

Volume 188

April 2018

INDIANAPOLIS BONSAI CLUB

The Bonsai Creation

"April is the cruelest month..."

T. S. Elliot, The Wasteland

While we don't know if Mr. Elliot was a bonsai hobbyist, many of us in Indiana can identify with the first line of his epic poem. To an Indiana bonsai enthusiast, April (generally) brings warmer weather and April showers, but BEWARE! This is Indiana, and another **COLD** spell could be just around the corner. Leave those pines, junipers and deciduous trees in their winter domiciles for a little bit longer... begin to contemplate the exciting things you will do when the time is right. To quote Herbert the Snail's famous lyric "Patience", "*Have patience, Have patience, don't be in such a hurry...*"

The Editor



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From the President

March Madness has many forms. In Indiana, it is found in basketball. In bonsai, it is found in plant management! There have been just enough warm spells followed by cold fronts to bewilder plants and growers alike. The bonsai often need protection from the cold and the heat on the same day! If you have not already done so, inspect your plants to determine if potting or repotting is needed. It is also a good time to make sure you have bonsai soil available.

At our March meeting, Paul Weishaar did his usual outstanding presentation on pots. I enjoyed the many different spice mans he used. Pots look better with trees in them. I especially enjoyed the last tree in the vintage pot. The "strangler Ficus" has all the makings of a 'murder mystery'. I personally feel that it should be considered for the National Exhibit this Fall!

The April program will be exciting and useful. We have had programs on 'Finding the bonsai in the tree' and 'Understanding Bonsai pots.' It is time to put this all together. The protocol for the meeting will be that starting at 6:00 pm on Wednesday, April 4th, each member who is planning to sell bonsai related items will have 1/2 of a table (9 square feet) to sell items to other paid members. No unpaid members or guests can participate. You determine the price and no fees from the club. If there are less than 10 members selling, then full tables will become available.

Bob Warfel will be leading the potting portion of the program. There will be a lot of help available for the potting. It is always better to have assistance in potting.

We are going to reserve a front row seat for the Videographer.

The April tree of the month is the Chinese Quince.

Carl Wooldridge



Indianapolis Bonsai Club

March 7th, 2018

Meeting Minutes

Alyssa Batula

Date & Time: March 7th, 2018, 7pm

Location: Garfield Park Conservatory Meeting Room

Presiding: Club President Carl Wooldridge

Attendance: 41

Membership: 40 paid memberships

Checking/Savings Balance:

Checking: \$1,639

Savings: \$12,593

The March tree of the month is the dwarf mulberry. It's a fast-growing, flowering tree that produces berries.

The main meeting featured an informative presentation on bonsai pots by Paul Weishaar. Topics ranged from a history of style changes over time, to the benefits and drawbacks of pots made from various materials, to a warning about "reproduction" antique pots for sale. Possibly the most helpful to those looking to repot their trees this spring were tips on proportion and style relationships between the tree and the pot that make for a good bonsai.

Announcements

Members-only sale

- Before the April 4, 2018 meeting: 6-6:40
Members may bring any bonsai material (trees, pots, etc.) to sell or trade with other club members.
Healthy plants only! No boxwoods permitted.

Searching for Bonsai in Boston

by Cindy Leppert

Last October, I spent a lovely two week visit with my son and his wife at their home in historic Salem, Massachusetts. This coincided with the annual, month long tourist celebration of the town's witch hunt history, and was the first time I had been allowed to come during the event because of the crowds and the general ambiance of something short of crazy going on at that time. But schedules being what they are, I got to see it for myself, for once. Salem is a compact "walking town" between Boston and the sea, and has more than enough to interest a visitor, even without the crazies. The weather was October idyllic. Thus, I had no real interest in venturing beyond walking distance - - except the thought of visiting the "Boston Arboretum's" bonsai collection.

When Matt Reel attended our club meeting for a demonstration, he spoke reverently of his time there early in his career, helping to care for their terrific collection. I remembered my mental note to not go through Boston again without seeing this special place. My host and hostess said, "No problem. It's just on the other side of Boston from here. You take the train." Great! At home before the trip, I was up to my armpits in alligators, and never even thought about researching the arboretum or the realities of the excursion to get there. Dusty and Carrie would have that covered. Wrong.

Carrie was available to accompany me on the last day of my stay, so we made it a girl's day out, and she planned it, though she had never been there. Her information was that the bonsai exhibit would be open on that day, with docents available. Perfect! Wrong. But we didn't know that yet, and I was excited.

