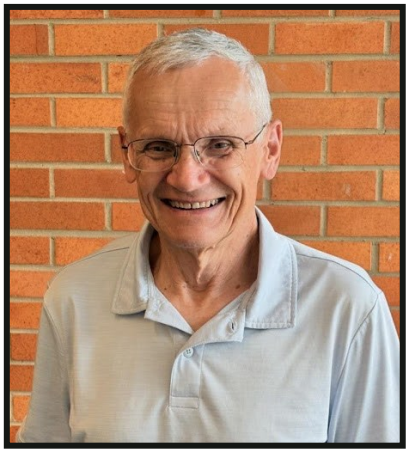
ANN ARBOR BONSAI SOCIETY

Volume 23
Issue 8

September 2026 AABS Annual Auction

September 23rd marks the return of our annual auction for bonsai and related items. Offering items for auction is reserved for members of the Society who are invited to sell bonsai and related items. For those members selling items at the auction, this is the start of a new era. In the Fall 2025 the Board of Directors decided to eliminate all fees related to selling at the auction. This means the price an item sells for, goes to the member-seller. Sellers have an opportunity to make a donation to their Club, which will be appreciated. The auction will be conducted in two formats, a silent auction and the live auction, and all are welcome to bid on items.



The Auctioneer, Cyril Grum

Success of our Auction depends on assistance provided by our members. If you can help with the administration of the auction, talk with me on the evening of the Auction or reach out kulesap@gmail.com

When the live auction wraps up, payment for auction purchases will begin. A Board Member will accept your credit card/apple pay for payment, along with a check 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.

In broad terms, this is the schedule for your *Evening At The Auction.*

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.
9 PM-ish The live Auction wraps up and payment for Auction purchases begin.

Between 9:30 and 9:45 PM we are turning off the lights and pulling the door shut behind us.
Additional information and forms have been delivered by email.
Questions / concerns? Please contact me: kulesap@gmail.com

—-Paul Kulesa

President's Perspective — Don Wenzel

Meetings

The Ann Arbor Bonsai Society meets on the fourth Wednesday of the month at the U-M Matthaei Botanical Gardens, 1800 N. Dixboro Road, Ann Arbor. The 6 pm program is our Beginner's Series led by club mentors. Then join us at 6:30 PM to meet members, buy raffle tickets and conduct other club business.. The all member presentation will begin at 7:00 PM.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

September 2026 Program	1
President's Perspective	2-3
Minutes from August	4
Coming in October	5
September Beginner's Series	5
Tree Talk	6
Upcoming Events	7
Our Mission Statement	7
Contact Us	8
Raffle	8
Board Members	8
Support our Members	9

Our annual show was a great success. We had over 1000 attendees visit during the show. At least 50 club members volunteered in various ways to help make it such a success. I'd like to take a moment to thank everyone who contributed their time to the show. We have an excellent club and it is great to be part of such an awesome group of people. Thank you all for your efforts for the club.



Hidden Lake Gardens' Larch forest won the public vote for Best Tree. Ellen Veselenak's 'tree house' boxwood and Cyril Grum's fused trunk trident maple tied for Best Tree in member voting. One vote behind them were Scott Bresler's blue atlas cedar, Jacqueline Thomas's juniper and Chris Kehrig's bougainvillea pixie.



Our annual auction is this month and you have already seen email about that as well as seller/bidder sheets. Please consider filling out what you can ahead of time to help things run more efficiently the evening of the auction. A couple reminders, you must be a member to sell items, but anyone can buy items. Also, once again, there will be no seller fees levied.

Before the auction gets into full swing, we will be talking about the 2 open board positions (Publicity and Membership) and asking for nominations from the floor. Based on any nominations received, we will be sending out an email with the ballot of nominees for all board positions. That will be sent between the September and October meeting and will be voted on at the October meeting. If you can't be present at the October meeting you can send in a proxy vote (which will need to arrive in the AABS email box one day prior to the October meeting). As a point of information, terms are for 2 years and most current board members terms are ending at the end of this year. Most board members are planning to continue in their roles.



Some of you may already be aware of some pretty big news at Matthaei Botanical Gardens. We received word they plan to demolish the existing building, including the Conservatory, beginning in early 2028, with the hope of completing the new structure in 2-3 years. It is my understanding that we will be able to continue to use the existing space through all of our 2027 activities, including the 2027 show, but, we will need to find a new home for at least 2028-2030, and perhaps longer. We have formed a small group to do some fact finding about possible alternatives and will periodically update you on our progress. If you have ideas about locations that might work, please pass them along. We are trying to be open to different options. I expect we will be somewhat constrained by cost. We are fortunate to be able to make use of Matthaei at no cost to our group and I suspect we will find it difficult to find a similar deal elsewhere. Interesting times…

In addition to elections at the October meeting, we will be having our first Bonsai Trivia night! There will be prizes awarded and I expect it to be a lot of fun. Finally, don't forget about the Fall Fruit and Foliage Bonsai Exhibition in October at Hidden Lake Gardens. Check out all the details here.



August 19th Meeting Minutes — Chris Kehrig

Announcements:

- One new member in attendance.
- Annual Auction is Sept 23rd with no selling fee on sale items.
- Auction Emails will include Buyer and Seller Forms. Please complete before the start of the sale.

David Cutchins on Fall Preparations



David has 11 years in forestry, 14 years on bonsai in Florida, and is a student of Ryan Neil.

He now resides in Kentucky which is zone 7.

He mentioned that vascular growth happens in the Fall.

Spring is the time for Foliar growth.

Spring takes more water and is like A/C for trees in Summer.

Roots want to ramify and why it's important to fertilize in Fall.

Fertilizer breakdown is NPK = Up/Down/All-around.want to concentrate on roots.

Can lessen the nitrogen (N) in the fall time since we want to concentrate on roots.

Watch out for heavy salts in some fertilizers (Osmocote) as they attract insects.

If a tree is healthy it will be resistant to insects.

Fish emulsion/kelp can be smelly, but gets the job done.

Root growth in Fall helps with winter protection.

David mentioned tilting a tree pot will help it dry down while remaining humid.

Akadama has taken the place of turfus in many soil mixes.

Heavy pruning in Fall can weaken the tree for winter.

Don't want to promote new growth going into winter.

Sprays are not needed if a tree is healthy.

Bougain fertilizer is great for bougainvillea and fights off pests.

Don't carve into them as this will draw pests.

Announcing Our First Bonsai Trivia Challenge!

October 28th at 7 pm



Teams!

Test Your Knowledge!

Learn Stuff!

Have Fun!

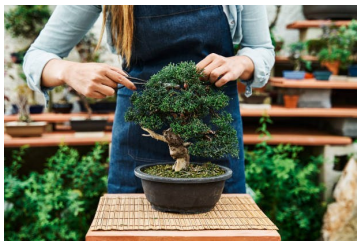
Win Prizes!

Beginner Series on September 23rd at 6 PM

Because fall maintenance is so important — it does, after all, determine whether or not beginners even have trees the following year, we will be hosting the beginner series with pre-winter care in mind. While we have been providing information as we progress toward the cooler months, we know you have specific questions about **your** trees. Bring your questions (or your trees) and we will make sure you have answers about feeding, watering, health support, and all things "vigor."



TREE TALK - BECOMING A BONSAI ARTIST



Every member of the AABS started with one tree. Whether you are still considering your first tree or have a dozen or more, here is where you will find suggestions for developing your artistry.

Fall in the Midwest

Last month we had the pleasure of hosting David Cutchin for our August meeting and he had such good advice, particularly for those new to bonsai, on how to care for temperate trees in the Midwest once September and October arrive. Let's take another look:

1. These shorter days and cooler nights activate a tree's vascular system. The sap starts running just like it does in early spring. An active vascular system promotes root growth and helps with the tree's vigor (over all health and disease resistance). This is what will see your tree through winter dormancy.
2. During the fall season it is imperative to continue watering trees when dry and feeding them. However, do not use a fertilizer heavy in Nitrogen (N), the first number on the fertilizer. Nitrogen promotes foliar growth and you want to avoid that. You want to provide your trees with Phosphorous (P) and Potassium or potash (K), the middle and last numbers on the fertilizer container. Phosphorous promotes root growth and potassium improves system health. Excellent for wintering!
3. Some nitrogen is needed to help your trees absorb other nutrients. Look for a 5 -10-10 fertilizer, organic fall fertilizers, fish emulsions, and the like to feed your deciduous trees.
4. Insects love fall and the feeding bonanza is on! Watch your trees for invasions of chewing and sucking insects such as mealy bugs, spider mites, borers, lace wings and caterpillars. Remove larger bugs such as the caterpillars and grass hoppers, use systemics (Bayer is a good one) for borers, and clean off mealy bugs with a cotton swab dipped in rubbing alcohol.
5. Pruning, which promotes back budding (new growth) and can result in open wounds which need time to heal properly, is generally discouraged.

The Numbers Game

Always listed in alphabetical order on fertilizers are the three macronutrients: Nitrogen (N), Phosphorus (P), Potassium (K). The numbers? That's the percentage of the nutrient contained in the fertilizer by weight. Knowing what each nutrient does is key to fertilizing correctly throughout the growing season. Nitrogen promotes foliar growth. Phosphorous promotes root growth (and flower/fruit set), and Potassium promotes overall health and vigor. As David Cutchin reminds us: the numbers can be read as "UP" (nitrogen/foliar), "DOWN (phosphorous/roots), and "ALL AROUND (potassium/vigor). Now you are a macronutrient expert!!

Bonsai Events 2026

Date	Event	Sponsor/Club	Link
September 23rd	AABS Annual Auction	Ann Arbor Bonsai Society	Link
September 26th & 27th	Four Seasons Bonsai Club Show	Four Seasons / Bordine's Nursery	Link
October 3rd & 4th	West Michigan Bonsai Club Fall Show	West Michigan Bonsai Club, Grand Rapids	Link
October 17th &18th, 2026	Fall Fruit and Foliage Bonsai Exhibition	Hidden Lake Gardens	Fall Fruit and Foliage

AABS Mission Statement:

The purpose of The Ann Arbor Bonsai Society shall be to promote knowledge, appreciation, and practice of the art of bonsai to its members and to the general public through meetings, lectures, workshops, exhibitions, publications or other means.

Celebrating over 50 years of promoting knowledge, appreciation, and the practice of the art of bonsai.

Ann Arbor Bonsai Society

Written correspondence may be addressed to 907 Hillside Ct., Ypsilanti, MI 48197.

Email us at: aabonsaisociety@gmail.com

We are on the Web and Social Media!

https://annarborbonsaisociety.org
https://www.facebook.com/aabs1970/

Prizes for the Raffle

We are always 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 Rick McCoy at any meeting or email him at imrickmccoy@yahoo.com



2026 Board Members

Don Wenzel, President
Ellen Veselenak, Vice President, Programming
Mark Hanner, Past President
Brian Shepard, Treasurer
Chris Kehrig, Recording Secretary
Anne Evans, Membership, Newsletter
Michael Bruneau, AABS Show Chair
Hannah Aiko, Communications and Social-Media
Melissa Renaud, Marketing and Merchandise
Jay Sinclair, Director at Large
Denise Bellinger, Director at Large
Carmen Leskoviansky, Director at Large

Ad-Hoc Committees

Rick McCoy, Raffle Coordinator

Jay Whitehouse, Webmaster

(Open), Publicity Coordinator

Position Openings on the Board and Ad-Hoc Committees open each October. If a member is interested in serving they should contact the President, Don Wenzel, at wenzeldt@gmail.com to express interest. The Slate of Officers is set by the Board in September and voted on by the general membership in October,

It is also possible to shadow a board member for a period of time to learn the role ahead of the October election. We encourage you to join our leadership!



SUPPORT OUR MEMBERS



A BONSAI PODCAST FOR ALL SKILL LEVELS FEATURING
CARMEN LESKOVIANSKY AND EVAN PARDUE
AVAILABLE ON ALL LISTENING PLATFORMS

AABS Member Len Buckman has published a book, *Bonsai: Anyone Can Do It*. His book is intended for those beginning their bonsai journey.

You may purchase Len's book by contacting him at lenbuckman@aol.com. The book is $16 and shipping is $5.







SUPPORT for BONSAI MEMBERS' ENDEAVORS

Members may advertise any bonsai or bonsai related materials in the newsletter with no ad fees. Additionally we are happy to promote member podcasts, published materials, non-profits, etc. as long as the content is related to the art of Bonsai. Ads should be submitted for inclusion by the fifth of the month. Materials should be submitted as a jpeg or png full color file. Ads and announcements will run consecutive months without interruption if requested. Please send artwork to aevans136@gmail.com. Thank you!