



BONSAI NEWS

June 2017

GREATER LOUISVILLE BONSAI SOCIETY

Ross Clark, editor

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OFFICERS' CORNER

From President Earl Ekman—

Our June meeting is a trip to Tim Weckman's Berea Bonsai Nursery (see next page for details). I have not been there, but am looking forward to the trip and experiencing the fun of checking his stock of bonsai trees, pre-bonsai, pots, utensils and supplies. It's a great convenience to have a member of the club available to us to supply our bonsai needs. Members of GLBS have mentioned to me what a great nursery Tim has. Those planning to travel as a group are planning to leave Louisville at 9am Saturday, June 10 from the parking lot of Middletown Government Center at 200 Juneau Drive. If we meet there, we can carpool, which will be more fun and will save on gas expense. If you have any questions, give me a call, or better yet, call Tim at 859-582-1234. He is located a very short distance from Exit 76 on Interstate highway 75. [ED. NOTE — COMPLETE CONTACT DETAILS FOR BEREA BONSAI NURSERY ARE ON THE NEXT PAGE OF THIS NEWSLETTER]

Our introduction to bonsai workshop on May 13 was a great success, and we signed up some new members. There were six students and eight instructors—lots of personal attention! Thanks to all the club members who showed up and provided their experience, help and tools. See p. 4 for details.

Don't forget our Garden Tour on July 15! We will meet at Bob Williams's home and proceed to Tommy McCurry's. From there, we will have dinner at a restaurant in Goshen. More details in the July newsletter.

Several members have mentioned having another Masters Workshop in the near future. Please let me know how you feel about this. If there is something else you would like to do or try, please give me a call or email with your ideas. (Contact information, bottom of p. 2)

A group of us is planning on visiting the Mid-America Bonsai Alliance show in Indianapolis on July 7. Let's get together and make a day of it. Details next month.

Many thanks to Lee Squires for his series of articles on the history of the Louisville Bonsai Society. This is a lot of work on his part. If you enjoy it, please let him know with a big thank you.

We need to schedule a Board of Directors meeting so we can plan next year's schedule. Please (everyone) start thinking of things you would like to do.

While we were at Yew Dell Gardens, some members expressed interest in scheduling our meetings and workshops at the lower level of the Gheen's Barn. How do you feel about meeting there? I will contact their management and see if this is possible or advisable. If there is not enough club interest, I will drop the idea.

All the best,
Earl

Information about our June Meeting/Nursery Visit on June 10

A BRIEF INTRODUCTION TO BEREAL BONSAI STUDIO AND NURSERY — by Tim Weckman

Berea Bonsai Nursery was established in 2008 in Berea, Ky. The enterprise began as a venue for bonsai materials and instruction in central Kentucky, as there were no other resources available. The nursery is situated on two acres just off I-75 on the southwest side of Berea. A freestanding workshop space is complimented by a large warehouse and about ½ acre of nursery grounds. Trees offered range from untouched collected plants and container stock through semi-styled and ‘finished’ bonsai. The holdings are especially strong in Japanese black pines, shimpaku junipers, Japanese and trident maples and satsuki azaleas. In addition to these traditional materials, a wide range of native North American species is available. These include spruces, pines and deciduous trees such as hornbeams, beech and bald cypress. The studio offers workshops and hosts a study group for bonsai enthusiasts. It is a popular destination for visitors from across the U.S. as one of the many working artisan shops available in Berea.



228 Old Wallaceton Road, Berea, Kentucky

www.bereabonsai.com

[On Facebook](#)

859-582-1234

tj.weckman@yahoo.com

Hours on June 10 = 10am to 6pm

DIRECTIONS FROM LOUISVILLE:

EXIT FROM I-75 AT EXIT 76. TURN RIGHT (WEST) AT THE TOP OF THE EXIT RAMP. AT ABOUT 0.5 MILE TURN RIGHT ON OLD WALLACETON RD. BEREAL BONSAI STUDIO AND NURSERY IS ABOUT A HALF MILE NORTH, ON THE RIGHT SIDE OF THE ROAD AT A SHARP TURN IN THE ROAD. FOR LUNCH, SEVERAL RESTAURANTS ARE LOCATED JUST EAST OF I-75.

