



Kongetsu

West Michigan Bonsai Club Newsletter

Vol. 10 No. 1

January 2006

Mollie Hollar, Editor

2006 Schedule

Sat, Feb. 18: Root-over-rock with tropicals plants

Thurs, March 16: BYOT (bring your own tree) in preparation for the May show, also pests and diseases, and bonsai mums!

Sat, April 1: Repotting workshop

Sat, April 22: Collecting trip (location TBA)

Fri, May 5: Set-up for All-State

Sat & Sun, May 6 & 7: Michigan All-State Bonsai Show

Thurs, May 18: Show re-cap and photos

Sat, June 10: Open studio/BYOT

Sat, July 22: BYOT, styling, wiring, general care

Weekend of Aug 19 & 20: Trip to MidAmerica Bonsai Exhibit & Show in Chicago

Sat, Sept 16: Tanuki/phoenix graft workshop

Fri, Oct 13: Set-up for Club show

Sat & Sun, Oct 14 & 15: Club show

Thurs, Oct 19: Planning meeting for 2007

Sat, Nov 18: Potluck & auction (location TBA)

All events are at Meijer Gardens unless otherwise noted. Thursday meetings are 7:00-9:00 PM, and Saturday workshops are 9:00 AM to Noon. More details will come in future newsletters as events draw nearer.

Welcome to WMBC's 2006!

As I write this, we're having the first sunny day in way too long a time. High clouds are drifting through, but they're not interfering with the lift in my mood. I keep telling my out-of-state friends that this winter has been even worse than normal Michigan winters! And at this point, I'm even wishing for snow to at least make things a little brighter. At least it's past the winter solstice so we know the days are getting longer. Cheer up, everyone, spring is coming!

November 2005 Meeting

We had a small but lively crowd for our planning meeting last November. 2006 officers are as follows:

President	Mollie Hollar (also secretary and newsletter editor)
Treasurer	Ed Spaans (616-245-4674)
Librarian	Lorena Chambers (phone: 616-399-1359)
Webmaster	Mary Calvin
Coordinator, All-State Show	Vacant

You'll notice a change in two positions this year. It's wonderful for our Club to have more people taking part in the responsibilities of helping to put together good events for the Club. We were in great need of a new treasurer, and Ed Spaans has stepped up to take that on. I'm looking forward to turning our website over to someone who actually knows what she's doing. A website is very important to a group like ours, and it's time to have a professional-looking one.

However, one position that isn't filled, as you can see above, is Coordinator for the Michigan All-State Bonsai Show for 2007. Ed Hilton has graciously and very successfully coordinated this important event for the past several years – in fact, for longer than our by-laws call for – and it's time for someone else to take over that responsibility. Ed and I will both be available for assistance through the planning process, and the new Coordinator will then take over fully for the 2008 show. This is a very important job for someone in our Club and I'm hoping that one of you will step forward soon to volunteer to take it over. I am attaching to this newsletter a fairly thorough description of the arrangements that need to be made. Although this list was for the 2004 show, most of the details still apply. Some of the staff at Meijer Gardens work with us on the arrangements, so it's not a huge burden on any one person. **Please call Ed Hilton 616-8875534 or me (contact info below) if you are interested in more information on this important position.**

Mollie Hollar, President [mollie@basicallybonsai.com] 616-754-2351

Bonsai Conventions & Shows in 2006

April 21-23: Mid-Atlantic Spring Festival, East Hanover, NJ

April 30-May 3: Bonsai Clubs International (BCI) World Penjing Fair, China

May 26-29: Rendezvous at Brussel's Bonsai, Olive Branch, MS

June 15-18: American Bonsai Society's (ABS) Learning Seminars, Saratoga Springs, NY

June 22-25: Mid-America Bonsai Alliance (MABA) Convention, Milwaukee, WI

August 18-20: MidAmerican Bonsai Exhibit & Show, Chicago, IL

August 26 & 27: Ann Arbor Bonsai Society show, AA, MI

More information will be added as details become available

How to Survive Winter in Michigan

Three words: read, read, read. It took me a few years to realize that research is a very important part of doing bonsai, and a Michigan winter is perfect for learning more about every aspect of bonsai.

What are the care requirements of maples vs. pines? What do some of the Masters think of various soil components? How much light should your indoor bonsai be getting this winter? Given our dull grey days, should you augment their available light with a plant light or lighting system? (*cont. next page*)

Season Opener

On Saturday, February 18 from 9:00 AM to Noon we will be having a root-over-rock workshop. The Club will provide a variety of tropical plants, nursery pots, soil, plastic wrap, and raffia. You will need to find a rock you want to use, and bring your tools.

There are a couple different ways of doing root-over-rock plantings. For the one we'll be doing, it will take at least a year for the roots of the plant to be anchored to the rock well enough to put the planting in a bonsai pot. Remember, bonsai is not a hobby for the impatient! I'm sure you'll be happy with the results from this workshop, and repotting the planting will be a workshop for 2007.

The February newsletter will have a registration form for this workshop. I expect cost to be quite low – probably between \$15 and \$30.

