



Great Swamp Bonsai Society

Next meeting: **Tuesday, MARCH 10th**
6:30– 9:30 PM

Selection of MABS Trees

February 2020 Newsletter

No meeting in February!

Don't forget, our next meeting is in March! Our main topic remains open, but we will also be selecting our 3 trees to represent our club at this year's **Mid-Atlantic Bonsai Societies' Spring Festival**. More details in next month's newsletter.

January Meeting: Post-Holiday Holiday Party and Bonsai Auction

We had a very nice turnout, with lots of food and beverages, including apple pie (from Mary Larsson), babka (courtesy of Zach Bier), a custom-made Great Swamp Bonsai Society cake (as shown above, courtesy of Joan Cho), plus cookies, cheese, and more. Thanks to everyone who helped make the meeting a bit more festive!

The main feature of the meeting was our annual Bonsai auction, and the membership really came through with a nice array of trees, pots, and other items of general interest. Most everything was sold and the club picked up a little money in the bargain. Veteran club members Mark Schmuck and Fred Aufschläger kept the books as John Michalski acted as auctioneer. Thanks again to all who helped in every way.



January Party and Bonsai Auction – photos



Paid Afternoon Workshop with Guest Artist Suthin Sukosolvisit

On Tuesday, April 21st, from noon to 4:30, we will be hosting a paid, hands-on workshop with guest artist **Suthin**, fresh from his appearance at this year's MABS Spring Festival (go to www.midatlanticbonsai.org for details on the festival). This workshop will take place in our usual meeting room at the Frelinghuysen Arboretum.

The workshop fee is \$75.00 per participant, and you bring your own material to work on. We are sharing this event with Deep Cut Bonsai Society, and **space is limited to 4 participants** from our club, and 4 from Deep Cut, so **please contact John Michalski** (at huonia@aol.com) **ASAP if you wish to attend**. We also allow additional "silent participants" to attend for \$10.00 per person (you don't bring a tree to work on, but you get to observe the others at work with the master). Photography is generally allowed.

At 4:30 the entire group will break for dinner (usually at Arthur's Steakhouse in Morris Plains, for which we split the check), and return to our meeting room for an evening demo/presentation at 7:00 PM by Suthin, which is free and open to the public.



(photos from 2014 visit with Suthin; lower left, club member **Brian O'Byrne** with the finished tree from the evening demo.)



The Colors of Winter

Some of you newbies out there (and even some of us old-timers) may be curious about the muted foliage colors on your hardy evergreen bonsai this winter. What were vivid, rich greens in July have turned to dull bronze or reddish-green by January.

There is no reason to panic—junipers, yews, and arborvitae usually display distinct color shifts during the cold months.

My yews and arborvitae have gone from bright, cheerful green (color swatch A) to a rather forlorn, greenish-dusty-brownish-mossy gray (color swatch B), but that's normal for the time of year. What you want is for the color to return to Type A as the new buds begin to swell with the onset of warm weather and longer day length. If the color is not back by June, you may have a problem. Until then, relax!



A

Summer Yew



B

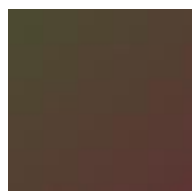
Winter Yew

Similarly, my Eastern Red Cedars (a species of juniper) have all gone a sort of coppery red-green by now, but once again they should brighten up come April.



A

Summer Juniper



B

Winter Juniper

The good thing is, the springtime color change is a great indication of the health of your evergreen bonsai, and a trustworthy signal that the growing season has commenced and that you can safely engage in such activities as repotting and so forth.



Custom-made Bonsai Stands and Daizas (bases) for Suiseki (display stones)

[This is not a personal endorsement from your editor, but rather a product announcement, but one that I feel our membership may find most interesting.]

Custom-made bonsai stands available

Timothy Kuhlmann makes show-worthy bonsai stands for sale on Etsy: www.etsy.com/shop/NeuerTag. He offers a range of styles and specializes in building custom stands to specific pots, trees, and the owner's personal preferences – from rustic slabs to refined stands in solid mahogany, walnut, and cherry. He also makes custom daizas for suiseki viewing stones.

He is offering a **10% discount** to all club members on orders over \$100, along with a **matching 10% donation to GSBS**. Shipping is free and he can build most custom stands within 2 weeks.

Now is a great time of the year to think about what trees you want to display at the open house on May 31 – and how you will present them. You can contact Timothy through the link above, or at: timothy.kuhlmann@gmail.com



Plant Care Tips for February – A lot like January!

The weather continues weirdly—a few days in the 50s and even 60s, followed by a return to the 20s and 30s. Continue to protect your bonsai from abrupt fluctuations in temperature. As mentioned last month, if you keep your collection in a shed or unheated garage, continue to be watchful of warm spells—a few days in the 50s could have your bonsai breaking bud, only to have them freeze in the next (inevitable) cold snap!

