



Great Swamp Bonsai Society

Next meeting: **TUESDAY, July 10th**

Topic: What Are You Working On Today?

July 2018 Newsletter

Looking Back: Our Annual Bonsai Open House !

Sunday, June 3rd, was our annual **Bonsai Open House**, which was held in the upstairs lecture hall of the Haggerty Education Center (our usual building). The show was open to the public from 10:00 AM to 3:30 PM. Club members arrived by 9:00 AM, to help set up. We were joined by **Deep Cut Bonsai Society** member **Brian Cairns** (www.bonsaidreams.net), who set up an extensive vendor table offering tools, books, magazines, pots, and bonsai soil. Club member **Fred Aufschläger**, assisted by his daughter Liesl, offered a variety of Fred's own hand-crafted bonsai pots as well.



Club turnout was good, with upwards of 40 trees on display—everything from starters that had only just been worked on for the first time, to breath-taking show trees worthy of the finest international competition. **Fred Aufschläger** won **Best In Show** with his sublime Korean Hornbeam; **John Michalski** won the **President's Award** with his yamadori Northern White Cedar (*Arborvitae*); and **Mark Schmuck** won the **People's Choice Award** with his spectacular forest planting of Chinese Elm, Pink Azalea, and Boxwood. All the trees on display contributed to an excellent show with representatives of everyone from beginners to experienced old-timers.



(Above) **Fred Aufschläger's** display of pots, with vendor **Brian Cairns'** vendor tables in the background.

(Right) **Mark Schmuck** and **Evan DeAngelis** work on a Japanese Garden Juniper.





(left) **Fred Aufschläger's** wonderful **Korean Hornbeam: Best In Show.**

(below) **John Michalski's** yamadori **Northern White Cedar (Arborvitae): President's Choice.**



(left) **Kerry Heck's** elegant **American Wisteria.**

(below) **Mark Schmuck's** enchanting **Forest Planting (Chinese Elm, Azalea, Boxwood): People's Choice.**



Turnout from the visiting public was modest but steady. (We will dedicate more effort next spring toward generating greater visibility among the gardening community and the general public, something we have often discussed but have rarely achieved—stay tuned.)



This month's meeting: What Are You Working On Today?

Our next meeting will be Tuesday, July 10th, at the usual evening meeting time (6:30-9:30 PM) and place (downstairs classroom at the Haggerty Education Center, Frelinghuysen Arboretum). We encourage you to bring in one or more bonsai that you are working with at present—whether it's a tree/design that you're particularly happy with, something that you've just gotten started on, or a tree that currently has you “stumped.” Bring them in and show us what's on your mind.

If you have recently acquired some new material, and would like to show us what you plan to do with it, please bring it along, to share your ideas and experience with the membership.

For you newbies, this is a good opportunity to bring a tree and your tools, to work on with guidance (if you want it), or assistance (if you need it).

July is **not** a good time to repot, but it is a good time for pruning, styling and wiring, depending on the species of tree you're working with. So, if you have a bonsai for which you would like ideas/opinions/assistance, this is your chance to have some one-on-one time with fellow members to get some fresh ideas, and/or get some work done.

As always, new faces (non-members) are always welcome. Hope to see you there!



Bonsai Tip from your Editor: Take Photos of All Your Bonsai at least Once a Year!