Ever gone anywhere by train (or trains) in Boston/Salem area? Here's what it took to get to the east corner of the 281 acre Arnold Arboretum of Harvard University. We walked 15 minutes to board the train into Boston for a 35 minute ride. We walked to another terminal to change trains in Boston for a 45 minute commute. When we emerged from the train station on "the other side of Boston," there was absolutely no clue where to go from there, and because of massive construction outside the station, nobody to ask. Getting away from the construction site, we thankfully noticed a small, dark sign nearly hidden by trees, and high up on a hill overlooking the intersection, indicating that the property was part of the arboretum. Good enough. So, up we went. And up, and nothing in sight but the brick wall topped by a tall, old iron fence to our left and lots of trees. We walked for 20 minutes or so (did I say up? did I say *walking distance*?) and came to an opening in the fence, and a dirt road. About another 20-30 minutes later, walking through a nice landscaped, but still wooded area, and at a curving incline, we came upon a large, terraced area called the Leventritt Shrub and Vine Garden protected from north and west winds. We had arrived somewhere! In the right church, so to speak, but not the right pew. But there, above the gardens was a beautiful pergola and gazebo, and a row of greenhouses. It took a while to figure out how to get up there, but we finally did, and by dumb luck, we had found the Lars Anderson Bonsai Collection, all twelve trees in their own little Japanese Tea House. Gorgeous! Not a soul in sight.

We loved it though, and took some pictures, but I didn't take notes pending finding the rest of the collection, and official documentation. We decided that there had to be an official entrance and visitor's center

somewhere, so, we took off walking again. Eventually, and again by dumb luck, we found it. The sign read, CLOSED ON WEDNESDAYS. Thank goodness, the main hall and the restrooms were open. Carrie rechecked her information, and realized that the open bonsai exhibit was to be the next day. Not to be deterred, we found a couple of people setting up for the next day, and they confirmed that the gazebo was all there is to the bonsai exhibit. Which is a very long way of saying why I didn't write this article in the first place. But Bob wants articles.

Since our quest, I have researched what I saw, talking to people on the phone. I tried email contact with the curators of the collection, but have gotten no response; used the internet, knowing that there is great information somewhere, if a person can find it. Most of the information on the internet, though, is current only up to 2006 through about 2015.

For instance, the surviving core of the Bonsai and Penjing Collection at the arboretum is *now only* 6 stunning *Chamaecyparis obtusa*, *Chabo-hiba* trees, most of the others having succumbed to freezing. One of these is billed as the oldest bonsai in North America (c. 1737, and likely in the original pot,) the others close follow-ups from the 1800's. They were originally decorations for Japanese temples. This remarkable hinoki cypress cultivar is now rare in Japanese bonsai culture but its history predates any naming of the plant by Western botanists. The Lars Anderson Collection is named in honor of their original American collector, an ambassador to Japan who imported 39 trees in 1913 for his personal enjoyment. He also "imported" a Japanese caretaker to design and care for the oriental garden that became their new home. With the deaths of their owners, the entire collection was given to Harvard University and fell on tough times. One that did not survive was given to Mr. Anderson by the crown of Japan. Since the worst of the disasters, though, the arboretum has worked hard to overcome its deficiencies, and has vastly improved bonsai culture there. Other trees considered of "high-end" quality have been accessed, and the collection stands once again at 39. As far as I can tell this is the oldest bonsai collection in North America that is still living.


If intrigued, Google the official website for the Arnold Arboretum of Harvard University. From the home page, click on Collections; then Plant and Garden Highlights; then Bonsai and Penjing Collection. For best specific information, then click on *About*, then *Highlights*, then *Arnoldia* (their bi-monthly newsletter, for historic articles.) To find the history and the story behind this wonderful, vintage collection, you have to click on the listed *Arnoldia* articles by Peter Del Tredici. I always did like a good storyteller. My favorite, though, is *Portrait Gallery of the Lars Anderson Collection 1913-2005*. It shows several drawings and pictures of each of several trees, from the beginning of their history to the present - - what they looked like over time. Amazing!

Also, to see good pictures of Chabo-hiba, you can Google chabo-hibacypress.com. Get to bonsaibark.com and sitesmedia.com. I'm sure there are others. Click on the first few pictures shown, and see many more...and happy hunting!



Bonsai in April in Central Indiana

Paul Weishaar

 I don't know about you, but April is my favorite month. I will probably say the same thing in October when the fall change in colors is underway; however, it is April and right now THIS IS MY FAVORITE TIME. Well..... let me rephrase that and say this is my favorite time with **my bonsai** as tax day is rapidly approaching. Just remember, April is the month where the investment of a small bit of effort will yield excellent growth in the near future. No... No... No. I am not licensed to give you financial advice. We are discussing bonsai.

To me it is exciting to see the results of warmer weather and the lengthening of the days. Winter dormancy is ending with spurts of growth in the form of tender new leaves on the deciduous trees and if I look closely I can see the beginning of bud swell on the conifers. I always hope everything survived and right now it looks like they all made it through this winter.

One of the hardest decisions to make in early spring is when to take the trees out of winter protection. As soon as you see bud swell you should consider moving the tree outdoors. Sure, you will bring your deciduous trees back inside a time or two when Jack Frost pays a visit, but overall your trees will do better outside. If they are left inside too long the vigorous new growth will look fantastic but will most likely sunburn or windburn when placed outside, which immediately places the tree in stress, not to mention how bad they will look. If you are not able to move your bonsai in and out a few times in early spring, when you finally do move them outside you must allow them to adjust to the new environment slowly. This means keeping them protected from the full sun for a week or two. Then gradually increase their time in the direct sun.

As we mentioned last month any tree that was not repotted last year should probably be repotted. However, most of the "experts" recommend letting older, mature bonsai go for three or four years between repotting. Remember, deciduous first and conifers later and it may be too late for your deciduous trees if they have leafed out. The buds on my deciduous trees in the coldhouse have already begun to open.

On any deciduous tree you are nearly always trying to increase ramification and you must prune each and every branch to achieve this. On nearly all deciduous trees the new growth comes out on the end of each branch as well as other locations. This new sprout at the end of each branch should be removed to force multiple branches to develop at a lower point on the main branch or trunk.

Begin fertilizing the bonsai in mid-April with a balanced formula (20-20-20 or similar) but NOT for spring flowering trees or pines. Feeding high nitrogen fertilizer on flowering trees may disrupt

their flowering. On pines I have always used a "0" nitrogen fertilizer (0-10-10) until the new candles are pinched and set. This helps keep the needles short. You can also use the 0-10-10 on the flowering trees until they have flowered. You can then change over to a balanced fertilizer. For any trees that have been just been repotted most "experts" recommend waiting at least 1 month after potting before fertilizing. Keep those repotted trees in the shade for a week or two. If you use Superthrive or HB-101 it is ok to apply it immediately..

Although it is important to supply additional water and nutrients for your bonsai to grow, be careful and do not overwater, especially the conifers. Elms are another family of trees that do not like excessive water. This can happen very quickly if we have a couple days of heavy spring rains. If your soil stays soggy wet you should immediately check to see if it is loose and porous and has adequate drainage from the pot. If I see the weather report says heavy rain is forecast for the next 3 or 4 days I move my elms to a protected area.

You can prune and repot your tropical trees now. However, if you wait until the nighttime temperatures stay above 50 degrees F you will get a much better response from the tree. Keep in mind that a tropical also goes partially dormant through the winter and really becomes active with the additional daylight and 24 hours of warmth. Repotting and pruning any tree creates stress on the tree and if you have a weak tropical it may not survive early pruning or repotting.

One other item, if you are considering exhibiting any of your bonsai this summer now is the time to select which trees and begin the fine detailing needed to complete each masterpiece.

OK.....as soon as your finish reading this newsletter it is time to get to work on your bonsai (or your taxes). Oh no.....I just used that "work" word again (remember last months discussion). I started this discussion by rephrasing the very first paragraph so I may as well end the discussion by rephrasing this last paragraph and say "it is now time for you to participate in the maturation of your bonsai."

Enough said! See you Wednesday, April 4th at the monthly IBC meeting.

Flowering Quince has been used by the Chinese for thousands of years to celebrate the New Year. The brilliant flowers on the leafless stems are a wonderful harbinger of Spring. This tough and versatile plant also makes excellent bonsai. Bred in the East for many centuries, there are some remarkable cultivars that are relatively unknown to the West. Among these are cultivars that are short in stature and some that are even quite prostrate, and others that are deep clear reds, pure white, clear pink, or contorted in growth habit.

Getting a Decent Sized Trunk All of the cultivars sucker to some degree, a process that dissipates their energy into many small stems, making it difficult to get a good trunk. When growing them out for bonsai be sure to remove all the suckers as soon as they appear. There seems to be little advantage to putting them into the ground to fatten the trunks, they seem to grow just as quickly in five gallon cans. However plan to spend five years to grow even a 3/4 inch trunk. This is what makes thick trunked quinces so rare and so valuable. They are remarkably adapted to root pruning and usually suffer little from even a drastic pruning as long as an equal amount of top growth is removed either before or at the same time. This phenomenon makes them ideal to collect and there is always someone who wants one removed from his or her yard.

Fruit and Flowers Another remarkable quality of Quince is its ability to repeat bloom after heavy pruning. Of course in a bonsai situation they are always being pruned so that they flower on and off all summer and especially in the fall. Most cultivars will also set fruit which is yet another pleasing quality for bonsai. The fruits range in size from about one inch for 'Orange Delight' to about the size of a medium apple for 'Toyo Nishiki' a popular cultivar that has pink, white and sometimes red blossoms on the same plant. I have even seen individual petals perfectly divided, one half pink and one half white. All of the fruits are edible and wonderfully fragrant, although they must be very ripe to release their perfume. This usually occurs in late Fall after a few frosts have softened them.

Proper Names The species names of *Chaenomeles* is a taxonomist's nightmare. Usually they are referred to as *japonica* although *speciosa* is used often for the larger varieties. A similar situation exists for crabapples where the parent species are so cross bred that they are named simply *Malus* followed by the cultivar name.

Propagation Quince are easily propagated by cuttings and by division of the suckers or root division. They are best grown in full sun, except that some of the cultivars do burn in afternoon sun in the hottest and driest areas. They are not particularly heavy feeders and it is probably best to limit the amount of nitrogen to get the best flowers. The flowers form on wood that is a year or two old so do not remove all of the previous years growth when pruning. They occasionally will throw flowers from quite old stems es-

pecially after heavy pruning. Also the wood that forms first in the Spring will mature by late fall and may throw a few flowers then.

Cultivars Some cultivars that are particularly suitable for use in bonsai are the contorted forms (always favorites), there is a white flowered one that has pale pink buds that open to pure white, and like all the contorted ones, the stems are fantastically contorted, often doubling back on themselves. The Red Contorted has solid red buds that open to a deep pink. It is less aggressive than the white and will probably be ultimately smaller, perhaps four feet if planted in the open.

One of the best forms for bonsai is 'Hime' a small red form with solid red flowers and showy yellow stamens. The flowers and fruit are smaller than other Quince making it a good choice. The growth is not aggressive and it gets quite twiggy at an early age. Another small flowered form is 'Kan Toyo'. The flowers are a nice pink and only about 1/2 inch across. A very rare and highly prized cultivar is 'Kurokoji' that has very beautiful dark red velvety flowers. This is the darkest red form I have ever seen. However, the growth is weak and upright, but the sheer beauty of the flowers make it good candidate. The most beautiful white form is undoubtedly 'Jet Trail', an almost prostrate and slightly contorted form. The flowers are a brilliant pure white without a trace of pink, and it is very floriferous and a repeat bloomer.

'Falconet Charlotte' has beautiful double pink flowers on a plant that is not too large and can be controlled. Also double flowered is 'Iwai Nishiki' a dark solid red with large fully double camellia shaped flowers that also tend to form in clusters sometimes 6 inches across. It is low growing and almost prostrate. Spitfire is another red that is quite small in stature and develops nice twiggy branches with little effort.

And finally...

Quinces are quite easy and very rewarding. People are delighted to see a nice little Shohin bonsai with a single 3 inch yellow fruit hanging from it and sometimes flowers, too, at the same time!





Indianapolis Bonsai Club History

Paul Weishaar

As part of the Indianapolis Bonsai Clubs 50th Anniversary, I have undertaken the task to complete the updating of our history. What I am requesting from the IBC membership are any photographs, written items or other documentation pertaining to the IBC prior to 2000. If you have any such items, please make copies of what you have and send them to me (pweishaar3@comcast.net) or contact me and I will make arrangements to copy what you have and return the originals to you. Your assistance will be greatly appreciated.

The **Indianapolis Bonsai Club** was founded in 1968 to promote interest in and appreciation of bonsai. However, Its inception really dates to the spring of 1965, when Bev Oliver set up a Bonsai booth at the Indianapolis Flower and Patio Show. Having been transferred from the Cleveland area, where she had been exposed to the Cleveland Bonsai Society, she was determined to find others in the area that were interested in Bonsai.

On a Sunday in October, 1967, the Indianapolis Star ran an article "Interest In Bonsai Horticulture Stirs Plans For Forming Club" written by one of our local Women's Editors. Anyone interested in Bonsai was urged to write or call Mrs. Oliver. Response was very good, and finally, on January 12, 1968, Sybil Mead, Betty Peirce, and Bev Oliver met as a self-appointed board to start the Indianapolis Bonsai Club with 18 charter members. The purposes of the so-named Club were (and still are) as follows:

To advance appreciation of Bonsai, their val-

ues, 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.

Wanted: Articles/photos for the e-news.

(Send to r.hoy@sbcglobal.net)

Upcoming Bonsai Events

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

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



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 Members 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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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
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Publications	
Photos	Bob Hoy

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