

Volume 187

March 2018

Mugo Pine



INDIANAPOLIS BONSAI CLUB

The Bonsai Creation

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From the President

It is the dead of winter. The weather report said rain and ice tonight! I have been needle plucking and some wiring of pines, but otherwise I have a bad case of Spring Fever.

The February meeting was just plain fun. Bob Hoy prepared a detailed Treasurers report and Steve Dick presented a very classy 2018 Membership Directory. The short meeting presented several upcoming conventions available this year. (see below).

The tree of the month was switched to Flowering Japanese Apricot; *Prunus mume*. This type was a Yabai. The mume needs:

■ Full sun, except for temp over 85 degrees. ■ Allow branches to grow all season, then shorten in the Fall. ■ And last but not least, Flowering Apricots are very susceptible to boring insects.

The main topic of the meeting was 'finding the Bonsai in the tree'. The topic was very timely because one of our long term members presented a smoke bush that had some die back. Paul Weishaar calmly found the live vein and carved some of the dead wood. By the end of the meeting, a potentially interesting pre-bonsai tree was formed.

The bulk of the evening program was examining twelve different trees, each with a different potential bonsai opportunity, and needed direction. The one exception was a smokebush, which has no bonsai potential! There was extensive discussion, and many good ideas were presented. I am finding that presenting trees is far more interesting than pictures of trees. I am especially grateful to Mark Fields, for pitch hitting for Cameron, and videoing the evenings program..

BUYING FLORAMITE AT AN AFFORDABLE PRICE.

Mark Fields and I are going to make ready to use **Floramite SC** insecticide available for members of the club. Floramite is very efficient and safer than most sprays. If you are interested in buying it, bring in as many one gallon clean containers, ie. plastic gallon milk cartons. The cost is \$5 dollars per gallon. Floramite is very expensive and so we are diluting it to a useable quantity.

UPCOMING BONSAI CONVENTIONS

1. *American Bonsai Society Annual Convention*

April 19-22. at Collinsville Illinois. HEADLINERS: Bjorn Bjorholm, Marc Noelanders, Matt Reel.

Registraton: www.absbonsai.org.

2. *All Michigan Bonsai Show*

Frederick Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park, Grand Rapids, Michigan. May 11-13. (a 3-4 hour drive from Indianapolis).

3. *Mid-America Bonsai Show*

Chicago Botanic Gardens: Aug. 17-19.

4. *6th U.S. National Bonsai Exhibition*

Rochester N.Y. Sept. 7-9. 8 hr drive. This has the finest and largest number of Bonsai displays in the country.

Bob Hoy and I want to develop a section of the newsletter for "**Bonsai Tips**". These will be helpful ideas to aid members in our understanding and development of our trees. They should be seasonal if appropriate. Please submit any/all "tips" you employ in the development and care of your trees. Following are a few I believe to be helpful.

TIP 1: HOW TO DEVELOP A THICKER TRUNK. Bonsai Iligan, a bonsai grower from the Philippines on Facebook, presents a technique to develop the trunk by using a plastic growing pot and opening up the hole so the roots can grow through. It is worth taking a look.

TIP 2: I have found that the BSOP (Bonsai Society of Portland)] series featuring Ryan Neal is an excellent series on the fundamentals of bonsai. There is also considerable "Bonsai Mirai" material available on You Tube. This may be the 'Golden Era' of bonsai in the US.

Carl Wooldridge

Mugo Pine Bonsai

Though *Pinus Mugo* has something of a poor reputation as bonsai, with the correct techniques, Mugos are easy to cultivate and style.

Mugo pines (also known as Mountain Pines) are easily available at garden centres and nurseries compared to most pine species. It is recommended that the plain Mugo Pine is used as Mugo varieties tend to be weaker and unresponsive in comparison. Try to find ordinary landscape pines rather than the miniature rock-garden varieties such as *P. mugo* 'Mops' and 'Valley Cushion' that are known as being particularly touchy to bonsai cultivation.

Mugo pine care

Mugos like plenty of light and water to achieve their full potential, however they must have a fast draining soil so that their roots don't sit in water. For maximum health and vigour, feed Mugos strongly with slow release fertiliser from Spring through to late Summer.

Repotting Mugo Pines

Pinus mugo has a bad reputation for reacting badly to repotting and rootpruning. It is not unusual to hear of Mugos becoming weak or even dying after a Spring repotting.

Unlike the timing for the Japanese Black Pine which is normally repotted as they come into active growth (the candles have extended and the new needles can be seen held tight against the candle). Mugo pines react far better to Summer repotting. Following comments I read on the internet last year that Mugos dislike being repotted in early Spring and respond strongly to be repotted while active in the Summer, I repotted 3 Mugos last August with great success. The Mugo pine appears to be one of a few tree species that actually prefer repotting and rootpruning during the growing season.

The ideal repotting time would seem to be after the first flush of growth has extended and is cut back (see below) and before the end of the Summer; this equates to July and August in most climates.

With a healthy mugo, all of any old, poor draining soil that is found can be removed by hand but *do not* wash the roots. This allows new, fast draining soil to be introduced around the rootball without removing the natural mycorrhizae attached to the roots. If you have any doubts as to the strength of the tree, only remove 50% of any old compacted soil that is found, removing the remainder in the next repotting.

It is not necessary to prune any of the foliage of the pine after rootpruning to 'balance' the tree. The waxy needles of a Pine require relatively little moisture uptake from the roots, there is no

need to try and reduce transpiration through the removal of above-ground growth. The more foliage the tree has after root-pruning, the more strength it will have to repair and regenerate the rootmass. The tree will 'balance' the roots and foliage itself. After repotting during the Summer, if temperatures in your climate are above an average 80°F (approx) keep the tree out of direct sun for a couple of weeks (only) and lightly mist the foliage a couple of times a day, otherwise no special provision is necessary.

Insulting a Pine

Healthy and vigorous, immature landscape or garden centre Mugos can be repotted, pruned and wired all at the same time after the first flush of growth through to early September. However, after this initial styling, the tree then will require 2 or 3 years to recover.

Be wary of reducing a nursery Pine's top growth by more than 50% in one vegetative period. Reduce the height of the trunk (and foliage) slowly in comparison to deciduous tree species. Mature Mugos are much like other Pine species in that they will only take one major working every year.

The general rule with mature (over 30-40 years) Pines is to keep to 'only one insult per vegetative period'. After repotting or drastic pruning or wiring or styling you must *then* wait until 12 months elapses before carrying out any further work. This also means that if a Pine is styled in the Summer, it *cannot* be repotted the following Spring.

Immature pines can be worked much harder and it is possible to get away with less time for recovery but it is important to respect that Pines must always be worked slowly.



Bonsai in March in Central Indiana

Paul Weishaar

Spring is springing. Spring has sprung. However that saying goes... it sure seems like spring. Well.....not yet according to the calendar. Officially the first day of spring in 2018 does not arrive until March 20.

Whatever the actual date spring begins, this is the month to get excited and re-inspired after the long winter doldrums. This month the landscape reawakens. However delicately, it is unmistakable. As the days lengthen and brighten, subtle evidence of that reawakening will soon appear in your bonsai collection. This is the time to keep a close watch on dormant trees for renewed growth and to be ready to take appropriate action. Just be sure and you don't jump the gun and begin working too early.

Working... Work... Is that a good description of what we really want to do? A quick look in Webster's Dictionary (the 1957 edition I took with me when I enrolled at Purdue) produced the following synonyms: labor, travail, toil, drudgery, grind, etc. That's not what I want to do. Maybe I should review some other dictionaries and find a definition I like. Hmmmm, that one is not appropriate, neither is that. I think I will check the Internet. Everything is on the Internet....Right? Here we go, this applies: an activity in which one sustains a physical or mental effort to overcome obstacles and achieve an objective or result. That works for me. Oh no...I used that "work" word again. Anyway, it is time to do your spring bonsai chores. I wonder what Webster says about chores.....

I am assuming you have spent January and February preparing for the spring tasks. Assuming. Assume. There's another word I don't like. No, I am not getting the dictionary out again. I do know the R-Rated definition of assume. To rephrase what I said, I know you have studied your bonsai and know exactly what you wish to do. Your soil is sifted and mixed or you have purchased some pre-mixed soil. You have cleaned and sharpened all your tools. All your old pots are clean and you have purchased any new pots required. In addition you have drainage screen, wire, Superthrive or HB101, liquid hormones, mycorrhiza and tool sterilizer.

You get the idea. What....some of you have not completed the above items? If this description fits you it is not time to begin spring bonsai chores, it's PANIC TIME.

One of the first tasks is spring pruning. Pruning is best accomplished before you repot the tree as it is still setting solid in the pot. This is the time for heavy pruning as the tree is still concentrating its energy in the roots. When the buds begin to open the energy is transferred to the branches and removal of branches becomes a greater shock to the tree.

Trunks and older branches need to have unwanted buds removed now. This is easy as the buds, when they are just popping out, can be knocked off with no effort. The ease of these buds coming off is why you should have wired in January or February on deciduous trees. Remember that next year!

Remove any old wire. While there is no foliage on the deciduous trees it is an excellent time to inspect for old wire. It seems like I always find a few places where I missed removing some wire. If you leave the wire on too long it will scar the branch. If the branch pops back to its original position simply rewire it.

This is a good time to remove moss from the trunk and exposed roots on your trees. Simply take an old toothbrush, dip it in a mild soap mixture and gently scrub away.

Now that all of the above have been accomplished we can consider repotting. How often should you repot? Good question. There is no fixed definition. Some bonsai books say grasp the trunk and gently try to move the tree from side to side. If it moves easily and the tree is healthy you do not have to

They must all need repotting. Oops...all my trees are wired into the pot. I bet that's why they didn't move. Why do I wire them to the pot? I tried not wiring my trees into the pot one year but after a couple boisterous trips along the bonsai bench by some resident raccoons and then a windy day or two I realized what an error this was. So much for what the bonsai books say. As a general guide, young bonsai are repotted every year and older, more mature trees every three or four years, or more. I have a Green Island Ficus I styled and potted back in 1998 when I spent a month working with Jim Smith in Vero Beach Florida that has never been repotted and it is doing just fine. I always suggest when you water and the water stands on the soil it is time to repot.

I will not get into the discussion of the contents of your soil mix as this would take about 10 pages and our editor (Bob Hoy) would most likely refuse to include it in the newsletter. The IBC does have a prepared soils program which possibly could be presented next February. Hint... If you are not interested in mixing your own soil, contact Mark Fields at Bonsai by Fields or Scott Yelich at Eagle Creek Bonsai or Bob Hoy at Circle City Bonsai.. All have a number of mixes available. (See ads in this newsletter).

Your deciduous trees should be repotted first. Watch them closely as when bud swell begins you have about a two week period to successfully repot. I have noticed in my collection the Elms and Hornbeams bud first, and then the Maples. Pruning and repotting of flowering trees should be put off until flowering is completed. Many experts recommend allowing the flowering bonsai to bloom one year and then pruning and repotting the next year. Danny Use (Ginkgo Bonsai) says never let your bonsai flower as it makes them weak. On the other hand Dave Kreutz (Satsuki Bonsai) always lets his trees bloom every year and says flowering has no detrimental effect on the bonsai. Who knows?

Conifers can be repotted through the end of May in the Indianapolis climate while Junipers can be repotted as late as mid June. If you repot conifers too early while they are dormant, they are prone to root rot.

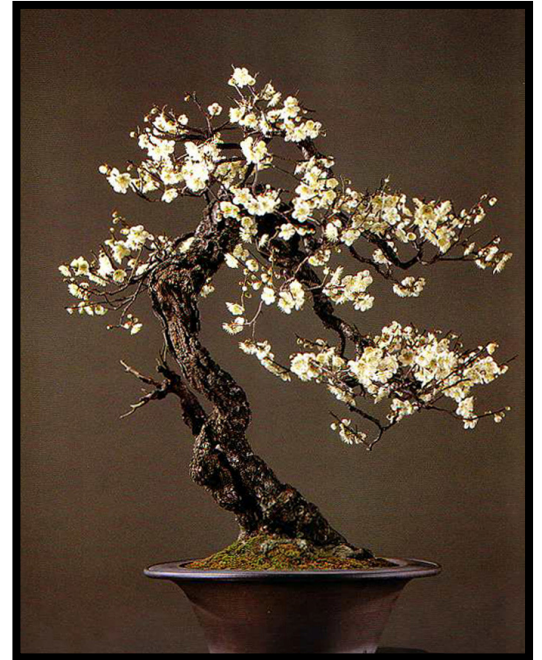
Do not repot your tropicals yet. Wait until you see vigorous growth. This usually occurs when the temperatures get around 60 degrees outside and there is a lot of sunlight. Obviously if you have a greenhouse or are using grow lights you can repot earlier.

Remember to protect all your repotted bonsai from the direct sun and wind for at least one week, preferably two. Do not fertilize for 30 days. You can add Superthrive or other hormones to all of your bonsai to promote root growth immediately after repotting.

Any questions? If so, bring your question and/or tree to the March IBC meeting. We have many talented and knowledgeable experts who are willing to share their expertise. Hey, we are an equal opportunity club so if you want you can even ask some of us unknowledgeable members for advice. We will be glad to respond. (Note: The dictionary has been put away and Spellcheck did not reject *unknowledgeable* so I guess it is a real word)

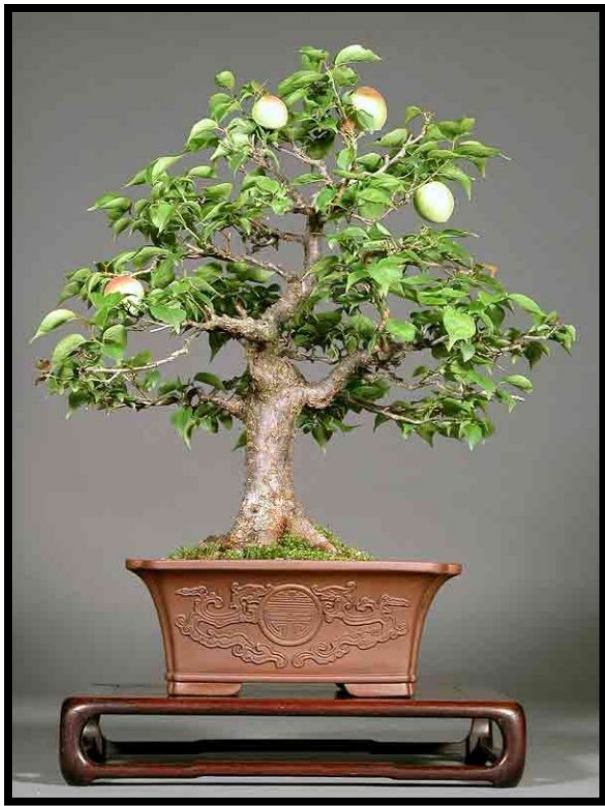
WANTED: ARTICLES/PHOTOS FOR THE E-NEWS.

(Send to r.hoy@sbcglobal.net)



FLOWERING APRICOT BONSAI

Tree of the February 7, 2018 meeting



How to Grow Bonsai Moss



While recently cleaning out some file cabinets, I came across this article I produced (with considerable help from Cheryl Owens) about 30+ years ago for the IBC. After perusing the information, I see no reason why what was done 30+ years ago will not work today.

