



Kongetsu

West Michigan Bonsai Club Newsletter

Vol. 13 No. 2

March 2009

Mollie Hollar, Editor

2009 Schedule of Events

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.

Really Beginning the Season

The bamboo stand-making workshop we did in February was marvelous! I'm pretty sure everyone had fun and learned a lot, and everyone left with a great looking stand. I talked to a few people before that workshop who couldn't be there, so there's a chance we'll repeat it sometime later in the season.

My yard is almost clear of snow, except at the corners of the driveway where it's been upwards of three feet for most of the winter. But most of the rest of the yard is bare – and of course looking a little sad – so I know Spring is coming. I'm going to be doing a lot of soil mixing over the next few weeks so I can repot all those trees I didn't get to last year!

I feel as though the bonsai season is truly beginning now, with our next meeting.

In March

Our March 21 meeting is one of those that isn't going to be held at Meijer Gardens. We'll be going to Holwerda Plant Services at 2187 100th Street SW. These are the directions John Holwerda sent:

Take 131 (south) to 100th Street exit 72 and head westbound (right) for 2.5 miles and you will find us on the north side of the street. We have a sign out front HOLWERDA PLANT SERVICES, however many people looking for us are traveling at 50-60 miles per hour and pass our driveway; they need to turn around and come back. If you get to the four way stop at Byron Center Ave. you have passed us.

These directions should suffice for anyone coming from anywhere. If not, try Mapquest.

John is an expert on indoor plants and knows a lot about outdoor ones too, and has been into bonsai for a good many years. He's going to be telling us about insects and diseases that might infest our bonsai. We're all guaranteed to gain very important information to add to our knowledge of total care for our bonsai. We'll be meeting there at 9:00 AM.

2010 Mid-America Bonsai Alliance Convention

Bob Goddard and I have been working with people from the Grand Rapids Convention & Tourist Bureau in preparation for WMBC hosting the MABA convention June 25-27, 2010. We've now made site visits twice, and have chosen the Amway Grand Hotel as our site. It's amazing how much they are willing to do for us, and how excited they seem about being the site for this convention. We'll have an excellent guest room price so even some of those of you who are local may decide to spend at least one night there. We do need to guarantee a certain number

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2009 ABS Seminars

Speaking of shows not happening, which I did in the column to the right, the 2009 ABS Seminars have been canceled due to lack of registrations. It was to take place in Boise, Idaho, which apparently was a drawback to many people, including me. I'm on the ABS Board, but wasn't going to be able to fly out there just for the Board meeting. And given the economy, it definitely wouldn't have been worth it for me to pull my trailer out there to vend. No worries though, since it has been canceled. We are looking at possibly changing the format for next year. I'm also going to suggest that we do a show every other year, on the off years of the MABA shows.

Dues Are Due

In last month's newsletter, I spelled out the difference between active and inactive memberships. If you would like to keep receiving our newsletters and come to most of our events free of charge, please get your dues into our treasurer. The 2009 membership form and directions for mailing are on page 3.

All-State Show

If you are a member of Meijer Gardens, you've received their Seasons magazine with information about the May show. However, since I have received nothing from Tim Priest or Anita Buckowing, I really don't have any information for you about exhibiting trees or anything else. Hopefully I will soon.

of guest room reservations in order to get the convention rooms for – are you ready for this? – absolutely nothing! That's the way it's done for big bonsai conventions elsewhere, but given the accommodations for everything we'll be using at the Grand, we're getting an excellent deal. I have to admit to extreme excitement that just grew and grew at our meeting there last week.

The convention will take place mostly on the second floor in the "old" Pantlind Hotel part of the Grand. If you've never been there, you're in for a huge treat! It's absolutely beautiful, and all the rooms and hallway spaces we'll be using are just perfect. The bonsai and suiseki (viewing stones) exhibits will be on the main floor of the ballroom, which is downstairs from the other rooms but has a mezzanine on the second floor level that is accessible from staircases from the main floor. This is truly a beautiful setting for our exhibits. Vendors, workshop rooms, and demo/banquet room are all in a contained area on the second floor. It's just perfect for what we need.

Obviously, Bob and I aren't going to be doing this alone. He'll be seeing to arrangements for the vendors. Other areas in which we'll need volunteers are the following:

- Hotel – guest rooms
- Hotel – convention areas
- Pre-registration
- Guest artists (presenters)
- Workshops
- Demonstrations
- Exhibits
- Raffle
- Banquet
- Publicity

Most of the work in these categories will be done before the convention.

We will also need people for the following during the show:

- Exhibit set-up
- Registration sign-in
- Assistance in workshops
- Assistance during demos
- Exhibit helpers
- Raffle ticket sales
- Raffle drawings

I'm sure some others will come to mind, but this is a pretty good breakdown of what we'll need. If we can get two or more people for each area, the work won't be overwhelming for anyone.

So, right down to it: I would like to hear from all of you as to which area you would like to volunteer for. Without a lot of help, this convention won't happen, or will be second-rate. Given the facility we're going to be in, we need to do all we can to see that this is an unforgettable experience for everyone, convention attendees as well as everyone in our Club. I have organized quite a few bonsai shows, so you won't be alone in whatever you decide to do.

My contact information is at the bottom of page 1, so get in touch with me and let me know to which committee I can add you. I'll have more details for you then.

Bits and Pieces

Stone Lantern (formerly Bonsai Today) has been having some great sales lately on books, tools, and magazines. If you need something right now (and can't wait until the All-State Show in May where I'll be vending) you might check them out at

www.stonelantern.com.



If you have nothing pressing to do this Saturday, come on over to East Lansing for the MSU Horticulture Gardens Spring into Gardening conference. I'll be vending, with more of my general use stuff than bonsai stuff. As far as I know, this has replaced the Master Gardeners' state show. It's in the Eli Broad College of Business in Eppley Center in the North Business College Complex. For a map, go to www.bus.msu.edu/information/directions/index.cfm?area=lansing. Hours are 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM.



Skip is working in Washington, D.C. for another three weeks so I flew there last Friday for the weekend. We had the opportunity to go to the National Arboretum and see the National Bonsai and Penjing exhibit – or what of it was out from winter storage. I got a lot of pictures and will print them out for you all to see at the workshop on March 21. We also got to the National Aquarium – not particularly impressive – and the National Zoo, which was marvelous! Saw lots of critters and walked lots. Plenty of good food too.

What To Do in March

For the past many years, the Club has done our repotting workshop in April, which is the perfect time to be repotting most outdoor bonsai. Obviously some trees can be repotted through May and even into June. But please be very careful about what trees you repot when.

Because of some very warm days recently, some of your trees probably look like the leaves will unfurl any time. However, generally speaking March is much too early to repot. It does not harm most bonsai to repot it after the leaves have come out as long as you are careful. It would harm the tree much more to repot it too soon. Until most days and nights are above freezing, you won't want to repot any outdoor bonsai. Doing so will practically guarantee death to the tree.

Indoor bonsai can, of course, be trimmed and repotted any time now that they are getting back into their growth times. So work away!

As I mentioned last month, spend the rest of March getting ready for the outdoor growing season by mixing soil, preparing pots for repotting, and getting all those tools ready for use.

Also be aware of the amount of water your trees are getting. With most of the snow gone (except for you lakeshore people) and some of the warm days we've had, be sure to take your watering can out and give them just a bit of water to get them through until the next rainy day, or heaven forbid more snow.

I know we all get the itch to work on our trees, but don't do them harm by doing something too early.

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