



Pittsburgh Bonsai Society

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

October 2011 Newsletter

NEXT MEETING

Needle Tweakin' & Last Minute Styling for Spring 2012

Photography by Cindie Bonomi



Needle Reduction in pines (Black, White & Scots) is an art beyond mere "tweaking"; learn the difference between plucking and pinching and when each technique is appropriate. A demonstration by Bob Grealish will give you the styling information you need. And please bring in your maples, oaks, hornbeams for questions you didn't get answered at the September Meeting!



Wednesday, October 19, 2011 • 7pm • Phipps Garden Center, Shadyside

NEXT EVENT

November Meeting:

Winterizing
Techniques for
Beginners

Plus Elections

Wednesday, November 16, 2011 • 7pm • Phipps Garden Center

SPECIAL OCTOBER EVENT

DAY TRIP

To D.C./National Arboretum

Date and details revealed on the Website. View our national Bonsai collections.

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



The Pittsburgh Bonsai Society Newsletter

Editor:
Cindie Bonomi

Copy Editor:
Jay Miller

Graphic Design:
Cindie Bonomi

Contributors:
Jay Miller
Dave Metzgar
Bob Grealish
Mark Berbach

Photography:
Cindie Bonomi
Bob Dietz

Publishing & Circulation:
Jay Miller

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 two months prior to issue date.

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



A Note From Dave:

Look for more changes on the website...

The PBS website will have a new updated look very soon. Gone will be the 80's era style and the over stuffed front page. On the old version of the website design software, it was easy to add information, and a little more involved to make links to new pages, hence the bulging suitcase of stuff that was overflowing the front page. In its place will be a modern design that you'll want to visit often.



Photo by Cindie Bonomi

One of the best new links is the Bonsai Barn. Members can post information there about anything bonsai related that they want to buy, sell, trade, announce, etc.

Have some trees or tools you want to sell? Send some pictures.

Looking for information on a certain variety of tree? Ask a question and see who responds.

Heard about a bonsai event locally, nationally, worldly? Post it so others can find it.

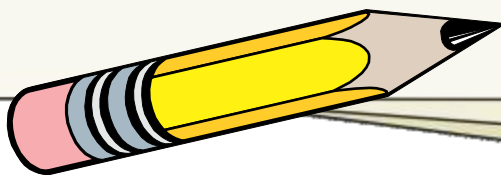
The Tree Calendar link will have updated information on what to do seasonally.

Much of it is pulled from Bob Grealish's online reference guide on bonsai, also online found under the Resources link.

So keep the website in mind next time you need to find out the topic of the next meeting, or have something to sell locally. It will be updated as much as possible and will be more current than the newsletter.

www.pittsburghbonsai.org

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

Trash to Treasures, Indeed!

By Jay Miller
Photography by Cindie Bonomi



September's Meeting showed that bonsai enthusiasts in the Tri-State area know a bargain when they see one! Looking around the main meeting room of the Pittsburgh Garden Center you could see an amazing variety of bonsai material that had been purchased, collected from the wild, and, in some cases, rescued from street-side trash containers before the garbage men came along. Society members compared bargain prices as avidly as factory outlet shoppers!

Bob Grealish elaborated on the "stumping" technique, touching on the growth, styling possibilities and pests to expect. He cautioned that you should heavily prune deciduous trees in February or early summer. He provided constructive comments on members' trees for future styling. Some were literally right out of the ground.

Dave Metzgar had the opportunity to acquire a large boxwood from the collection of a former member. The tree was lightly pruned by Bob, then raffled off. The happy winners were Max and



More Trash to Treasures Photos...

Photography by Cindie Bonomi



**Boxwood Winners:
Max and Mary Crossley**

Tagging, Eyeballing & Singin' in the Rain

By Jay Miller

Photography by Cindie Bonomi

There were lotsa opportunities during the drenching hour's drive to Mike Stern's to reflect on the consequences of an obsessive hobby. Mostly, "are we nuts"??? Well, yes and no. A rain-soaked drive, and a trudge (with rain) through Mike's huge in-ground development area was worth the trip.

