



Kongetsu

West Michigan Bonsai Club Newsletter

Vol. 12 No. 1

January 2008

Mollie Hollar, Editor

2008 Schedule of Events

Sat, Feb 16: Building wire caddy and/or training box.

March: Pines, date TBD

Thur, April 17: Repotting

Sat, April 19: Bring Your Own Tree, show preparation

Sat & Sun, May 3 & 4: All-State Show

Sat, May 17: Trip to Gee Farms

Sat, June 21: Japanese maples workshop/lecture/demo

Sat, July 19: Trip to Stone Zone

Thur, July 24: Tropicals

Thur, Aug 14: Bring Your Own Tree

Sun, Aug 24: Silent Auction

Thur, Sept 18: Show prep

Sat & Sun, Oct 11 & 12: Fall Show

Thur, Oct 16: 2009 Planning meeting

Thur, Nov 20: Winterizing

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

Please note that a few of the events for 2008 that we planned at the meeting in October 2007 have been changed. As I was typing them, I realized that we had scheduled field trips for many of the Saturday meetings, leaving us little time to work on our trees. Please let me know if you have any objections to this change in schedule.

Celebrate 2008

As I sit in my office working on this first newsletter for 2008, I look out on the five or so inches of snow we got last night, and soon, much as I hate to, I'm going to have to close my curtains against the bright sunlight that's hindering my vision. All in all, I can't complain about the winter weather we've had so far, especially the January thaw with temps around 60°. We've had a fair amount of sunshine, and after all, with this much snow, those of us who have left our bonsai in the open for the winter don't need to water them as long as the snow is there. I try to think of the snow as a necessary evil, good for adding an inch or two to our own groundwater, and hopefully more than that to our Great Lakes which have been so sadly lacking in recent years.

My trees all look as though they're doing very well so far. Even with the small amounts of ice they've had to endure, all branches seem to be very well intact. We put our more tender trees – almost all the deciduous ones – under a large burning bush for the winter and that has protected them all very well for several years now. The conifers – mostly junipers – do just fine in the open but near fences where they're well protected from the wind. I've worried about my granddaughter's small fir tree being where wind, ice and everything else this winter dishes out can get at it, but it too seems to be doing just fine. As I mentioned in last November's newsletter, we quit babying our trees a few years ago and have yet to see any negative results. I'll let you know in the Spring how it all worked out this year.

First 2008 Event

We have an excellent line-up of workshops, field trips and other events scheduled for 2008, starting with building wooden wire caddies and/or training boxes on February 16. Many of you were at the meeting last year (September or October as I remember) when Joe Petronis brought the fantastic wire caddy he had built. He has kindly agreed to share his knowledge and experience with us so we can all have a caddy that'll make carrying around our wire so much more easy and efficient. When you're finished with the caddy, you'll have the opportunity in the same workshop to put together a training box for your bonsai. This will also be a valuable addition to your collection of pots. The wood will already be cut so the workshop will consist of putting together the pieces of the caddy and training box. You'll only need to bring a drill, preferably cordless. If you don't have access to a drill there will be a couple of extras there. Also, if you are not able to do the drilling yourself, someone will be available to help you.

(cont on page 2)

Mollie Hollar



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Bits 'n' Pieces

Skip found this in an Amish cookbook. We've all seen it in one form or another, but I thought it was interesting that the Amish also use it, referring to their children:

"As the twig is bent
The tree will grow."

It certainly can refer to a lot of different things in our lives, but I thought it's rather interesting in reference to our bonsai too.



In case you were wondering, the tree on the cover of the Nov/Dec 1007 Bonsai Focus is a chocolate vine – native to China, Korea and Japan. I doubt that they're very easy to find here, but I do like the plant.



A few bonsai resolutions for you to think about for 2008:

1. Never have more bonsai than you can take care of *well*. Not just taking care of them, but doing a great job of it.
2. Get rid of any plants that don't have a real future. Keeping it for years won't necessarily make it grow into a specimen tree.
3. Start a record sheet for each of your trees and keep it current. Include photos. This is invaluable in the good care of our bonsai. I'll include a sample record sheet with next month's newsletter.
4. Know the details of proper care for each of your trees, not just general bonsai care tips. Deciduous and conifer care are vastly different.
5. Learn how to care for a new species *before* you purchase one.
6. Attend all the Club events that you possibly can in 2008!

