

Four Seasons of Bonsai

Bonsai Society of Greater Springfield's Newsletter

January 2004

Winter in N.E.

Cold, dark and blustery, Winter in New England can be depressing if you allow it to get to you. But if you are a bonsai enthusiast you still have lots to do. Even if you don't have tropical bonsai trees there are lots to be done before the Spring rush, here is a short list:

- Sharpen your tools
- Read a good Bonsai book or two
- Research your trees on the internet
- Make and maintain a Bonsai record keeping database
- Practice: Wiring, tree design drawing
- Make pot choice decisions
- Mix your own soil
- Visit a Bonsai Nursery and enjoy a heated greenhouse.
- Get outside and enjoy the beautiful trees in our winter landscapes and look for design ideas
- Plan spring digs
- Attend Bonsai Society meetings
- Check out your libraries collection of Bonsai Books
- Stock up on supplies
- Carve or remove deadwood on stored trees
- After letting tree thaw detail wiring can be done, it is best to wait until Spring to make radical bends in branches.
- Winter is an ideal time to do major pruning on most dormant Bonsai.

2004 B.S.G.S. SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

January 7 at 6:30 Board Meeting location, Marilyn Monetts Home 242 Fuller Rd., Ludlow

January 20 at 12:30 4:30 Pauline Muth workshop

January 20 at 7:30 Bonsai Professional Pauline Muth lecture & demonstration

February 4 at 6:30 Board Meeting location TBA

February 17 at 7:30- Members Bonsai exhibition "Winter Silhouettes" bring in your deciduous bonsai to show it in its stark splendid winter state. Bonsai Books and BSGS membership benefits discussion.

Feb 28 Making Cement Bonsai Planters Workshop. Learn how to make your own bonsai pots using a process designed by Colin Lewis and improved by our own David Wolski. Location & Fee T.B.A.

March 2nd 12:30 - 4:30 Suthin S. Trident maple workshop \$35.00 + material

March 2nd (NOTICE DATE CHANGE) at 7:30 Suthin S. Lecture & Demonstration

March 27th Soil Workshop at East Springfield Flower Shop (1:00?)

April 7 at 6:30 Board Meeting, location TBA

April 20 at 7:30 Art Days Japanese Maples Spring Fling

April T.B.A. Bonsai Basics Workshop (?)

April 25th Sunday Nick Lenz Free Garden tour & \$40.00 BYOT workshop. Tour 9:00 - 10:00 workshop 10:00 - 4:30

May 5 at 6:30 Board Meeting, location TBA

May 18 at 7:30 Bonsai Show Preparation Lecture and sale tree workshop

June 2 6:30 Board Meeting, location TBA

June 15th at 7:30 Flowering Bonsai & accent plants

June 5th & 6th Tower Hill Plant sale fund raising event

July 10 & 11 Club Show and sale at Quadrangle

July 17th Club Picnic & Auction & workshop with Ron Martin

August T.B.A. Road trip to Suthin's Royal Bonsai for workshop

Sept 17, 18, 19th Tower Hill Bonsai Show

Bonsai...within us by Bob O'Brien

Finally, only a few more turns on this last shoot and we'll be there! After what seems like weeks of first cleaning, pinching, and plucking, then painstakingly applying wire to nearly all that remains on the tree. The moment you've been working towards is here. Time to begin the process of bringing to life what you've seen in your mind's eye since you began. The pulse quickens as the branches are slowly brought into their ideal positions one by one. Now we can really begin to feel the magic that is bonsai we are seeing not only in present tense, but also what lies ahead, as each shoot fills out over time. These will become our vision.

Bonsai engages the senses in a way few undertakings can. As we transform these trees, we experience visual excitement throughout the entire process, first as we decide on a design, be it in a sketch or in our mind. Then, as the idea begins to take shape and finally when the object in front of us resembles the artistic vision we have. The olfactory senses are brought into play as well we can smell the familiar scent of damp soil, occasionally even the smell of wood that is being carved and shaped into some otherworldly jin and shari. And in the case of conifers the scent of sap can fill a room which is to me, and I suspect other enthusiasts as well, reminiscent of childhood play, and years gone by. Above all else, our sense of touch is a constant companion throughout the entire process of our artistry. The cold feel of the tools, the subtle texture of the bark and the presence of life in the foliage are all taken in as we work. When we finally get to the actual bending of larger branches, our thumb tips ache, and beg for the end. Yet it is a pain that will pay off.

These things are all so easily taken for granted when we have a picture that we are so intent on achieving. It is perhaps a good practice for us to try and take the time to notice each and every step we take in accomplishing the end result. For myself, Bonsai is actually sort of a contradiction, while much of what I do is felt as calming in an almost philosophical way, the process is also one which I cannot help but be driven by, in nearly a blinding passion. When I am working on a tree that is undergoing a big change or its initial styling, I actually have to bring myself to a stop and walk away sometimes, so that I am sure that I am not missing any possible alternative design options. Patience does not necessarily come with this passion. For a great many of us, these senses and feelings are indeed quite easily stirred. As we go about our daily routines outside of bonsai, we are constantly being lured into seeing the art in landscape planting, and trees growing naturally in wooded areas. I, like most of us I suspect, am forever searching for worthy urban material, always looking for the tree within the shrub



One of the greatest aspects of belonging to a club or association is having a group of like minded individuals who can appreciate all that is involved in the creation of what we are so passionate about. Not only do we have access to workshops and many other valuable assets, but we also gain access to other enthusiasts ideas about design in bonsai . The ability to have more than one set of eyes to evaluate a tree is at the very least, an irreplaceable tool to have at our disposal. We are indeed a uniquely fortunate group of individuals to have found our way into bonsai. I have to believe that we are able to see and appreciate all that trees offer, perhaps a little more than the uninitiated. Even with the changes we impose upon them, we cannot help but respect and admire the complexity as well as simplicity in what mother nature has started, and allowed us to bring forth the true potential in.

Brooklyn Botanical & N.Y. Botanical Garden trip Report
Twenty-six persons: Bonsai Society of Greater Springfield, MA members, family members and friends took an all day bus excursion to New York City on Sunday, October 26, 2003. First, they visited the Brooklyn Botanical Garden where they enjoyed the Japanese Hill-and-Pond Garden in the peak of its fall colors and the C.V.Starr Bonsai Museum, the "location of the oldest collection of dwarfed, potted trees in the country". In the afternoon, the group went to the New York Botanical Garden where they savored the YAMA KI Bonsai Society, New York, NY annual exhibition. On the bus everyone had fun eating continental breakfast, reading bonsai magazines, watching bonsai videos and hearing Lee Berrouard's original poem about his bonsai experience. We thank Lee for organizing this trip. By Gerry Garner

Photographs taken by Lee Berrouard.



Water Fall at B.B.G.'s Japanese Garden



Historic Japanese White Pine at B.B.G.



Swiss Mountain Pine at B.B.G.



Conservatory at N.Y. Botanical Gardens



Yama Ki Bonsai Society member's trees a Pine Cascade and a Hinoki falsecypress

Winter web site visiting suggestions**Internetbonsaiclub.org**

(check out the fantastic gallery and F.A.Q. sections)

Bonsaitalk.com

(Good active forums)

Evergreengardenworks.com

(Don't miss Brent's articles)

Royalbonsaigarden.com

(Local nursery, don't miss Suthin's workshop link)

NEBonsai.com

(Local bonsai nursery's site)

Bonsaiwest.com

(Local bonsai nursery's site)

Winter Bonsai Care Tips:

I have discovered over the last few winters that the tropical trees I care for indoors over the winter need more watering then they needed when they where outdoors. I guess it is the desert like low humidity that robs the plant and the soil of moisture. So check your trees frequently, their water needs may be more then you are used to. The most common reason for bonsai death is either over watering or under watering. Trees kept indoors also need to be monitored for pest frequently the less then ideal indoor environment is stressful for trees and a stressed tree is an invitation to pest prediction. If you find you have a pest problem first I.D. the pest, try Ortho.com to I.D. it or visit your local library and check out a indoor plant pest I.D. book. Try the least toxic removal technique suggested by the book/web site first, usually this is just a strong blast of water or manually picking off the pest.

This year I also realized that caring for hardy bonsai trees dug into the ground for the Winter is very easy, the easiest except for having someone else care for them. I just check them once in a while for damage caused by rabbits or mice. Spray them with repellent or protect them with hardware cloth screening if I notice any rodent signs. That is all that needs doing, mother nature takes care of the watering most the time, here in New England it rarely gets dry enough during the Winter that you need to water. I do have to water the trees in the covered cold frame and the ones in the cellar bulkhead occasionally, and during the unusual warm Winter days (over 40 deg.) I have to open the covers so the stored trees get some sun and air circulation. Winters a breeze, now Spring that's another story.

Club E-mail address

SpringfieldBonsai@Hotmail.com

Club web site:

Geocities.com/springfieldbonsai/

Meeting Location The B.S.G.S. meeting are held at Springfield Technical Community College in building #17 (the Putnum Building) in room 316 at 7:30 PM. Unless otherwise noted.

Board meetings are open to all members, get involved in the running of your bonsai society, attend a board meeting.

Club dues Annual (Sept.-Sept.) of \$20.00 for individual membership or \$25.00 for family membership dues can be paid at any club meeting or mailed to Marilyn Monette,

72 Fuller Rd. Ludlow, MA 01056

Workshops:

Unless stated otherwise or T.B.A. Our scheduled workshops are being held at East Springfield Flower Shop548 Page Blvd., Springfield

(413) 732-7407

Club Officers:

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| President | |
| Douglas Taylor | 786-1309 |
| Vice President | |
| Judson Boardman | 736-3258 |
| Treasurer | |
| Marilyn Monette | 583-4036 |
| Recording Secretary & Past President | |
| Gerry Garner | 783-7273 |
| Librarian | |
| David Wolski | 596-9478 |
| Web Master | |
| Kevin Wolski | 596-9478 |
| Hospitality Committee head | |
| Eve Thomas | 739-1393 |
| Membership/Publicity Committee | |
| Robert Farnsworth | 569-0267 |