Watching Cindie, Bob Dietz and Dave Metzgar bobbing in and down as they tagged their choice trees reminded me of a dipper-bird convention. Then we gathered in Mike's garage to watch the ignition sequence of the grille, and then to the kitchen to relax with warm beverages and good talk.

The Lord hastened the rain away after lunch, and we were able to squelch around the large display area near the garage to view the finished bonsai and sale material. Despite spousal admonitions, some of us brought some treasures home ("Honey, it just jumped into the car.") Because the weather had kept some folks away, we may be visiting Mike next April; stay tuned.



Joe Stupka Is Captivated By Horticultural Mysteries

Sat. September 24, 2011
By Doug Oster, Pittsburgh Post-Gazette



Pam Panchak / Post-Gazette

Joe Stupka, from Pulaski, stands among a forest of trees that he has cultivated over the last 40 years.

Joe Stupka has spent a lifetime combing the country for strange growths on trees and shrubs referred to as witches' brooms. These horticultural mysteries take many forms, and it's hard to pinpoint why they occur. Oftentimes a mass of twigs form resembling a broom, hence the name. Mr. Stupka, 85, of Pulaski, Lawrence County, particularly looks for them on conifers, searching for a globe-shaped shrubby growth on a tree that normally grows tall and straight, or one limb that doesn't look the same.

"Something happens to the terminal bud and all the cells change," he says, leaning over a dwarf conifer, one of hundreds of witches' brooms he has discovered. "I can't make this into a witches' broom. Nature does it." Horticulturalists are divided on what exactly causes the mutations. Some think it's environmental stresses, fungi or insects. Mr. Stupka disagrees. "I think it's radiation from the sun." He noticed in Colorado that brooms formed on the west side of trees facing huge boulders, which act as giant reflectors. Tombstones do the same thing. "You can find a lot of brooms in the cemetery and no one gives you any trouble, nobody says a word," he said with a smile.

Once the broom is discovered, he figures out a way to propagate it from cuttings, air layering or grafting. Some root easily while others refuse to, he says. Cuttings become clones of the plant and will be identical to the broom. Sometimes, when a broom is out of reach, he takes things into his own hands, literally. Mr. Stupka actually knocked the broom off a tree with a shotgun. "You can't do that everywhere, but if it's out in the country you can," he said, laughing. He proudly walks his 12 acres in an old brown, half-tucked T-shirt and matching suspenders. His large front yard is a plant lover's dream. It's not a pristine formal garden but a space filled with rare plants. Some are in tiny pots; others are planted in the ground and reach 50 feet. It's almost like the Island of Misfit Toys but in a good way.

There's a Kousa dogwood that grows 20 feet tall but only 1 foot wide. Waist-high mounded arborvitae grow next to prostrate Scotch pines, which are both dwarfed by tall weeping conifers. Two of the most stunning sights are a variegated hemlock and a unique ginkgo. "A woman drove from Chicago to buy hundreds of my variegated ginkgo seedlings," Mr. Stupka said. He is continually working on the tree to perfect the mix of green and white on the leaves. So far those sales are the only way he's made a little money off his passion. He's never received any royalties on the plants in cultivation that bear his name, and he never names the



Pam Panchak / Post-Gazette

Joe Stupka show off a witches' broom, a deformity in woody plants.

plants after himself. Others do. "I just do this to satisfy myself," he said.

He donates many of his greatest finds to conifer societies which auction the plants off at premium prices. His passion was ignited in the 1940s when he became friends with the late Bob Danik of Valencia who ran North Hills Landscape Nursery. Mr. Danik introduced him to the American Conifer Society, and a lifelong obsession was born. One of the plants he's most proud of is arborvitae 'Mr. Bowling Ball.' It's a 3-foot tall mounded, shrub-like version of the tree, discovered as a broom. "You never have to prune it. It's easy to propagate (and) easy to maintain," he said proudly. Witches' brooms are everywhere, he says, and a new discovery could be right around the corner. "You can find plants almost anywhere, any day if you just keep looking for something different."



