



Great Swamp Bonsai Society

Next meeting: Saturday, October 3rd (see below)

September-October 2020 Newsletter

Great Swamp Bonsai Society is getting back on its feet!

Here is the news, following a “think tank” session hosted on Saturday, September 19th, by club member **Mark Sanders**, and including club president **John Michalski**, club treasurer **Rick Myers**, and past president **Mark Schmuck**:

- Club meetings for October and November will be held at the homes of **Rick Myers** and **Mark Schmuck**, respectively (see below).
- As in recent years, we will have NO meeting in December or February.
- Meetings for January and March are somewhat conditional based on whether our regular meeting space at the Frelinghuysen Arboretum becomes available at that time. We hope to host a **repotting workshop** at the March meeting, wherever it is eventually held. We will also select the trees to represent our club at this year’s **MABS** Spring Festival (see page 6).
- We are booked to host renowned bonsai artist **Todd Schafler** on **Monday, April 19th**, which is the day following the **Mid-Atlantic Bonsai Societies’** Spring Festival, to be held this year in NJ. Details as they emerge.

October Meeting: All About Pines – Saturday, October 3rd (rain date Sunday, October 4th), at the home of club member Rick Myers, **12:00 – 4:00 PM**

October’s meeting will be hosted and led by Rick Myers of Succasunna NJ, who will walk us through his bonsai collection and explain the **culture, care, and design elements** of different species of **pine bonsai**. You are encouraged to bring specimens of your own for discussion, comment, or suggestions and assistance.

Feel free to bring a folding chair and perhaps a snack, treat, or beverage of your choice. Directions and other details as the date approaches.

AUGUST MEETING: Annual Club Picnic – Saturday, August 22nd

This year's annual Club Picnic was hosted by renowned bonsai artist and teacher **Martin Schmalenberg** at his home and studio in **Stillwater, NJ**. About 20 people attended, and it was a great day—a cloudburst in the afternoon did not stop the fun!

In addition to the food and camaraderie, Martin walked us through his extensive and extraordinary bonsai garden, explaining the histories and developmental phases of several trees as we strolled. He also invited us into his bonsai studio, where several club members brought trees from their own collections for critique and suggestions.

This was a great event and if you missed this one, we hope you'll make the next one. Thanks again, Martin and Amy!



Top grill-master **Juan Calderon** sees to the brats and burgers, assisted by **Diego Pablos**.

Dues are Due

Dues are normally collected in September, and may be paid by check or cash to **club treasurer Rick Myers**, in person or mailed to his address on the last page of this newsletter. Annual membership remains at \$40 for individual, \$50 family, and helps support club activities such as hosting touring experts and purchasing supplies like soil and wire for group activities.

IMPORTANT BUSINESS: Changes of meeting times and venue!

As mentioned in recent newsletters, **our usual meeting rooms will be unavailable until sometime in 2021**, if we are lucky.

In the meantime, we will be hosting meetings at alternating club members' homes on Saturday afternoons, from noon till 4:00 PM. We hope to return to our regular meeting rooms as soon as they are again made available. We will announce details as they develop.

Repeat: GSBS Facebook Page / GSBS YouTube Channel

A reminder that our club **Facebook Page** is up and running, and if you haven't yet checked in, come and join the fun! This is a wonderful venue for anyone in the group to post photos, ask questions, or chime in with ideas and opinions about other people's work and accomplishments. To contribute to the discussion, all you have to do is go to the page and request to join the group—once your request has been accepted, you will be able to post photos, videos, and comments. (Don't worry, you won't get "friended" to death—this group is being run fairly tightly.)



We have also established a Great Swamp Bonsai Society **YouTube Channel**, which at the moment features only a few amateur video clips by yours truly (John Michalski), expounding or demonstrating simple maintenance techniques for different species used in bonsai. It shows promise as a venue for club members to share their knowledge, or their bonsai collection, with the membership. If you have something you'd like to upload, get in touch with me at huonia@aol.com. Thanks!