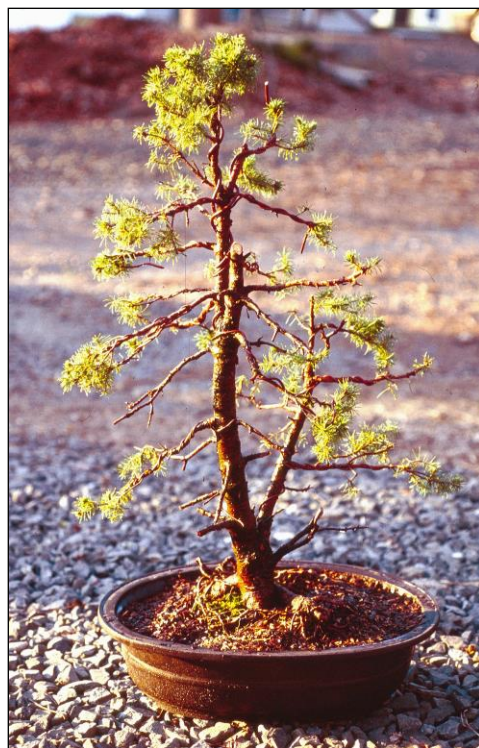
I say this at meetings all the time, but you'd be surprised at how seldom bonsai students take the time to photograph their trees as they develop from season to season.

This is a great way to measure your progress—both the progress of the individual tree, and ***your*** progress as a developing bonsai artist. You may also, from time to time, find yourself delighted at the results of your work—it's so easy to forget how our trees looked when we first got started with them.

I offer an example from my own collection. This series of photographs are of one of my longest-standing bonsai, a dwarf Alberta Spruce (*Picea glauca 'conica'*), that I received as a discarded "live Christmas tree" from my sister-in-law around twenty years ago. The plant was originally about 24 inches in height, not counting the pot.

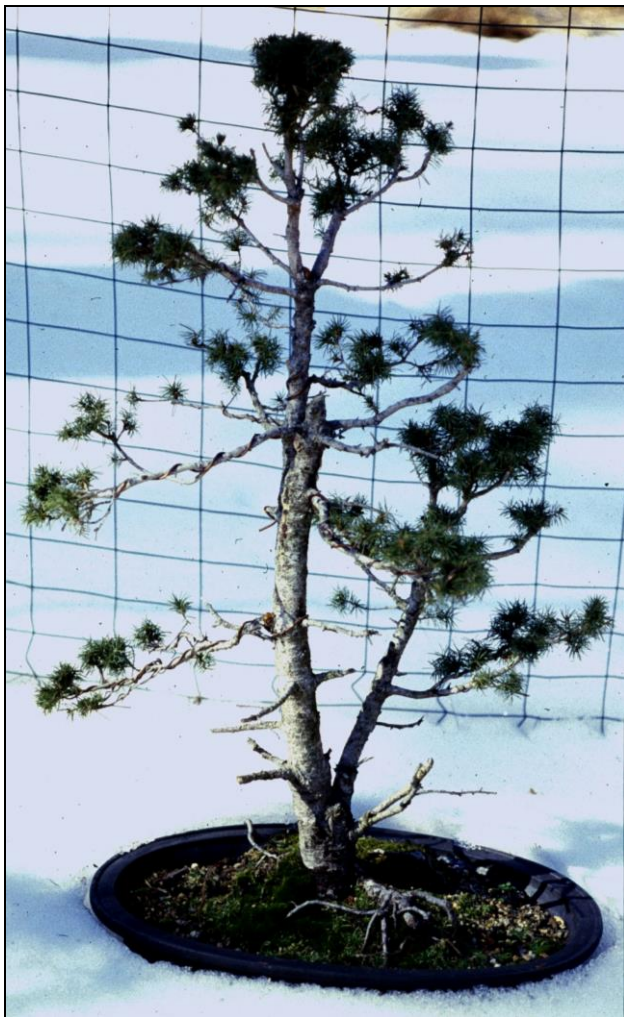
The first photo (1996) shows the tree soon after I reduced its root ball and fit it into a glazed green oval bonsai pot. Just about all I had done with the tree over the past season was to remove the conical apex and thin a few of the lower branches.

The second photo (1998) shows the tree two years later, after I had removed all non-essential branches and wired the remaining branches into position. It looks like a stick-figure, but I was very proud of it at the time! Talk about thinning a tree out!



In the next photo (2000, below), we see the same tree the following winter. Some of the wiring has been removed, which is why some branches are “bouncing back” upwards. You can also see that I’ve shortened, but not removed, what was a secondary fork in the trunk slightly more than halfway up the tree (which can be seen more clearly in the previous photo).