Turface and Pine Bark

Be thinking ahead to your spring repotting. I will soon be picking up Turface and pine bark, so if you would like some, please let me know. Price for a 50# bag of Turface is \$9.50. A 3-cu.-ft. bag of pine bark is also \$9.50. If you don't need this much, we will have 2# and 5# bags of conifer mix and deciduous mix available for purchase.

This is a perfect time to get the two components we use for our soil mix, and sift and mix them so they will be ready when you need the soil. I have used just two mixes over the year, one for conifers and one for deciduous. There are many different substances you can mix into your soil – any good bonsai book will give you some examples.

Future Events for 2006

As you can see by the 2006 Schedule on page 1, we have a lot of great events planned for this season. We are again making a trip to the "Chicago show" in August an official Club event. We hope you can plan ahead and put this on your calendar. We carpool to Chicago, and all stay at the same hotel (arrangements can be made for you by the Club), and have dinner out somewhere fun and different on Saturday night. It's been several years since we've done this, and I'm very much looking forward to it.

We have changed our planning meeting/officer election to October. In November we will have a Saturday potluck and silent auction. The few years we had an auction it was very successful, and we are happy to have it a part of our season again. Please give some thought to a location for this event as we are not allowed to have an auction at Meijer Gardens. We need a fairly large room that can be set up with probably 8 or 10 8' tables, and chairs for the potluck for about 20 people. If you are aware of a place that would be appropriate and available for this, please let me know.

Take a Walk!

Winter and early spring are also ideal times to walk in a local park or woods and study the bare trees and bushes to get ideas for bonsai shapes. Remember to take your camera or a good sketch pad. And look for dead wood to use in our tanuki workshop in September.

Are watering needs different for some of your tropicals when they're inside? Do you really need to have a humidifier near your trees? Can you trim and repot them any time you want to? There's always so much more for us to learn, and while it's wonderful to be able to work with someone to get a real hands-on experience, some good books can teach you a lot.

Basically Bonsai

So how's business? I'm glad you asked. And speaking of reading, I have quite a good assortment of bonsai books in my inventory now. You can check out my merchandise at www.basicallybonsai.com, or give me a call or send an e-mail and I'll send you one of my catalogs. I'll also bring catalogs to meetings and workshops with me. I'm setting up a store in my basement because of all the people who have asked if they can come in and see everything I carry. Should be done in a few weeks.

Crescent pots have become pretty rare in the past few years. Luckily I have found a supplier for small ones (I'm trying to encourage her to make larger ones.) like the one below. If you think you might be interested in purchasing one, let me know at or before our February workshop.



Items Available for Sale

Unless you are a new member of our mailing list, you'll remember that Bob and Jeni Shives had many years of bonsai materials available for sale. I spent the better part of a day at their home listing and photographing everything they have, then came home and made up the list. I'm afraid the file would be too large for many of you to receive by e-mail, so I'll be snail-mailing this newsletter along with the Shives' list to everyone on our mailing list. After this, the newsletter will again be sent to most of you via e-mail. If you have an e-mail address but have been getting a hard copy of the newsletter, you can opt to receive the newsletter by e-mail (except for those technophobes who have trouble opening it on the computer ; <)).

Membership for 2006

Dues for membership in WMBC are \$25.00 for an active membership, and \$6.00 for an inactive membership.

An inactive membership gets you a copy of the newsletter every month and the option of attending all meetings and workshops. There would be an extra charge of \$10 for each workshop in addition to the normal cost of workshops – so you see, by the time you've come to two workshops you've already paid more than the active membership. But if you want mainly to get the newsletter for information on bonsai, this would be your option.

With an active membership, you get the newsletter, any extra notices there would be throughout the season, and nothing but basic costs for workshops. Obviously you would attend all meetings and lectures for free too. Dues include everyone in your household who is interested in coming to events. Bring along the kids! I would truly love to have children in our Club.

The Membership form for 2006 is on the last page of this newsletter. Deadline for membership dues is April 1. If we don't have your dues by then, your name will unfortunately need to be removed from our list.

MABA 2006

I recently received a letter from the Exhibit Chair for the Mid-America Bonsai Alliance Symposium which will take place June 22 through 25 in Milwaukee WI. While we did not make this show an official Club event, I recommend that everyone attend. The MABA shows are by far the best of any given in this area (except ours of course).

MABA clubs (of which we are one) have been invited to have a display of trees at the show. We will have two 96" x 30" tables for our display area. So be thinking now about what you would like to take to show. If you have a tree that you would like to have exhibited but are unable to attend the show, I know we can make arrangements for someone else to take it if you will let it out of your sight for that long.

And the end result of all this is that MABA is giving case prizes for outstanding exhibits, so our Club could make as much as \$300.00! We can have accent plants, suiseki (viewing stones), scrolls, and anything else that would enhance the display. So be thinking about this and we'll talk more about it as it gets closer.

2006 Membership Form

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phones: Home _____ Work: _____

E-mail: _____

(Check one:)

Active membership (\$25.00) Inactive membership (\$6.00)

Please make check out to:

WMBC

and mail to:

Ed Spaans

947 Orchard SE

East Grand Rapids MI 49506

Or bring to any meeting or workshop.