



Kongetsu

West Michigan Bonsai Club Newsletter

Vol. 15 No. 1

February 2011

Mollie Hollar, Editor

2011 Schedule of Events

- Thur, Feb 17:** Photographing Your Bonsai and/or DVD
Sat, Mar 19: Bring Your Own Ficus workshop
Thur, April 21: Repotting workshop
Fri, May 13: Set-up for All-State
Sat & Sun, May 14 & 15: All-State Show
Thur, May 19: BYOT
Fri, June 3: Blended Mame demo
Sat, June 4: Blended Mame workshop
Sat, July 23: Field trip to Arrowhead Nursery
Sat, Aug 20: Potluck & silent auction
Thur, Sept 15: Prep for fall club show
Fri, Oct 14: Set-up for fall club show
Sat & Sun, Oct 15 & 16: Fall Club Show
Thur, Nov 17: 2012 Planning meeting

All events are held at Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park unless otherwise noted. Thursday meetings are from 7:00 to 9:00 PM, and Saturday meetings/workshops are from 9:00 AM to 12:30 PM unless otherwise noted.

2011 Officers

President: Mollie Hollar
Vice-President: Mary Lou Wilker
Treasurer: Jane Harrelson
Librarian: Lorena Chambers
Web Master: Mary Lou Wilker
Newsletter Editor: Mollie Hollar

Website address:

www.wmibonsai.org

Welcome to the 2011 Bonsai Season!

As I sit down to write this first WMBC newsletter for 2011, I look out my window and wonder when I'll ever be able to get to my outdoor bonsai again. Snow is piled up about two feet deep on them. Because we had so much trouble with a rabbit (just *one* did a lot of damage!) we kept most of our trees on top of our display benches. I took a couple of photos of them to send to Mary Miller, buttonwood specialist, in Florida. I expect yours look much the same.

One thing about having all this snow, you don't need to worry about watering your outdoor bonsai! Yes, for those of you who are new to bonsai, your trees *do* need to be watered in the winter if there isn't regular precipitation, or if you keep them in a garage or shed. Once a month is usually enough – you don't want the roots to dry out entirely because they continue to grow a tiny bit throughout the winter. If they don't get moisture you won't see that welcome green growth come spring.

We have some really exciting events planned for this year. I hope we'll have a large number of new people to share them with!

First Event for 2011

We might cover more than one topic for our first meeting. If the volunteer contacts me, we'll talk a bit about how to photograph your bonsai. The second thing will be a DVD or video, depending on what AV equipment I can get at this late date. Those available range in title from Andy Smith's *Finding the Bonsai Within* and *How to Collect Wild Trees*, to *Art & Horticulture Vol. 1 Basic Techniques* by Bill Valavanis from International Bonsai in New York state. Any of these will be of great interest to our experienced bonsaiists as well as our beginners. Come and enjoy!

New Folks

For many of you, this newsletter is the first one you are receiving from WMBC. We collected your name and contact information at one or another of the bonsai shows at which we appeared in 2010. I would like to encourage you to come to as many events as you can early in the year, so you can get a good idea of what we're all about. Then, as soon as you are definite about joining WMBC, pay your dues and you'll be on The Official List. We look forward to seeing you in this week and in the months to come.

Mollie Hollar



616-754-2351



hollar@chartermi.net

520 W South Street, Greenville MI 48838

2011 Dues Replay

Our Club has been in existence for a good many years now, and during that time our dues have remained the same. Since we will have enough in the treasury to pay for one or two outside speakers, we see no reason to raise the dues for 2011.

As usual there are two membership categories: active (\$25.00) and inactive (\$6.00). 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, and you will not be able to check out library materials. 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.

One change that began last year reflects our tough economic times. We have a new hardship category for those members who would find it very difficult, if not impossible, to pay membership due to loss of income. Therefore, if you fall into this category, check that line on the membership form on page ___ and send the form in to our treasurer so that we can mark our membership list accordingly.

Deadline for dues payment is April 1, after which time unpaid people will be removed from the mailing list.

October 2010 Demo/Workshop

For our last event for 2010, we were privileged to have Andy Smith from Golden Arrow Bonsai in Deadwood, South Dakota, come to work on creating deadwood on our trees (the wood, not the town) with us. I have included below some photos from the demo in which Andy worked on a Black Hills spruce. That tree will be available some time in the 2011 season for a raffle – you'll be notified in the newsletter ahead of time.

Andy has for many years collected conifers in the Black Hills of South Dakota. He is widely recognized as this country's expert in collecting, and has made two DVDs about this pursuit.



The finished product

February, the Itchy Month

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! I always go to Amazon.com for great prices. 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.

(cont next column)

5. Outdoor deciduous trees can be trimmed now, if you can get them out from under the snow. 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.

And a few Care Notes from the Columbus (OH) Bonsai Society Website January - Mid Winter

- Start deciding which trees will be repotted in spring. Make a list of available pots, and which trees will work with them. Having a battle plan is very useful once the chaos of spring arrives. Order repotting supplies such as new pots, soil, wire, drainage mesh, etc.
- Protect your trees from direct winter sun and wind as it will cause freeze-dry damage.

"Shoe" likes bonsai.



2011 Membership Form

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phones: Home _____ Work: _____

E-mail: _____

(Check one:)

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

Hardship membership

(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:

Jane Harrelson
1151 Parnell Ave SE
Ada MI 49301

Or bring to any meeting or workshop.