

August Meeting: Jim Doyle

Our August Meeting will take place on Wednesday evening, August 24th beginning at 6:30 pm in the auditorium at Matthaei Botanical Garden. The formal meeting will begin at 7:00 pm with Jim Doyle presenting "Field Collecting".

In 1973, with a B.S. degree in horticulture from Delaware Valley College of Science and Agriculture now Delaware Valley University, Jim started [Nature's Way Nursery](#) and developed an early interest in Asian culture and plants. By 1980, through the influence of Chase Rosade, bonsai passed from being a hobby to a business/lifestyle. Jim attends many symposia, teaches year-round to both adults and children at his studio, and travels extensively.

After a brief visit to Japan, Jim started a quest for new information. He was involved in founding the Susquehanna Bonsai Club, boasting a membership of over 100, and co-chaired the 1992 ABS Convention in Hershey and many more that followed. He has written articles for national publications and consulted regionally in Japanese garden design.

Today, along with his teaching, Jim continues to import bonsai, pots, tools, and related garden items. Other interests include conifers, Japanese maples, writing haiku, fishing, bike riding, nature walks, and spending time with his dog, Adia, and children, Nell and Max (not to be confused with his other hobbies). Jim's favorite tree is, of course, the one he is working on.



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President's Perspective

Mark Hanner

Greetings

The bonsai fun continues, following the wonderful auction and birthday celebration for our dear friend Jack Wikle, and the program and workshop with Jennifer Price, in July. Next up, our presentation and workshop in August, with Jim Doyle, followed immediately by our annual members' show, August 27-28, at our regular venue, Matthaei Botanical Gardens. As it is a members' show, not a competition, we hope everyone will select at least one tree for entry. Part of our mission is to educate the general public about bonsai, and a great way to introduce potential 'recruits' is to show them you can start with very do-able trees, and learn along the way.

Perhaps because I am still closer to entry level than experienced bonsai artist, I like to think of it as a journey, not a destination. And along the way, we enjoy the learning process, as our skills improve.

Set up for show takes place Friday, August 26, starting at 10:00; many hands lighten the load, and we have a good time chatting with friends while we transform the auditorium to a fine-looking show venue.

Hope to see you all soon,
Mark

July meeting notes

Chris Kehrig

7/27/22 Ann Arbor Bonsai Society Notes

Jack Wikle thanked the group for his 90th Birthday Bash which generated 40K for the Hidden Lakes Garden Endowment!

Five new members in attendance

The Annual Show will take place on August 27th and 28th.

Set up starts on Friday at 10am with trees to arrive later in the day.

There will be a dinner with judge critique of the trees on Saturday evening.

Jennifer Price was the speaker who presented on Zhongguo Feng Penjing Exhibition from 2017 and 2019 visits to China. She has been involved with bonsai for 14 years.

In China, Penjing = Bonsai

China has little greenspace with people living in towers. They have community gardens. Kindergarten and up have to take Penjing classes.

They only use aluminum wire in China and were fascinated with her use of copper.

Penjing trays have become difficult to come by.

Penjing is not only a landscape, but also tells a story.

Once, China relied on Cloud and Flattop styles, now they want to look more western.

Even their landscape trees have scaffolding and twine to shape.

Master Zhao Qingquan is the master of Penjing.

He asked if the movement of the tree can be mimicked by the body IE fluidity, balance, and sparseness.

Literati is difficult to get balance with so much negative space.

When judging a tree one has to think about two things:

1. Appreciate the beauty
2. What would you change

Water is often used in Penjing along with use of animals IE horse, cows, and monkeys.

On some of the more famous trees, rules of bonsai can be broken for a more natural look such as crossing and straight up branches that aid in the artistry.

Jennifer did not see many S curve trees and she was told those are shipped to us!

Pauline Muth is a Penjing instructor who uses natural materials to tell a story, challenge the eye, and breaking the rules when necessary. This is OK when you know the rules.

AABS Annual Show Setup/Takedown

Paul Kulesa

AABS Annual Show Setup

Friday, August 26, 2022 10 AM – 3 PM

I am looking for members to help with show setup on Friday morning. Please join me to transform the auditorium at Matthaei Botanical Garden into a foundation for another great Bonsai Show. This is light work involving some lifting, toting and sprinkling a bit of magic dust around the auditorium. A light lunch will be provided. The transformation process should wrap-up about 3 PM. If you are available, meet me in the auditorium on Friday morning, 10 AM.

Taking Down The Show
Sunday, August 28

Following the show, your assistance is needed to take down and stow the setup materials. The show ends at 4:30 PM and the take down begins in earnest when the bonsai have been moved. With enough hands to assist, this process will take 1 ½ - 2 hours. Your help is appreciated.

Paul Kulesa

Bonsai artist earns well-deserved legacy

Matthew Bird-Meyer

Jack Wikle sat in a rather uncomfortable folding chair, a bucket hat pulled low, his arms folded over his LL Bean fleece and dark green smock, as the last of his bonsai collection drifted out of the large shed and into the hands of the highest bidders.

Hanging behind the auctioneer, a large banner fastened to a beam featured a smiling Wikle in a bucket hat, the same photo used to decorate a cake he would share with friends and family following the auction July 9 at Hidden Lake Gardens.

Wikle celebrated his 90th birthday at the live auction to benefit the Jack Wikle Bonsai Legacy Fund. The sale, along with a silent auction and a series of previous online auctions, raised some \$40,000 for the fund, which will help support and maintain the bonsai collection at Michigan State University's Hidden Lake Gardens in Tipton.

The fund was created last year, but Wikle established the garden's bonsai collection not long after he began working there in 1968 as their first education specialist.

During the auction, he sat with a stack of Jack Wikle Bonsai Legacy 2023 calendars on his lap. I sat directly behind him and watched as friends and fellow small-tree-in-pot enthusiasts came up to wish him a happy birthday. Many gave him cards. Many gave him hugs and many hung around to chat and comment on how folks were getting quite the bargain on some gorgeous trees. He signed a few calendars for his fans and at one point apologized to me for standing in the way. He wasn't in the way.

At the end of the day, I walked out with a Japanese maple two-tree planting in a tiny 5-inch pot. Back in June, during the online auction, I snagged a handsome Siberian elm. Both started as seedlings in his yard in nearby Tecumseh where he lives with his lovely wife of 64 years, Jeannine.

But I found that out later. I didn't want to bother Wikle during the auction, and I was a little worn out from sitting through just about all of the 146 auction lots. So, I called him up later and we met at his home for a short visit.

A few trees in various stages of development still line his outdoor bonsai benches. He told me that he first started unloading his collection 10 years ago. Three major arboretums and botanical gardens, Hidden Lake Gardens, Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park, and Matthaei Botanical Gardens got first dibs to purchase trees. Individual buyers came later.

Ten years later, Wikle sat calmly as the balance of his trees went to auction. "Even before the auction, you know (people) were asking that question, 'How are you going to feel about this.' And my answer is, and I think it's still valid, is what it was like when my daughter went away to college – a sense of loss," he said. "But at the same time, an even bigger sense of relief. I'm not going to be spending as much time watering and working with (a large collection), you know I've got some stuff left here, but it's less time-consuming."

Wikle and I sat in some nice shade in his backyard. We talked about soil mixtures, the importance of roots being able to absorb oxygen, his pioneering work growing trees indoors under artificial light and how he first encountered a bonsai garden during an Army deployment to Japan in 1956.

I brought the Japanese maple that I bought during the auction. As I set the plastic mini cream puffs container on the grass between us, the maple safely stowed inside, I asked if he could tell me a little about the tree. I guess I accidentally called it "his tree."

"Well, to start, this is your tree," Wikle politely corrected me.

He noted the varied trunk sizes of the two-tree planting, which is a technique to help improve the individual aesthetics of the planting.

But then he said something I'll never forget. "You know, it's like your kids. Some people say, well what's your favorite," he said. "At any given time, I've probably got a dozen favorites. But this is one of them. I like it a lot."

As we parted, Wikle noted the maple's dry soil, and we walked over to the little courtyard with his bonsai

benches. I set the tree on a rock on the ground and Wikle gave his, I mean my, tree a quick drink for the road.



A Thank You from Jack

Fellow members of our Ann Arbor Bonsai Society

Please know that you have my great appreciation for this Society's hosting of my 90th birthday party on July 9th, but more importantly appreciation for its recent, major, monetary contribution to the Jack Wikle Bonsai Legacy Fund. This is the fund I and a few bonsai friends founded last year creating an endowment supporting the art of bonsai broadly but, more specifically, support of the Bonsai Collection at Michigan State University's Hidden Lake Gardens.

As many of you know, I've had a long personal involvement in encouraging and teaching the practice of

"bonsai art." I am the longest active member of the Ann Arbor Bonsai Society. I edited the American Bonsai Society's Quarterly Journal for four years beginning in the late 1980's. And, I've been responsible for the maintenance and display of bonsai at Hidden Lake Gardens since that activity began with my being hired as the Gardens' first Education Specialist in 1968 (54 years ago).

Over the years, association with great friends, many of whom I would never have met if it weren't for my bonsai involvement, and many positive memories of fun doing bonsai work have been highly gratifying, but nothing can compare with the outpouring of support and appreciation I experienced during our fund raising auction on my birthday.

The many people involved in organizing, promoting and doing their best to make it all work, spent far more hours of personal effort than anyone anticipated.

The result has been a completely overwhelming success which generated far more monetary return from the several preliminary auctions and the birthday finale than any of us thought possible . . . \$40,000. I have been deeply and profoundly touched!

Of course our fundraising effort will continue, but July 9, 2022 really was a day to remember. My deep appreciation to everyone who has been a part of that super effort in any way. I expect to be saying, "Thank you" again and again.

Jack Wikle

Membership News ***Becky Hanner***

Be sure to keep your newsletters coming, by renewing your dues for 2022. You can visit our website, and use PayPal, or see me at a meeting, where we can take a credit card, or send your check to: Membership, 10414 Oak Rd., Otisville, MI 48463.

Thanks so much!

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

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Show Committee: Ron Milostan and Paul Kulesa

Annual Auction: Paul Kulesa

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
 1800 North Dixboro Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48105-9741

Visit us on the Web:

<http://www.annarborbonsaisociety.org>

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