees show ready. We can learn a lot from online resources so that's where we'll look to get some great ideas on styling and displays.

Dave Metzgar

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Haiku Corner

The spring rain:
Between the trees is seen
A path to the sea.

~Otsuji

A LONG, HARD WINTER



~by Lynne Squilla

No one would argue that this winter was a killer. In more ways than one. For bonsai practitioners (and plant-lovers in general), it was a winter to try our souls. If the sub-zero cold didn't burn or outright snuff our carefully tucked-in bonsais, then it was desperate deer who finished them off. OK, so it wasn't as cold as 1994 (which had the coldest day ever recorded in Pittsburgh history: -22 degrees, warming only to -3). It was still plenty cold to push us into a lower planting zone for a couple days a couple times.

This spring, as the snow cleared and our thoughts turned to unearthing our old friends, many of us felt the dull horror of seeing trees we spent years shaping, feeding and protecting just remain dead shadows. Not dormant. Dead. No green buds. No blooms. Nothing.

Bob Dietz's vast forest was reduced by scores of tiny trees. The devastation among Dave Metzgar's collection made him lament, (in an unguarded moment), that this winter was enough to make him think of giving up bonsai forever. (He won't). Cindie Bonomi found her favorite Dawn Redwood forest, that she'd finally got to look extraordinary, trimmed by deer into stubby sticks poking out of a pot. Deer helped themselves to the bloom buds on my star magnolia, breaking and damaging branches and completely altering its shape.

We keenly feel these losses.

Does our grief arise from the deeply personal relationship we've formed with these remarkable little trees, whose age is their beauty, value and power? Is it seeing so many hours of thinking and designing, making just the right pruning cuts, artfully wiring branches, moving trees to new pots, keeping them fed and watered and sheltered from the elements --- all come to nothing? Is our ego being tweaked, when our work is undone or a thing we thought would live long after we're gone --- is no more?

I began to think some kind of grief counseling might be in order. I envisioned the May meeting being a slew of cots with bonsai society members stretched out, pouring out their sadness to professional help.

And then, I thought of the Tao of bonsai. The roots from which it first grew in China. Taoism proposed that the ideal way to live is in harmony with nature, in its rhythms and interrelationships. Practicing bonsai was a means to reach this understanding and a profound respect for it. Earliest practitioners admired naturally-occurring trees that had been windblown, dwarfed, with broken, bleached branches and trunks and strong, gnarled roots. They transplanted these and tried to recreate them, meditating on the persistence of these tenacious beings who hung on in spite of all the hardship nature could fling at them.

Maybe that's the core of our sorrow: seeing that tenacity give up the ghost. But even that is part of the understanding of nature, and we have to embrace it.

I'd never pretend to be an expert on Taoism, Zen, Shinto or, for that matter, bonsai. But there's no denying that it is a spiritual exercise, not simply a hobby or an end product. Not a bragging point or trophy. So, we mourn our lost trees and we turn our heads, hands and souls to continuing this profound, beautiful, and sometimes baffling practice.

Lynne's Magnolia, with no blooms still in the ground after a bad winter.



Cindie's Dawn Redwood Forest



Summer 2013



Tucked into it's winter bed 2013



Spring 2014, five sticks in a pot

Kelley Adkins and April's Meeting

~by Jay Miller



Fifty-plus members! A great turnout for Kelley Adkins who performed a demonstration on separating, repotting and basic styling of *Ulmus carpinifolia*, the *Carpinifolia Elm*. The origin of his first tree of the variety was the old White estate on the former Polo Grounds in Hunting Valley, an affluent eastern suburb of Cleveland. Previous gardening staff had planted the elms at the entrance of the estate.

Kelley harvested seedlings, but discovered the best propagation method was root cuttings. Orphan roots are cut when pots are lifted; many new trees are the result. He showed this method by cutting roots protruding from the bottoms of the demo trees, encouraging Society members to take the cuttings home, pot them, and put them on the ground.

His bonsai soil preference is Haydite and pine bark mulch, but pea gravel is a good alternative to Haydite. While he was attacking the demo trees with root hook and rake, he mentioned that he uses two sets of tools, one specifically reserved for root work, which would otherwise rapidly dull his foliage pruners and shears. Branch cuttings are another propagating option, for these are "very forgiving" trees.

