



BADGER BONSAI SOCIETY

Promoting and Enjoying the Ancient Art of Bonsai Since 1972

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NEXT MEETING:

August 10 | 6:30

Olbrich Botanical Gardens
3330 Atwood Ave., Madison, WI

MEETING AGENDA:

Air-Layered Ficus & Bring Your Own Tree(s)

CLUB OFFICERS:

President Karl
Vice President Mary
Treasurer Gary
Communications Devon
Librarian Derek
Refreshments Elaine

President's Message

Our next meeting, Thursday August 10, will be a mix of a couple ideas. First, I have always been intrigued by what a good bonsai artist can create – sometimes from material that seems more suited to the compost pile than outstanding bonsai. A few decades back, I watched a demo by Dan Robinson of Washington state. I don't remember exactly what the finished tree looked like, but I do remember Dan's advice – "you can put the foliage anywhere you want". That is to say, it helps to have the foliage where you would like it, but don't worry if it is not, for we are going to put it where it is most esthetically pleasing. I think this one concept is what distinguishes the real artists from the rest of us. So I'll have a number of images to show of before and after bonsai that illustrate this idea. Some of the transformations are rather predictable, but others are so profound it seems they have photographed the wrong tree.



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Secondly, I'll bring in some of my ficus nerifolia on which I've done trunk chops or air layers. It is always a little scary to chop off the top of a tree and leave only stubs. But, ficus will almost always (remember there are no guarantees in

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bonsai) send out lots of new growth. “Make the smallest bonsai possible with the material you have” – the advice of John Naka. A corollary to this advice is “... without killing the tree.” Additionally, if you have a tree with large leaves, a larger finished tree will look more believable than a smaller one. Lastly, anyone wishing to work on their own tree is welcome to bring in something to work on, or to get help with.

Picnic Wrap-up

Thanks to Roger and Julie O for hosting the July picnic. About fifteen members were in attendance, and it was a perfect day – good conversation, great food, and a beautiful setting. Roger’s trees, benches, and display area were all immaculate. And the sound of the trickling water in the constructed brook proved very relaxing. Car enthusiasts appreciated Roger’s 1973 Cougar, which looked like it just came out of the show-room, and the vintage Sinclair Gasoline pump with the viewing window, showing a price per gallon of 25(?) cents. Those were the days! Merci beaucoup to the O’s for a great afternoon!

Chicago Show

The closest big bonsai show (after our own, of course) is always held the third weekend in August at the Chicago Botanic Garden in Glencoe, Illinois. This year that date is August 15-17. The Garden is located on Lake Cook Road – the boundary between Cook County and Lake County. Admittance to the Garden and show are free. However, there is a \$20 charge for parking. If you are an Olbrich member even the parking fee is waived, so take along your Olbrich Membership Card.

Wisconsin State Fair

If you are going to the state fair in Milwaukee, be sure to check out the bonsai display in the horticulture building. The fair runs from Aug. 3-13. Can you say “cream puff?”

For Sale

Irene R , a former colleague at MATC, has a knob cutter and shear that she would like to sell at half price. These tools were used only once, so they are virtually new. (see attached photo). She would like \$31 for the knob cutter, and \$7 for the shear. If you are interested, Irene (in Sun Prairie) can be reached removed



Nursery close-outs

I didn’t monitor nursery sales this year very closely, so I didn’t find any great bargains. Shopko had some azaleas and toyo nishiki quince at 75% off. I don’t know if any of these are left, but if I was going to buy something, these are the two I would consider.

Super Glue

I was anxious to try the superglue idea to stabilize rotting wood on my bougainvillea. First, I applied lime sulfur to the area. The instructions said to get the wood as dry as possible, so the superglue would penetrate better. The article suggested using a torch to dry out the punky wood, which I found a little scary. So, instead I placed a small 3-inch fan directed at the wet area and let it blow for two days. I then unpotted the plant and dripped superglue unto the rotten areas. I went through about fifteen of those little tubes, figuring as long as the wood was absorbing the glue, I'd keep putting more on. Repotting and stabilizing the tree was a bit of a challenge, given the loss of a portion of the trunk due to rot. A week has now gone by and the tree has not dropped its leaves, but the rate of water up-take from the soil is less than I would have hoped for. Time will tell.



other pines, should be worked on in late July and early August. This year's growth could be pruned back, leaving only a few needle clusters of this year's growth. Well, ordinarily new growth is easy to distinguish from older growth – the needles are usually lighter in color for one and not as stiff. However, when I went to work on these, it was not so easy to tell where the new growth started.



Next year I'll prune a little earlier so this is more obvious. If you are going to work on mugsos, I would suggest you read the section on this species at Bonsai4Me. This source also warns against using the mugo cultivars (like 'mops'). It is suggested that the cultivars are even more delicate/sensitive about pruning and potting.

Mugo Pines

I bought a bunch of mugo pines a few years ago, and most of them are still in their nursery pots. I was a little reluctant to work on them as they have a reputation as being difficult subjects to bonsai. The Bonsai4Me web site said that mugsos, unlike



Member Ideas

It is not always easy to come up with good ideas for club meetings. Long-time members don't need another lecture on soil mixes, or wiring, or how to water. But, that is exactly what new members need to hear. Finding programs that appeal to everyone is a challenge. And I am running out of ideas. So, if you have ideas for programs, let me know. If you are willing to give a program, that is even better.