



# BADGER BONSAI SOCIETY

Promoting and Enjoying the Ancient Art of Bonsai Since 1972

**Badger News | A Publication of the Badger Bonsai Society | April 2018**

## NEXT MEETING:

**April 12 | 6:30**

Olbrich Botanical Gardens  
3330 Atwood Ave., Madison, WI

## MEETING AGENDA:

Colorado Spruce Workshop

## CLUB OFFICERS:

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

## President's Message

**March Re-cap:** Thanks to Ron F for a great repotting demonstration! As Ron said, if your trees are healthy, they are going to produce lots of roots and this will necessitate repotting every few years. The speed at which water drains into and out of the pot is a good indicator whether your tree needs repotting. A newly potted tree will drain freely. As the roots colonize and fill the pot, the rate of draining diminishes. With our meeting time limited to just an hour and a half, Ron had to rush to finish the demonstration.

## Let me add just a few ideas that you might find useful.

**Screening:** Size your screening to cover the drainage holes plus a little extra. Don't cover the entire bottom of the pot with screen. Why I ever

thought this was a good idea I can't remember, but it is definitely a no-no. The roots will grow through the screen and enlarge on the bottom side. This makes getting the screen off when repotting an arduous task and you end up damaging lots of roots.

**Pin Shape:** The simplest shape for the pins that secure the mesh in the pot is a U-shaped bobby-pin form, with the width of the U equal to the diameter of the drain hole. Being lazy, this is the shape I always use. But, a more secure clip is made in the shape of a butterfly.



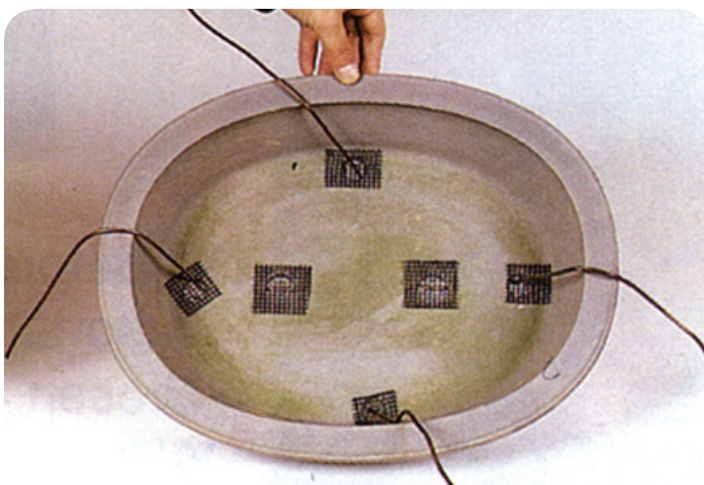
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The loops are bent so they lay flat on the screen. Again, the space between the vertical portions should equal the drain hole diameter.



While not crucial, I think these clips work best if they run in the short direction of the pot, so as not to interfere with the tie down wire(s) used for the tree. Be sure to cut the tie down wire long enough! Nothing is as aggravating as getting the tree in position and finding your tie down is too short. The wire should pass up through the mesh so it is adjacent to the edge of the drainage hole closest to the pot center.



When the wire is tightened, it won't shift the position of the screen. Consider placing some rubber tubing on the wire if it might scar an important root. I prefer using two wires – one on the front side and one on the back. My experience using just a single wire is that as the wire is tightened, it causes the planting angle to change. For additional stability, after the front and back wires have been snugged, twist one

wire from the back and one wire from the front on both sides of the tree - i.e. the trunk of the tree is now surrounded by box of tie down wire.

**Important reminder from Wayne:** Don't cut sandpaper or the silicon-carbide sharpening sheets with a scissors. The grit will damage the cutting edge. Instead, tear the sheet using a straight edge. If the mylar sheet won't tear smoothly, cut it with an Exacto knife, single-edged razor blade, etc. something with a disposable blade because the grit will destroy the edge.

