



# GREAT SWAMP BONSAI SOCIETY

December, 2008 Newsletter

Next Regular Meeting: 7 PM, Tuesday, December 9, 2008  
Frelinghuysen Arboretum, E. Hanover Ave, Morristown, NJ

## November Highlights:

Our November meeting was held on the 3rd Tuesday due to two Arboretum holidays: Election Day and Veteran's Day. Our featured speaker was our own Martin Schmalenberg who spoke in depth and at length about the Literati "movement" in China and in particular, its influence on the Bunjin style of Bonsai. These guys were the Intellectuals/Artists/Poets of their day and were both politically connected and wealthy enough to be able to maintain their chosen lifestyle. They "did their own thing", rejecting the influence of so-called "trained artists". They were very much into "do what you feel" rather than "do it this way"...

Marty covered the history of the literati and shed considerable light on their philosophy and style using lecture and a slide presentation. Much of their art work was more suggestive of nature rather than being an accurate depiction of it. This makes their art very alluring and their influence on the Japanese was profound.

Several members brought "pre-literati" material which Marty reviewed, critiqued and worked on to various extents as the meeting time allowed. Below are just a few of the trees that were brought in. In addition to the pre-literati trees, you'll notice Mark Schmuck's very nice Azalea, displaying its rich Autumn color...



## Dues are due...

It's that time of year again, so please be forthcoming with your dues. Your club is not able to provide guest lecturers, etc without your monetary support, so please... Dues are still only \$30 for an individual member or \$40 for a family membership, and helps to support our activities. Please see or contact Fred.

## Presidential Corner:

Greetings of the Season!



Our November meeting featured guest speaker **Martin Schmalenberg**, a local but increasingly nationally-known bonsai artist and educator, who spoke to us about the history, philosophy, and style of **Literati bonsai**. As usual Marty was eloquent and provocative, and brought a wide array of information to this area of our art - a challenging and, I hope, encouraging presentation for all.

As we lean towards 2009 (already!), I think our club has much to be proud of over recent years. We continue to attract new members to each meeting, and our fellowship continues to include large numbers of people from all walks and stages of life. Among the new (or increased) activities we've had lately are the **club trip to the Brooklyn Botanic Gardens** with our **backstage tour** organized by club members Greentree and Fred; our new **relationship with the Morris County Park Commission** that will allow us **collecting access of nonnative and invasive species** for bonsai material; and our broadened involvement with the **Arboretum in October**, including a **public beginner's workshop**. We even managed our first **Maine Collecting Trip** for wild larch. We are particularly proud of the work of club members **Juan Calderon, Peter Michienzi, and Jim Gillespie**, who created bonsai that were invited to the **first national bonsai show** in **Saratoga** this October. It was great to have our club represented by such spectacular trees, and on top of that Jim received an award for **Best Display** – well deserved, and congratulations to all! In addition we've received some very nice "reviews" lately from visiting artists regarding our club members' sense of dedication and enthusiasm for the art form. I hope all who read this will make a point of joining us for as many meetings in 2009 as possible, because great things are happening.

Our December meeting will be held **Tuesday December 9th** and will feature our **Holiday Party** and **Club Auction**. Even if you're new to GSBS or have yet to attend your first meeting, please consider yourself welcome to join us for the food, camaraderie, and bonsai talk, and consider bringing a tree for discussion or advice. And, bring your saleable pots, tools, books, videos, trees, etc. for the club auction – and your checkbook to bring something home! This is a great opportunity to pick things up at good prices. Contact John at [huonia@aol.com](mailto:huonia@aol.com) if you intend to bring food or non-alcoholic refreshments.

February (**MONDAY Feb 23**) will feature **guest speaker** Sean Smith on the subject of bonsai stands and bonsai display. He encourages you to bring your trees for advice and mixing and matching with stands he will bring. Sean will also have stands for sale.

January and March are still open but in April we will host one of the presenters from MABS and in May Fred will present a lecture-demo on grafting and air-layering. June is our annual Open House already!

Keep an eye peeled for breaking news, and we hope to see you all at the meetings!

**NOTICE:** If you have special material for this year's December auction, please email or mail me a PHOTO ASAP so that we can get a catalogue online. The more outside clubs see what we have to offer, the more people will travel to be at the auction, and people will pay real money if they see something online that they want.

