

*I BA News & Muse*  
*January 2010*  
*Volume 27 Issue 6*  
*Iowa Bonsai Association Newsletter*  
[www.iabonsai.com](http://www.iabonsai.com)



#### JUNE ACTIVITIES

##### JUNE 15, DES MOINES MEETING 7 PM

Des Moines Botanical Center

**Black Pine Work- carrying out a plan**

*Ron Heinen, Helene Magruder & Ed Pogensee*

**Tree of the Month- Black Pine**

Bring a black pine or any tree

**JUNE 25-27, MABA CONVENTION**, Grand Rapids, MI. There is still time to register, [www.mababonsai.org](http://www.mababonsai.org)

*Knowing trees, I understand the meaning of patience.  
Knowing grass, I can appreciate persistence. -Hal Borland, journalist (1900-1978)*

#### EIBA

EIBA life was busy in May. Trees are actively growing requiring our constant attention and care. We had a very nice club workshop "The \$15 Tree Challenge" Amazing what you can create on the cheap, and have lots of fun besides.

Ivan Hanthorne and Bill Ball gave excellent talks at our May mtg on Accent Plants and Developing Elms. A couple of members trekked to Brussels for Rendezvous. Lots of fun, photos, and a few trees brought home.

Also, the club received an order of maples from Randy Knight of Oregon bonsai. Excellent potential, but the trees will need a good period of recovery first. We will work on them with Matt Ouwinga in August. We can't wait.

#### EIBA Calendar

June 2	Board Mtg
June 17	Club Mtg at Keith Carris home. Topics: Candling Pines and Defoliation of Maples
July 17	Picnic Guthridge Park Green Pavillion, Hiawatha
Aug 4	Board Mtg
Aug 7	Workshop with Matt Ouwinga
Aug 19	Club Mtg
Aug 28	Brucemore Garden and Art Show (EIBA exhibits)

#### TIMELY TIPS

This is a busy time of year for bonsai enthusiasts. Seems like everything happens at once. My azaleas have mostly finished blooming. Some people repot them after they have bloomed. I repot them in early spring but there is still plenty to do. The blooms need to be removed and the little stems in the middle need to be pinched off. They have nice little threads on them to help you find them. Then they may be pruned and wired - carefully. Azaleas are one of the most brittle trees I have ever worked with.

Black pines have developed their candles and most need to have them cut. Be sure not to miss the next meeting which is all about black pine care. A lot of the information out there is totally confusing so we'll try to help.

Junipers are growing vigorously now. Keep pinching them to keep their shape. Deciduous trees are also exploding with growth. When a shoot has extended to 8-10 leaves snip them back to 2-4 leaves. Hopefully a new shoot will develop at the base of one of the leaves which is what ramification is all about. Check wire frequently as branches swell quickly this time of year.

Keep fertilizing on a regular basis. I use a variety of fertilizers and switch around so I am hopeful that I am covering all their needs. I also use cake fertilizers which are hard to come by. Here is a recipe from Bonsai Today #71, "Superfeeding 2" by Michael Persiano

3 parts cottonseed meal (acidic)

1 part bloodmeal (nitrogen and iron)

2 parts garden lime (alkaline)

1 part bonemeal (phosphorus)

Mixing solution of full strength Schultz 20-30-20 and water

Fish Emulsion-5 ounces for every 5 pounds of dry ingredients

Mix dry ingredients first and then add the fish emulsion followed by the Schultz solution until the consistency of lumpy oatmeal. Spread over some form of drying tray (such as inverted lids of plastic storage containers), to about 1/4 to 5/8 inch thickness and while wet, cut into 1 inch squares using a sharp knife or chopstick. Let dry in the sun for a couple of days. Break apart and store in a plastic container.

Use 1 cake per 4-6 square inches of soil surface. The cakes are slow release so change them about once a month. Use these along with liquid fertilizer applied to the leaves and roots on a regular schedule.

