

NEXT CLUB MEETING: **September 25th, 2019**

NOTES ON THE SHOW: **Kurt Smith**

By all accounts the 49th annual Ann Arbor Bonsai Society show was a success.

- Beautiful weather
- 59 trees in the show
- 19 club members had trees in the show. With 80 some members I would like to see that number higher.
- Attendants was 458 on Sat. 343 on Sunday total was 801.
- We had 10 kids for the kids workshop.

Special thanks to my team leaders

Paul Kulesa and everyone who helped with set up and take down.

Carmen Leskoviansky and all who helped with placement of the trees

Michael Field and Vicki Norfleet for doing all the place cards for all the trees.

Ron Milostan for getting all the demo's lined up.

Peggy and Barry Kubitz for the wonderful dinner Saturday night.

Carmen again for doing the critique, she did great!!

Huge thank you to everyone that helped in a small way or in a big way - it is a big job and everyone that helped is very appreciated. I can't name everyone but know that I and all the leaders thank you!!

Next year will be our 50th year as a club!! i would like to see a bigger, better and more trees from members at the show!!

Thank you
 Kurt Smith

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PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE: **Ron Milostan**

September 2019

Well we are nearing the end of another year of the Ann Arbor Bonsai Society. We now have close to 90 members; several new members joined as a result of our bonsai show. This year our show had record numbers of attendees and our vendors went home very satisfied. Our meetings have attendance of 40 to 50 every month and a record of 65 during our last meeting that featured Jerry Meislik. Our workshops are always interesting and full to capacity.

Our Board Members have worked very hard all year behind the scenes. They also pull many extra hours volunteering, writing articles for our newsletter, working on the Bonsai Show, making decisions on behalf of our members and working at our meetings and workshops.

We also have a group of active members helping with all the goings on. As in all clubs there are those that have the time to help and those that make the time to help. If you would like to be more active in our club, please talk to me or send me an email. There are ways that everyone can be

more involved and help with the work that goes into running a successful club.

This month is our Auction, lets just have fun. October is an opportunity for all of you to step forward and join our Board of Directors. At this October meeting, we will vote to approve our new By Laws and also vote for our Board of Directors. Please attend this meeting. We want your vote and participation.

The September Auction is almost here!

Paul Kulesa

This is September and that means the return of our annual auction for bonsai and bonsai related items. This is a great opportunity to lighten your stock of bonsai containers, bonsai, pre-bonsai and all sorts of bonsai related materials. The corollary is that there will be plenty of bonsai and related material for you to add to your collection at this auction.

All members are invited to offer bonsai and bonsai related items for auction. Offering items for auction is reserved for members of the Society. Of course, you are welcome to bid on items at this auction. The auction will be conducted in two formats, a silent auction and the live auction.



Tom McCue and Bill Struhar Will Return This Year Acting As Auctioneers

The success of our auction depends on assistance provided by our members. If you can help with the administration of the auction, contact Paul Kulesa at kulesap@gmail.com

In broad terms, the auction schedule is found below.

- 5:30 PM Setup of the auction floor - setting up table and chairs.
- 6 - 7 PM Registration of Buyers, Sellers and auction items.
- 6:30 PM The Silent Auction begins.
- 7:00 PM The business meeting begins (10-15 minutes).
- 7:15 PM The Silent Auction resumes.
- 7:30 PM The Silent Auction wraps up and the Live Auction begins.

When the live auction wraps up, payment for auction purchases will begin. The treasurer will accept your credit card for payment, along with a check, PayPal and US currency. There are no provisions to accept payment for purchases prior to the conclusion of the auction. To eliminate the crush of purchasers wishing to pay *right now*, buyers will be called in succession by their Buyer ID Number, starting with #1.

Additional information and forms will be delivered by email.

August Meeting Review

Chris Kehrig

8/28/19 Presentation from Jerry Meislik

65 people attended this meeting which is a record

The annual auction is coming up on Sept 25th. If bringing trees for sale please make sure they are clean and bug free. Payment can be made via cash, check, paypal, or credit card.

Jack Wickle mentioned The Art Of Bonsai happening Sept 15th at Hidden Lake Gardens – see website.

The show had 801 people in attendance and over a thousand dollars was brought in by the raffle.

The first Saturday of every month is open workshop at Flower Market from 9am – 430pm.

Our guest speaker, Jerry Meislik, had a very special presentation on the difficulties he has had with bonsai over 42 years. He can be found online at Bonsaihunk.

Jerry and his wife live in Montana, but spent the first 25 years of bonsai in Ann Arbor. He started getting involved with Bonsai in 1977 with mostly outdoor trees. Outdoor trees need a place to go for the winter, so he tried burying some in the ground and the other half in the garage. What he found was the ones in the ground survived and the garage stored trees did not. The garage, while unheated, had windows which would cause the temps to fluctuate and hence kill off the trees. Jerry then went to cold frames which worked well with his first that was not too deep. The second one nearly filled with water which would then always need a pump. Either way, protecting the roots is the important part as outdoor trees have adapted to winter for what is above the ground.

Jerry made a shift from outdoor trees to indoor due to the short growing season in Montana. The tropics don't go outside in Montana due to 30 degree temp snaps. He has a 18 x 18 grow room off the back of the house with halide grow lights.

Soil was then brought up. Jerry started with regular dirt or potting soil. He found his trees would not make it a year. Switching to a granular mix allows a gas exchange and for the water not to sit against the roots.

Fertilization started at every 6 weeks and then he went to 3 weeks. What Jerry found was that his wife's plants growing hydroponically were growing so much faster than his so he kept bumping up the fertilization of the trees. He finally got to twice a week which was quite a burden doing one tree at a time. He now has a total fertilization pump/mixer that speeds up the process. What he found was the hydroponic plants were not only getting water and fertilizer 3x a day, they were getting the gas exchange more often. The soil plays a big part in the gas exchange. Smaller grain is good for more mature trees and larger grain for trees in high growth/training.

Wiring was then brought up. Scarring often happens if the wire is left on too long which takes away from the natural look of the tree. Jerry would remove his wire after 4 months and then find the branch bending back up. What he found was the wire needs to be cut off to allow the new fibers to stay set.

Then, he had some great pictures of trees he has seen or had over the years. One, a huge Ficus Congesta, had new red leaves which gave it a fall time look. Bigger trees take longer to refine and grow. Also, each death of a tree

should be a learning lesson. Talk to others and find out why the tree died.

Finally, Jerry had shown a very large Ficus with large leaves and straggly nature that was "gifted" to him. He didn't know what to think of it. He was able to break the tree up into a dozen or more smaller trees which all look very different from one another. The lesson was that you can't always predict what will be good bonsai material.

Up for Debate

Aaron J. Binns

The Hardest Article I Ever Dug

Our annual club show has come and gone which means that fall and then winter are quickly approaching. The smart play is to start worrying about winter protection now. We have all done some kind of combination of expanding our collections or improving the trees we already have or both. The bottom line is that we all invest a lot of money and time (same as money if you believe all of the old adages) into our trees and each year they become more and more valuable, at least to us. That means it's worth trying to improve your winter protection to protect your investment.

"But Aaron, how do I winter protect?"

Like everything else the perfect scenario for winter protection is "Up for Debate". See what I did there? Anyway, we will start with the basics. Here's what winter protection should do:

Disclaimer – I'm not talking about tropics here, bring those inside.

- 1) Good winter protection lets trees get cold. You want your trees to go dormant and stay that way through the winter. Since plants start to metabolize above 40F it seems like not the best idea to allow them to reach above that temperature until spring has sprung.
- 2) Good winter protection does not have to include an absolute no freezing policy. I have pulled trees from a block of ice... no problems. All trees have the ability to withstand some freezing. People get concerned for no reason. Remember under 40F they aren't

metabolizing so if the roots are a block of ice it's ok, they aren't up taking water anyway.

- 3) Good winter protection keeps the trees from freezing too hard. So trees have the ability to reduce the overall liquid content in their cells so that when the water in the cell freezes it doesn't burst. For that reason, don't open your winter protection to water when the temps go above freezing if you know the temperature is going to dive to -20F at night due to some made up weather channel phenomenon like a nor-easter-tropically-depressed-cyclone, or some such thing. Independent of the trees ability to resist freezing, eventually it will freeze and if the temperatures drop too low there will be tissue damage. You will lose branching or the entire tree.
- 4) Good winter protection blocks the wind. I think this is the most important. Many times you get the situation where the roots are still frozen but a sudden warm up has surrounded the trees branches by warm air. In that case the branches ask for water that the roots can't supply. Protecting from wind really helps prevent this.
- 5) Good winter protection does not have to include light... for any tree. Remember that they don't metabolize under 40F. They don't need light if they aren't active.

I used to protect under a work bench wrapped in plastic. I have moved to a pit and over the last couple of weekends I built a second one. When I protected under a work bench my trees got light, not so with my original pit. Remember how I said everything is up for debate? Number 5 above isn't one hundred percent clear in my mind. Even though plants don't metabolize much there are plenty of winter days where the temperature is approaching the 40F mark and I have to believe the trees aren't absolutely dormant. At any rate there are well respected growers who will tell you that some light is critical for pines and azaleas. I have never had better over winter results than when I switched to a pit. Here is why. The earth is a big thing. It has a lot of what is called thermal mass. This means that in the heart of winter the ground only freezes for a couple feet. Below that the temperature of the ground stays pretty constant all year around. By digging a pit you put your pot in contact with a nice stable cold but not too cold temperature and you let

Mother Nature worry about regulating everything. My new pit has a window. This is an experiment. Right now some of you are cringing because I just build what looks very similar to a cold frame. It isn't. You sight a cold frame facing south to maximize direct light and the greenhouse effect it brings. I sighted the window slanted to the north to minimize this effect. I am still concerned so I am purchasing two min max thermometers and placing one in the new pit and the other in the original to make sure I don't break rule number 1 above. I can always cover the window if necessary. You can see in the pictures below my original pit with a flat top, the new one with three doors and a half window, and several other in process pictures.

The process I followed was:

- 1) Dig the hole, oversized, made easier by all the sand that is my property and the 15 year old son.
- 2) Build the walls of the pit.
- 3) Drop the walls in the oversized pit and assemble in place. It would be crazy to do this by yourself so of course I did just that. I'm glad I'm still not laying in the pit.
- 4) Build the tops. Three at least, fewer lids are just too heavy.
- 5) Don't build a floor... if you do you missed the point of making good ground contact with your pot.
- 6) I will still add peat to the bottom so I can heal my pots in.
- 7) The whole project cost a couple of weekends and under \$300.00. The hinges and plexiglass are ridiculously expensive. I skimmed on thin plexiglass, do not skimp on the hinges, you will be replacing them in a year or two if you do. Think about how much you have invested in your trees before you decide that's too much to spend.

If this has inspired you to try building a pit, great, that's what I was going for... and there's still time before winter.



Big hole, oversized so I could assemble the walls in the hole.



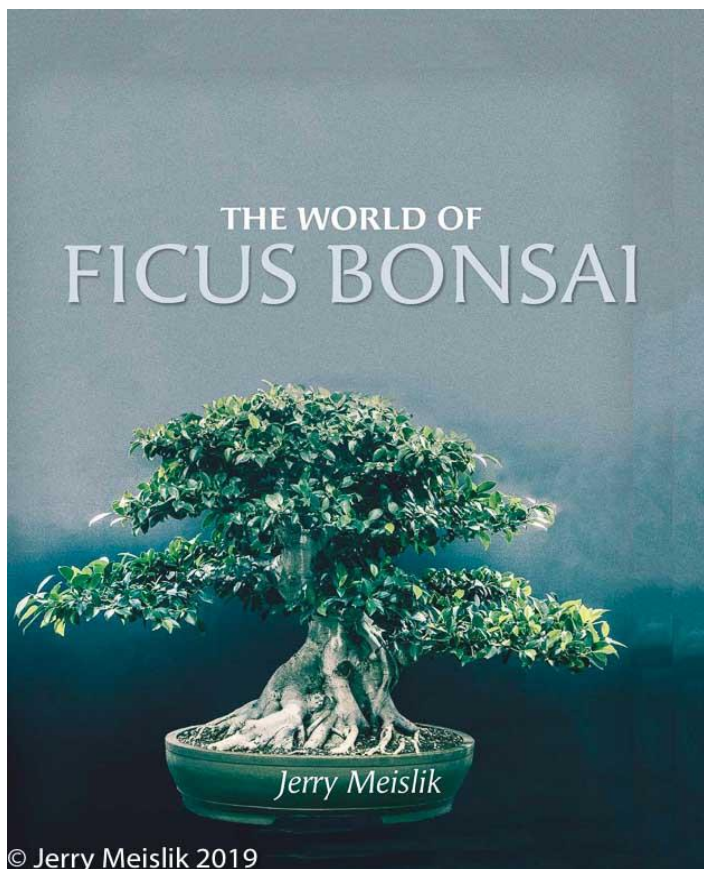
Walls are in and I add a brace 2x4 to keep the weight of the fill dirt from pushing in the sides. You will never keep the top square enough for the lids if you don't.



Finished product. I was about finished at this point too. The doors are at an angle, it's hard to tell from this photo.

Club members may be interested in this new book now available by Jerry Meislik. Here is Jerry's intro.

At long last it is here. **The World of Ficus Bonsai by Jerry Meislik.** I have been learning more and more about Ficus and how incredible they are for bonsai and for growing in your home. I have expanded and added new material to create an enlarged and updated book on using Ficus for bonsai. The book is 324 pages full of great information and full of pictures. It is available as a e-book or as a soft or hard cover book.



You can purchase it on:

Amazon - https://www.amazon.com/World-Ficus-Bonsai-Jerry-Meislik/dp/152553288X/ref=sr_1_1?keywords=The+World+of+Ficus+bonsai&qid=1555519664&s=gateway&sr=8-1

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John May has some items for sale. Photos below.

Six concrete stands 21" high with 16" square surfaces - 50.00 each

LARGE mica training pot 100.00

Dwarf kingsville boxwood - 400.00

Contact John Many at johnemany@comcast.net or text/call 469-352-4214





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>




Ann Arbor Bonsai Society
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Visit us on the Web:

<http://www.annarborbonsaisociety.org>

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