So, with separation, he produced TWO raffle trees. Tree #1 was cut and wired, and Tree #2 was topped for the "prune & grow" approach. Both were raffled off to two very happy winners!

Kelley said he cuts the elm tops back 3-4 times a season. Results: ever more twiggy ramification. The elms stay out all winter, on the ground and mulched with leaves, sheltered near the buildings for wind protection, but they are very hardy.

Twenty-five elms were auctioned off. Kelley kindly roamed the room, advising the new owners on future styling directions, answering Elm care questions, etc. It was a great evening, for new fans of the *Carpinifolia Elm*!



Our Two Lucky Tree Winners



Dom Sacchetti



Louise Means



Picking out our trees.



~Photos by Cindie Bonomi

Kelley Adkins and April's Meeting Continued From Page 4



Steve, I don't think that was what Kelley meant by trying to keep the roots wet until you got home~

Kelley went over to each table and personally gave his input to every workshop participant on trimming and styling his or her tree.



~Photography by Cindie Bonomi



At the end of the meeting, Dan Yobp had wired and shaped some of Bob Dietz's trees and brought them in to be shown and bought.

Kelley shared some of his 40+ years' History In Bonsai:

After graduating from Miami University, I moved to Cleveland in 1973 to accept a gardening job for a wealthy family there. I had ended up at the 1972 Bonsai Show quite by accident and decided I needed to pursue bonsai as an interest. As it turned out, Cleveland was a great place to study bonsai, the Cleveland Bonsai Club was very active and full of knowledgeable and helpful people. In the spring of 1974 I took my first bonsai class at the Garden Center of Greater Cleveland. My instructor was Keith Scott, who, at the time, had a bonsai nursery in Bainbridge Ohio. Keith needed help with the nursery, so I started working for him and quickly became immersed in all the stages of bonsai development.

I continued to work with Keith and spent countless hours working with him at the nursery. Along the way I worked with many of the masters of that time including John Naka and Toshido Saburamoru. I have served as president of both the Cleveland Bonsai Club and the Midwest Bonsai Society in Chicago, and have traveled and lectured throughout the Midwest.



~Photo By Cindie Bonomi

I am happiest when just working on bonsai in my backyard and really enjoy developing my own bonsai over a number of years, a trait I learned from my first instructor and friend Keith Scott.



MEMBER PROFILE: Barbara and Charles “Charlie” Lim

Family, home life, occupation: Barbara grew up in suburban Philadelphia, Charlie is originally from Lawrenceville. They have been married for 30 years. They live in Murrysville. They have one 26 year old son, Gregory who currently lives in Chicago.

Barbara graduated from the University of Pittsburgh with a BS in Biochemistry and a MS in Health Physics (Radiation Safety Engineering). Charlie graduated from Penn SU with a BS in Mechanical Engineering; he later earned a MS in Environmental Engineering from Pitt. They met while working at Bettis Atomic Power Laboratory in West Mifflin.

Barbara worked as a radiological engineer at Westinghouse Bettis Laboratory and commercial Westinghouse. She ran two personal radiation dosimetry laboratories. Barbara later taught radiation safety and also managed the radiation protection program at Duquesne University. While their son was in high school and college, Barbara tutored high school mathematics and prepared high school students for the mathematics section of the College Board's SAT exam. Barbara is currently on sabbatical from tutoring in order to care for her 93 year old mother who resides in Florida.

Charlie worked at Bettis and Westinghouse Electro-Mechanical (EMD) in Cheswick PA in numerous senior engineering and management positions. In his last 15 years of employment, Charlie managed the Radiological, Safety and Environmental Compliance programs at EMD. He retired in 2011 with 39 years' service at Westinghouse.

Our son Gregory, graduated from Franklin Regional High School in Murrysville, received a BS in Finance from the University of Notre Dame and an MS in Business Administration from the University of Chicago. He is currently employed as a senior portfolio advisor for the University of Chicago's endowment fund.

Our family is rounded out by our canine companions, Kobe and Gus, our chocolate labs. Sadly Kobe moved on to a better place in March. It was Kobe who introduced Barb to Dave Metzgar, many years back while both were walking their labs in Murrysville's parks!