This promises to be one of the best workshops of the season, so fill out the registration form on page 4 and send it and your check to Ed, then call Joe (616-897-9746) to let him know that you'll be participating. ***We must have registration (written or verbal) and checks for the workshop ahead of time so that we have enough materials for everyone.*** See deadline on the form.

Shows in 2008

Besides our own Club show and the All-State Show, I have dates for the following shows in 2008:

MidAtlantic Bonsai Societies Spring Festival: April 11-13, Hudson Valley Resort and Spa, Kerhonkson, NY (I'll be vending here. This is a fabulous show, and the site this year looks marvelous.) Check this site for details: <http://midatlanticbonsai.freemembers.com/fescurr.htm>

Featured artists: **Min Hsuan Lo – Taiwan, Graham Potter- United Kingdom, Michael Hagedorn – USA, George Le Bolt - USA**

Rendezvous 2008: May 23-25 at Brussel's Bonsai Nursery, Olive Branch MS. Featured artists: **Cheng Cheng-Kung** from Tien Wei, Taiwan, **Marc Noelanders** from Hasselt, Belgium, **Jose Luis Rodriguez** Puerto Rico, and **Suthin Sukosolvisit** from Boston, MA. If I had my choice of only one big bonsai event to go to in a year, this one would be it. I've never been to something that is so well organized with every little detail seen to. I'll be there again this year!

http://www.brusselsbonsai.com/about_us/rendezvous08.shtml (Skip got us signed up Monday night, and already some of the workshops were full. If you want to experience this wonderful event, get signed up soon!)

Mid-America Bonsai Alliance (MABA) Convention: June 12-15. This is by far, in my opinion, historically the best show in the country, and it's close enough for all of us to go! <http://www.maba2008.org/> Features: **Danny Use** from Belgium and creator of the Ginkgo Award for Excellence in bonsai design and owner of the [Ginkgo Bonsai Center](#) Bonsai Nursery

Steve Pilacik is known as the "American Pine Master" and owns the [Matsu Momiji Bonsai Nursery](#)

Dana Quattlebaum is the Resident Artist and Production Manager of [Brussel's Bonsai Nursery](#)

Matt Ouwinga is an up and coming bonsai artist who has studied in Japan under renowned Bonsai Master Kunio Kobayashi

Andy Smith has collected, trained and sold bonsai specimen material for many years and owns [Golden Arrow Bonsai](#) in Deadwood, SD

David Kreutz, Satsuki expert, is certified as a first level instructor by the Japan Satsuki Association.

Mark Fields has been practicing the art of bonsai for over 40 years and is the owner of [Bonsai by Fields](#)

Mike Devore is widely known for his tropical bonsai material and owns Northridge Tropical Bonsai Nursery

Simon Feng has been trained in the Chinese "clip and grow" school and has practiced bonsai for over 20 years.

(cont on page 3)

Bonsai Periodicals

Over the years I've read and subscribed to many different bonsai magazines. The four best known in the US have been the ABS Journal, Bonsai Clubs International's Bonsai & Stone Appreciation, International Bonsai Magazine, and Bonsai Today.

Most of you know that last year Bonsai Today and Bonsai Europe combined to become Bonsai Focus. As a subscriber and advertiser, I was anxious to see how this would work out, and I must admit that I've been quite disappointed. In my opinion, it is now almost entirely a European magazine. Most of the articles so far have been by European bonsaiists and about European plants and trees, many of which are not available in the US. I cancelled my ad before the last issue in 2007 came out, and I'm seriously considering not renewing my subscription for 2008. It takes a lot for me to pass up written info on bonsai, so this is a pretty drastic move. But I just can't see paying for information that isn't useful to me. I'd like to hear how some of the rest of you feel about this before I decide on renewing our Club subscription for this year.

As far as the other three magazines go, I'm as satisfied with them as I can be without committing some of my time to help edit them. I'll be renewing both my advertising and my subscription to all three of them.

I'd also like to hear from you as to whether the Club should subscribe to all or any of these three for 2008.

American Bonsai Society (ABS) Learning Seminars: June 19-22.

Featuring Guy Guidry - Mike Hansen - Hal Mahoney - Ted Matson - Jerry Meislik - Michel Phaneuf - Martin Schmalenberg - Sean Smith - Ed Trout. (I'm afraid I'll have to miss this one - a bit too far for my summer traveling.) I've included information about the two contests in my snail-mailed newsletters. Everyone else check: <http://absbonsai.org/seminars/ABS2008/main2008.html>

Four Seasons Bonsai Club annual show: also June 21 & 22, Telly's Greenhouse, somewhere in the Detroit area

International Bonsai Arboretum's 2008 Bonsai Symposium:

September 4-7 in Rochester, NY, "Deciduous Bonsai featuring Maples." No info on their website yet.

Ann Arbor Bonsai Society Annual Show: October 4 & 5, Matthaei Botanical Gardens, Ann Arbor www.annarborbonsaisociety.org/calendar

1st National Bonsai Exhibition: October 11-12, Rochester NY, headed by Bill Valavanis from International Bonsai, this will hopefully become an annual event. I encourage you all to do what you can to support this important national event - try to attend, and enter a tree if you can. <http://www.internationalbonsai.com/nbe08/>

I'll be adding more to this list as the year progresses. I think this is enough for you to absorb for now.

This just in from the ABSForum

ABS Raffle
Supporting ABS

Complete set of Bonsai Today Magazine
Issues 1-108

A BIG thanks to Ed and Jean Meehan for their donation of all issues except 86, 94, 103 and 108, which were donated by [Stone Lantern](#).

Raffle to be held: Saturday, March 15, 2008

\$10 per ticket, 3 for \$20, or 15 for \$100

Complete set will be shipped to winner with no charge for shipping.
[If you already have a complete set, the Club could use it!]

Winner does not need to be present to win.

Buy your tickets on-line using PayPal at
<http://absbonsai.org/books/r-item2.html>

OR

Send check made out to ABS to:
Pauline Muth ABS President
7 Western Ave.
West Charlton, NY 12010

Dues Are Due

Below and to the right is the 2008 Membership Form for the Club. We need to have your check by April 1 or we will need to remove your name from our mailing list. We're entering another year with not increasing our dues.

For clarification of inactive and active membership: If you choose to pay the \$6 for inactive membership, you will receive the monthly newsletter, and you'll be able to exhibit trees in the Club show. If you take part in a workshop that has a charge, you'll need to pay an additional \$10. With active membership, you'll get the newsletter (by your choice of e-mail or snail-mail), notification of any extra events or visiting artists, and paying the actual fee for any workshops.

Auction News

Our auction last November was very well attended, and we made over \$700 dollars for the Club! With that and 2008 dues, we're going to be able to have some out-of-state experts on some topics for workshops or meetings this year.

Our thanks to all who donated items and brought great food for the potluck!

I'm afraid I'll have to miss the February workshop. Skip and I will be in Las Vegas to see Blue Man Group and Cirque de Soleil. I'd like to tell you that I'll be thinking about all of you ... but I probably won't.

Registration for Wood Wire Caddy & Training Box Workshop Saturday, February 16, 9:00 AM-Noon

Name _____

Phone _____

I want to make:

Wire Caddy _____ Cost for materials: \$20.00
(14" high x 20" wide)

Training Box _____ Cost for materials: \$ 5.50
(cedar, 15" x 15" x 8")

Please write check for total amount to:

WMBC

and mail to:

Ed Spaans

947 Orchard SE

East Grand Rapids MI 49506

Deadline: Monday, February 4

2008 WMBC Membership Form

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phones: Home _____ Work: _____

E-mail: _____

(Check one:)

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

(Check one:)

I prefer that my newsletter be e-mailed to me.

I prefer a snail-mail copy of my newsletter.

Please make check out to:

WMBC

and mail to:

Ed Spaans

947 Orchard SE

East Grand Rapids MI 49506