



Pittsburgh Bonsai Society

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

MAY 2010 NEWSLETTER

Spring Bonsai Weekend

**NEXT
EVENT**

Dave Metzgar and his team have a great weekend planned, with super trees, vendors, demonstrations, consignment sales and lots more. Setup Friday May 21st and Saturday morning May 22nd. *(See more on page 3)*

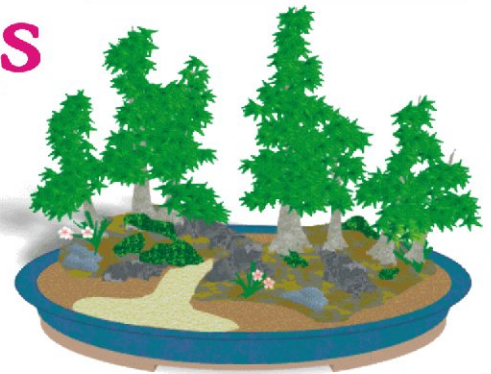
May 22-23 2010 at Phipps Garden Center

Saikei Plantings

June 16, 2010 7:00pm at Phipps Garden Center

If you've ever wanted to capture the essence of your favorite location, ie., a forest, stream-side setting, shoreline or mountain views, you can create it with saikei. It is the art of the living landscape, a classic form of bonsai. This will be a great introduction to miniature landscapes using organic and living material.

NEXT MEETING



Please check our 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 Bob:

Time for our Spring Weekend, May 21st-23rd. I hope everyone will feel free to bring in your bonsai for display.

If you haven't been in bonsai very long, don't be shy, just bring the trees you like to look at. They don't have to be a hundred years old.

Setup is on Friday from 2-8pm, but if you can't make it, you can bring them in on Saturday 8-10am and we'll find a place for them. We would like to see a whole variety of trees, so if you have one that's young or an unusual style, that would be good. They don't all have to be classic Japanese bonsai. This is a chance for everyone to display their work, whether you are experienced or just beginning.

We could also use a few nice viewing stones to place in the display area. We are going to have a consignment area again, so all members are welcome to bring bonsai material, starter plants, or finished bonsai to sell. Put a label on each one with the variety of tree, the kind of pot if it's in one, and the price. We will sell them with a 15% commission going to the Society. And don't forget the Silent Auction. That will help us pay the rent. See Dave's article for more details.

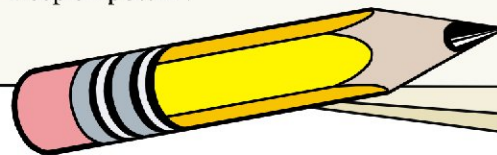
The Bonsai Workgroup has started, and will be every other Thursday, 6pm at my place. The next one is April 29th, then every other week. All members are welcome to bring trees to work on with us. It's a lot of fun to work together, and we exchange a lot of opinions and information. I hope to see a bunch of you there. If the dates change, I will post it on the PBS website.

I hope you are having a successful Spring.
Keep on pottin'.

Bob Grealish



photo by Doreena Balestreire



For your Bonsai supplies support

the store that exists for the society



Bonsai In The Burgh

724-348-4771

Pots, wire, tools, soil, plants

Spring Bonsai Weekend 2010

by Dave Metzgar



photographed by Cindie Bonomi

Dust off your leaves and straighten your branches, the Spring Show will be here before you know it. Like last year, it will be held at Phipps Garden Center in Shadyside on Saturday, May 22 and Sunday, May 23. Hours are 10-5 on Saturday and 10-4 on Sunday, with setup on Friday from 2-8pm and Saturday from 8-10am.

We would like to show as many trees as possible this year, highlighting many varieties and styles. If you have something different you haven't displayed in awhile, please consider bringing it. Bring along any accents or display items as well. Clean up the pots and remove any debris that takes away from the beauty of the tree, in other words make them show-ready.

We are also looking for items for the Chinese auction: books, pots, tools, and accents, anything that could bring a buck for the club. There will be food and drink available for lunch to purchase, and if you can, please bring some treats individually wrapped to sell as a way to raise funds. You can bring plants to sell in the consignment area, with a small percentage also raising funds.

Bob Dietz of 'Bonsai in the 'Burgh' will be manning the tables full of pots and tools, where you can pick up anything you need in the way of supplies. Crowd favorite

Meehan's Miniatures from Maryland will also be on hand with a large assortment of Bonsai plant material and accent plants.

We are concentrating on getting the word out about the show, so we hope to have a large crowd. Please feel free to go to the website, <http://www.pittsburghbonsai.org/> and download a copy of the flyer to post anywhere that might get some attention.

See you at the show!

Dave



photo by Cindie Bonomi

All
T-Shirts
are gray
with black
logo



Pittsburgh Bonsai Society T-Shirts?

"There will be Pittsburgh Bonsai T-Shirts for sale at the Spring Bonsai Weekend. The price will be \$15 proceeds benefitting our very own Bonsai Society. The T-Shirts will feature the PBS logo and will be available in a range of sizes. Buy one, support the society, and look good doing it!"

Adam Versaw

MEMBER PROFILE: LINDA VELTRI

by Dave Metzgar



photographed by Cindie Bonomi

Linda is a retired biology teacher who lives with her husband, John, in Delmont. Her home is decorated with Asian prints and other artwork, teapots, and stones. She has her own work area and a shed dedicated to pots, rocks, slabs and tools of the trade. John has made stands

around the yard to display her trees, and the yard also features stone lanterns along with other Japanese accents and plants.

ANY OTHER INTERESTS? Needle work , RV-ING

HOW MANY YEARS DOING BONSAI? Twenty or so. Her son was attending Pitt and met Rose Grealish, the wife of our current president, Bob Grealish. Rose suggested that she come to a meeting, where she met a very kind Ralph Lang and his sister Orla, who warmly greeted her and made her feel at home. She is grateful that she has had the chance to work with Keith Scott for as many years.

DO YOU REMEMBER YOUR FIRST TREE? It was probably a juniper.

HOW MANY HAVE YOU KILLED SO FAR? Lost count at this point.

FAVORITE TREE IN YOUR COLLECTION? Have a few, including a trio of Larches in a group planting.

FAVORITE VARIETY OF TREE? Trident maple.

HOW MANY TREES DO YOU CURRENTLY HAVE? Around thirty, but downsizing. Had over 75 at one time.

MEMORABLE COLLECTING TRIP? The China trip in 1999, where she purchased several Chinese elms. Also visited the Great Wall, Yellow Mountain, Beijing, and many other places. Would love to go back if she had the chance.

GIVING IT UP ANY TIME SOON? No, just making her collection more manageable.

HERE ARE SOME OF LINDA'S TREES



photographed by Dave Metzgar

Repotting Revisited

Wednesday April 21st Meeting of the Pittsburgh Bonsai Society

by Dave Steidl

Even a veteran bonsai enthusiast will admit that a repotting demonstration can often be about as exciting as watching paint dry. But John Metcalf and Bob Dietz, with the help of Dave Metzgar, have raised the bar on this time-honored tradition of techniques, soil recipes and pots.

Why do we repot? Often to upgrade to a better pot, or just a different pot. Size, shape and color are all factors in the choice. But, as John described, more importantly we repot for the health of the tree. By taking a tree that has been growing in the same pot for years and trimming back the overcrowded, matted and unnecessary roots, we can rejuvenate the tree and allow it to live in a pot for a long time—even beyond our own lifetime. It is as close as we get to discovering the fountain of youth... for trees. A well-potted and cared-for tree can live longer as bonsai than it might in the wild.

Bonsai soil is a critical element for growing trees in pots and everyone has a favorite recipe. John described the basic components of bonsai soil. The first type is a structural material—like fine gravel—often hard, sharp edged, porous and doesn't break down. Examples would be Haydite, turkey grit or Akadama. Second is an organic material, for example pine bark that can be screened to various sizes and to eliminate the finer dust that can clog a pot's drainage holes.

By varying the percentage of structural vs organic material, you can create a soil that suits each plant. As a general rule, pines and junipers prefer a dryer, well-drained soil (more structural material in the mix) and azaleas prefer more moisture (more organic in the mix). Other ingredients include sand to make the soil finer and still drain well, mycorrhizae—a fungus that grows on plant roots and improves plant nutrition—and sphagnum moss which has antibacterial qualities and also holds moisture well.

Bob Dietz came with a collection of pots for members in case anyone needed one for a potential show tree next month. He described the different qualities of a pot and how to choose one over another for a particular tree. Tropicals can use a lesser quality pot, he said, because they don't have to withstand a freeze. Trees requiring more moisture prefer deeper pots and so will people who don't want to water as often. Qualities in the tree such as color, line and shape should be considered in pot selection. Pots that taper inward at the top can make removing the tree difficult when it's ready to be repotted.

When the repotting demo was set to begin, members gathered around the front table to witness the event. Bob Grealish provided a Scots Pine in the literati style for the demonstration, as well as a beautiful 3-inch deep, round pot that he had fashioned himself. The soil was ready. The hand-made pot was prepared with screens for the drain holes, and the tie-down wires were positioned. We all watched with wide eyes as John cut the old wires that had held the tree in place for so many years. Then, with a curved knife, he swiftly removed the tree from its place in the old pot.



photo by Dave Steidl

The tree had grown accustomed to its rectangular pot, which was much larger than its new home. A lot of tangled, matted roots had to be removed. It's important to work quickly and keep the roots from drying out, but even with Dave Metzgar's help, they were having some difficulty paring down the mass of roots. John asked if anyone had a second root hook handy. Bob Dietz rushed in with a well worn chopstick. All three tackled the root-ball like kids in a sandbox. Soil was everywhere.

After a spirited debate on how to place the tree in the new pot, Bob and John wired it firmly into position and the final result was revealed—we were all impressed, a work of art and a noticeable improvement over the former planting. The tree would be placed out of the sun and wind and allowed to recover.

It was memorable meeting indeed.

Be sure to check out the pictures of this meeting on page 6



Have you moved?

If you have recently moved or are planning to move, please let PBS know! Contact our Membership Chair, Meg Vates Amoudi, with your new address, email address and phone number. Email meg_bonsai@hotmail.com or call: 412-477-7231.

Repotting Revisited

Some pictures from the April 21st Meeting

photos by Cindie Bonomi

continued from page 5



Bob Dietz talks about bonsai pots.



John Metcalf and Dave Metzgar prepare the new pot for Bob Grealish's Scots Pine. They cut the wires holding the tree to it's old pot.



John cuts around the tree with a knife before attempting to take it out of its old pot.



Once the tree is out, they decide what sized wire they need to hold it into its new pot.



Bob frees up the roots with a chopstick.



This tree had been planted in a pot that was larger than it needed. John, Dave and Bob must trim and reconfigure the roots so that it fits the new smaller pot.



The tree is now ready for its new pot.



Once planted Bob and John wire it in. Page 6

2010 Calendar of Events

May 21-23.....	Fri-Sun.....	Spring Bonsai Weekend
Jun 16.....	Wed.....7pm.....	Saikei Plantings
Jul 21.....	Wed.....7pm.....	Viewing Stones
Aug 14.....	Sat.....11am.....	Picnic at the Grealish Farm
Sep 15.....	Wed.....7pm.....	Kelley Adkins "Forest Plantings"
Oct 20.....	Wed.....7pm.....	TBA
Nov 17.....	Wed.....7pm.....	TBA
Dec 15.....	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.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Bonsai Workgroup:
The work group meets every other Thursday at Bob Grealish's farm 6 - 10pm. The next several dates are May 13 & 27, June 10 & 24. If you are interested in sharpening your skills, call Bob at (412) 977-0077.

June 12-13, 2010 Rochester, NY:
2nd U.S. National Bonsai Exhibition
Monroe County Hospital, 435 East Henrietta Road. Hours 9am - 5pm daily.
Demonstrators are Kunio Kobayoshi, Marco Invernizzi and Dr. Alice Chen.
Admission \$20.00. for more information e-mail WNV@internationalbonsai.com.
The preceding Exhibition garnered praise from all who attended. Rochester is about a 5-hour drive from Pittsburgh.

June 25-27, 2010
Grand Rapids, Michigan:
2010 Mid-America Bonsai Alliance Convention-Amway Grand Plaza Hotel, Grand Rapids MI. Featured artists include Kathy Shaner and more. For more information contact Mollie Hollar at info@basicallybonsai.com or by phone: (616) 754-2351

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 thenucletoid@yahoo.com

Spotlight Trees:
Remember to bring your spotlight trees to the next regular meeting for "show & tell". It's a great way for new members to learn about new (to them) species; their TLC requirements and your story.

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 2010. 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 Mark Berbach, Treasurer, 1031 Windance Drive, McDonald, PA 15057. Checks should be made payable to the Pittsburgh Bonsai Society. Individual \$30, Family \$40.

June Issue Deadline:
Submissions for the June 2010 Newsletter are due no later than May 12, 2010.

Compiled by Jay Miller

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



photographed by Cindie Bonomi