Other interests: Barbara's first passion is gardening/landscaping; she also enjoys Labrador Retrievers, baking and cooking. After 25 years of planting trees, shrubs, perennials, annuals, bulbs, ground covers and wild flowers, Barbara became a

Penn State Master Gardener in 2009. Charlie joined her as a PSU Master Gardener in April 2014 (along with Dave Metzgar and Inga Jensen -congrats!). Charlie's other passions are his 72 Corvette, wood-working and eating. Charlie's inspiration for bonsai was developed by watching Mr. Miyogi (with our son) from “Karate Kid” fame.



~Photo by Barbara and Charlie Lim

Your first tree: Since we joined the society in 2013, we have acquired a trident maple (*Acer buergerianum*) and 2 Japanese maples (*Acer palmatum* 'murasaki kiyomime' and 'toyama nishiki' bonsai. Our 2014 spring projects are attempting to train a *Chaemycyperis obtusa* (Hinoki cypress) and a *metasequoia glyptostroboides* (dawn redwood) as bonsai. We are still searching for their inner spirit to determine their style.

Favorite variety/style: The first trees (full size) Charlie, Barb and Greg planted at their Murrysville home were an evergreen, *Crytomeria japonica* 'yoshino' (Japanese cedar), a deciduous conifer, *Metasequoia glyptostroboides* (dawn redwood) and a flowering deciduous tree, *Styrax japonica* (Japanese snowbell). The cedar and redwood are now 30' and the styrax is 10' tall by 15' wide. Since even our (somewhat) horticulturally challenged son appreciates the noble trees they have become, we would like to try each of our originally planted trees in bonsai. The cedar and the snowbell have already produced seedlings; a friend gave us another dawn redwood.

How many in your collection: See above.

Anything new or experimental: Everything since we just started!

Any trips to see bonsai elsewhere: Phipps in Pittsburgh, Chicago Botanical garden.



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Bob Dietz



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annaclaus55@hotmail.com



-photos by Cindie Bonomi and Anna Domasky

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Thursday Workgroup at Bob Grealish's:

Started April 24, 2014. Next session is May 8th and then very other Thursday at 6:00pm. For details and directions, call Bob at 412 977-0077

Coming Events:

May 2-4, 2014 Potomac Bonsai Association Spring Bonsai Festival, "Southern Fried Bonsai", Washington DC at the National Arboretum. May 2nd 8:00am to May 4th 5:00pm. A five hour drive but worth it!
www.potomacbonsai.com
or www.usna.usda.gov

37th Annual Mid-America

Bonsai Exhibit:

August 15 - 17, 2014 Our August show is our show with the longest history, going into year 37 in 2014. 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 mid west. Enthusiasts from five states bring their trees to be judged in the main hall at the Garden's Regenstein Center - with this year's Guest Master Rodney Clemmons. 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.

4th US National Bonsai Exhibition:

September 13, 2014-9:00am to September 14, 2014 - 5:00pm International Judges: Susumu Nakamura, Lindsay Bebb, David Easterbrook will evaluate over 200 bonsai from across the United States for awards and present free demonstrations. For additional information and to submit photos for entry contact: William N. Valavanis at wvn@internationalbonsai.com or 585-344-2595

June 2014 Issue Deadline:

Submissions for the June 2014 PBS Newsletter are due no later than May 15, 2014.

Compiled by Jay Miller
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Pittsburgh Bonsai Society
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PITTSBURGH BONSAI SOCIETY • 2014 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

May 21.....	Wed 7pm	Spring Show Prep Class; Get trees ready!
June 6,7, 8.....	33rd Annual Spring Show.....	Phipps Garden Center
June 18	Wed 7pm	Bring your Show purchases for Care/Styling tips
July Auction.....	TBA	Phipps Garden Center
July 16.....	Wed 7pm	Tropical Tree Workshop
Aug 9.....	Sat 11 am	Annual Member Picnic
Sept 17.....	Wed 7pm	Guest Speaker Workshop
Oct 15.....	Wed 7pm	Carving: Demonstration & Hands-on training
Nov 19.....	Wed 7pm	Phoenix Graft
Dec 09.....	TUE 6:30 pm.....	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.