



Kongetsu

West Michigan Bonsai Club Newsletter

Vol. 15 No. 2

March 2011

Mollie Hollar, Editor

2011 Schedule of Events

Sat, Mar 19: Bring-Your-Own Ficus Workshop with Jack Douthitt

Thur, April 21: Repotting workshop

Fri, May 13: Set-up for All-State Show

Sat & Sun, May 14 & 15: All-State Show

Thur, May 19: BYOT

***Sat, June 4:** Field trip to Arrowhead Nursery

***Fri, July 22:** Blended mame demonstration by Pauline Muth

***Sat, July 23:** Blended mame workshop with Pauline Muth

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

November meeting: Date TBD

***Note change of date from February newsletter.**

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 Noon unless otherwise noted.

What Price Technology?

I am writing this from a device that is almost completely foreign to me: my husband's laptop computer. Yes, my old desktop that my son "built" at least 12 years ago has finally given up the ghost (just what does that mean anyway?). It died on me late last week and, despite a hint or two since then that it might be salvageable I'm afraid it's hopeless. I was prepared last Wednesday to finish this newsletter and get it out to you in good time, but technological obsolescence reared its ugly head and I was stuck with nothing. Unfortunately even the back-up that I had run last Monday on my external harddrive for some reason didn't work, so I was *really* stuck with nothing. My son has since at least fixed me up temporarily, but consequently the newsletter I wanted to send out early did not happen. We'll suffer through with what I have, and save my pennies for maybe a new 2015 model.

This Month's Special Event

We are privileged to have Jack Douthitt from Wisconsin coming to do a workshop with us this Saturday, March 19. Jack is, in my opinion, one of the greatest bonsai experts in the country. He is the author of *Bonsai – The Art of Living Sculpture* and has at least one tree in the national collection in Washington, D.C. He also conducted a ficus (fig) workshop with amazing plant material at the Mid-America Bonsai Alliance Convention our Club hosted last June.

Jack will be doing a bring-your-own ficus workshop with us Saturday morning. Because his plane for home takes off just after 1:00 PM, we're going to be starting a bit early, so plan to be there around 8:30 AM. Jack is well-known for working with bonsai enthusiasts of all ability levels so the workshop will benefit beginners as well as our more experienced members.

If you don't own a ficus, they are fairly common house plants, and should be available at Flowerland, bigger Meijer stores, and Walmart. Look for one between one and two feet tall, with lots of branching and foliage. Don't get the typical office-style plant. And look for something with fairly small leaves.

For those of you who don't yet have many bonsai tools, I will bring some you can borrow. If you might be interested in beginning your bonsai tool collection, let me know ahead of time (contact info below) and I will bring some that you can purchase.

If you would prefer to observe rather than work on a ficus, that would be fine. But I highly recommend that you all plan to participate.

Mollie Hollar

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Request for Photos

The following came to me from Randy Davis, Reference Librarian for the American Bonsai Society (ABS). This is a huge undertaking and one which will benefit bonsaiists of all ability levels everywhere. I would ask that any of you who have any photos of high-quality bonsai forward them to Randy with the requested information.

“I am on the Board of the American Bonsai Society and one of the projects that we have just started is to begin accumulating images of good quality bonsai of any and all plant species. We would like to invite your club to join in the project and would like to make a plea to look through your archives and make image submissions if you would be so kind. I know this is a huge undertaking but we have to start sometime and somewhere and now is just as good a time as ever. We would like full size images (JPEG preferred but we can handle bitmapped too). Our preference is to have the botanical name of the plant and cultivar name if applicable and the name of the person for attribution. Anything you can do to help would be great! And while you’re at it pass the word around to your internet friends too. We would love to get images from all over the United States, Canada, and Mexico to start off but our intention is to go world-wide in the search as time permits. Submissions can be made to me directly at plantmanky@yahoo.com”

Hemlock Warning

The following is for any members who have hemlock bonsai. Remember, any diseases or pests on the bigger trees will attack our little ones too. Long-time member and WMBC librarian Lorena Chambers sent this last November:

Exotic Hemlock-Killing Insect Found in Three Michigan Counties Infestations found in Holland, Petoskey, Clinton and Shelby townships.

LANSING - The Michigan Department of Agriculture (MDA) today confirmed small infestations of the hemlock woolly adelgid (HWA) at sites in Emmet, Macomb, and Ottawa counties.

“Nursery operators, landscapers and homeowners should never accept hemlock from quarantined areas, and never accept hemlock without proper certification,” said Ken Rauscher, MDA Pesticide and Plant Pest Management Division Director. “Examine your hemlock for the presence of white, cottony masses on the underside of the branches where the needles attach. If you suspect HWA, contact MDA immediately.”

The positive sites in Macomb and Ottawa counties were discovered by two alert arborists who reported their suspicions to MDA. The positive site in Petoskey was discovered by an MDA inspector upon re-inspection of a previously negative invoice tree from the 2006 detection. The trees in Petoskey have been removed and replaced by the landscaper who inadvertently brought them into the state in 2006 and insecticides have been applied.

“These detections underscore the importance of citizen involvement in exotic pest detection,” said Rauscher. “Without these alert and conscientious individuals, these detections may have gone unnoticed for months, or even years, making eradication of this devastating pest much more unlikely.”

These infestations represent the first detections of HWA in Michigan since 2006, when it was found in hemlock nursery stock grown in West Virginia and planted for residential landscaping in the Harbor Springs area. This population was eradicated, and the area was subjected to several years of intensive pesticide treatments and surveys.

The new infestations are also believed to originate from hemlock nursery stock originating from HWA-infested areas of the U.S. The infested trees at each site have been removed and destroyed. Nearby trees are being treated with pesticides and surveys are being performed to determine if HWA has spread.

“MDA is requiring removal of positive trees and treatment with an approved insecticide and will also conduct survey activities where HWA has been confirmed,” said Rauscher. “Homeowners should be on the look out for white cottony masses at the base of the needles and report any suspects to MDA.”

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HWA is a small, aphid-like insect that uses its long, siphoning mouthparts to extract sap from hemlock trees. Native to eastern Asia, HWA was discovered in Virginia in 1951, and has since spread over an area from Georgia to Maine, decimating hemlock stands across much of the eastern U.S.

Over 100 million hemlock trees are present in Michigan forests, providing valuable habitat for a diversity of animals, including birds, deer, and fish. These trees are critical to the ecology and aesthetics of Michigan's northern forests.

Michigan law restricts the movement of hemlock into the state, and includes a complete ban on the movement of hemlock from infested areas. Details on this quarantine and more information on HWA can be found at www.michigan.gov/mda.

Dues are Due

A reminder that dues are due by April 1 if you want to keep getting this newsletter. You still have a choice of Active or Inactive (you get only the newsletter and pay \$10.00 extra for workshops) membership. And for those of our members who are in extreme financial situations, we have our special Hardship membership, which is free for the year. Membership form is on page 4.

New Contest/Great Prize

For those of you who are new to bonsai, Stone Lantern is the company that formerly published *Bonsai Today* magazine, which was blended with the European *Bonsai Focus* several years ago.

From Stone Lantern's almost-daily e-mails came the following recently. It would be a great exercise in learning how to create a bonsai from beginning to "end" (they're never really finished) while documenting it all with photos, which is a great habit to get into anyway.

Go to www.stonelantern.com for more information. I'll pass along updates as they come to me.

Bonsai from Scratch

It's time to get start thinking about your entry in our upcoming *Bonsai from Scratch Contest*. We're going to make it worth your while with a \$250 Stone Lantern gift certificate for the winner and other gifts for outstanding entries.

Five easy steps to get you started

1. Find an untrained stock plant. Your choice of size, variety etc.
2. Photograph it from all four sides (and any other angels you want) before you do anything else.
3. Grab your tools and get to work. Take your time; the contest won't close for months. This will give our snowbound northern friends a fair chance.
4. Take photos as you go. The more the merrier.
5. When you've got what you want, put it in a bonsai pot (if it isn't already) and photograph it from all four sides (and any other angel you would like). Hint: an uncluttered background that shows the tree to its best advantage is a good idea.

Stay posted

We'll be following up with more information, like: categories, judges, deadlines, and whatever else we think will enhance the contest. Meanwhile, it's not too soon for you to start planning.

Last Month's Video

Last month we watched a movie made by William Valavanis of the International Bonsai Arboretum in New York. I agreed to share with you some of my observations.

1. When working on a plant, it is not necessary to angle it by placing a block of wood under one side.
2. It is not necessary to wire the trunk if you are not going to bend it.
3. The length of time wire needs to remain on branches is largely dependent on the type of tree. For fast growing trees such as maples (most deciduous actually) and even Shimpakus (junipers) be sure you check the wire once a week so you can remove it before it cuts into the wood. But slow growing trees might do just fine with the wire on for a year or more. Again, keep an eye on it.
4. The anchor wires Bill put in the bottom of the pot are to stabilize the tree when it is repotted. Otherwise, with any small movement of the tree, some of the tiny, most beneficial hair roots will break.

More next month.

All-State Show Request

Going to you exactly as it came to me, the following is from Anita Buckowing, Co-Chair of the All-State Show:

“As you know, the 2011 Michigan AllState Bonsai Show is fast approaching. . . Here is the demo' schedule we are hoping to have that weekend. I'm in need of volunteers to fill some of these demo' spots. PLEASE let me know if you can help.

Saturday -

9:30-10:00 a.m. - Wiring Demo - ? Will Heath? Please confirm...

10:15-11:45 a.m. - 3-of-a-Kind Demo Constructing a Larch forest -

Colin Lewis, and tentatively Will Heath & Vance Woods; If Will would like a break (and the opportunity to be a heckler), we could use a person to fill in here (? Eric Newton or Steve Jetzer, are you interested???)

12:00-12:45 p.m. - Meet & Greet Guest Master Colin Lewis w/possible book signing

1:00-2:00 p.m. - Bonsai Display & Accent Plants - ???_____???

2:15-3:30 p.m. - Re-potting Demo - Steve LaWarre & Dean Bull

3:45-4:45 p.m. - Creating & Carving Deadwood - ???_____???

Sunday -

11:15 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. - Pot Selection - ???_____???

12:15-1:30 p.m. - Bonsai Styles - ???_____???

1:45-3:00 p.m. - Meet & Greet Guest Master Colin Lewis w/possible book signing & Colin works on Yamadori (donated by FMG&SP)

3:00-4:00 p.m. - EXHIBIT Walk-Thru w/Colin Lewis

3:15-3:45 p.m. - Bonsai Care & Feeding - The Growco Guys

4:00-4:30 p.m. - Announcement of PEOPLE'S CHOICE & Best of Show

Please e-mail me at mrbuckowing@yahoo.com or call 269-792-4438 (or if you need to talk to me during the work day 1-888-792-1677).”

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:

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Ada MI 49301

Or bring to any meeting or workshop.