

March
2009



SPRINGFIELD BONSAI SOCIETY

Palmatum Press

Future Tense March Meeting

The April monthly meeting will be on **Monday April 13th**. Dick Adorjan will be doing a presentation on Pest Control. Spring growth is quite susceptible to aphids and other insects. Dick is a Master Gardener and, among other things, he plans to talk about Integrated Pest Management. The meeting starts at 7pm at Washington Park Botanical Garden Conservatory. For new attendees to our meetings there are usually enough parking spaces in the back of the building, if not, you can park in the front by the Carillon. If the front door to the conservatory is not open please ring the door bell. Someone usually is there at least by 6:30pm. As always, you are welcome to bring a tree to style or repot.

I still have quite a few trees to style and I plan to bring one or two to get club member's opinion. I can now understand why fellow bonsai newsletter editors claim they don't have any time for newsletters in the spring!!

April 4 workshop with Erik Wigert. The workshop is now full! There will be a couple of members from St. Louis club joining us. Since the workshop is at Cass Bonsai Gardens in Edwardsville, IL some members are planning to car-pool. If you wish to car-pool please call Gary at 217-741-4849. The cost of the workshop includes the Bougainvillea trees but please bring your own tools. Lunch will be provided courtesy of Cass Bonsai. The demo will be in the morning session and is free. Everyone is welcome to come and observe the demo/workshop if they wish.



April 24 - 26 Shohin convention and workshops in St. Louis. There are about 25 workshops at various price levels and tree styles. This is a great way to acquire some good bonsai and learn the craft from well known bonsai artists. One day registration is \$65 Friday or Saturday (both days \$140 and includes banquet). In case you are wondering, "Shohin" typically means bonsai about 8" to 10" tall. The workshops are mostly full but spots are still available. I got into a couple of workshops on Friday – Azalea workshops David Kreutz and Guy Guidry.

The **2009 SBS membership** dues are now due. Annual membership is \$20 for individual and \$30 for family. Membership supports the club activities and gets you discounted rates on workshop fees and access to club supplies (potting soil, wire, etc.) during meetings.

Gary Trammell and Dick Adorjan are looking into a good time for guided tour of **Starhill Arboretum**.

Past Tense – March meeting

The March Meeting was a repotting meeting. We had fresh soil and wire supplies brought in. Members brought in trees to repot and style.

Dr. Roland Folse brought in a Natal Plum which he transplanted into a Bob Dixon Bonsai pot. Bob is a professor emeritus at UIS and recently won an award for his pottery. <http://www.vasefinder.com/v%20nats%202009/Exhibitor%202059/exhibitor59a.html>

Roland said he has been working with Bob on bonsai pottery recently and the pot to the right is one of them.

Scott Day worked on a San Jose Juniper he had bought at the Park collection auction. He made a design change that simplified the branch structure. Here are a couple of before and after pictures.



Before



After



New name badges were handed out at the meeting. We still have a few name badges that are unclaimed. We'll have them at the next few meetings for you to pick up, hope to see you there. We would love to have more members attend the meetings.

Dena Sturgill, Where the Roses never fade:

It is with deep regret I inform you that ex-president David Sturgill's wife Dena passed away recently after a couple of years of severe paralysis. We wish David and his family strength and serenity as they go through this trying time.

Bougainvillea Bonsai – Care Tips

General Information: Bougainvillea, named for a French navigator, is a native of South America and is grown extensively in the warmer climates of the United States. It is a member of the *Nyctaginaceae* family with close relatives being the four o'clock and the sand verbena. Bougainvillea is an evergreen vine which is just as happy spreading horizontally or hanging downwards as it is climbing upwards, it makes itself at home in almost any situation. It can be grown as a hedge, groomed as a ground cover, pruned as an espalier, trained as a tree or contained in a pot in a variety of shapes. Its trunk tends to be gnarled. Bougainvillea is ideal for bonsai. Red, violet, orange, yellow or white bracts which appear on the ends of new growth.

Available in nurseries and from bonsai specialty growers. A good source is from old gardens being redesigned and from trash piles where a frustrated homeowner has thrown the thorny plant.