2017 OFFICERS of the Greater Louisville Bonsai Society

President Earl Ekman

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Vice President Lee Squires

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Other board members: Dick Blayney, Chris Bowman, George Buehler, Steve Hammel, Tom McCurry, Marian Taylor, Bob Williams

The Editor thanks everyone who helps this newsletter succeed and welcomes ideas, suggestions and articles. Please address newsletter items to ross.clark@eku.edu. The deadline for the July 2017 issue of this newsletter is Friday, June 23.

2017 MEETINGS OF THE GREATER LOUISVILLE BONSAI SOCIETY

(all meetings in Louisville, Eastern time, unless otherwise indicated)

JUNE 10, Saturday, at Berea Bonsai Studio and Nursery *(details on pp. 1 & 2)*

GLBS member and proprietor Tim Weckman will be our host as we enjoy seeing a tremendous variety of bonsai material, at many stages of development. Driving time is about 1.5 hrs; plan to carpool if you wish.

JULY 15, Saturday, schedule tba. Gardens tour hosted by GLBS members Tommy McCurry and Bob Williams.

AUGUST — no meeting scheduled

SEPTEMBER 16, Saturday, details tba

Workshop on “twisted mame junipers”. Instructor: GLBS member Cliff Pye.

OCTOBER 19, Thursday, at Bon Air Library. We will build bonsai show stands. Sharpen your tools!

NOVEMBER 8, Wednesday, at Bon Air Library, time tba. Important business meeting. We will vote on our revised constitution and by-laws and plan 2018 meetings and events.

DECEMBER 2, Saturday, time and place tba. Annual holiday party.

Additional details will be published in this newsletter as they become available.

SOME 2017 SIGNIFICANT BONSAI EVENTS, EASTERN NORTH AMERICA (listed by date)

Additional events and details will be posted in this newsletter as details become available

U.S. National Shohin Bonsai Exhibition, June 23-25, North Carolina Research Campus, Kannapolis, NC

A full-spectrum event, sponsored by Steven Zeisel, Director of the NCRC; coordinated by William Valavanis.

Mid-America Bonsai Alliance Convention, July 7-8, Clarion Waterfront Hotel, Indianapolis

This event undoubtedly will be **the top bonsai event in our immediate area this year**. The highlighted artist will be Matt Reel, who will be joined by 12 additional noteworthy artists. When your editor checked this site in early January, 16 vendors were listed, covering all aspects of bonsai. **Our society is a member of MABA**, and as many of us as possible should attend. This should be considered **a “must do” event for people who are relatively new to bonsai**. See the last page of this newsletter. GLBS members will carpool to this event . (See p. 1)

Prairie State Bonsai Society (The Art of Bonsai) Show, Aug 5-6 (Sat. + Sun., 10 to 4), The Morton Arboretum, Lisle, IL. Owen Reich is headliner; workshops include dwarf hinoki, dwarf English yew, shohin Chinese elm, kusamono, junipers.

Midwest Bonsai Society Show and Sale, Aug. 18-20 (Fri. noon to 5, Sat. + Sun. 9 to 5), Chicago Botanic Garden, Glen-coe, IL. Features: display of numerous trees; judged by Colin Lewis; more than a dozen vendors; demos, lectures, workshops

Mid-Appalachian Bonsai Kai Show, Sept. 9-10, Gray Fossil Site (near Johnson City, TN)

Carolina Bonsai Expo, Oct. 13-15, North Carolina Arboretum, Asheville

An Evening of Bonsai with Rodney Clemons, Thursday, Nov. 2, 6-8pm, Waterfront Botanical Gardens, Sawyer Hayes Community Center, 2201 Lakeland Road, Louisville. This is actually an annual membership meeting of the WBG, but they are inviting folks interested in bonsai to join them. Admission: WBG members, free; general public \$20; students with ID, \$5. Information on how to obtain tickets and other details of this event will follow in a future issue of this newsletter.

BEGINNER'S WORKSHOP A SUCCESS — by Lee Squires

Six new folks took our introductory bonsai workshop on May 13. Students included four adult ladies, a 12 year-old girl (granddaughter of one of the ladies) and a young man in his twenties. As you may know, there are many more men than women in bonsai, so we're especially pleased to see more women interested!

The small *Juniperus procumbens 'Nana'* (aka dwarf Japanese garden junipers) chosen for the class were well suited for new students, as they fit into small pots and are easier to maintain than more complex plants of other species. Prior to the workshop, these plants, which were bought at Brussels Bonsai (near Memphis) in March, were cared for, fertilized, and given a pre-emptive spray of pesticide. I also gave them a dose of garden (dolomitic) lime, since it often helps to prevent yellowing in junipers.

We also picked up three new members from the Yew Dell Show and this workshop. One of the "new" members is Bob Huebener. Bob was a member and president in the 80s and 90s, but took a break and now is back. Bob was one of the first in our club to chop big-trunked trees down short in order to develop impressive trunk taper very quickly. His noteworthy zelkova was purchased by Earl Ekman years ago, and last year Steve Hammel bought it from Earl. Before being shortened, originally it was 20 feet tall. It's great to have Bob back in GLBS, along with his friend Cherie Burshears.



Happiness



doing



bonsai
together!



The History of the GLBS

A Multi-Part Series – Part 3, June 2017
Lee Squires

First, let me make a correction from my last edition of GLBS history. Gene Sewell, our resident membership and raffle sales expert, was not a Sergeant on the Louisville Police Dept. as I reported. He was a Juvenile Detective with a Special Unit of Jefferson Co. He was and still is an active member in the Fraternal Order of Police. Gene was a Master Sergeant in the U.S. Army. At our Yew Dell Show last month, he sold \$57.00 in raffle tickets. Way to go, Gene !!

The year 1976 was an interesting year for the GLBS. We got into high gear for shows and started having some interesting master teachers to keep everyone amused and educated. Club members were also starting to give demos throughout the city to garden clubs and other interested groups that were looking for a new topic to discuss besides perennials or flower arranging.

I have been a member of the Kentucky Nursery and Landscape Assoc. since 1969 and was their Executive Director for 18 years from 1978 – 1996. They have an annual meeting in January and always were in the market for new topics. The program committee asked me to give a demo on bonsai at their conclave at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Lexington in January 1976. Of course, I agreed to give the demo to an audience of 200+ horticultural experts. It was a bit intimidating but I figured I knew more than most of them about the subject.

Louis Hillenmeyer, from the famous Hillenmeyer Nursery in Lexington, was president at the time and my buddy John Korfage, from Korfage Landscape & Designs in Louisville, was on the program committee. John and I concocted a plan for the demo to be assured that we would highly entertain everyone. We had the idea that we would both dress in karate outfits and me in a papa san straw hat. As I busted through the door [[see photos below](#)] from stage right at age 29 and sporting my 1970's moustache, John would hold a styrofoam board I would break it with my foot. It all went as planned and we brought the house down as I broke the board. Mitch Leichardt, owner of Leichardt Nursery in Bowling Green, donated a Robusta Green Juniper for the demo. I took it from a four foot 5 gallon plant to an 18" informal upright with a good jin on the apex in less than an hour. Everyone was amazed how a tree could be treated like this and still survive for many years.

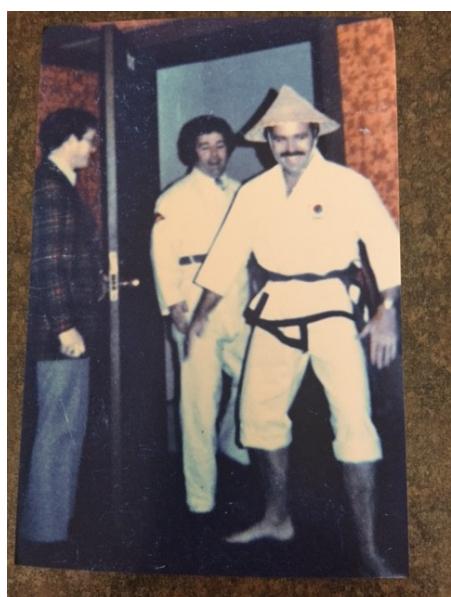
Mitch took the finished bonsai back to his nursery to add to his small collection. He sat it on a bench at the garden center and as an employee walked by he eyed the stripped jin. Knowing that dead branches should not be left on plants for sale, he took his hand pruners and cut off the jin. Egad ! Of course, he did not know the purpose of the jin at the time. Mitch did forgive him for his actions.

The pictures shown here are reprints from slides that I took in 1976. They're a little smudgy and blurred but are 41 years old so cut me some slack.

I'll have some more on 1976 in our next edition.

To be continued.....

Ed. note: Are you sure this isn't Jack Nicholson? Maybe we could persuade Lee to repeat this program.



LESSONS FROM DEM BONES

by Ross Clark

“Yes, I had a bonsai once. It died.” (John Q. Public)

Everyone who works on bonsai, from people who have just taken their first workshop to the highest-calibre artist, loses trees. Beginners often lose the first tree they work on. Experts, on the other hand, also sometimes lose trees—much more significant and beautiful trees. It’s a dirty little secret, one that isn’t talked about much in the higher circles of bonsai practice. Among regular folks, we hear things like, “Yeah, I had a bonsai once, and it died. So I haven’t tried it again.” So, what can we say to that? How can we persuade people to try this neat bonsai thing again, not to give up so easily? Well, one way I think we could help is to admit that losing trees happens to everyone; it is a normal consequence of the growing small trees in pots. You occasionally lose them.

There are a lot of ways to kill plants. It’s a lot easier to kill plants than animals, because plants don’t come up to you, push against you and look at you with big mournful eyes, or swim over to the edge of the pond, reminding you that they crave attention, food or clean water. Even though we treasure our bonsai, they usually don’t become actual members of the family the way some animals do. The fact is, it’s not difficult to subject a tree to conditions it cannot tolerate, miscalculate on avoiding damaging temperatures, under- or over-watering, or being too conservative in treating pests or diseases in time. These are just a few of the way we kill trees. And sometimes those trees are real prizes, or were really expensive. Or both. Ouch. But it doesn’t mean we have failed.

Yes, everyone loses trees. But having a tree die doesn’t mean you’re a failure. Good physicians bring all their training, skill, training and focus to bear when they treat a patient. When they lose a patient, when a patient dies, do good physicians quit practicing medicine? Hey, maybe that’s the key word: PRACTICING. Should we expect to be experts at doing bonsai the first time we put a tree into a pot? Of course not; we need practice. And if we lose the first tree we try, how are we going to practice unless we get another tree and try it again? Think about it . . . doesn’t everything we expect to do well at require practice? **Here are a few lessons I’ve learned by losing trees.**



Don’t use neem on oaks.



Junipers can be (and these were) beautiful, but in the humid microclimate of my yard, I am not willing to spray them constantly to keep fungi from attacking them. Lost junipers will not be replaced. On the other hand, my yard is a great place to grow broadleaved species such as maples, hornbeams and azaleas.



Japanese black pines (left) and ponderosas (center) in our region require constant spraying with nasty stuff to keep needlecast from killing them. I will protect my three black pines which still are healthy, but will never buy another one. And no more ponderosas for me! Plus, I simply do not have the horticultural skill to grow **Zuisho Japanese white pines** (right).

The most important thing is to try, to try to become better at what we do. And to learn from our unsuccesses.

Some memories from our May 2017 public show.



Vice President Lee Squires with his amazing Theodore Klein hinoki cypress.



A nice bald cypress, grown from seed by Bob Williams.



A classic Ginkgo.



A unique satsuki azalea and its incredible root system.

Greater Louisville Bonsai Society

An elegant literati-style pine (with apologies for the very inelegant backdrop).



A fine Koto Hime Japanese maple.



President Earl Eckman, our Show Chairman.



A Chinese elm, chosen by viewers as Best of Show.

SEASONAL SUGGESTIONS

So, what kind of spring have we had? Certainly not a dry one. The figure to the right partially tells the story. And as I write this on May 25, we've had about three more inches of rain since the 20th!

Already, I'm having problems with **fungi**, such as downy mildew attacking new growth of defoliated trees, powdery mildew on various plants (not yet on bonsai, though), and one or two [azalea galls](#). And, of course, pine needlecast is always lurking. Between deluges of rain, I'm feeling that preventive fungicide spraying is necessary. In this time of heavy statewide rainfall, we need to be very vigilant about fungi. And it begins with prevention — good light and air circulation.

Suppose you're a bonsai person of limited means, have a special tree or two, and would like a few more like it without paying big bucks. Well, it turns out that **June is probably the very best month for taking softwood cuttings**. Basically, you use new growth that has hardened off, some hormone-containing rooting compound, and porous rooting medium that is always kept moist. The rest of the instructions are everywhere. It helps if the parent plant is rather young. What the horticulturists call "juvenile" of the stock tends to boost rooting success of most cuttings.

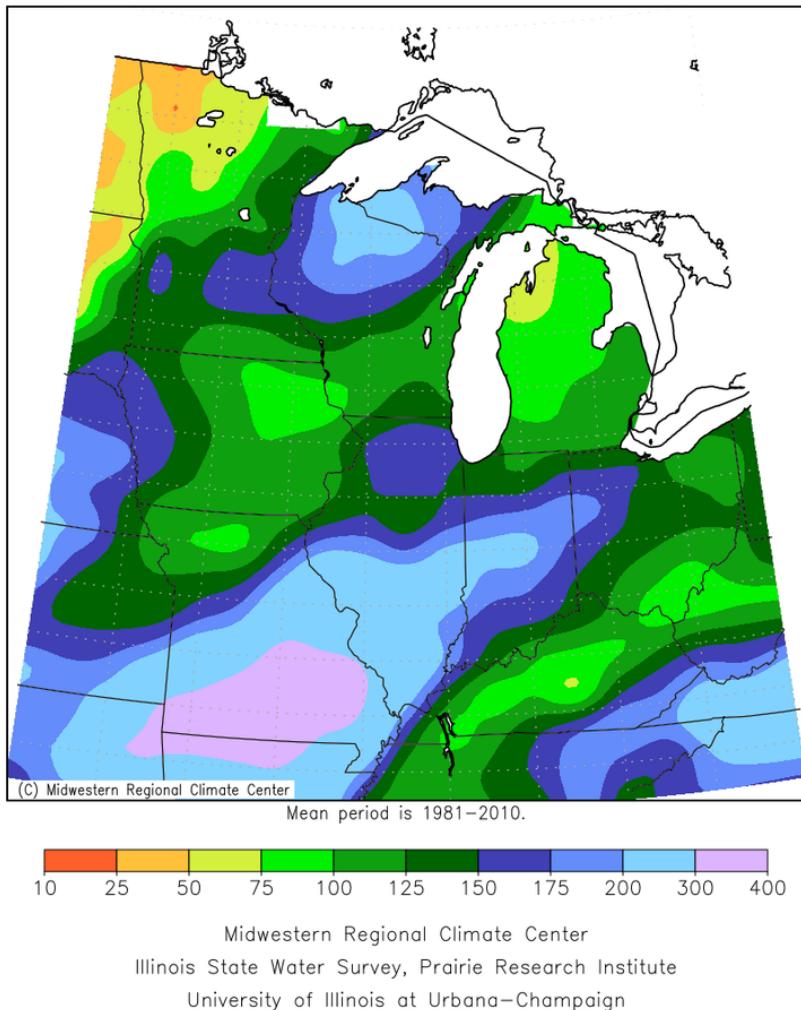
I'll spare you the other technical details, because they're readily available. But if you would like a step-by-step, we could put it in a future newsletter issue. By the way, maple and azalea cuttings are very easy. But **you have to be patient**; they grow slowly at first. (It's easy to forget that an underlying requirement for doing bonsai is patience!)

Mid to late June also is a prime time for decandling pines in our region. If you decandle as soon as the needles of vigorous plants are fully expanded, plants will tend to grow new leaders quickly. However and perhaps an even better idea, if you wait a couple of months when daylengths are decreasing, multiple buds will form without forming new candles. Multiple buds in the fall mean more branching next year.

This is also the time for wire removal. If the wiring was put on last year, you will be lucky if you don't have bad wire scars by now. However, wire that was put on a month or so ago this spring should also be *carefully* removed now, because enough new wood usually has formed in smaller branches to hold the new shaping you have designed. Don't wait; it's better to rewire later than to risk wire scars.

IT'S ALSO THE SEASON TO ATTEND BONSAI SHOWS AND CONVENTIONS. —ed.

Accumulated Precipitation: Percent of Mean
April 21, 2017 to May 20, 2017



Coming in a rush,

This calming air and bright light

Soak more than the skin

-rc

ADVERTISING (free to members)

To encourage advertisers to review and update their ads, we require advertisers to contact the newsletter editor at least once per year to request that an ad be continued or modified. All ads for specific trees should be accompanied by photos no more than six months old.

BONSAI FOR SALE

Buying established bonsai from GLBS members is a good way to acquire quality trees at a reasonable cost, and save yourself the years it would take to develop those trees yourself.



Korean hornbeam (*Carpinus turczaninowii* var. *coreana*) with weeping habit, 29" spread, 22" tall, 2.5" trunk diameter. Pot is 14" x 11" oval, glazed, reddish brown with feet. Raised from a 1996 cutting. \$250.00. Contact Lee Squires at 502-551-5985 or bonsaiman@tvc.com.



Kiyohime Japanese maple (*Acer palmatum* 'Kiyo Hime'), 30" spread, 23" tall, trunk diameter 2.5". Pot is glazed olive green, 16" x 12". Grafted tree, 13 years in training. \$400.00. Contact Lee Squires at 502-551-5985 or bonsaiman@tvc.com.

Kamagata maple (*Acer palmatum* 'Kamagata')

14 inches tall above the pot (note the keys for scale)
1.25" trunk diameter, above a 2-inch basal flare
about 15 years old from a cutting (on its own roots, not grafted)
very nice nebari (basal flare) and small leaves
In 15x11x2-inch brown Chinese oval container
\$120.00. Contact Ross Clark at 859-625-4668 or ross.clark@eku.edu

(The square image at the base of the tree is a piece of bicycle inner tube which is protecting the root flare. This tree obviously needs some styling, but nothing major. Photo was taken April 2017.)



GLBS is a Proud Supporter of:

ABS

The American Bonsai Society

For More Information Contact

abs@insightbb.com or visit their web site

absbonsai.org/

These days, many commitments compete for our time and attention. But most of those commitments are not stress relievers. Are you interested in looking for the most efficient way to improve your bonsai horticulture, technique, and your "eye" for good bonsai design? The absolutely most effective way is to attend bonsai shows and workshops, such as those offered at the Mid-America Bonsai Alliance convention in Indianapolis. A group of GLBS members will be attending the convention for a day on July 7. We hope you will join us! **A day being immersed in and inspired by bonsai is like no other day.**



April 19-22, 2018
Gateway to Bonsai

Collinsville, IL
(Just 10 min east of St. Louis)

Guest Artists

Marc Noelander, Bjorn Bjorholm,
Matt Reel

Follow us on Facebook

Presented by
American Bonsai Society and the
Bonsai Society of Greater St Louis



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MID-AMERICA BONSAI ALLIANCE C O N V E N T I O N

July 7-8 2017

Featuring Matt Reel

Bill Valavanis

Mary Madison

Jim Doyle

Mark Fields

Andy Smith

Brian Ciskowski

Michael Bell

Paul Weishaar

Carl Wooldridge

Scott Yelich

Ken Huth

Alan Magruder

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