February remains a good time to assess the design of your deciduous trees and wire your evergreen trees, to plan your repotting schedule, mix or purchase bonsai soil, clean up and sharpen your tools, read some good books and periodicals, and travel the countryside looking for suitable material from the field.

Watering, when needed, should be limited to keeping the soil slightly moist. Remember, leafless trees need less water, but don't allow the soil to dry out completely! This holds true throughout the winter months.

Remember, winter protection is chiefly concerned with: (a) preventing the soil from repeatedly freezing and thawing; (b) preventing wind from dehydrating the upper portion of the plant; and (c) preventing the soil from drying out completely. You may also have to concern yourself with rodents that sometimes feed on the bark of dormant trees. Wiring may be performed on most conifers during the winter months, but deciduous trees are often too brittle to survive branch-bending, so postpone wiring on leafy trees until spring. [JM]

Now is a good time to begin putting together your bonsai compost. A suggested combination would be 1/3 peat, 1/3 garden compost, 1/3 sand or grit, and a slow-release fertilizer (about a handful per 5 gallons). Towards the end of the month, if there are any brief mild spells, it is time to repot and wire those deciduous trees. It is also possible to lift trees from the ground and do some undercutting. Leave evergreens until later. Branch pruning of deciduous and evergreen trees can be done (except Japanese maples and pines). Any major redesign and reshaping of trees can be done now. Pines and evergreens can be grafted now. [DY]

Dues are Always Welcome!

Dues are normally collected at the September meeting. If you haven't yet paid up, please bring cash or check to **club treasurer Rick Myers**, or mail it to his address on the last page of this newsletter. Annual membership remains at \$40 for individual, \$50 family membership, and helps support club activities such as hosting touring experts.

Save and Bring In Your Discarded Copper Bonsai Wire

Please remember to save and bring in those wire clippings. **It helps if you cut your wire into short (3-6 inch) lengths, as it packs more easily for transport and sale.** About once a year we bring them to a scrap metal dealer and swap them for cash. It's usually about enough to equal one or two paid memberships, so it really does help keep the GSBS afloat.



Keep those Topic Suggestions Coming!

A reminder to feel free to send your ideas and topic suggestions to any of the Board Members listed at the back of this newsletter. GSBS is always looking for new and interesting topics that will appeal to the various educational needs of our diverse membership. The club exists for you, so don't be shy with your recommendations.

We especially welcome volunteers who wish to plan and lead presentations and workshops, so that the club may benefit from the wide array of experience contained within our membership.

Visit our webpage at <http://www.arboretumfriends.org/gsbonsai/>

Novices and non-members always welcome!

Come and plan to get your hands dirty!

Calendar of Events for 2020

We still have several open slots in our 2020 calendar. Please email any of our club officers with suggestions—we want to plan meetings that will benefit you and cater to your interests!

*** No meeting in February**

March 10th (Tuesday, 6:30-9:30 PM). **Topic to be determined. We will also be selecting our 3 trees to represent GSBS at this year's MABS Spring Festival. Details as we get closer.**

April 14th (Tuesday, 6:30-9:30 PM) **Soils and Repotting Workshop.**

April 17th-19th Mid-Atlantic Bonsai Societies' Spring Festival, Holiday Inn Harrisburg/Hershey PA. For details go to www.midatlanticbonsai.org.

April 21st (Tuesday) **Daytime (paid) workshop with guest artist SUTHIN SUKOSOLVISIT, fresh from MABS, evening presentation with same. Details as we get them!**

May 12th (Tuesday, 6:30-9:30 PM). **Topic to be determined.**

May 31st (**SUNDAY**, 9:00 AM – 4:30 PM). **ANNUAL BONSAI OPEN HOUSE.**

*** No meeting in June**

July 14th (Tuesday, 6:30-9:30 PM). **Topic to be determined.**

August: Annual Club Picnic. Date and location to be determined.

GSBS Contact Information:

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Past President: Diego E Pablos
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Vice President: **Position Open**

Secretary: Mark Schmuck lofty235@verizon.net

Treasurer: Rick Myers spruce80@verizon.net
80 Kenvil Ave
Succasunna N J
07876

Newsletter: John Michalski huonia@aol.com

Club Information

Location:

The Frelinghuysen Arboretum
353 East Hanover Ave,
Morristown, NJ 07962

Date:

Usually the second Tuesday of each
Month, (check our website for
special dates and locations)

Time: 6:30 – 9:30 pm

**Remember to check our website
(<http://www.arboretumfriends.org/gsbonsai/index.htm>) for
special events, dates, updates
and latest information.**

Great Swamp Bonsai Society

c/o John Michalski
223 Mount Kemble Ave., Morristown, NJ 07960

Great Swamp Bonsai Society Membership Registration:

Send to:

GSBS c/o Rick Myers **New** **Renewal**
80 Kenvil Avenue
Succasunna, NJ 07876. **Individual (\$40.00)** **Family (\$50.00)**

Name(s): _____ **Email:** _____

Address: _____ **Phone:** (_____) _____

If Family Membership, please list other members:
