



BADGER BONSAI SOCIETY

Promoting and Enjoying the Ancient Art of Bonsai Since 1972

Badger News | A Publication of the Badger Bonsai Society | Jul 2021

Next Meeting Date:

Thursday Jul-8-2021 | 6:30 to 8:00 pm
Olbrich Botanical Gardens
3330 Atwood Avenue, Madison, WI

AGENDA:

Annual Show trees, mag reviews, Apple yamadori

CLUB OFFICERS:

Co-President Wayne / Bill
Vice President Mary
Treasurer Gary
Web Master / Newsletter Wayne
Librarian Ben
Refreshments Elaine

President's Message

With the transition from spring to summer, warm weather to hot weather and graduations, we seem to have returned to a bit of normalcy in our lives. But what this means for our bonsai activities is continued vigilance for tree health, repotting (for some species) stylings, propagations, fertilizing, monitoring for pests, and especially your trees watering needs. Thank you to Karl for providing a bit of commentary (page 3) on the importance of bonsai watering. So many of the basic issues that we see with bonsai come down to improper watering. Read this, understand this, and live this, or your bonsai goals can experience an expensive setback — both in terms of cost and time.

Our Jun-10 meeting at Olbrich Gardens, had a total of 27 attendees that included 4 members that joined at the meeting. We reviewed feedback from

the 2021 Annual Show. Thanks to everyone that brought along a tree from their participation in the April Amur Maple Dig (12 people brought in 18 amurs) and 4 other trees for presentation — ideas and discussions that ensued were of good interest, particularly with Karl's azalea, and Zach's apple (more on the apple at the Jul-8th meeting ... see page 4). Karl's pond basket was an interesting alternative to a colander for a training pot. Gary reviewed the treasurer's report for May and reported that our paid membership is now 44 individuals.

Post-meeting events included: a BBS wiring workshop; the Grand Opening of Wisco Bonsai in Sussex. Like our trees, the bonsai businesses and clubs are coming out of the COVID dormancy with a wealth of opportunities that are just out there for you to take advantage of ... *will you?*

Our Jul-8th meeting will be held in the Olbrich Gardens Upstairs Meeting Room; our normal 2nd floor meeting location. We'll again use a theatre style seating with fewer tables to provide greater seating capacity and a better opportunity for safe distancing as needed. The same [COVID measures](#) established for the Jun-10 meeting will be in effect for the Jul-8 meeting. Thanks also to Barbara for preparing member name tags, these help quite a bit— remember to turn your nametag back in at the end of the meeting. — *Wayne*

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July Meeting Agenda

Our plans for the Jul-8th meeting includes: new attendees intro; a video review of the trees from our 2021 Annual Show; discussion of volunteered magazine reviews (see details at right); revisiting Zach's apple tree yamadori; other show'n'tell items, door prizes; and discussion of ideas for our August and September meetings.

Recap of Wiring Workshop

On the morning of Sat Jun-19th TimO invited BBS members to attend a wiring workshop at his home. Bill, John, Lisa, Loren, Molly, Seth, Vicky and Wayne attended to practice their wiring skills on arbor vitae practice branches and/or on their own trees. Thanks also to Karl for assisting Tim as they guided the attendees with their wiring questions. See pictures from this event below.



Magazine Review Challenge ...

At the June BBS meeting 12 members selected a back-issue bonsai-related magazine from the club library, to review the contents and summarize for discussion at the Jul-8th meeting. We hope this is an activity that can continue monthly as a way to "mine" and identify and categorize some of the great content in this club resource. Volunteers, please remember to bring in your reviews.

Wisco Bonsai workshops in July

If you attended the Jun-19th grand opening of Wisco Bonsai (see recap on page 3) and signed up for Kevin's mailing list, you have received notification of 2 upcoming workshops that Wisco Bonsai is hosting in July, at:

N68 W23890 Donna Dr, Sussex WI 53089

Email wiscobonsai@gmail.com to request full details be sent to you.

*Tropicals Repotting Workshop ... **free***

Sat Jul-10 10am to 4pm weather permitting

No registration necessary! Bring a Tropical Tree that is in need of repotting and learn how to do that with guided assistance. This workshop is BYO tree, and if you have the appropriate pot, substrate and tools, bring those as well. If you do not have an appropriate pot or substrate, those will be available in the shop. I will have work tables set up for your use, along with some basic tools to share if you do not have your own (tools also available for purchase).

And if you want to just come and observe, that's fine too. The workshop will be taking place during normal open hours.

*BYO Juniper Styling Workshop (**\$25 fee**)*

Sat Jul-24 (rain date Sun Jul-25) 10am to 4pm

Geared toward the beginner level of Juniper styling in which we will take the first steps in turning that garden store (or other) Juniper into a Dynamic Bonsai. Bring your own tools and wire, and your own Juniper (should NOT have been repotted or collected this year and should be healthy and vigorously growing). Cost \$25 and limited to the first 8 people that pay in advance.