The winter tree, however, retains a forked apex, which has been removed by the time I took the next photo (below, right), in August of 2002. That middle fork in the trunk has also been eradicated, and back-branches repositioned to fill the void this created. Foliage pads are beginning to fill out noticeably.



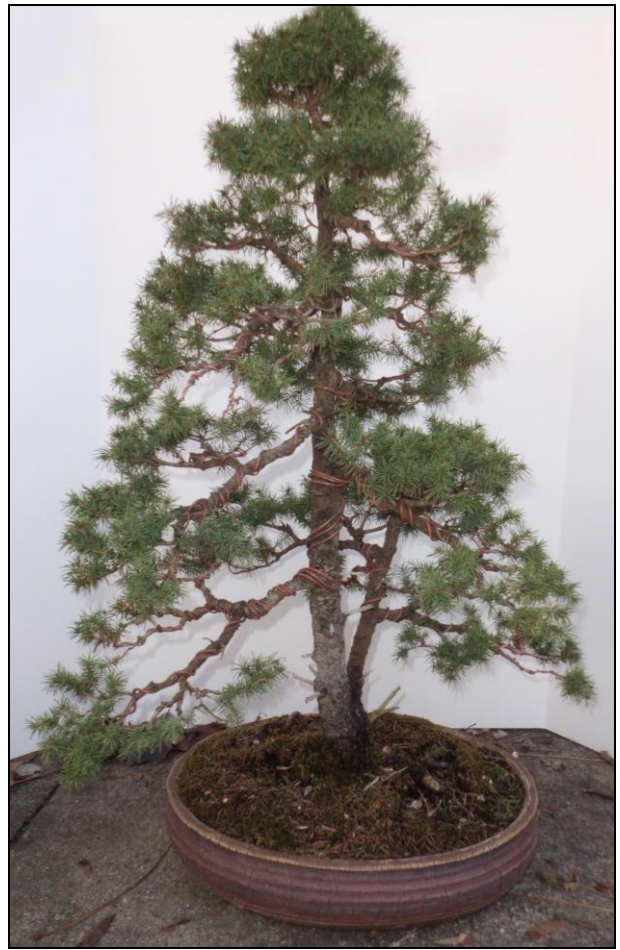
By the summer of 2004 (below, left), the foliage pads have continued to fill out, and you can once again see the result of removing the previous year's wiring—the “bouncing branches” are back!

By 2007 (below, right)—when I had begun to actually *take the time* to set up a neutral photographic backdrop, for a clearer image—the major branches have attained a fairly stable, definitive structure and the tree is beginning to reach a mature form.



By 2012 (below, left), the tree had been given a season or two without wires, and you can see how much progress has been made in the development of full, robust foliage pads. But you can also see how some of the branches have resumed their tendency to spring upwards.

By the winter of 2013 (below, right), I have re-wired the tree to give it back its intended bonsai form.