Before I get into the details of growing moss, let me mention Cheryl's contributions. Cheryl was one of the early bonsai practitioners in the Midwest, dating back to the late 1960s. As a matter of fact Cheryl was a very close friend with Betty Oliver who founded the IBC in 1968 and she frequently attended IBC meetings, which was no small trip as she lived in Elkhart, Indiana. Back then it was almost a 4 hour trip from her house to the church where the IBC meetings were held. Cheryl traveled throughout the states and visited Japan numerous times. During this time she became very good friends with Ben Oki, one of Americas leading Bonsai Artists and Ben would visit Elkhart every year to present bonsai workshops and programs. On one of Bens visits Cheryl asked him to do the landscape design for her home, which would include a bonsai display area and a moss garden. Ben did a fantastic job and soon Cheryl would become known as not only the 'Bonsai Lady' but also the 'Moss Lady'. Cheryl died in 2017 and I last saw her in 2016 at a meeting of the Michiana Bonsai Study Group where I was presenting a bonsai program.

Cheryl found out rather quickly you cannot collect moss from remote locations with different environments and expect it to survive so over time she developed her method of propagating moss. I have tried this method and it does work. Keep in mind this procedure takes about 3 months. You will need a nursery flat (or 2, 3...), some cheesecloth, newspapers, bonsai soil, skim milk and starter moss.

First you must find a starter moss. Look for moss on stones, trees, concrete walks, etc. Lift moss pieces with a knife and let dry until crumbly. Separate the green part by scraping it from the soil or crumble the soil away. Shred the moss. This is your starter moss.

To keep the soil from sifting out place a layer of newspapers in the nursery flat. Cut a couple slots in the paper to help drainage. Fill the flat with about 1" of sterilized soil. **You must sterilize the soil.** Place the soil in a container and cook it in the oven at 250f for about 15 minutes. If you bypass this step you will end up with a flat of weeds. After placing the soil soak with a solution of 1 part skim milk to 7 parts water; the milk is a mild acidifier. Most mosses prefer an acidic environment.

Cut 2 pieces of cheesecloth a bit larger than the flat. Place 1 layer over the soil. Sprinkle the pulverized moss over the cheesecloth and cover with the 2nd piece of cheesecloth. Water gently but thoroughly.

Place flat in a shady spot and keep moist. If there is a location where the flat gets early morning or late afternoon sun it will help.

In around 2 months you will find the moss has just barely penetrated both layers of cheesecloth. In another 30 to 45 days the moss should cover the cheesecloth. At this time you should be able to carefully lift the cheesecloth, with the moss, out of the flat. You can then cut the cheesecloth/moss to whatever shape you wish.

Paul Weishaar

We've Come a Long Way!



hen I'm showing trees or vending throughout the area, I often talk about and promote the Indianapolis Bonsai Club. Frequently, I will get a response like, "Gosh. I didn't know Indianapolis had a bonsai club!" Despite our presence on the Web and on social media, I'm amazed at how few people know our club exists. Often, we are found by accident. I guess this happens because we are consistently attracting new individuals who've never really thought about bonsai until they happen across it at a show or someone selling bonsai at a booth. The notion of a bonsai club is always new to *someone*, despite the fact that our club is going to be celebrating our golden anniversary.

It may be hard to believe that our club has been around so long. Fifty years is a long time! Although many things have changed in that time, our club has a great history and the mission has always been the same:

- To advance appreciation of Bonsai, their values, their meanings, and their limitations.
- To create interest in and inspire participation by both advanced and beginner growers of bonsai, and to increase enjoyment of Bonsai.
- To supply aesthetic, business, and scientific information on Bonsai, including methods, sources, and accessories.
- To provide communication among Bonsai lovers, creators, growers, and vendors; to acquaint each with the activities of others, to advise everyone of new things and developments of interest, and to describe opportunities and experiences wherever they may be applicable.
- To affiliate with Bonsai Clubs International (BCI) and to abide by their requirements.

