



Pittsburgh Bonsai Society

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



April 2010 Newsletter



"Potting and Repotting"

**NEXT
MEETING**

...with Tom Kohlmyer



Photographed By Cindie Bonomi

Tom will cover all aspects of Spring potting activity: pot selection, to prune or not to prune, wiring the tree into the pot, and wiring the bonsai. We hope to have bonsai soil at the meeting. Bring a tree and your Tools!!!

**Wednesday April 21
7:00pm at Phipps Garden Center**

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.

May 22-23 2010 at Phipps Garden Center

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.

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Mike's Corner



Tips and
Suggestions
from Mike Stern

Break Out The Liquid Iron

This is a good time of the year to break out the liquid iron and mix it as recommended. Spring foliage is in the process of developing and maturing. The iron is best absorbed when the leaves are forming and developing. As a result your pale green trees will have a rich dark green appearance and look more like the tree would if it were growing in the ground. Over the course of time I have noticed many trees losing their rich green color. You can also read the directions and water the roots with the mixture.

Don't forget to keep an eye on the new leaves for predators such as bugs, fungus, and bacteria. People like tender greens for their salads and so do other creatures in nature.

For your Bonsai supplies support
the store that exists for the society



Bonsai In The Burgh

724-348-4771

Pots, wire, tools, soil, plants



Photo by Cindie Bonomi

Last Month's Meeting!

Propagation: Timing & Techniques

By Jay Miller

Thirty-plus members and guests were on hand for the March 24th presentation on "propagation" by Keith Scott, PBS Life Member and former Curator of the Phipps

Bonsai Collection. Keith was ably assisted by Bob Grealish, Bob Dietz and Perry Welling.

Keith discussed bonsai propagation from seed, air-layering and cuttings. Of the three, seeds take the longest time, with seedlings' complicated requirements of heat and humidity creating obstacles for the Zone 5 enthusiast without a greenhouse.

"All is timing.." He stressed that air-layering is best begun as early in spring (mid-March to mid-April) as possible. The process is pretty simple: the upper section of the tree and its branches are removed to be grown as a bonsai. This can be done on almost all woody plants. Keith discussed two methods of air-layering.

In the first, he used a sharp knife to remove about a 1-1/2" piece of bark all around the tree, including the cambium. The cut is equivalent to the width of the trunk. This cleared area is where the future roots will grow. Wrap the cleared area with moist sphagnum and cover with plastic, tied tightly around the lower end, with the top loose enough to permit watering. You can also use a small plastic pot in place of the plastic wrap. Water or mist daily. Remove unnecessary branches.

The second method is "girdling"; winding wire so tightly around the trunk that it severs both the bark and cambium layer. The next steps are the same as above. If you wait try air-layering in late spring to early summer, it may take until fall for roots to appear for deciduous trees, and next year for some conifers.

Finally, Keith turned to cuttings for successful propagation. You can pick a hardy "mother" plant, once again in early spring. Picking a branch with many leaves and leaf buds, cut diagonally under a node, about 2-21/2" long, and place half its length in soil within the growing container. Keith pointed out that the soil should be coarse; more sand for easier rooting, with a gravel base for drainage. He also praised the willow tree as an unsung ally. The Pussy Willow (*Salix discolor*) produces a natural hormone that can stimulate rooting in any kind of plant. Merely rub a willow cutting against your cuttings to insure active root production before you place them into your growing container.

Keith mentioned that Shimpaku are good candidates. Big Shimpaku branches will root by mid-summer. A lively Q&A session followed.



Photos By Cindie Bonomi

Snow Scapes *By Cindie Bonomi*

Many of us felt that the big snows this year were, for lack of better words, totally uncalled for. The white stuff made our lives a pain as we worked to clean off cars and walkways. And there were other pains: damaged roofing, broken gutters and water coming into the house in surprising new places.

The snows were deep, too. Two- to two-and-a-half feet, drifting up to four or five feet.

But the most heart-wrenching part for us bonsai-ers and gardeners was the damage to our little

trees. In my yard, anything sticking up above the snow line was eaten off by hungry deer, who might have found other food sources had the snow not completely covered everything.

But as glorious spring brought my yard back to life, I looked back at photos of the snows, now that they are just a memory. I can appreciate how pretty it all actually was. Armand Latour and I took some pictures of our yards under this winter's blanket of snow, and we wanted to share them with you all. Here they are:

Armand Latour's Yard



The Lantern

Photographed By Armand Latour



The Pagoda

Cindie Bonomi's Yard



The Japanese Garden

Photographed By Cindie Bonomi



The View From The Front Porch

2010 Calendar of Events

Apr 21	Wed	7pm	Tom Kohlmyer "Potting and Repotting"
May 22-23.....	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 original starting date for the work group that meets every other Thursday at Bob Grealish's farm was originally Thursday, April 8, 2010 6:00pm on. But the opening session has been changed, and Bob is notifying the regular group members. If you are interested in sharpening your skills, call Bob at 412 977-0077.

April 30-May 2, 2010 Washington, D.C.

The Annual Spring Bonsai Festival, at the National Arboretum, features free admission, Hours 8-5. Displays of PBA members' bonsai trees, demonstrations by Stephen Tolley, beginner's, intermediate and advanced workshops. Schedules and registration for these events will be on the US National Arboretum website:

<http://www.usna.usda.gov/>

June 12-13, 2010 Rochester, NY

2nd US 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

May Issue Deadline

Submissions for the May 2010 Newsletter are due no later than April 21, 2010.

Compiled by Jay Miller



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