



Pittsburgh Bonsai Society

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

October 2012 Newsletter

THIS MONTH



Bring Your Own Tree!

"Trash to Treasure II"

So much fun last year, we're doing it again! Potential bonsai abound, from neighbor's landscaping castoffs, to "orphans" at local garden centers. Bring in your deals/steals for a major makeover into a potential bonsai show tree! PS: don't forget your tools.

Wednesday, October 17, 2012, 7pm at Phipps Garden Center, Shadyside

NEXT MONTH



Winterizing Techniques for Beginners Plus Elections

Techniques to help you tuck your trees away for the winter! Get more involved with the Society for 2013! Volunteer to help with the Spring Show, the Welcoming Committee, our Website, Public Relations or (you fill in the blank!)

Wed. Nov. 14, 2012, 7pm at Phipps Garden Center, Shadyside

Please check our newly revamped 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 two months prior to issue date.

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



A Note From Dave:



"How do I get more trees?"



Photo By Cindie Bonomi

I remember asking that question when I first started playing around with bonsai years ago. I bought my first tree at an arts festival, and ever since then I have found many sources for adding to my collection. From scouring garden centers to scavenging in my sister-in-law's yard for ancient yews pulled up with a tractor, I grabbed anything and everything and potted them up with hopes of developing a miniature masterpiece. Some worked, some didn't, but I did learn from each one.

It seems like we have had more than the average amount of new members joining the PBS lately. Some of them maybe taking home their very first tree from one of the workshops we have done in the last few months. Starting on the same road as I did, a new collector can find material in a variety of ways.

Our "Trash to Treasure Workshop" in October encourages you to look for material and bring it in to see what can be made out of it. In future workshops, we can teach the techniques of layering, both ground and air layering, and of taking cuttings, to get more trees out of trees you already have.

One of the best sources for new trees is at our Spring Show in June. Both vendors and members sell finished trees as well as starter material. So to new members I say, "Hang in there", your collection of one tree will soon turn into two, then four, then ten, then....



Dave Metzgar



Literati Bonsai



September is always a good month for bonsai enthusiasts, and 32 showed up for the Scots Pine Literati Workshop. Past Prez Mark and Becky Wazenegger supplied 26 candidate trees, grown from seed, 10 years old and already showing potential. Mark used a combination of iPad and laptop to show examples of the wide variety of forms within the Literati style. The goal of the workshop was to create basic shape, with movement, using wiring techniques and very little pruning.

The end result, in a few years, will demonstrate grace, elegance, balance and form.

Everyone who wanted a workshop tree picked tickets out of a hat, grabbed their tree and set to work. The club tools and wire were available to those who needed them, and the veteran members helped mentor the newer folks with wiring techniques. Expect to see some of these literati pines in future shows!

-by Jay Miller

Dave started the meeting off with a couple small raffle giveaways.



Mark Wazenegger then began the meeting showing some examples of Literati style.



Everyone got a tree and no one wasted even a minute getting down to business working on it.



A lot of our older more experienced people made their rounds and helped some of our Newbies out wiring and trying to decide how to bend the trunk.

Literati Bonsai "Continued From Page 3"



Sage Ross brought one of his trees to work on... two of his little buddies decided to hitch a ride in the pot.



Haiku Corner
this road--
no one goes down it,
autumn evening.
-Basho



Literati Style Bonsai

-by Christopher Treloar



-photo by Christopher Treloar

In light of our recent meeting about literati style trees I thought I'd share this excellent example I saw while on my recent vacation.

We went to Seattle and while there visited the Weyerhaeuser Bonsai Gardens. We viewed around 100 different bonsai, many from the "Best In The Northwest, Washington" exhibit, which featured bonsai by members of the PNBCA. Among the other trees on display we came across this excellent example of the literati style, a Bald Cypress (taxodium distichum).

I especially liked the touch of hanging the Spanish moss from the upper branches. What follows is the description from the collection. Bald cypress (so called because it drops its leaves in winter) is not a true cypress at all, but a close relative of the redwoods. Young trees have a pyramidal form typical of conifers. As they mature, some individuals undergo a radical change in form, abandoning most of their lower limbs as the upper trunk divides and branches to form a flat, fan-shaped crown.

Artist Vaughn Banting studied the natural form for years before attempting to duplicate it in a bonsai. This is one of the original two trees he used to develop the "flat top" style of bonsai design. He began in 1972 with a 5 foot tall nursery plan, and spent the next fifteen years reducing it and developing it into an extraordinarily accurate image of a natural tree. This tree was on loan from the Banting Collection, Metairie, LA



BONSAI

All it takes is one to throw a room completely out of whack.

Over by the window it looks hundreds of yards away,

a lone stark gesture of wood on the distant cliff of a table.

Up close, it draws you in, cuts everything down to its size.

Look at it from the doorway, and the world dilates and bloats.

The button lying next to it is now a pearl wheel,

the book of matches is a raft, and the coffee cup a cistern

to catch the same rain that moistens its small plot of dark, mossy earth.

For it even carries its own weather, leaning away from a fierce wind



-photography by Trevor Bonomi

that somehow blows through the calm tropics of this room.

The way it bends inland at the elbow makes me want to inch my way

to the top of its spiky greenery, hold on for dear life

and watch the sea storm rage, hoping for a tiny whale to appear.

I want to see her plunging forward through the troughs,

tunneling under the foam and spin drift on her annual, thousand-mile journey.

Billy Collins, Poet Laureate of The United States, 2001-2002

Norbert Pietrzak Workshops

Tropical Bonsai Workshop

Dates: Sat., Oct. 13

Time: 10 a.m. - noon

Instructor: Dr. Norbert Pietrzak

Fee: \$ 30 members; \$35 non-members; \$45 material fee

Location: Botany Hall at Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens

The art of bonsai is centuries old, but is still popular today. In this workshop you will train a weeping fig into a bonsai specimen using specialized techniques of styling, wiring, potting and root pruning. All materials will be provided and each participant will take home a completed bonsai which can be kept indoors. Please bring hand pruners if you have them. Class size is limited to 15 participants.

To register, call the Garden Center at (412) 441-4442 ext. 3925

Bonsai Forest Workshop

Dates: Sat., Oct. 20

Time: 10 a.m. - noon

Instructor: Dr. Norbert Pietrzak

Fee: \$ 30 members; \$35 non-members; \$50 material fee

Location: Botany Hall at Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens

Using five maple seedlings, create a landscape that replicates nature. The trees are clustered in two groves, naturally separated by a "meadow" in the container. Students will learn how to plant, prune and maintain this spectacular style of bonsai. Please bring a pair of hand pruners if you have them. Class size is limited to 15 participants.

To register, call the Garden Center at (412) 441-4442 ext. 3925



Learning to Garden Weeds: A Re-Encounter

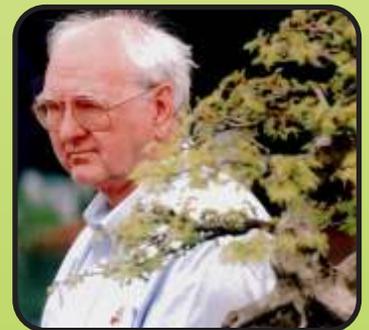
-by Keith Scott from his Book: *Tricks the Books Never Told Us*

For the I.B.C. Cleveland convention I decided after much good natured producing from Chase Rosade to remove all the mulch that served as ground cover in the bonsai garden. The bark mulch had broken down enough to allow weeds to germinate. I hated to admit it but taking out the rotted bark and replacing it with gravel was essential. Even the most inept reader will infer that I am not a person who goes around daily plucking weeds, even those in easy reach. Weeds should realize they are not wanted and should droop and die when told to. Such a miracle has never occurred. I have tried the usual and the unusual weed killers. Here I hasten to admit that I give herbicides more intellectual credit than they deserve. Despite what the accompanying instruction booklet stated, I think the product should know it is being applied to bonsai and therefore should selectively kill any greenery except the moss and the tree.

On the advice of a friend I later discovered was an enemy, I applied herbicide "A" to kill *Arenaria*. The product did kill it. But, it also killed every *False-Cypress* within yelling distance. From this experience I learned the folly of counting your bonsai before they are "finished" and the evil of having false pride in *False-Cypress*. Thus I have become weed killer shy and now I must force myself to pull an occasional weed. Hence the need, but not the desire, to take to take up all that mulch replacing it with stone.

Somewhere there exists a commandment warning that no garden should ever be built on a hill. Discard all those romantic notions about hills: they are killers. When I think of the tons of materials I lugged up the hill to complete the garden, I stagger from such weighty thoughts. At this point some wag comments that I should think how easy it is to bring plants or whatever *down* the hill. To me either up or down offers respite.

I figured that the garden would need about twelve or fourteen tons of pebbles. When I thought of pushing a wheel barrow up a hill with several hundred pounds of pebbles at a time, my jaw dropped; my heart stopped; my ankles turned right along with my stomach. I snapped into action! When the stone arrived, I suggested the driver back the truck close to the garden so I wouldn't have to wheel barrow so far. He was to miss the barn, the clothes posts, the clothes line, the dog house, and a small entourage of mediaeval appearing creatures my son calls his friends. Need I say the trucker knocked over the dog house, hit the barn like a ricocheting bullet, crushed both clothes posts, snapped the clothes line and finally reached the garden's edge but not without putting deep tire prints the entire length of the yard. I had a disagreeable experience with a heavy equipment driver and felt I couldn't afford another encounter. The stone slid off the truck bed, and I began wheeling the answers to my weeding prayers into the garden. I'll not go into the assorted pains I suffered for my art. If an artist must suffer, I became an artist that day.



The convention arrived subsequently so did the buses replete with 150 bonsai addicts ready for a horticultural fix. The pebbles really completed the garden. About two weeks later I detected a crass *cotyledon* sticking up through the pebbles. I was beaten. All my work was for naught. I guess that if weeds lived through the rigmarole I put them through, they deserved to live.

Yea! We Got Shirts! Good Shirts!



-photo by Cindie Bonomi

Now you can proudly show your enthusiasm for Bonsai and the Pittsburgh Bonsai Society with golf shirts from members Anna and Cliff Domasky. (You may have noticed fashion-conscious Society members wearing them at the Annual Picnic and the September Meeting!)

Currently available in white, tan and taupe for \$25, including three-color embroidery, but you can also have your own shirt embroidered for a modest charge. Sweatshirts may soon be offered, too!

For more details, email Anna and Cliff at: annaclaus55@hotmail.com

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Coming Events:

06-07 October 2012 Cleveland, OH: Cleveland Bonsai Club "Fall Show 2012", Cleveland Botanical Gardens Center Sat: 10-5; Sun: Noon-5 They expect at least 7 vendors, tree raffles, silent auction tables, and at least 100 of the finest trees in NE Ohio.

11030 East Boulevard Cleveland, Ohio 44106. Phone: 216 721-1600; Fax: 216 721-2056 info@cbgarden.org

CBGC admission fees: \$9.50-Adults, Children under 3 - \$4.00. It allows one to see the entire Garden Center, 7 Theme Gardens, the enclosed Glass house and the show. Underground parking is also available for \$5.00.

04-07 October 2012 Grantville, PA "International Stone Appreciation Symposium", Holiday Inn, Harrisburg/Hershey. The largest show devoted to suiseki and stone appreciation in the West; More information and registration forms at www.StoneShow2012.com

Mark your 2014 Calendars:

A switch from Spring to Fall for the 4th U.S. National Bonsai Exhibition, 13-14 September in Rochester, NY. Details next spring.

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 at: cindiebonomi@yahoo.com

November 2012 Issue Deadline:

Submissions for the November 2012 Newsletter are due no later than October 18, 2012. The December issue deadline is November 15, 2012.

Compiled by Jay Miller
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the store that exists for the society



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

Pittsburgh Bonsai Society 2012 & 2013 Calendar of Events

- Oct 17 Wed 7pm Trash to Treasures Workshop
Nov 14 Wed 7pm Winterizing plus Elections
Dec 6 THURS 6:30pm Annual Holiday Party
January & February..... 2013 No Meetings
Mar 20,2013 Wed 7pm TBA
Apr 17, 2013 Wed 7pm TBA
June 7, 8 & 9 2013 Spring Show



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.