The IBC had it's first meeting in January 1968, although the clubs first inception dated back to the Spring of 1965. The IBC's 'god mother' and first president was Bev Oliver. Bev migrated to Indianapolis from the Cleveland area. While in Cleveland, she was exposed to Cleveland Bonsai Society. Bev hoped to inspire her interest of bonsai in others, so she set up a bonsai booth at the 1965 Indianapolis Flower and Patio Show. Furthermore, Mrs. Oliver was featured in an article on bonsai that was ran by the Indianapolis Star on a Sunday in October, 1967. The article urged those interested in forming an Indianapolis club to call or write Bev for more information.

From there, Mrs. Oliver started a board of directors and the club started with 18 club members. Bev Oliver was elected the first IBC president. The club's first official meeting took place at the home of Betty Peirce on January 25th, 1968.

Like many associations, the IBC came from very humble beginnings. Fifty years ago, we had only eighteen members. Now, we have about one hundred members. In the past fifty years, our club had 18 different presidents. many shows and many presentations from outstanding artists.

Over the next few months, I am going to feature snippets of Indianapolis Bonsai Club history. I'm hoping I can even find some old pictures. We have a great future ahead of us, but I think it's fun to appreciate events and individuals that helped build the IBC into the club that we have today.

Scott Yelich

A Beginner's Experience with Larch Bonsai

Alyssa Batula

Since starting bonsai, I've tried working with as many types of plants as I could get my hands on (and afford, and had room for, etc. etc.). But one I keep coming back to is my American Larch, I'm not good at picking favorites but this tree might be mine.

This tree has a lot of qualities that seem to make it more forgiving of my newness: it's extremely cold-hardy, takes well to bending with wire, and is a strong tree that has done a good job surviving my rookie care attempts. It's also just a really cool tree, with soft green needles that look especially beautiful when they first bud in spring or turn yellow in fall.

My tree started out looking a bit like a pom-pom on a stick, or a Truffula tree if you're a Dr. Seuss fan, as part of the club's Larch workshop in 2016. But it had an interesting trunk and there was something appealing about its odd shape. With some wiring it's slowly starting to look enough like a bonsai tree that it even made an appearance at the 2017 state fair (and, as the only entry in the beginner native tree category, came home with ribbon).



May 2016



March 2017



August 2017

Upcoming Bonsai Events

(For IBC Monthly Meetings/events+ visit www.indybonsai.org)

February 17-18, 2018

GSBF annual bonsai auction at the Bonsai Gardens at Lake Merritt, Oakland, CA

February 24-25, 2018

Bonsai-A-Thon XXII at the Huntington Library and Botanical Gardens in San Marino, CA

March 3-4, 2018

Bonsai Returns to North Haven Gardens in Dallas, TX

March 17, 2018

Beginners Bonsai Class at the Indianapolis Museum of Art led by Paul Weishaar. 10 am-noon. Reservations required, contact the IMA

March 22, 2018

Beginners Bonsai Class at the Indianapolis Museum of Art led by Paul Weishaar. 6:30-8 pm. Reservations required, contact the IMA

March 17-18, 2018

Atlanta Bonsai Society Spring Show at Atlanta Botanical Garden, Atlanta, GA

March 24-25, 2018

Bay Area Bonsai Associates 37th annual exhibit at Lakeside Park Garden Center, Oakland, CA