Witches' Broom Photos
by Bob Dietz



"Dr. Nam Lam, a member of our Society for four years, passed away on Sunday, October 2, 2011 after a brief illness.

There will be a mass for Nam on Friday, Oct 7, 2011 at 10am at the St John Chrysotom church in Greenfield.

Nam was very passionate about bonsai, and a wonderful friend to many of us. He will be greatly missed."

Bob Grealish

Mid-Autumn Around The 'burgh

By Jay Miller



Photo by Cindie Bonomi

It may be "Mum"tober in your regular garden, but it's a good idea to prune any autumn-blooming bonsai you may have, whether rhododendron, azaleas, chrysanthemums. Yes, some members have successfully bonsai'd chrysanthemums in semi and cascade forms. Harvest some seed now. And plant some maple, pine, juniper and hemlock seeds as well. Consider a protective box to protect them from squirrels and other critters.

If you have any bonemeal left in your bonsai pantry, figure a handful of bonemeal for each 30" plant. Begin autumn cleanup, picking up leaves from your bonsai and placing them in a compost pile. Use your fungicide one last time on your crabapples, cherries and other stone-fruit trees. Water only as needed and check your branch wires again.

You did bring your tropicals inside, didn't you?

And if you were inspired by September's "Trash to Treasures" program, it's not too late to make a final swing around the nurseries and garden centers for trees and shrubs with potential.



Pittsburgh Bonsai Society 2011 Calendar of Events

- Oct 19.....Wed 7pm.....“Needle Tweakin' & Last
Chance Styling for Spring
2012” (BYOT)
- Nov 16.....Wed 7pm.....Split Meeting: Winterizing for
Beginners plus Elections
- Dec 7.....Wed 6:30pm.....Annual Holiday Party
- Jan & Feb 2012.....No Meetings
- Mar 21.....Wed 7pm.....TBA
- Jun 1-3..... Sat/Sun..... Spring Show 2012

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.



Cartoon sent in by:
Mark Berbach

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Coming Events:

April (Date TBA) 2012 Harrisburg Area PA MidAtlantic Bonsai Societies 29th Annual Spring Festival Harrisburg Hershey Holiday Inn, Grantville PA, Questions?
<http://midatlanticbonsai.freesevers.com>

June 9-10, 2012 Rochester, NY 3rd U.S. National Bonsai Exhibition, Questions?
WNV@internationalbonsai.com

Spotlight Trees:

Remember to bring your spotlight trees to a meeting for “show & tell”. It's a great way for new members to learn about new (to them) species; the TLC requirements and the story of your tree.

Newsletter Information:

It's easy to make an announcement or contribute to the PBS Newsletter. If it is text only, call or email Jay Miller at 412 481-4540 suisekifan@yahoo.com If it is a sketch or photo, email Cindie Bonomi cindiebonomi@yahoo.com

November 2011 Issue Deadline:

Submissions for the November 2011 Newsletter are due no later than October 20, 2011. The December issue deadline is November 17, 2011.

Whatever happened to...

Joan Aaron, John Bernard, Kenneth Butch, Jim Butts, Janice Grim, Audrey Hatcher, Carlin Hulick, Elaine Lentz, Chuck Lloyd, Darrell Matthews, Jeff Oravik, Janice Reese, Joe Saber, Earl Stewart, John Weixel and Teresa Wolken?

Compiled by Jay Miller

suisekifan@yahoo.com



You Have Just Found The Cure For Bad Advertising

- Logo Design
- Magazine Ads
- Full Color Brochures
- Illustrations
- Product Illustration
- Displays For Trade Shows

Website: <http://www.graphicdesigngeeks.com>

E-Mail: cindie@graphicdesigngeeks.com

Or: cindiebonomi@yahoo.com

Cindie Bonomi • 335 Newburn Drive • Pittsburgh, PA 15216 • Phone: (412) 561-2057



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

Happy
Halloween