*Nature is ever at work building and pulling down, creating and destroying, keeping everything whirling and flowing, allowing no rest but in rhythmical motion, chasing everything in endless song out of one beautiful form into another. -John Muir, Naturalist and explorer (1838-1914)*

### **PERFECT LANDING**

(by Larry Totton)

A family in Michigan often requests that I visit them. I oblige them with my presence a couple times each year. Ok, it is my Mom and sister etc. so it is actually them letting me stay and be entertained on the cheap in a wonderful state.

This year, for my first visit I chose a vacation week which started with a weekend Bonsai Show in Grand Rapids (12th Annual Michigan All-State), and ended with a weekend show in Fort Wayne, Indiana. I felt that one of those would likely be "on the way" if I drove to and from Warren.

An air fare watch dog web site sprang into action about two weeks before the vacation, posting a

deeply discounted air fare if I was flexible about flight times etc. I am flexible, and would bend over backward to land on a bonsai exhibition during any trip. The special fare would in fact land me in Grand Rapids rather than Flint or Detroit Airports. So, after landing, I ended up loitering for several hours with my nephew around the Meier Gardens and Sculpture park, including the All-State Show. (Steve was in Grand Rapids visiting his in-laws, and he is into backyard ponds and giant potted tropicals: Close enough!)

This place spared no expense in its design and construction, and is great to visit even when no special event is advertised. But this time the bonsai were the highlight for me. Ten clubs were represented. Maybe eighty trees. The display area is super for bonsai, but I did not hear any of Ivan's background music. Free demos for the public were non-stop while I was there.

Perusing through the vendors area, I eventually realized I was speaking to diehards such as Will Heath, and Vance Wood. Vance says "hello" to you, Fred Truck, and he asked about the "Loto Winners" (You know who you are.)

By the way, the upcoming MABA Convention June 25-27 is also in Grand Rapids.

There was a stop-over in Milwaukee but not Fort Wayne, so I missed that show this year. I did not buy any goodies until I reached Telley's Greenhouse in Warren, where I always find a pot or a ficus (or some miles south at "The Bonsai House"). Two pots this time, which I was barely able to stuff into my carry-on back pack. The little pack was quite heavy and earned me a close encounter with a lady from security (Not the first time, as some of you know, my passion for roadside yamadori seems to attract females in uniform.).

*Laughter and tears are meant to turn the wheels of the same machinery of sensibility; one is wind-power, and the other water-power. -Oliver Wendell Holmes, Sr., poet, novelist, essayist, and physician (1809-1894)*

### **MUST SEE WEBSITE**

Brian van Fleet, a former member of IBA who is now living in Tennessee, has a small backyard bonsai business and maintains a wonderful website. He has just posted the best record of the development of a

maple over a period of about 10 years. Go to his website: [www.nebaribonsai.com](http://www.nebaribonsai.com). Click on "Updated Japanese Maple Presentation!" to see it. It is an exceptional example of great record keeping and photography.

Brian also traveled with Ron Heinen to South Dakota on a collecting trip. They brought back some terrific looking Ponderosas and Rocky Mountain junipers. Brian has photos of some of the trees on his website as well.

Click on Resources and he has another recipe for fertilizer cakes. Don't miss it.

### **HAVE YOU SENT IN YOUR STATE FAIR ENTRIES?**

#### **RENDEZVOUS REPORT**

Several members of the Iowa Bonsai Association attended Brussel's Rendezvous in Olive Branch, MS over Memorial Day weekend. Alan and I attended once again as did Beckham and Martha Miller. John Denny and Morris Daily from the Cedar Rapids club also ventured down that way. We have all made the trip more than once, it is kind of addictive.

We were royally fed. There was orange juice, doughnuts and coffee every morning. Lunches were delicious salads, sandwich makings and roasted vegetables and a hamburger and hot dog cookout. There was a catfish fry Friday night and a whole hog barbeque Saturday night. We did not go hungry.

There were numerous workshops with wonderful pre-bonsai material, taught by several wonderful bonsai artists.



Kathy Shaner working with a student on a Japanese maple



Rows of Japanese maples in one of the yards



A row of Ficus trees in one of the tropical greenhouses