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## April Meeting

I have ordered 100 Colorado blue spruce for our April meeting. The trees are six years old (designated 3/3: three years in the seed bed, followed by an additional 3 years after transplanting) and are supposed to be 15 inches tall. One of the benefits of belonging to the BBS is that we can order trees in bulk and at a reduced price. The price of the trees is \$2 each. "A six year old tree for two bucks?" Yup, that's right. These will come bare-rooted packed in shredded newspaper. You may do either a single tree or a forest. A deeper pot will make potting easier and allow for a faster recovery. You may wish to bring a few different sized pots, and use the most appropriate size.

### What to Bring:

Tools, assorted pots, wire, plastic to cover your workspace, and soil. If you are going to take trees home without working on them, be sure to bring plastic bags to keep them from drying out. Caveat – the trees are ordered from Musser in Pennsylvania. Shipment of the trees depends on weather at the nursery. If the ground there is frozen, or if the trees are covered in snow, shipment will be delayed.



## Web Master

We have been operating without a designated Web Master. We really could use someone familiar with running a web site to oversee ours, and keep it current and up-to-date. Anyone want to volunteer to take this on?

## Silent Auction

Last month we had a very generous donation of pots and humidity trays. We will put a few of these up for silent auction each month until they are gone. Devon also donated a large cache of plastic pots. These will probably be too small for the Colorado blue spruce workshop. We will save them for another time.



## 2018 Bonsai Show

Our annual Olbrich show is scheduled for May 19-20. As usual we will need help in setting up and tearing down, volunteers to do demos, people to run the front desk, and members to interact with the public. You should start planning on what trees you are going to show, what stands you are going to use, what accent plants to use, etc. We typically have about fifty trees in the show. "But, I only have one tree and its not very good". Don't worry, the public will love it. We want to show that every bonsai doesn't need to be decades in the making. We will have show fliers at the April meeting. Please take some of these and post them where they will get the most attention – work, nurseries, libraries, UW campus, grocery stores, etc.

## Tim Dig – April 14

Tim and Denise have graciously volunteered to host a dig at their home.

Dig Your Own Tree at the (pending weather)

**Location:** Date: Saturday, April 14, 2018  
Time: 10:00 a.m. – noon

**Parking:** Spaces for seven near our garage. If full, park along as much as possible so traffic can go by.

**Tree Description:** Trees include honeysuckle, mulberry, and amur maple. Bring your own supplies to dig and store your trees. Trees are wild and self-seeded and come in a variety of sizes.

**Food:** Sandwiches, chili, and beverages will be provided afterwards by the O'Rourkes.

**Questions?:** Contact Tim at



mulberry



honeysuckle



amur maple

## Words to Ponder

“For me, trees have always been the most penetrating preachers. I revere them when they live in tribes and families, in forests and groves. And even more I revere them when they stand alone. They are like lonely persons. Not like hermits who have stolen away out of some weakness, but like great, solitary men, like Beethoven and Nietzsche. In their highest boughs the world rustles, their roots rest in infinity; but they do not lose themselves there, they struggle with all the force of their lives for one thing only: to fulfill themselves according to their own laws, to build up their own form, to represent themselves. Nothing is holier, nothing is more exemplary than a beautiful, strong tree. When a tree is cut down and reveals its naked death-wound to the sun, one can read its whole history in the luminous, inscribed disk of its trunk: in the rings of its years, its scars, all the struggle, all the suffering, all the sickness, all the happiness and prosperity stand truly written, the narrow years and the luxurious years, the attacks withstood, the storms endured. And every young farmboy knows that the hardest and noblest wood has the narrowest rings, that high on the mountains and in continuing danger the most indestructible, the strongest, the ideal trees grow.

– Hermann Hesse, *Bäume*.

*Betrachtungen und Gedichte*

Harry Harrington is an accomplished bonsai artist from England. He has written extensively and contributed to promoting bonsai to everyone. In perusing his Bonsai4me web site I was struck by this image of an English elm. Study this photo and we'll have a brief discussion of the tree at our April meeting.





# ***BONSAI EXHIBIT***



**May 19 – 20, 2018**

Saturday: 9 am – 4:30 pm

Sunday: 10 am – 4:30 pm

Olbrich Gardens

Demonstrations at 11am & 1:30pm

Free Parking & Admission

Olbrich Botanical Gardens, 3330 Atwood Avenue, Madison, WI

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