They flower most heavily in winter and early spring, but some plants put forth scattered clusters all year. The colors are found in tones of purple, lavender, carmine, scarlet, red, pink, orange, yellow and white. Single and double flower forms are available. Double forms tend to carry their blooms near the end of the stems rather than distributing them evenly over the plant. The colorful, papery "blooms" are not flowers; they are bracts. The true flower is white, trumpet shaped and almost unnoticeable within the bracts. Bougainvillea are available in a variety of species, each having its unique characteristics.

Lighting: Full sun.

Temperature: Being a warm weather plant, they must be provided winter protection. They can usually tolerate die back from a freeze, but will withhold blooms for awhile.

Watering: Sparse to light watering and good drainage.

Feeding: Fertilize once in the spring with a low nitrogen fertilizer and maybe once again in the fall. The old established method of forcing flowers is to withhold water to a point of causing severe stress to the plant. Research at the University of Florida has found that plants flower best when given high nitrogen fertilizers and short day lengths (15 hours of darkness within ever 24 hour period).

Pruning and wiring: The bougainvillea takes well to pruning; a useful attribute in styling bonsai. Because bougainvillea generally blooms on new growth, each branch, as blooms begin to fade, should be cut back to a point somewhat shorter than the desired length. Seal all cuts to prevent rot. If rot is detected on a collected specimen, cut it out completely.

Propagation: Bougainvillea may be grown from air layers, root cuttings and branch cuttings. Young shoots, a few inches in length, should be placed in sandy soil with bottom heat and moisture. Half-ripened or old wood cuttings in six to twelve inch lengths may be rooted April to June.

Repotting: Repot in Spring. Do not prune the roots too severely.

Pests and Diseases: Caterpillars, aphids, scale, green fly and mineral deficiencies (chlorosis). Care must be taken that fungus does not invade the tree; reduced humidity and a preventive spraying of fungicide will help greatly.

Reprinted courtesy of <http://www.bonsai-express.com/>

"De-Japanising" Bonsai by Fawzan Barrage

Austin Bonsai Society Member <http://www.main.org/bonsai/articles.htm#Japanising>

The common bond between all masterpieces of art is sincerity. It is this sincerity that invokes in us a moment of epiphany; that moment of effortless discovery and joy, or what the Japanese call "Te" (unthinking, unconscious ingenuity and creative power of our spontaneous natural functioning - a power that is subdued when forced to conform to our logic). Without this sincerity, creativity is reduced to method, art to duplication and masterpieces to perfect replicas.

If we are to have a truly North American movement in Bonsai, OUR contribution to the art has to be, in every way possible, reflective of OUR reality and OUR understanding of the indigenous nature of OUR continent. Just like it is easy for the trained eye to distinguish between a bonsai trained in the Chinese method and one trained in the Japanese method, our bonsai has to be clearly identifiable by the way we adapt the classical "rules" to conform to our nature.

◇ It is the image of our indigenous trees that must inspire our art movement and not the photographs of bonsai from Japan. In contemplating Maples, for instance, it is more natural for us to envision a majestic Maple growing next to a farm house in New England than a Japanese grove with Mount Fuji in the background. The same holds true for our Bald Cypress, our Oaks, Elms, Figs, Junipers, Pines, etc...We all live among those trees and their shade at different times in our lives. The Japanese artists who create the bonsai at which we marvel in books and magazines take their inspiration for the indigenous nature of their islands - as we must take ours from the nature around us. If all we do is copy the trees of Japanese artists, we would do no better than a painter dedicating his art to copying the great works of the Masters.

It is truly revealing how we will not give a second thought to endowing our bonsai displays with Japanese and Chinese figures, but scoff at the sight of a miniature tire hanging from a bonsai branch, reminiscent of many of our own backyards. Which is more sincere to our collective eye? Where in North America can you readily see a Japanese man dressed in his traditional kimono and reading a book in the shade of a Bald Cypress, Canadian Spruce or Cedar Elm?

◇ We must begin to understand that the Art of Bonsai is no more exclusively Japanese or Chinese than theater and poetry are exclusively Greek. These cultures created the art forms and should always be honored for doing so. Yet, had we insisted on simply copying the Greek dramas without adapting the art form to our own culture, theater would have remained stagnant and eventually disappeared. All of the masterpieces of drama and film - from Shakespeare to Scorsese - would not have come about.

◇ It is acceptable for a beginner to copy existing works of art in order to learn technique and method. Once we are over that stage however, Nature should be our inspiration instead of pictures in bonsai books and magazines. If you want to create a Cedar Elm bonsai, for example, visit the Hill Country of Texas and look at what Nature has done with those trees in their native setting. Barring an actual visit, have a friend photograph some of them for you. Learn the tree's growth habits, distinctive looks and study its natural shape. Take notes - all artists do. Armed with that knowledge, let your creative genius take over. The result will be on YOUR sincere interpretation of Nature, OUR bonsai art and, hopefully, our North American Bonsai Masterpiece.

(Continued on page 5)

Reprinted from Texas Bonsai, LSBF publication, Summer, 1991

SBS Editor notes: I found this article on the internet but the search for it was inspired by this email that I got from the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County. "Annually, the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County gives 20 awards to valued volunteers. This year we are looking for bonsai style native trees/plants for our Natural Resource Management and Wildlife volunteers. Do you have any suggestions as to where I could find a native tree/plant in a bonsai style. We are looking to buy them and we have a price limit."

If you have some native bonsai or know where to get one please let me know so I can publish this information. I personally have tried bonsai using native material. Like the Elms we got from our "Tree digs" with Janine, some Amur Maples from a friends backyard, Fragrant Sumac (not poisonous)– Rhus Aromatica etc). The sumac had great potential; the Lo-Gro Sumac naturally lends itself to cascade bonsai – but for some reason it did not survive repotting last spring :-)



April Bonsai Care Tips

Disclaimer: This is a general guide. Times can vary as much as a month depending on the weather trends. Some species of trees do not follow the general category guidelines of deciduous, evergreen or tropicals. Know your trees!

- Continue pruning deciduous trees as buds are opening. Remove dead branches and twigs.
 - Continue repotting junipers and spruce. Repot pines toward end of month. Leave for next year to repot any deciduous trees that have buds opening unless tree is root-bound.
 - Do not prune spruce and pines due to resin bleeding.
 - Wire spruce, juniper and pines, taking care not to wire too tightly, as branches will thicken quickly. Do not wire deciduous at this time.
 - Check wiring done last month.
 - Keep an eye on watering. Check daily and water only trees that are dry.
 - Do not feed newly repotted trees. Feed trees repotted last month if growth has started.
 - Check for pests as you water.
-



SPRINGFIELD BONSAI SOCIETY

Gary Trammell, President

c/o Washington Park Botanical Garden
1740 W. Fayette
Springfield, IL, 62704
Phone: 217-753-6228

Upcoming Events

April 4 – Bougainvillea Workshop with Erik Wigert from Florida. Come down to Cass Bonsai for a free Demonstration. Workshop cost \$75 for current SBS members, \$100 non-members. You will get hands-on experience styling and potting two trees (a tropical and an evergreen) for you to keep and enjoy. A \$40 supply fee is payable to the instructor the first day of class.

April 24-26 – Shohin Bonsai Convention in St. Louis. Bonsai demonstrations, workshops and vendors from all over the country. Visit www.stlbonsai.org or call 314-952-1317

May 9th and 16th – Bonsai Basics – To register, call LLCC Community Learning 217-786-2292. Instructor: Gary Trammell and SBS members
Course Code: CEW 106-X40 (summer session)
Dates: Saturdays, 5/9/09 – 5/16/09, 10 a.m.– noon
Number of Sessions: 2 **Registration Fee:** \$15
Limit: 15 **Location:** Washington Park Botanical Gardens, 1740 W. Fayette, Springfield

Administrivia

Your 2009 Officers are:

President – Gary Trammell 217-741-4849 (M)
Vice President – Scott Day 217-585-8473 (R)
Treasurer – Tom Applebee
Secretary – Manish Sumant 217-652-9619 (M)
& newsletter editor

Annual membership is \$20 (family \$30).

Email msumant1@netscape.net to sign up or visit
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/BonsaiSBS/>