



Kongetsu

West Michigan Bonsai Club Newsletter

Vol. 13 No. 1

February 2009

Mollie Hollar, Editor

2009 Schedule of Events

- Sat, Feb 21:** Making bamboo bonsai stands
- Sat, March 21:** Bonsai pests*
- Sat, April 18:** Repotting workshop
- Sat, April 25:** Field trip to Wavecrest and Huntree nurseries near Fennville*
- Sat, May 9:** Wiring and prep for All-State Show
- Fri, May 15:** Set-up for All-State
- Sat & Sun, May 16 & 17:** Michigan All-State Bonsai Show
- Thurs, June 18:** Ciment fondu form making
- Sat, June 20:** Making ciment fondu planters*
- Sat, July 18:** TBA – outside presenter
- Sat, Aug 22:** Annual silent auction & making muck*
- Sat, Sept 19:** Bring your own tree (BYOT) & repot bonsai mums
- Thurs, Oct 15:** 2010 planning meeting
- Fri, Oct 16:** Set-up for Club show
- Sat & Sun, Oct 17 & 18:** Club show
- Sat, Nov 7:** Possible marking of trees for 2010 collecting

All events are held at Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park unless otherwise noted.
Events marked with an asterisk * will be held elsewhere.

Into the New Year

I'm really looking forward to 2009 for our Club; we have some great events planned. As you can see by the schedule to the left, most of our events this year will be on Saturday mornings rather than Thursday evenings. Several of our long-time members have been unable to attend on Thursdays, so we decided it's time for a change.

For those of you who are new to the West Michigan Bonsai Club, or at least to the newsletter, each month you will receive a newsletter detailing the event for that month, as well as other information pertinent to our mutual hobby (obsession?). All Saturday events that take place at Meijer Gardens will be at 9:00 AM and last until around Noon. Thursday evening events at the Gardens will be from 7:00 to 9:00 PM. I will let you know the room location at the Gardens in each newsletter.

Obviously our planning meeting last October was very successful. We also elected officers for 2009. They are as follows:

President/Newsletter Editor:	Mollie Hollar
Treasurer:	Ed Spaans
Webmaster:	Mary Lou Wilker
Librarian:	Lorena Chambers

We will also need a chairman for our Club show in October. If you are interested please let me know (contact information at the bottom of this page).

First Event for 2009

On Saturday, February 21, we will meet in the FMG Foundation room for a workshop putting together bamboo bonsai stands. These stands will be made from $\frac{3}{4}$ " bamboo and will be about 15" long. The 15" pieces will already be cut, so we'll be weaving them together with clear plastic lacing.

There will be no basic charge for this workshop for Club members. Membership may be paid before or at the workshop. For non- or inactive members there will be a basic \$10.00 charge.

For everyone, cost of the workshop will be determined by how many of the bamboo pieces you use. Each piece will cost \$2.00, and the lacing will cost 50¢. If you want to put two perpendicular pieces of bamboo on the bottom of the stand for "legs," you will need to bring a hammer. The Club will provide nails and glue.

You can phone or e-mail me to let me know the number of bamboo pieces you will want to use, then pay for the workshop there. I will bring a few extra bamboo pieces.

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MABA 2010

The Mid-America Bonsai Alliance has approved Grand Rapids as the location for its 2010 convention, and WMBC will be hosting it. I am in the process of looking for a facility, possibly downtown. Then I'll start working on all the other arrangements.

Obviously I'll need help on this, so please let me know if you'd be interested. I'll need people to work on getting guest artists and vendors; making up the registration form; doing registration for the convention; and many other areas both before and at the convention.

I have had quite a bit of experience planning bonsai conventions, so I won't have a problem leading this committee. Now I just need *you!*

Bonsai 101

For those of you who are new to bonsai, we will again this year be offering Bonsai 101 sessions before our regular meetings or workshops. In some cases the topics will be similar to the regular meeting or workshop. In others, it will be completely different. I will report in each newsletter, in one of these left-side columns, what the topic will be for that month. Some possible topics: bonsai styles, design principles, root pruning, what works and what doesn't, and tool care. If you can think of anything else you'd like to learn about, let me know.

Also, to our experienced people, please let me know if and when you'd like to conduct one of these sessions and the topic.

February, the Itchy Month

I have been very fortunate in starting a second business this winter so that I haven't been going crazy waiting until I can start working on my bonsai. For most of us, this month is one filled with waiting, fingers getting itchy to start trimming and potting, and disappointment when yet another snow storm hits.

So to keep yourself busy, I would suggest the following:

1. Read, read, read. If you've gone through all the bonsai books you have, visit your local library. If you have only a couple of bonsai books, buy some new ones! There's always something to learn.
2. Mix soil for spring repotting. This is one of the most valuable things I do ahead of time – there's nothing worse than being all ready to repot and discovering you don't have any soil mixed.
3. Clean and prep your pots. I know we put away some pots at the last minute last fall that weren't cleaned properly, so those will need scrubbed out with a stiff brush. And if you get the holes covered and anchor wire installed, your pots will be ready when you and your trees are. This would also be a good time to bring pots inside and soak them in white vinegar if they have any water deposits on them.
4. Clean your tools. Depending on where you keep them in winter (ours are in our unheated garage), they might have collected a bit of dirt and rust. Get out your sandblock and WD-40 so they're ready when you need them.
5. Outdoor trees can be trimmed now. It's easier to see their branch structure without the leaves, and it won't harm them since they're still in dormancy. Just be sure not to have them inside for too long. Better yet, work on them outside.

Brussel's Rendezvous

As the people know who have been Club members for more than a year, I have found this event to be the most valuable and fun bonsai weekend I've ever attended – and I've been to a lot. It takes place Memorial Day weekend (Friday, May 22 through Sunday, May 24) in Olive Branch, MS at Brussel's Bonsai Nursery, by far the best and probably the biggest bonsai nursery in the country. So in addition to some really great workshops and demonstrations, you can peruse acre upon acre of bonsai and pre-bonsai. I'd advise that you either start saving money for it now, or leave anything vaguely resembling money at home so you don't go broke. Yes, it really that good.

There is always an outstanding group of Masters and experts teaching a fabulous group of workshops. This year the guest artists are Rodney Clemens from the southeast US; Arthur Joura from Asheville NC; Marc Noelanders from Belgium; Kathy Shaner, the first woman and first non-Japanese citizen to be certified as a bonsai Master; and Peter Warren from the UK.

I will have a brochure about this at our workshop next weekend, and you can go to www.brusselsbonsai.com or call 800-582-2593 for more information.

2009 Dues

The dues for this year will again be \$25.00 for active membership and \$6.00 for inactive membership.

With active membership, you will get a hard or e-mail copy of the monthly newsletter, be notified of any extra events or changes in schedule, check items out of the Club library, and pay no extra fees for workshops.

Inactive membership will get you a hard or e-mail copy of the monthly newsletter. You will need to pay \$10.00 for workshops you attend. So by the time you come to two workshops, you might as well have paid full membership. However, we do understand that some of you would prefer to just receive the newsletter, hence the inactive membership.

Dues for the year are due *by* April 1. In order to not pay the extra \$10.00 for the bamboo stand workshop next weekend, membership will have to be paid at or before the workshop. Membership form is at the right.

Tool Sharpening

Our Webmaster, Mary Lou Wilker, has graciously offered to sharpen your bonsai tools for you. Just bring them to one of our meetings or workshops and she'll take care of them for free. What a deal! She can, of course, teach you to do the sharpening yourself.

American Bonsai Society (ABS) Learning Seminars

In the past few years, ABS has changed the format for their annual convention to Learning Seminars, which has been hugely successful. This year the Seminars will take place in Boise, Idaho June 11-14. Thirty-six classes will be offered, with each registrant attending four classes; two classes will be offered each day.

Guest artists will be Kathy Shaner, David DeGroot, Jerry Meislik, Larry Jackel, Rob Kempinski, John Muth, Pauline Muth, Arthur Skolnik, and Peter Adams.

Two extra events have been planned as well, a collecting trip into the Owyhee Mts. on June 10, and an ultimate adventure whitewater rafting trip on June 15.

This conference offers a huge variety of workshops and classes for a reasonable price. And isn't it time for you to visit Idaho? For more information go to www.absbonsai.org/seminars/ABS2009/main2009-5.html. I'll bring the information I have to the workshop next weekend.

July Presenter

At last October's planning meeting we hoped to schedule Jack Sustic to do a workshop and demo. Unfortunately, Jack has returned to his job as curator of the National Bonsai Exhibit in Washington, D.C. Therefore, I will be looking into possibly scheduling someone for a deadwood carving demo if there is enough interest. Let me know.

2009 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

Or bring to any meeting or workshop.