

October meeting raffle winner !!!

Paul Kulesa was the lucky winner of the Rocky Mountain Juniper styled by Mark Fields earlier this year.



Be sure to check out the For Sale ads at the end of this month's newsletter.

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PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE: Ron Milostan

As all of us are putting our trees in to storage for the year it is a good time to reflect on our past year's activities as a Bonsai Society. Our goal is to promote the Art of Bonsai. Our speakers this year have certainly been able to promote the Art of Bonsai and given all of us, regardless of our experience, some new ideas. We started our year with Tyler Sherrod then Jack Sustic, Young Choe, Bjorn Bjorholm, Mark and Becky Hanner, Mark Fields and finally Jack Wikle. Many of our speakers also offered workshops so our members could get some hands-on learning. We further promoted the Art of Bonsai by having a wonderful Bonsai show, with some first-class exhibits. Our auction also helped promote the Art of Bonsai by making available some great trees for very reasonable prices.

It has been a very good year and I feel that we have achieved our goal of promoting the Art of Bonsai this year. I also look forward to next year's new programs and workshops, raffles, auction and show as we continue, as a society, to promote the Art of Bonsai.

October Meeting Review

By Chris Kehrig

Styling Stuff: Observations on Bonsai Design and Aesthetics by Jack Wikle 10/24/18

Jack started the presentation by passing a small fig tree around the room. He explained when he was a G.I. in Japan, he came across Bonsai in the Omiya Gardens and thought he would not be able to do since he is not Japanese.

Jack did start on a bonsai in June of 1966 with Hawthorne collected from a cow pasture. He joined the Cleveland Bonsai Club and brought the tree to a meeting. Where he saw that a branch should be cut off, a lady of the club recommended bending it down. This provided Jack with a new perspective.

Bonsai is a realization of beauty, self-expression, self-exploration, and flow-experience where time goes by without realization. There is beauty through balance and sculpture created with living art. Books such as Basic Bonsai Design by David DeGroot, Bonsai shows, and online pictures provide inspiration and new ideas. You can find what really excites you and what doesn't. You'll start to recognize the patterns.

We are growing representations of trees, not scale models. They are abstract art using living material. John Naka said to style bonsai to look like trees. David DeGroot said that 80% of bonsai is styled to look like bonsai rather than natural trees. International styles are evolving and have loosened since the internet.

Layers of chutes with buds will swell on the new branches. Not all buds will grow, but the branches can be sculpted and arranged into trees. Keep simplification in mind! Design through discovery is exploration of what you have in the tree provided.

The most effective bonsai has tight profiles, thicker trunks, and shorter branches. When in doubt, cut it out! Crossing, conflicting, or competing branches need to be managed. Jack recommends shortening the tree and remaining branches. He showed that many trees can be cut down to a stump and left to grow out new branches. Introduce openings and sculpt space with bigger spaces down low and less up top. A lot can be done wrong and

the tree will survive, but sometimes you will reach the point of no return.

There are rules for bonsai or common practices to follow. Stanley Chinn believes in the rules but says it's usually a 12 month commitment to learn from him. Branches should be alternated and not be directly across from each other. Branches can be bent down to look older and shorter. Only start work on a tree if it is healthy. If a tree does not look good on it's own, place it in a forest or grove. Think about where the foliage winds up. The process, according to Jack, has been more important than the product. Trees help you grow!

Jack came back to the fig that was sent around. It possessed all of the merits that he had discussed and was the result of chopping and regrowing.

UP FOR DEBATE:

Aaron J. Binns

Baby Its Cold Outside

Well winter is here, all of our trees are in winter storage, and we can breathe a sigh of relief now that the growing season has come to an end. If you have been following my articles for the last several years you know that at this point in the season I normally point out that winter should be used to plan for the next growing season while affirming that a good collection of tropicals can prevent you from getting depressed and going crazy during the many sunless months we now all face.

This year, as the cold dark winter rolls in, I would like to talk to a specific type of indoor tree that until recently I completely wrote off for use in bonsai. Succulents. The reason I spent so long ignoring these plants is that they are, for the most part, developed using clip and grow techniques. Wire can be used with some varieties, but in a significantly more limited way than the woody trees we are used to working with. This means that they will always have a less refined style than is my personal taste. The three succulent variety that come to mind are *Portulacaria afra* (elephant bush), *Crassula ovata* (Jade), and *Adenium obesum* (desert rose).

A good friend and colleague of mine, Brian Riley, has been growing succulents from seed for several years. He enjoys propagating species that are difficult or rare so the

number of varieties he has now collected dwarfs the pallet of even the best stocked nurseries. He is a member of the Michigan Cactus and Succulent Society, which coincidentally meets at Matthaei every 2nd weekend of the month. (Check their face book page out and visit a meeting. Since we meet at the same public garden they are like neighbors!) He is a prolific grower and recently gifted me the small succulent pictured below. I have already reduced the roots once, performed a very limited clip to encourage new growth closer to the trunk and purchased a pot that will be the trees final home for years to come. While this isn't a rare species it will look good in a bonsai pot and best of all it shares the traits that are making me reconsider succulents as material for bonsai. It requires low water, low fertilizer, doesn't mind the dry conditions of my home in the winter, and can survive just fine under artificial light. All of that means that I can enjoy the tree without constantly fussing over it. That is a nice change of pace. Note by the way that succulents take low water and fertilizer, not no water and no fertilizer. You definitely want these plants to dry out for a hand full of days but there is no need to make them suffer. Just because a plant can survive drastic drought conditions doesn't mean that those conditions are optimum. I water my succulents once a week, twice if it is in the heat of the summer and I have moved them outside. I have had a large Portulacaria for many years that is doing great following this recipe. Which brings me to the final topic for the article. Talking with Brian made me realize once again how important it is to experiment and try new things. That is exactly how he has been able to grow varieties that others can't seem to develop. He guesses until he finds what works for him. I have long been of the opinion that there is always more than one right way to develop and care for a tree. That is why the name of this monthly column is Up For Debate. As it turns out, he is of the same opinion and the success he has had growing rare plants is a function of his willingness to experiment. There is no secret sauce. You should find your own way and don't be afraid to experiment. Those who try new things usually meet with far more success than those who don't, which by the way, is a bit of advice that is applicable for a great many more things in life than just bonsai.



FOR SALE: Bonsai Magazines

FOR SALE – SET OF BONSAI TODAY ISSUES 1 THRU 47
IN NEW TO EXCELLENT CONDITION.

We would like to sell all issues together as a set.
To make an offer please contact 744.433.9773 or
email charris@provide.net

If interested we will arrange a convenient time to
review them.



FOR SALE: Trees and Stands

Club member John Many at the age of 82 has decided to reduce his bonsai collection - the following items are a bit large and heavy to lug to auction.

10 concrete stands - 75/100.00 ea.

Japanese Maple - 480.00

Single Shimpaku in stone - 650.00

Two Shimpaku in stone - 225.00

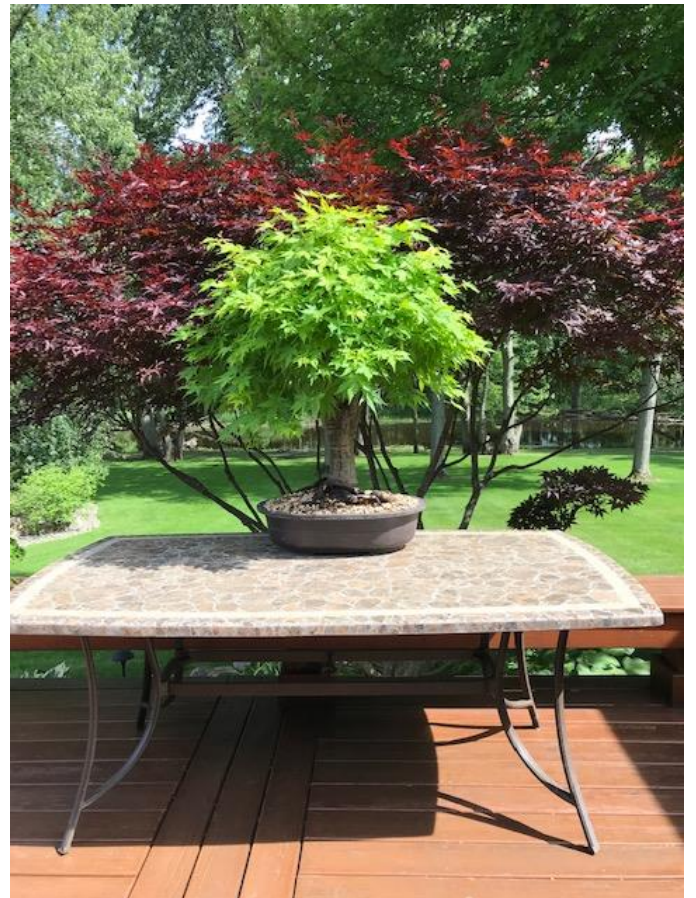
Shimpaku Forest on stone - 675.00

Korean Beech - 480.00

Anyone interested or needing additional information can email John at johnmany@comcast.net

Photos of John's items:





Ads in the Newsletter: All members can offer for sale any bonsai and bonsai related materials in the newsletter or at the monthly meeting with no sales fee. AABS Society Members' ads are free to publish in the Newsletter. Deadline for submissions to the Newsletter is the 5th of the month.

Prizes for the Raffle: We are soliciting donations suitable for prizes to be raffled during each general meeting, and, for the Annual Bonsai Show Raffle. If you have a tree, bonsai pot, tool or anything else bonsai related, that you do not use anymore and is still in good condition, consider donating it to the Society. Please see Bill Struhar at any meeting, email Bill at wm.struhar@mail.com or call (586) 468-7169.

Club Logo Now Available: we will embroider the club logo on your garment for \$12 (plus modest additional charge for lined garments).

The logo comes in two forms; light green tree on dark green background, or dark green tree on light green background, with a border on both combinations and AABS lettering and Chinese characters with appropriate contrasting color depending upon the garment color.

Bring your garment in a clear plastic bag to a meeting, select your colors, pre-pay Bill Struhar, and your garment will be ready one or two meetings later. (The vendor may require a minimum of five garments per order)

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AABS AD-HOC COMMITTEES

The AABS President is an ex-officio member of all committees with the exception of the Nomination Committee.

Fund Raising: William Struhar

Web Administration: Bob Bauer

Nomination Committee:

Show Committee: Ron Milostan and Paul Kulesa

Annual Auction: Paul Kulesa

Membership dues are \$25. Please pay by check, written to Ann Arbor Bonsai Society or bring your credit card to the meeting and pay! AABS now accepts credit cards for membership fees and other AABS activities. Please talk with the Treasurer at the next meeting.

Tamara Milostan – Treasurer AABS
4228 Highcrest Dr.
Brighton, Michigan 48116

AABonsaiSociety@gmail.com

The Ann Arbor Bonsai Society is affiliated with the American Bonsai Society: <http://absbonsai.org> and the Mid-American Bonsai Alliance: <http://mababonsai.org>




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Visit us on the Web:

<http://www.annarborbonsaisociety.org>

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Hours: Wed., Thurs. & Fri.; 11:00 am to 6:00 pm Sat., 1:30pm to 5:00pm
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