Watering your bonsai

With so many new members, I thought it would be good to do a quick review of watering. -- Karl

Watering is THE most important variable in keeping your bonsai alive. It's the Goldilocks idea - not too much, not too little, but just right. Beginners often ask, "how often should I water?" The answer is "only when the tree needs it". It is difficult to impossible to water on a schedule; there simply are too many variables - the size of the pot, the size of the tree, the amount of foliage, the age and composition of the soil, the air temperature, the pot temperature, the relative humidity, the age of the tree, the time of year, wind speed, whether the tree is actively growing, how many roots are there, etc. etc. etc. **NEVER** water a bonsai if its soil is still moist/wet. Most of the species used for bonsai can tolerate drought much better than they can tolerate being too wet. Here in Wisconsin we can often drive along the road and see fields of dead trees. Sometimes, the trees have succumbed to insects or disease; sometimes to drought; but, more commonly, death has resulted from flooding and water-logged soils. During drought, trees simply close their stomata to conserve the water that they have in their leaves and needles. If it's too wet, the trees have no way of dealing with this, other than waiting for gravity to drain away the excess.

So, how does one know when to water? Take a four or five inch wooden chop stick or skewer and poke it into the soil, leaving it there. Tomorrow, pull it out and examine the wood to see if it is wet/damp. If it is moist, don't water. Check again tomorrow. Repeat daily. When you do water, come back a minute or so later and water again. Some of the soil components, like peat, tend to be initially hydrophobic and repel water rather than absorbing it. This second watering helps insure that all of the soil is wet. If the water drains out slowly, or doesn't drain at all (your pot does have drainage holes, doesn't it?) make sure the drainage holes aren't plugged. If they are clear, slow drainage means it's time to repot. In general, spring is best for this, but a poorly draining bonsai might not last until next spring.

Hopefully, having convinced you of how to water, and with some trepidation, here is how I water. I offer this only to get you into the ballpark and give you a very rough idea of my watering frequency. For my trees, and I think for most of our members, our trees are watered every day during the summer. For small pots with coarse soil, they rarely go longer than one day. For larger pots, if I'm going to be gone for a day, every other day seems to be okay. During the winter, when my tropicals come indoors, I water once a week. For the temperate trees that are sleeping during the winter in my root cellar, ... well, more on that later.

Recap of Wisco Bonsai Grand Opening:

On Jun-19th, Kevin Stoeveken, owner of Wisco Bonsai held his grand opening. at N68 W23890 Donna Drive in Sussex-WI. With good food, drink and music, displays and demonstrations from nearby bonsai businesses and members of the Milwaukee Bonsai Society, and beautiful weather, about 50 guests spent the afternoon with Kevin and enjoyed bonsai.

About 10 miles from downtown-Milwaukee, and about 70 miles from downtown-Madison, [Wisco Bonsai](http://www.WiscoBonsai.blogspot.com): *"I cater to the serious (and not so serious) bonsai hobbyist"*, offering bobsai-related maintenance services, design assistance, basic training, bonsai supplies, and a large selection of bonsai pots – many from local potters.

Be sure to check out details on page 2 of this newsletter about Wisco Bonsai's free tropical repotting workshop on Sat Jul-10th; and a BYO-juniper styling workshop (\$25 fee and limited to the first 8 paid registrants) on Sat Jul-24th.



Other Shows and Conventions or Societies:

Due to the current COVID-19 situation ... check out the individual websites for current status.

US National Exhibition

Sep 11 – 12, 2021 East Rochester, NY

Join people from around the world for the U.S. National Bonsai Exhibition, where over 200 of the finest bonsai in the world will be on display.

MABA/Milwaukee 2022

June 23-26, 2022 Milwaukee, WI

Hosted by Milwaukee Bonsai Society. Includes 3 artist demonstrations, 19 artist workshops, and 6 presentations.

Zach's Apple

Because of the interest expressed at the last meeting, and unfortunately our running short on time for continued discussions, Wayne asked Zach to bring his collected Apple bonsai back to the Jul-8th meeting. This will give us an opportunity to hear the tree's history and Zach's design goals for this tree, as well as some of the successes and fails along the way. This is a unique tree and Zach's diligence shows. Please come prepared with your questions for Zach.



Tentative 2021 Calendar for

Badger Bonsai Society meeting & events:

(date is 2nd Thursday unless noted differently below)

Jul-8 - Movie of 2021 Annual Show trees; review June-Challenge project magazine reviews

July-2021 - no membership picnic

Aug-12 - TBD, silent auction of pots

Aug-2021 - bonsai beginnings seminar ???

Sep-9 - TBD

Sep-2021 - membership picnic ... ???

Oct-14 - TBD, nomination of officers for 2022

Nov-11 - TBD, officer elections

Dec-9 - TBD, Suiseki / Viewing Stones

Jan-2022 - Membership dinner - date/site TBD

Door Prizes

I apologize in advance, I thought I jotted winners down in June but could not find that, so I am going off of memory. Betty (I think) won an oval 9x17 pot, and Karl and Tim won smaller footed pots. And remember ... bring a 'show-n-tell' item to our meetings that is beyond the meeting topic and you get an extra entry for the door prizes.

Recent Links of Interest

- Bonsai Empire: [Watering Your Bonsai](#)
- Bonsai Empire: [Fertilizing Your Bonsai](#)
- Heron's Bonsai: [YouTube video on watering and fertilizing your trees](#)
- Eastern Leaf: [YouTube on Watering your bonsai](#)
- Bonsai Tree Gardener: [How to Water Bonsai](#)
- Bonsai Mirai YouTube: [How to Water Bonsai](#)
- Shizukana-En Bonsai: [YouTube How to Water](#)
- Bonsai Direct: [YouTube, Lloyd Noall, Chp 5 Watering and Positioning Your Bonsai](#)
- Bonsai Outlet: [Bonsai Watering FAQs](#)
- Grow Your Bonsai: [The Ultimate Guide to Watering Your Bonsai Tree](#)

our website: badgerbonsai.net