March 24-25, 2018

Tucson Bonsai Society annual exhibit at Tucson Botanical Gardens, Tucson, AR

April 13 -15, 2018

Mid Atlantic Bonsai Society Convention at the Radisson Hotel, Cromwell, CT



Financials January 2018

Expenses		Revenue
Boxking: Directory	\$ 183.04	\$0
Boxking: Brochures	\$ 323.27	
Storage (monthly)	\$ 81.00	
Bank charge (monthly)	\$ 3.00	
Web (monthly)	\$ 14.95	
Total Monthly Expense	\$ 605.26	
Checking Balance	\$ 1,937.04	
Savings Balance	\$ 12,593.04	
Total	\$ 14,530.08	
<u>Recurring Monthly Expenses:</u>		
Web	\$ 14.95	
Storage	\$ 81.00	
Bank Fee	\$ 3.00	
<u>Annual Expenses</u>		
print (brochure/directory)	\$ 508.00	
Penrod	\$ 275.00	
SF % (10 % of sales)	\$ -	
Volunteer Raffle gift	\$ 100.00	

Questions? Please contact Robert Hoy, treasurer.

IBC Financials 2017

Revenues	
Memberships	\$ 1,790.00
Garfield Park %	\$ 210.00
State Fair Sales %	\$ 732.00
Penrod Sales %	\$ 560.00
Auction %	\$ 692.00 m,
Dinner +	\$ 925.00
	\$ 4,909.00
Expenses	
Insurance	\$ 250.00
Bank Fees	\$ 36.00
Web	\$ 180.00
Penrod	\$ 275.00
Artists	\$ 1,352.00 (Danny Coffey)
Demo Trees+	\$ 195.00 (Danny Coffey)
Membership	\$ 45.00 (ABS)
Directory	\$ 185.00
Brochures	\$ 323.27
Storage	\$ 900.00
Volunteer Raffle	\$ 100.00
SF Volunteer Meals	\$ 135.00
State Fair %	\$ 292.00
Dinner+Raffle	\$ 768.00
Camera	\$ 470.00
Projector	\$ 491.00
	\$ 5,997.27
IBC Annual Net	\$ (1,088.27)
MABA Net	\$ 9,976.00
Net Revenue/Expense 2017	\$ 8,887.73

Date 2018	Short Program	Long Program	
1/3	Barberry Bonsai	Severe wiring of a Juniper	
2/7	Mugo Pine	Finding the bonsai in the tree	
3/7	Flowering Apricot Bonsai	Everything about bonsai pots	
4/4	Chinese Quince	Potting a Bonsai / Club exchange-selling of trees	
5/2	Crab Apple Bonsai	Shohin Bonsai	
6/6	Japanese Maple Bonsai	Kusamono	
7/11*	Juniper Bonsai	How to finish a bonsai display	
8/1	Tropical Bonsai	Presentation of show only State Fair trees	
9/4	Members Only Auction	Annual Club Members Bonsai Auction	
10/3	Evergreen Workshop		
11/2	Preparing for Winter	How to draw a bonsai	
12/5	Christmas GALA		

**For the most up to date calendar, visit our website:
www.indybonsai.org**

IBC Board of Directors 2017 & 2018

Carl Wooldridge – President

Dan Cain – Vice President

Bob Hoy – Treasurer

Alyssa Batula – Secretary

Scott Yelich – Past President

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Fritz Nerding

Conservatory Manager

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Club Officers+ 2017-2018

Club Information

Visitors are always WELCOME!!!

Where: Garfield Park Conservatory
2450 Shelby Street
Indianapolis, Indiana

When: First Wednesday of each
month

Time: 7:00 pm

Club Dues: Dues are \$25 per calendar
year. Cost includes (up to)
two members of the same
household.

President	Carl Wooldridge
Vice President	Dan Cain
Secretary	Alyssa Batula
Treasurer	Robert Hoy
Past President	Scott Yelich
Membership	Steven Dick
Web Master	Scott Yelich
Volunteers	Steven Dick
Historian	Paul Weishaar
Librarian	Paul Weishaar
MABA//BCI	Paul Weishaar
ABS	Mark Fields
Garfield Curators	Chuck Perry
Publications	
Photos	Bob Hoy

**Checkout the IBC website:
www.indybonsai.org**