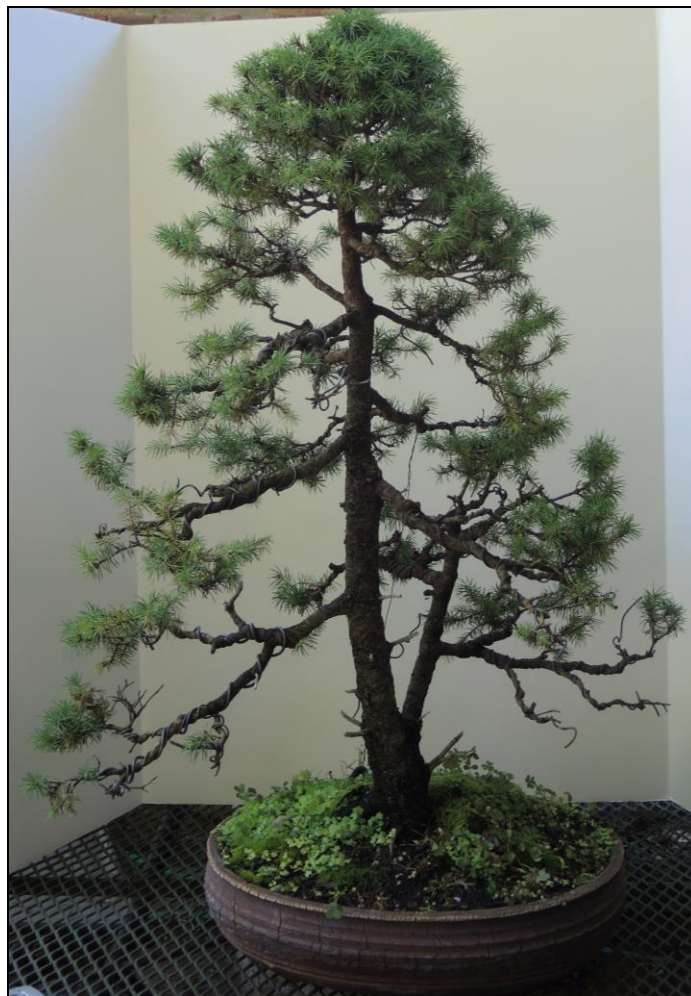


I last wired the tree in July of 2017. This turned out to be a mistake. All of the branches I wired (the lower two-thirds of the tree) dropped more than two-thirds of their needles by the spring of 2018 (see photo, below). I searched the internet (something that I might have done *before* wiring the tree!) and found that Spruce should **NOT** be wired until late in the season, late August into September. Wiring the tree during the growing season damaged its cambium—little did I know! But the tree survives, and in fact every single branch retains some healthy growing tips. It will take a season or two to get it back into shape, but I am optimistic. And I learned something!

Now go back and look at the early photos. What a difference—and I was very pleased with the tree at every stage in its development. But it's having the photo archive that *really* shows how far I, and the tree, have come.

Now get out there and take some photos!

--John Michalski



Plant Care Tips for July

It's generally too late in the season for digging or repotting, though the more experienced can seemingly get away with almost anything. Your feeding, pinching, and pruning schedules should be in full swing by now. Pinch the terminal buds from deciduous trees, leaving only one pair of leaves, and keep plucking the terminal buds off your junipers and cedars as well (Amur maples should be allowed to extend new shoots until they harden off, then prune back to the first pair of leaves).

Everyone seems to have their own preferences for fertilizers and feeding schedules, so ask around or find a good book. Keep an eye peeled for insect pests and don't overdo it with the chemicals! Always read and follow manufacturers' directions, and be aware that plants in small containers are more easily stressed than plants growing in the ground. If you spray your trees with insecticides or fungicides, it's best to put them into the shade for the rest of the day. [JM]

Save and Bring In Your Discarded Bonsai Wire

Please remember to save and bring in those wire clippings. 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.

Have You Paid Your Dues?

Dues are normally collected at the September meeting. If you have not yet paid up, please bring cash or check to **club treasurer Rick Meyers**, 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. See last page for details.

Meeting Dates for 2018–2019

***NOTE: We are working on our calendar for 2018-2019
– suggestions welcome!***

July 10th, 2018: ***Second Tuesday of the month, evening meeting.***

August 11th, 2018 (Saturday): ***Annual Club Picnic—friends and family
welcome!***

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

Novices and non-members always welcome!

Come and plan to get your hands dirty!

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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 Diego E Pablos
289 Mount Hope Ave.
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Dover, NJ 07801

Great Swamp Bonsai Society Membership Registration:

Send to:

GSBS c/o Diego Pablos **New** **Renewal**
289 Mount Hope Ave.
K-12, Rockaway Twp. **Individual (\$40.00)** **Family (\$50.00)**
Dover, NJ 07801

Name(s): _____

Email: _____

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

If Family Membership, please list other members:
