



Kongetsu

West Michigan Bonsai Club Newsletter

Vol. 16 No. 5

June 2012

Mollie Hollar, Editor

2012 Schedule of Events

Sat, June 16: Japanese maple workshop

Sat, July 14: Make form for ciment fondu

Sat, July 21: Ciment fondu workshop, potluck, and Andy Smith trees raffle at Bob Goddard's

Sat, Aug 18: Bonsai mums

Sat, Sept 15: Prep for Fall Show

Fri, Oct 12: Show set-up

Sat & Sun, Oct 13 & 14: Fall Club Show

Sat, Nov 17: 2013 Planning

All events are held at Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park unless otherwise noted. Saturday meetings/workshops are from 9:00 AM to Noon

Death of a Great Friend

It is with great sadness that I must tell you of the death of Eunice Corp, one of the truly great bonsai artists in Michigan.

Eunice donated the first trees to start the bonsai collection at Meijer Gardens.

She was an extraordinary artist with watercolors and Chinese brush painting as well as bonsai. She also helped design the new bonsai postage stamps.

I was lucky enough to know Eunice for many years. Our last visit was last summer when she had invited me to do a bonsai demonstration at her Sakura Bonsai Society in Cadillac.

Get Ready for June and July Events!

We're going to have some really exciting workshops in June and July, so pay attention and prepare for them! There's a lot of information in this newsletter for us to get ready.

First, on Saturday, June 16, we're going to do a Japanese maple workshop. Some of you bought maples at the All-State Show, and others already had one to work on. If you don't have a maple to work on you have two choices: either buy one at a nursery before you come, or buy one of those that I got at All-State. I am including photos, sizes and prices of the trees that are available on page 3 here. ***If you want one of these trees, you must let me know by Tuesday, June 12.*** We will be working only on the tops of the maples – it's much too late in the season to do anything with the roots.

So for this workshop, you'll need to bring your tools for trimming and your tree if you already have your own. The Club will provide wire.

I'm really excited about this workshop. It's been several years since we've done anything with Japanese maples as a Club.

And in July, from our Instructor . . .

Ciment Fondu is a special kind of cement that makes a light-weight planter that will look like a rock; with it we will be making a half-moon container. The powdery ciment is mixed with water in a couple/three stages, first as a slip (chocolate milkish) consistency and painted onto the prepared form, then allowed to dry for a bit before adding another. Then in the next step, the fondu in a yogurt-like consistency is applied to the form, and then another until you have the right amount added (minimum of 1/4" thick).

Important:

If you want to take this workshop you ***must*** pre-register and plan to be present at both of the two dates. ***There will not be any wire forming or sewing on the second day.*** Materials will be provided for only a specific number of people, and some of the materials you don't just run to the corner store for when you run out. There is a registration form on page 2. Deadline for sign-up is Monday, July 1 and will have a maximum number of 10 people. Cost will be \$50 (for medium grey color) or \$55 (for white color) for each member, which includes most of the material to create a half-moon container.

This will be a two-part workshop. For the first part on Saturday morning July 14 at 9:00am we will meet at FMG to put together the half-moon shape with 2x4 heavy wire sheet, and then form chicken wire over it. Then we will "sew" fiberglass cloth to the chicken wire form with
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Growing Bonsai Trees

A Word of Warning

-- A Lesson Learned

(from Dayton OH club newsletter)

It's been over 30 years since I began growing bonsai trees. During those years I found it necessary to buy many plants (*just to make sure I didn't miss out on anything*). . . species I had never tried, specials I saw at garden centers, bargains at club auctions. It was seemingly endless.

Somewhere along the way, I also decided I should have *one of every tropical with any bonsai potential* and I expanded my hunt. Of course, not all the plants I bought were even beginner bonsai trees, but I could grow them on.

After a few years, I started selling some of the plants I had gathered and rejected. The selling became a business. It grew and so did my habit of buying.

I sold lots of the 'stuff' and **watched others make decent bonsai** out of it.

It took about 15 years to discover I had lots of plants, I had very few bonsai.

The Tamarind shown here [next page] (*Tamarindus indica*) was one bonsai I managed to style and maintain for many years. (Eventually, I removed the first branch.)

Where did the time go? After 30+ years of supposedly growing bonsai trees, I finally figured it out. I had so much 'stuff', I had no time to develop it or even take care of it properly. It was not an easy habit to break, but I think I've managed to do it. Now that I
(cont page 3 col 1)

(*Ciment Fondu cont*)

fishing line that will be provided. For this first-day workshop, you will need to bring a heavy needle with a larger hole for sewing (a circular needle works well), work gloves, wire cutters and pliers (needle nose works well) or combination will work.

The second part is Saturday, July 21, at 9:00am [at Bob's house]. This part of the procedure for making the planter is quite easy but does take about 5-6 hours, so plan on staying for awhile and we will have the potluck and the raffle drawing for the two bonsai from Andy Smith in between the different stages. Mollie will give more info on both of those, plus directions to my house [in the July newsletter].

I will have some mortar colors that members will be able to use to color the ciment to look like a rock. The size of the container will be approximately 6" deep x 5" wide x 11" tall; this will vary a little.

For this second part on Saturday, July 21, members will need to bring the following materials:

1. Plywood, 1/2 inch thick and no smaller than 2'x2' (used to transport planter home and for curing until dry)
2. Small old paint brush, tooth brush etc, for applying and texturing the fondu
3. Old bed sheet (an old standard size pillow case will also work) and plastic sheet (approx. 3' sq.) to cover wet container when not working, and transporting home. This also helps to cure it over the weeks.
5. Small mister to keep container and bed sheet wet
6. Rubber gloves for fondu
7. Folding table, chair and hat if it's a sunny day
8. Pint jar for liquid sealer (seal once it has cured)
9. Look at stones and rocks to have some idea as to color and texture, and plan to bring them with you for reference for the second meeting.

Since there is a long period of drying time in between coats of fondu, plan on 5-6 hours for this workshop on the second meeting at my home.

[If you have any questions about any of this, call Bob at 616-791-9141.]

Ciment Fondu Workshop Registration

Deadline: July 2

Name _____

Phone _____

E-mail _____

Desired color: grey _____ @ \$50.00

white _____ @ \$55.00

Please make check payable to Bob Goddard and send check and this form to Bob at 3693 Dublin St NW, Walker MI 49544.

Registrations must reach Bob by Monday, July 2.

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don't have the business, I have a little more time.

Things are changing.

I began to use one of the bonsai how-to-lessons I teach ... **taper, taper, taper** ... and cut off the huge branches on an old *Bougainvillea*. I root pruned several small *Ficus* and placed them in the shallow pots I always recommend.

I tossed or sold everything *without a decent trunk* as per bonsai lesson number one. I also narrowed down the number of plants.

I cleaned up the dead wood and painted lime sulfur on my favorite *Conocarpus* (buttonwood). Even the weeds are *almost* under control.

A Final Note

For those of you just getting started in bonsai - and some of you old-timers who have similar buying habits - discipline yourselves!

After 25 years of neglect your 'stuff' will be nothing but 'old stuff'.

'Old stuff' does not go to shows or end up in magazines. It's still just 'stuff,' no matter how old it is.



Tree #1



Price: \$40.00

Leaves: green & red

Caliper: 3/4"

Width leaftip to leaftip: 28"

Height top of leaves to base of trunk: 28"

Tree #2



Price: \$55.00

Leaves: green

Caliper: 1"

Width: 21"

Height: 21"

Tree #3



Price: \$40.00

Leaves: red and green

Caliper: 3/4"

Width: 23"

Height: 27"

Details on Maples

1. All trees have branches low on the trunk.
2. There are fewer secondary and tertiary branches on Tree #3 so the foliage is not as dense.
3. All trees have good trunk movement and branching.
4. All trees are healthy and will make great bonsai!

This Weekend

If you have nothing else to do this weekend, head down to Dawes Arboretum near Newark, OH for their annual Ohio Regional Bonsai Show. I'll be vending there. They are anticipating featuring some Japanese extras – I'll be taking my two Japanese dolls that were given to my sister and me during the Korean War. Look for details on the show at

http://www.dawesarb.org/index.php?option=com_jcalpro&Itemid=1&extmode=day&date=2012-06-09.

2012 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.