---

## Upcoming Event Calendar:

- |                    |   |
|--------------------|---|
| <b>December 9</b>  | HOLIDAY PARTY and Club Auction. Please get your best stuff in shape for the auction, and look for supplementary emails from me for details.   |
| <b>January 13</b>  | To be determined.   |
| <b>February 23</b> | That's a <b>Monday</b> , gang. Featuring <b>Sean Smith</b> on the subject of bonsai stands and bonsai display. He encourages you to bring your trees for advice and mixing and matching with stands he will bring. Sean will also have stands for sale. |
| <b>March.</b>      | To be determined  |
| <b>April.</b>      | We will host one of the presenters from MABS  |
| <b>May.</b>        | Fred will host a lecture/demo on grafting and air layering.   |
| <b>June.</b>       | First Saturday - Club Open House at the Arboretum.  |

## December plant care:

The leaves of Autumn have now finally fallen and the fine twigs of deciduous specimens are nicely revealed. Conifers will sparkle with frost in the early mornings. You can appreciate the time you spent in the growing season caring for your trees. Your good work is evident.

Hardy species can be dug and potted into large containers or growing beds. Large, fully hardy deciduous bonsai can be repotted now, but only if roots can be protected from hard frost for the entire winter ahead.

Only rough pruning of raw material should be attempted now. Even well sealed wounds may die back around the edges if winter is severe enough. And, as usual, the Farmer's Almanac cannot be totally trusted to be right! Resist the temptation to begin any wiring. It will likely encourage die-back and lead to disappointment.

Water only when necessary, but check your trees regularly. Wind can dry out our plants as much as summer sun. Our trees are susceptible to over-watering, especially during rainy periods.

Be vigilant about removing debris that can harbor pests. Dead annual moss should be cleaned away. Check for scale, galls, etc and treat accordingly. Inspect conifers for signs of spider mite. Spray trees with fungicides and/or insecticides on dry, sunny days. Take hardwood cuttings and plant hard-shelled seeds.

Lacking a greenhouse, a wooden frame covered with clear plastic sheeting is an acceptable substitute. Keep your tender-hardy trees within this coldframe for protection from severe weather conditions.

Tips adapted from *Growing & Displaying Bonsai* by Colin Lewis and Neil Sutherland  
and from *Bonsai, the Art of Growing and Keeping Miniature Trees* by Peter Chan

---

## And let's not forget: December 9 is our:

# HOLIDAY PARTY

Come one, come all. Bring some goodies and have a ball.

Contact John at 973.829.0094. He will coordinate the festivities and food. Hope to see you all there.

---

## Other topics of interest:

Several topics are still open for future consideration. Among those are:

- 1) Weekend beginner's workshops
- 2) Caravan to Allshapes nursery with stop-over at Rosade Bonsai and lunch in New Hope, PA.
- 3) Preparation, cultivation and design of another Club Tree for future fundraising.
- 4) A new club brochure and improved access to our web pages on the arboretum website.

If any of these ideas seem like something with which you would like to be involved, please don't be shy. We encourage your input on these and any other ideas which might be helpful to our club and/or would help in our fundraising efforts. You should also feel free to donate trees, stones, books, tools, pots, etc that can be raffled (not auctioned) for fundraising. See John or Fred with your ideas.

We also encourage you to suggest ideas for meeting topics and if you feel able to host a meeting, please speak up. We can help you to work out a "lesson plan" to get you started.

---

**And finally, one last plug (for this issue): DUES are once again due. Please see Fred.**

## Contact Information:

**President:** John Michalski - Contact John at Huonia@aol.com  
or by Phone: 973.829.0094

**VP:** Michael Markoff - Contact Mike at MJSmart@aol.com  
or by Phone: 973.895.6287

**Treasurer:** Fred Aufschläger - Contact Fred @ fdauf@msn.com  
or by phone at 908.766.1359  
or 17 Lakeview Drive  
Bernardsville, NJ 07924.

**Secretary:** Ken Olander - Contact Ken at bowhunter444@verizon.net.  
or by phone at 732.202.0677

**Newsletter:** Dan Boehmke - Contact Dan at dann@earthling.net  
or by phone at 973.627.1318

---

---

Great Swamp Bonsai Society  
c/o John Michalski  
223 Mt. Kemble Ave  
Morristown, NJ 07960