Plant Care Tips for September and October

It is about time to begin hardening-off your trees for the cold months ahead, and preparing a safe place to keep them. For the most part you should not attempt collecting, repotting, air-layering or drastic pruning at this time of year. As we have seen in recent years, the seasons continue their unpredictable habits, so preparing your trees for winter is more crucial than ever.

Feeding: Please note that fertilization must be handled with sensitivity, or else you risk pushing too much new growth that will not harden-off sufficiently before the cold weather sets in. Following the needs of outdoor plantings, it can be said that deciduous trees may benefit from a low-nitrogen (that is, higher in potassium and phosphorous) feeding *after the leaves have fallen but prior to November 1*; this can promote bud formation and strengthen the trunk and root system for winter. Similarly, evergreens may be fed a low-nitrogen fertilizer, until the end of October. Most reference books refer to a single Autumn feeding.

Repotting and Training: Japanese texts recommend autumn repotting for most evergreens, but they also cite early spring for each of these—considering the difference in climate, I'd stick with early spring. Cherry and flowering quince are repotted by the Japanese in October, and we have heard that American collectors who repot these species in spring have suffered losses. Many needled evergreens are most successfully wire-trained during the autumn months, but most sources say wait until October or November.

Winter protection: Start planning how and where you will store your trees for the winter. In a “normal” year—and when was the last time we had one of those?—most of our outdoor bonsai can stay virtually unprotected beyond Thanksgiving, but this holiday is commonly used as a start date for winter protection. If you have only a few trees, it may be possible to plant them directly into the ground, pot and all, but for larger collections it may prove useful to build some sort of cold-frame or organize some space in an unheated shed or some-such. You will not need these precautions for a few months yet, but it pays to plan ahead! [JM]

Watering continues to be the most important task during this month. Reduce feeding slightly at this point, and use low-nitrogen or nitrogen-free fertilizer. September is a good month to take hardwood cuttings. This is the last opportunity to pot up air layerings as they may not be able to root sufficiently to withstand the winter [if you wait longer]. Also remove wires from branches that have set properly and be aware of thickening branches and trunks on wired pines. [DY]

GSBS Sales Table – “Virtual” Sales Table

Whenever we eventually return to something like a normal schedule, we will continue with our recent addition of a “sales table” for any bonsai-related articles that club members wish to offer for sale at our regular meetings. You simply bring your wares and post the prices with them.

In the meantime, feel free to post announcements on our club **Facebook Page** if you have something to sell, or something you are seeking. **(Non-commercial sales only, please. This is not intended as advertising space for full-time professionals.)** This is a good way for members to move along those items they no longer wish to keep, while offering same to other people who might cherish them! So please feel free!

GSBS Swap Meet

Please feel free to bring any bonsai-related items that you wish to sell or swap to any of our meetings. We will give you a moment to announce what you have so that those present can approach you as they wish.

Save and Bring In Your Discarded Copper Bonsai Wire

Please remember to save and (eventually) 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.

Calendar of Events for 2020-2021

Obviously, our calendar is currently a work in progress. But keep those suggestions coming—we will be back on track sooner or later!

WATCH YOUR EMAIL FOR UPDATES.

September: NO MEETING

October 3rd (Saturday, 12:00-4:00 PM): All About Pines. Hosted at the home of Rick and Leslie Myers in Succasunna, NJ. Rain date: Sunday, October 4th.

November 7th (Saturday, 12:00-4:00 PM): Winter Care, followed by a design demo/hands on assistance. Hosted at the home of Mark and Sheila Schmuck in Rockaway, NJ. Rain date: Sunday, November 8th.

December: NO MEETING

January: (Traditionally, this is the month we host our annual Holiday Party and Bonsai Auction. This year it's pending availability of our usual meeting room at the Frelinghuysen Arboretum. **Stay tuned!**)

February: NO MEETING

March: Repotting Workshop / Select club trees for MABS Spring Festival

April 16-18th: Mid-Atlantic Bonsai Societies (MABS) Spring Festival

April 19th: Guest artist Todd Schafler

May/June: To be determined

GSBS Contact Information:

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Treasurer: Rick Myers spruce80@verizon.net
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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:
