



# Kongetsu

## West Michigan Bonsai Club Newsletter

Vol. 15 No. 3

April 2011

Mollie Hollar, Editor

### 2011 Schedule of Events

**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 name demonstration by Pauline Muth

**\*Sat, July 23:** Blended name 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.

### Plant Show at Meijer Gardens

May 28 and 29

Iris Show  
Grand Valley Iris Society

### Last Month

Our March workshop was a huge success! We had a great crowd of people, and even had five visitors in to see what we were doing – future members hopefully.

We were privileged to have Jack Douthitt from Milwaukee to conduct the workshop. Jack is enormously knowledgeable about most everything concerning bonsai. Everyone greatly enjoyed the help and advice he gave us on our ficus plants, most of which are now bonsai! It's always good to have someone from outside the area do a workshop for us – next time will be in July.

I will share my notes from the ficus workshop as soon as I can find them. Between new computer, massive re-do of my website, and just life in general, they seem to be misplaced at the moment.

### This Month

We will be meeting on Thursday evening, April 21, for a repotting workshop. For those of you who haven't even potted anything yet, the term that is most often used for taking a bonsai out of a nursery pot and putting it into a bonsai pot is "repotting." That also applies to taking your bonsai out of their bonsai pots, taking off all or most of the soil, and putting the tree back into the same pot with new soil, after having trimmed the roots. It's a necessary and beneficial technique so that our trees don't get root- or pot-bound. Generally speaking, deciduous trees should be repotted every two or three years until they're well established as bonsai, after about eight years, when they need to be repotted only every four or five years. Conifers, usually slower growing than deciduous, need repotting only every three or four years until about eight years, when they can be done every five or six years. I have had lots of people tell me they wait "until the tree says it's time." I agree wholeheartedly, but that's another instance in which you need to know each individual bonsai well and pay attention to what it tells you – a good practice regardless of age or type of tree.

Our workshop will be from 7:00 to 9:00 PM in the lower level of Meijer Gardens, same room as March's workshop. The Club will provide the soil, wire and screening to cover the holes in the pots. You'll need to bring your bonsai (bring two if they're small) and whatever pot(s) you'll want to use. Also, bring trimmers, whether shears or concave cutters, and a chopstick and/or root rake. If you do not have any of these, check out [www.basicallybonsai.com](http://www.basicallybonsai.com), find what you need, and *call or e-mail me*. I'll bring it for the workshop.

Mollie Hollar



616-754-2351



[hollar@chartermi.net](mailto:hollar@chartermi.net)

520 W South Street, Greenville MI 48838

## Attachments

We have a couple of things coming up for which you will need information.

1. The Stone Lantern Bonsai from Scratch Contest I wrote about last month has had some changes. Page 3 is the update. This sounds like a great exercise for anyone who has a new plant to turn into a bonsai, not to mention that a gift certificate from Stone Lantern would be a marvelous thing to win!

2. The Michigan All-State Bonsai Show takes place May 14 & 15 at Meijer Gardens. As a Michigan bonsai club our members are permitted to enter bonsai trees/plantings/arrangements in the exhibit. On the last two pages are general information about the show, and the entry form you have to fill out to exhibit a tree. For the first time in several years I plan to have at least one tree in the exhibit.

### What To Do?

If you're wondering what you can be doing with your bonsai – or pre-bonsai – at this time of year, there are several things.

Assuming you have them out of winter storage you can repot and trim the tops. If you have bonsai pots to clean you can do that, and get them ready for whenever you do want to put something in them by adding the screening to cover the holes and put in the anchor wires. I've found this to be a really good practice because when you need the pots they are ready for you. Also, try to get a good amount of soil mix on hand to prepare for the repotting.

Don't take your indoor bonsai outside until it's at least 50 degrees at night.

### Ficus Note

The one thing I do remember from the ficus workshop last month is this: Wait to repot your ficus until very hot weather – they like it best.

### Soil Mix

The Club will be providing soil mix for the April repotting workshop, but if you need more than that I can bring it for you *if you let me know ahead of time.*

All soil is made up of clay aggregate and aged pine bark. I have one-pound and five-pound bags already mixed for conifers and deciduous trees which cost \$2.00 a pound. Conifer mix is two-thirds aggregate and one-third pine bark. Deciduous mix is two-thirds pine bark and one-third aggregate.

Or you can purchase a 20-pound bag of just aggregate for \$40.00, or a 2.8 cu ft bag of pine bark for \$15.00. Just be sure to let me know at least a week before the meeting so I'll have time to put everything together.

### Got a Weekend?

If you have lots of spare time this coming weekend, drive on over to Hershey, PA, for the MidAtlantic Bonsai Spring Festival. I'll be vending there (so you won't be able to reach me from Thursday, April 14 through Sunday, April 17). It promises to be a very interesting show. For more information check <http://www.midatlanticbonsai.freezers.com/fescurr.htm>.

Brussel's Bonsai Nursery's Rendezvous bonsai weekend is May 27-29 this year. We won't be going again this year, but it's probably the best immersion weekend in the country. Check [www.brusselsbonsai.com](http://www.brusselsbonsai.com) for more information.

### 2010 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.

# \$1,000 Stone Lantern Bonsai from Scratch Contest

## The stakes have risen in our Bonsai from Scratch Contest

In a moment of weakness we changed the first prize from \$250.00 to \$400 and added another \$600 worth of prizes. We figured you wouldn't mind.

## The prizes

First prize \$400 gift certificate to Stone Lantern

Second prize \$250 gift certificate to Stone Lantern

Third prize \$150 gift certificate to Stone Lantern

Another \$200 worth of gift certificates will be awarded. Plus other gifts (for example, [Robert Steven](#) has already committed to donating 1 copy each of [Mission of Transformation](#) and [Vision of My Soul](#)).

## How to enter

Find an untrained stock plant. Your choice of size, variety etc.

Photograph it from all four sides (and any other angles you want) before you do anything else. Send your photos to [wayne@stonelantern.com](mailto:wayne@stonelantern.com). Put *Bonsai from Scratch* in the subject line and put your name and where you live in the text.

Grab your tools and get to work. You can get started whenever you want, but the sooner you do, the more time you'll have to develop you bonsai. The contest will close October 15th 2011.

Take photos as you go if you want. The more the merrier, but the only ones that are completely necessary to enter are the before photos and the final photos.

When you've got what you want, either leave it in a nursery pot, or put it in a bonsai pot and photograph it from all four sides (and any other angle you would like). Hint: an uncluttered background that shows the tree to its best advantage is a good idea.

Send your photos to <[wayne@stonelantern.com](mailto:wayne@stonelantern.com)>. Put *Bonsai from Scratch* in the subject line and put your name and where you live in the text. Preferred image size is 680 pixel width at 72 dpi. If you don't know how to do this, do let that deter you. Just send us what you have.

## Rules

1. You must start with untrained stock. We prefer you use nursery stock that has not been grown for bonsai. We recognize there is a gray area and will try to be flexible.
2. Send your before photos when you get started (see #2 above for details). Do not wait for your final submission to send them.
3. You must start with untrained stock this year. Bonsai done before this year are unacceptable.
4. Your finished tree can be in either a nursery pot or a bonsai pot. Like the stock you started with, it must be photographed from all four sides.
5. Final submission must be in by October 15th 2011.
6. You must do all the work yourself. No one else should lay a hand or a tool on the tree you submit.
7. One finished entry per person. You can submit more than one untrained stock plant at the beginning, but you will have to make the decision on which finished tree you want to submit.

## Judges

We will have at least three professional judges (let me know if you are interested). We will also ask our readers to get involved with the judging (more on this later).

\_\_\_\_\_ Entry Number

May 14 & 15, 2011

## 2011 Michigan All-State Bonsai Show Registration Form

Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park presents the Thirteenth Annual Michigan All-State Bonsai Show  
1000 East Beltline NE, Grand Rapids, MI 49525 616-975-3147 [www.meijergardens.org](http://www.meijergardens.org)  
Questions – contact Anita Buckowing 269-792-4438

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Ph ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ Receive future e-mails ? Y N

e-mail \_\_\_\_\_ Club Affiliation \_\_\_\_\_

We are not limiting the number of trees/exhibitor this year but do reserve the right to NOT display some trees if we start to run out of space in the exhibit area. Please list the trees that you intend to display (we realize that this is subject to change due to the “**show readiness**” of each tree). Please use the back of this form if needed to list more trees. Stands and Accent Plants are highly encouraged but not required. It is recommended that each item presented for exhibit be discretely labeled with your name.

Tree #1 Common Name \_\_\_\_\_ Tree # \_\_\_\_\_

Genus \_\_\_\_\_ Species \_\_\_\_\_

Year Training Began \_\_\_\_\_ Approx Age of Tree \_\_\_\_\_ Critique/Judge ? Y N

Accent Plant \_\_\_\_\_ Stand \_\_\_\_\_

Tree #2 Common Name \_\_\_\_\_ Tree # \_\_\_\_\_

Genus \_\_\_\_\_ Species \_\_\_\_\_

Year Training Began \_\_\_\_\_ Approx Age of Tree \_\_\_\_\_ Critique/Judge ? Y N

Accent Plant \_\_\_\_\_ Stand \_\_\_\_\_

Tree #3 Common Name \_\_\_\_\_ Tree # \_\_\_\_\_

Genus \_\_\_\_\_ Species \_\_\_\_\_

Year Training Began \_\_\_\_\_ Approx Age of Tree \_\_\_\_\_ Critique/Judge ? Y N

Accent Plant \_\_\_\_\_ Stand \_\_\_\_\_

**Suiseki Exhibitors** should include a daiza or suiban if appropriate. Please use the back side of this form to list your suiseki submitted for exhibition. Include PLACE OF ORIGIN, SHAPE, & POETIC NAME (if applicable). Again, discreet labeling of your items is recommended.

All items to be exhibited must be dropped off on Friday, May 13 from 5-8 pm or on Saturday, May 14 from 8-10 am. PLEASE, no early deliveries on Friday. No late entries will be accepted unless prior arrangements have been made with Show Chair Anita Buckowing. Items must remain on display until 5 pm on Sunday, May 15.