



Kongetsu

West Michigan Bonsai Club Newsletter

Vol. 11 No. 2

March 2007

Mollie Hollar, Editor

2007 Schedule

- Sat, March 17:** Air layering, BYOT
- Sat, April 14:** Fieldtrip to Gee Farms
- Sat, April 21:** Repotting, BYOT, *afternoon*
- Fri, May 11:** All-State Show set-Up
- Sat & Sun, May 12 & 13:** Michigan All-State Bonsai Show
- Sat, June 16:** Dwarf rhododendron workshop
- Sat, July 21:** Fieldtrip to Jack Wikle's home & Hidden Lake Gardens bonsai exhibit
- Sat & Sun, Aug 18 & 19:** Club trip to Chicago 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:** Training pots

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.

There will be notices at the front door of the Gardens telling which room we'll be in.

Haiku

According to my friend Al Fassezke from the San Toshi Bonsai Club, "The history of the
(cont next page)

Spring Really Is Coming

From what little I can see of my bonsai they appear to have survived the majority of this wicked winter. I haven't spoken to any of our members on the lakeshore so have no idea of how much snow they have had compared to those of us away from the coast. I do know that Greenville is in its own little valley and we tend to avoid a lot of the really nasty stuff. What little ice we've gotten this winter has been a negligible amount and hasn't caused any problems.

I do know that I'm more than ready for Spring. Winter is not a time for me to thrive. On that note, I apologize for the lateness of this newsletter.

Coming This Week

It occurred to Skip and me this week that the bonsai you want to use for our first workshop might be frozen in storage. For that reason, I suggest you either use a tropical plant or begin working on the ice around your outdoor tree. It will not harm your outdoor trees to air layer them now as long as their after-care is appropriate. We'll give thorough directions for after-care.

That said, our first workshop for this year will take place this coming Saturday, March 17, in the Royce-Klopocic Room in the lower level of Meijer Gardens. There will be a sign at the door of the room directing you.

The workshop itself will begin at 9:30 AM and end at 12:30 PM. From 9:00 to 9:30 AM will be our Bonsai 101 session. For this first session I'll be relating a brief history of bonsai, from way back to the time of the Queen of Sheba!

The topic of the workshop is air-layering. You will need to bring a tree that has a fairly good-sized branch (at least 1/2" diameter) that you want to turn into another plant. Be sure the part you want to become another tree has a good "trunk" and good, even branch structure. You can also do an air layer on the trunk of a tree that has a long space with no branches. You'll also need to bring a very sharp knife or other cutter.

The Club will provide wire, sphagnum moss, clear plastic, soil and small nursery pots. There are two ways to finish your air layer, which you will learn about at the workshop.

Something else you might want to do is come to the workshop and just observe, then take home what you've learned and use it on a bush or tree in your yard.

In April

I am definitely looking forward to my calendars turning to *this* month. To me this is when spring really begins.

We have two events scheduled for April, the first of which is a trip to Gee Farms south of Lansing. I will be letting them know we are

modern haiku dates to Masaoka Shiki's writings from around 1892, which established haiku as a new independent poetic form. Shiki's reform did not change two traditional elements of haiku: the division of 17 syllables into three groups of 5, 7 and 5, and the inclusion of a seasonal theme. Haiku poems usually combine two separate sections or thoughts, but both sections must enrich the understanding of the other." And of course he kindly included several that I deem appropriate and much needed in this difficult time between winter and spring.

*while conjuring spring
for crocus pocus magic
mother nature sings*

*spring's lips, moist with rain
kiss away the winter snow
make my garden blush*

*lone spring pine bough bent
a seething wrathful march wind
turned back on itself*

*spring breeze caresses
blossoms from the tulip trees
destination earth*

*beneath spring's garden
last year's bounty ground alive
unseen beasties toil*

*young lad spring puddles
muddy boots insufficient
affiliated*

Ah, I feel it now, warm breezes, no snow, sunshine coaxing the bulb leaves to finally break the surface of the cold ground, tiny leaf or flower buds making a larger appearance on the branches of our bonsai. Yes, I'm ready!!!

coming. If I do that, there's a chance we might have one of their employees help us find the best of whatever we're looking for. I don't think anyone who went with the Club last year was disappointed. I know my truck was filled to overflowing! I highly recommend your going on this trip.

The other event is our repotting workshop. Be planning ahead as to what tree or trees you want to bring to work on. *Notice that this event is in the afternoon (1:30-4:00 PM).*

Dues

Again this year our dues are staying at \$25.00 for active membership and \$6.00 for inactive membership. I highly recommend active membership to everyone unless you know that you will not be able to attend most workshops. It is necessary for us to charge extra to inactive members when they attend workshops. Once you've paid the extra a time or two, you will have covered the cost of an active membership.

All dues should be paid by April 15. After that time, your name will be removed from our mailing list.

Bonsai Soil Ingredients

I expect some of you might begin your repotting before our April workshop. If you do not have the two ingredients the Club sells, you'll want to be sure to get them soon. We sell Turface, a baked clay, inorganic ingredient, and an appropriate size of aged pine bark, the organic ingredient in our mix. I'll be bringing several bags of each to our March meeting, but I need you to let me know if you will be needing a whole bag of either.

Turface comes in a 50# bag, the cost of which is \$11.00 (the first increase in several years). Pine bark is a 3-cu.-ft package and also costs \$11.00 this year. You may purchase any amount you need, from one pound to full bags. Cost for less than a full bag will be \$.50 a pound. I will bring scales and Ziploc bags in gallon and two-gallon sizes. If you're going to want a fairly large amount of either Turface or pine bark, please bring your own bag(s).

All-State Show in May

I am including the program for the 2007 Michigan All-State Show with both e-mailed and snail-mailed newsletters. Be sure you get your registrations in early for workshops. There are some really great ones, as usual, and they're all priced very reasonably. The experience you'll get from any of these will be invaluable in your bonsai learning process. I'd recommend one to you specifically, but I'm sure they will all be equally enjoyable and educational.

Let's Advertise!

Our Club has never actually advertised for members, so I think it's high time we do so! I have available the Club brochure for 2007 which I can send you copies of to distribute. Our treasurer Ed Spaans is already working on getting the Club into some local arenas, and I'd like to get information to all businesses that are even slightly associated with plants. Let me know if you'd like to help out with this!

Membership Details

With active membership, you have access to all events through the year without paying extra fees, except for workshop material. You also will receive a copy of the monthly newsletter, and any other special mailings throughout the year. In addition you have access to all the books, magazines and videos in our Club library, which will be available at each event.

Inactive members receive the Club's monthly newsletter. You are welcome to come to any meeting or workshop, but for the workshops there will be an extra charge added to the regular Club member price.

2007 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.