



APRIL ACTIVITIES

APRIL 21, Des Moines meeting 7 PM
Des Moines Botanical Center

Work on Botanical Center Trees

We will meet in the work corridor (use the regular parking lot and come in the south door next to the greenhouses). Be prepared to work on your adopted trees. If you do not have a tree, this is your opportunity to work with other members who have experience with quality specimens.

Tree of the Month: Elm presented by Mike Adams. **Bring an elm-bring any tree-we welcome questions.**

APRIL 29& 30, ANDY SMITH WORKSHOP
7 PM to 10 PM, Magruder Farm

EIBA News and Calendar

April is a busy month. Trees are awakening and requiring attention and time. We have workshops and workdays, board meetings and club meetings.

April 2 Board Meeting 6:30 pm HyVee

April 16 Club Meeting - Noelridge 7 pm

"Wiring" Discussion, demo, hands on

April 18 Work Day Noelridge Greenhouse 10 am

April 27 Andy Smith Workshop Brucemore Mansion Greenhouse 7-10 pm

April 28 Andy Smith Workshop Brucemore Mansion Greenhouse 1-4 pm

May 7 Board Meeting 6:30 HyVee

May 10 Mother's Day Bonsai Show at Noelridge Greenhouse

May 16 Work Day at Noelridge Greenhouse 10 am

May 21 Club Meeting Noelridge 7 pm "Watering and Fertilization"

TIMELY TIPS

I have finished repotting all but my tropical trees and I am feeling pretty smug about it. Deciduous trees should have been repotted by now (before they have leafed out) but you can still repot your pines and junipers.

It is about time to get your trees outdoors. There is nothing like mother natures sun light and longer days to encourage growth in your trees. I had mine out weeks ago and had to hustle them back indoors when we had that cold snap. Most of them are outside again but I did bring a few with tender new leaves in again last night when it threatened to go below freezing.

Expose them to full sun gradually so the leaves or needles don't get sunburned. I start mine out under a big old tree which hasn't leafed out yet so they get filtered sunlight.

It has been especially windy and I looked out the window the other day and one of my literati pines was hanging over the back of the bench. It was barely caught on the edge of the bench so the only damage it suffered was some loss of soil. Either put them on the ground or secure them on windy days. I keep a supply of bungee cords handy and leave some of my tippier trees secured all the time.

Growth has begun on our trees so it is time to start with a regular fertilizing schedule. Nitrogen will promote strong growth so be prepared to

start pinching back new growth. This will encourage ramification of the branches. Phosphorous helps root growth and Potash, fruit and flowers. It is nice to have a few other micronutrients thrown in for good overall growth. I have been warned not to use fertilizers with urea for my azaleas so I read the labels carefully. Wait to fertilize white pines until the new needles are set.

Fertilizer cakes have been discussed quite a bit lately. I do use them on all of my trees. They slowly release nutrients every time you water which is ideal. They need to be replaced about once a month. I also use liquid fertilizer along with the cakes. I guess this is called "super-feeding" but I have been doing this for several years and my trees seem to love it.

This is an exciting time of year as our trees burst forth with new leaves and new growth. Enjoy them.

I once met a man who had forgiven an injury. I hope some day to meet the man who has forgiven an insult. -Charles Buxton, brewer, philanthropist, writer and politician (1823-1871)

ANDY SMITH WORKSHOP UPDATE

Andy will be here before you know it. I have contacted all of the participants about which evening they are signed up for. The workshop starts at 7 PM and in order to get it started on time it would be helpful if each participant could arrive around 6:30 PM in order to get their trees from Andy before the start time.

Last Saturday some of the people attending the help session here at our home asked about observers during the workshop. That is a really good question. I think that it is a wonderful idea to have as much participation from all of our members as possible in all of our events and therefore have decided to have silent observers that are members of our club. In order to be fair

to the participants of the workshop that have paid, I feel that there should be a charge of \$10 per observer.

What is a silent observer? This question seems to come up at each workshop that I have been associated with. In this case it means a person may observe the workshop but may not ask questions of Andy while the workshop is in session. Any questions that the observers have may be asked after the session or at Andy's discretion. We would encourage participants to pay attention to what Andy is doing with other participants and therefore would ask the observers to have little conversation with the participants.

Certainly, observers may speak quietly among themselves and if the urge exerts itself may step outside and shout to their hearts content.

We have known Andy Smith for a number of years and are extremely excited to have him here in Iowa.

Alan Magruder

SHOHIN BONSAI

I am inspired to write an article about shohin bonsai as the Shohin convention in the St. Louis area is just a week or so away.

I attended a presentation on shohin bonsai by Bill Valavanis last summer. He stated in no uncertain terms that just calling the little trees shohin (and most of us are guilty of it) is not correct. The proper term is shohin bonsai. The word "shohin" is the Japanese term for a "tiny thing" so it is not just trees.

Shohin bonsai are indeed tiny trees. The height of a shohin bonsai has been defined as small as 4 to 6 inches and as large as 10 inches from the rim of the pot. The definition in the State Fair book is any tree under 10 inches. To be a shohin bonsai, however, the tree must give the

impression of a miniature tree, not just a short tree.

As I get older I have found that shohin bonsai has more and more appeal. They are much easier to carry about than a bonsai in a 20 inch pot. Just being small does not mean they are easier to create or maintain. Morton Albek wrote the recently published book "Shohin Bonsai". He states: "In many ways, Shohin-bonsai is very much like larger bonsai. However, with Shohin, everything must be expressed in a simpler more suggestive manner. This demands precision. A single misplaced branch, or a few too many leaves can affect the harmony and naturalness of an arrangement."

I have been diddling around, pretty much on my own, with shohin bonsai. I have found that they are indeed a challenge but also a delight. When we visited the Kokofu show in Tokyo a few years ago I was stopped dead in my tracks by the shohin bonsai display. They were at the end of the display which was full of incredibly beautiful trees. They were displayed on special stands, usually with five trees plus a companion tree and plant. Each tiny tree was immaculately groomed and gave the impression of a miniature of a much larger bonsai. I was totally enchanted.

I have since learned that there are a number of rules that should be followed in a shohin display. The tree on top of the stand should be a conifer, preferably a black pine, although junipers are also used. As the display progresses downward on the stand each tree is chosen to "bow" to it's lower neighbor. The companion tree, which is on a separate individual stand, bows to the trees on the larger stand. They create a breathtaking display.

There is much more to shohin bonsai and I am looking forward to learning more at the convention in St. Louis. If you have a yearning to find out more check it out at: stlbonsai.org. It is coming up April 24-26.

SPRING SHOW

The spring show was a great success once again. The weather on Sunday was appalling and we were all sent home early but Saturday and Sunday morning were very busy. Ron Heinen and Mike Adams did a well attended demonstration styling Mike's very nice black pine. Several other members worked on trees during the show and talked to the public. Thanks to all who participated.



Ron selecting branches



Mike wiring

Ah! what a divine religion might be found out if charity were really made the principle of it instead of faith. -Percy Bysshe Shelley, poet (1792-1822)