



Kongetsu

West Michigan Bonsai Club Newsletter

Vol. 11 No. 7

August 2007

Mollie Hollar, Editor

2007 Events

Sat & Sun, Aug 18 & 19: Chicago Show

Sat & Sun, Aug 25 & 26: Ann Arbor Show

Thurs, Sept 20: Pines with Frank Mihalic

Fri, Oct 12: Set-up for fall Club Show

Sat & Sun, Oct 13 & 14: Fall Club Show

Thurs, Oct. 18: 2008 Planning Meeting

Sat, Nov 17: TBA

All events are held at Frederik Meijer Gardens unless otherwise noted.

Thursday meetings are from 6:30 to 9:00 PM, and Saturday meetings/workshops will be from 9:00 AM to 12:30 PM unless otherwise noted.

Shows Coming Up

I know some of you are planning the trip to Chicago for the Midwest Bonsai Society 30th Annual Midwest Show at the Chicago Botanic Gardens. If you need more information, go to www.midwestbonsai.org/.

And of course the Ann Arbor Bonsai Society Annual Bonsai Show is at Matthei Gardens near Tipton. Check out their website <http://annarborbonsaisociety.org/> or call show chairs Hugh Danville at

(313) 455-7922 or Pete Douglas at (313) 867-8644.

September 6 – 9 brings Bill Valavanis's 2007 Bonsai Symposium in Rochester, NY, this one on shohin bonsai. More about this on page 2.

Catching Up, Getting Behind

My apologies for the lateness of this newsletter, especially in relation to my invitation for this weekend. For reasons listed below, this will also be a rather abbreviated newsletter.

My summer has certainly been a busy one, both professionally and personally. While I've been reasonably well (unlike last summer) I have experienced flares of my fibromyalgia (look *that* up in your Funk & Wagnell's) that tend to lay me out for a few days. Various changes in medication are helping that and other various conditions.

Most of you are aware that I'm the owner of Basically Bonsai, a largely website/mail order/show bonsai business. Being reasonably well has meant that I've been able to vend at most of the shows I'd scheduled in the early spring, and of course that brings the preparation time, travel time, show time, and reordering afterwards. I've been thrilled to be able to do all this, but of course it all takes time.

One of my two biggest changes (i.e. time consumers) has been the planning and set-up of a showroom at home. We've finally been able to put up a "shed" (it's something like 16' x 24') in our backyard to store a huge amount of stuff from our garage, and now I'm in the process of painting the second-hand shelves I've acquired to make room to display my wares. Here we are again with an enormously time-consuming project that isn't yet even close to being finished. So *don't come out – it isn't ready!*

The other project is my website, which was supposed to be ready in mid-May but isn't quite yet. I keep hearing from the company that's doing it, "Oh, it'll be great when it's done." Fat lotta good that does me now. I keep getting orders from customers from my existing website for stuff I don't have, and I have all this merchandise that I want to get on it that I can't yet. But when the new site is done, I'll be able to add new things right away, and take something off when it sells. The order payments will also be done through PayPal, an easy and incredibly safe method for anyone to use. More work = more time.

Don't even get me started on my catalog. That can't be re-done until my website is ready, but I've still had to spend time on it.

I'd like to invite everyone who isn't going to Chicago for the show there August 17 – 19, to come on out to Greenville for our Danish Festival. I'll be vending there, selling mostly my junipers that I do especially for selling at shows. Yep, you guessed it, another project is preparing them, mostly repotting right now. Then there's the Ann Arbor show the weekend after that, etc. etc. etc. My mother used to have a sign that read "The hurrider I go, the behinder I get."

Ok, enough of that. I just wanted to let you know why I'm late and this newsletter is short – oops, too late.

2007 Bonsai Symposium

I am highlighting this not only because I hope to attend, but also because I think there are some people among our membership who would greatly enjoy the experience.

This year's symposium features shohin bonsai, with Paul Goff (England), Kenji Miyata (Japan), Pedro Morales (Puerto Rico), and 12 other visiting artists doing a huge variety of workshops and exhibit critiques.

I picked up a number of brochures about the symposium at the Detroit club's show, so if you want to read in detail all about what this show will entail, contact me and I'll get one right out to you in the mail. Or you can get more details at <http://www.internationalbonsai.com/symposium/index.html>.

At the moment I plan to attend the symposium, and I'm offering a free ride to anyone else who might be interested. I'll be driving my truck, so there'll be plenty of space to bring home whatever we might find that we just can't do without. Hotel rooms are \$83.00 for a single or double, and I'd even be open to sharing with any of you ladies.

Shirts

Bob says the shirts and other items that were ordered are in, so be prepared to pick them up and pay for them at our September meeting.

So, Nothing for the Weekend

Much as I'd love to, I'll not be able to host you all at our house this weekend. See above if you can't figure out why not. I again apologize for the lateness of this decision.

Detroit Club Show

One of my goals for next year is to get better information about the club shows for all the other Michigan clubs. I think we could all benefit from just seeing how other clubs set up their exhibits, and what other events they have.

Bob Goddard and I both vended at the Four Seasons Bonsai Club's show the weekend of July 27 & 28 at Telly's Greenhouse in Troy. While the crowds were a big underwhelming (it was their first time at that site), I thoroughly enjoyed my time there. I also got some ideas of different ways of doing our Club show in October.

Their exhibit was truly incredible. While their club has been in existence many years longer than ours, all the trees in the exhibit were not done by their best and most experienced bonsaiists. This is something that I have always encouraged not only in our Club show, but also in the All-State Show exhibit. The Detroit exhibit was critiqued by Bill Valavanis, who also did some slideshow/lectures and a couple of workshops.

I had the fortunate opportunity to attend a slide presentation and lecture Bill V. did on bonsai styles. I'd never attended anything with Bill as the presenter and I was most pleasantly surprised. The presentation was very informative and humorous. The one thing I won't forget was his statement that "There are no bonsai police." Those of you who've known me a while know I encourage bonsaiists to "do their own thing" with bonsai since it is truly an art form. Bill was encouraging his listeners to "do their own thing" while being aware of some of the basic design and artistic principles with which we should all be familiar.

We'll be talking at the September meeting about some possible changes we might make for our October show.

"Annual" Auction

The auction is a very important money-maker for the Club and I'd love to see it take place again this year. However, our hosts of last year are unable to do so this year. Does anyone else have an idea as to a location? We're not able to do this at Meijer Gardens apparently due to their non-profit status.

Last year's event included a potluck lunch after the auction action, and I'd like to do this again. We need a space that is large enough for 10 to 15 six-foot long tables for our wares, in a location where we can also serve food.

If you have any ideas, give me a call or e-mail me. (Contact info below.)



Trip to Jack Wikle's

I understand from Bob Goddard and a few other members that the fieldtrip to Hidden Lake Gardens and Jack Wikle's home was a definite crowd-pleaser. Bob tells me that there were quite a few people from other clubs there. I feel good that we were the impetus behind people from all over having the opportunity to see not only HLG's bonsai collection, but also Jack's fascinating and educational set-up at his home.

I still tell people that you can't raise junipers indoors, but every time I do, I think of Jack's bonsai under lights and sometimes share that with them.

Coming Up

Last I heard from Frank Mihalic he was still planning to be here in September for a presentation on pines. We hadn't settled on details, but it promises to be fun and educational.

Remember the Club show in October and be studying your trees to see what needs to be done to display them. And more importantly, remember that this show is for *all* our members, not just experienced people. We want everyone to show the process of learning bonsai, from novice to intermediate and beyond.

And it's never too early to be thinking about 2008: what kind of events you'd like, trees you'd like to work on, trips to take, etc. Personally I'd like to see more of our Bring Your Own Tree workshops. Start thinking.

2007 Michigan All-State Bonsai Show

From Julie Francke at Meijer Gardens I got the following statistics about this year's All-State Show:

Attendance: Saturday: 1,047; Sunday: 1,002; total: 2,049
This is up from last year, which had a total of 1,764.

There were 34 exhibitors with a total of 95 trees (plus about 10 from the Meijer Gardens collection).

I must admit to having misplaced the e-mail Anita Buckowing, the All-State Coordinator, sent with more detailed numbers. I know one thing I noticed was the lower number of trees exhibited from previous years. The San Toshi Club from the east side didn't bring any trees at all, and I know others were a bit confused by the new exhibit rules. All that will be addressed by the show committee before long.

In years past, the All-State Show has been a joint effort on the part of members from all six Michigan bonsai clubs. That's a big part of what makes this the *All-State* Show. As the founder of this show, I would like to see us return to this tradition, especially for this our 10th year. I feel that all members of all clubs should be invited to participate in planning the show, particularly since many of these members were key in planning earlier shows.

If you would like to be in on the planning for our 10th show, or if you just have some ideas for how we can make it special for the big celebration, contact me. Hopefully a committee meeting will be set up soon so everyone can have their say as to what the 2008 Michigan All-State Bonsai show will be like.

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.