



## Kitchener-Waterloo Bonsai Society



**Newsletter**

**November 2005**

[www.kwbonsai.com](http://www.kwbonsai.com)

### President's Message

Well, another year has gone by in the life of our bonsai trees and ours!

After 14 years of growing bonsai I still have my first tree that I grew from seed. It is the Ficus Retusa that is featured in our members gallery. Many people ask me how long does it take to grow a bonsai? Well it depends on what you start with, I have seen collected material look really good in only a couple of years, I have seen nursery stock look good in five years. But I tell people the real joy of bonsai is watching your tree develop from whatever you started with. Many of my favorite trees looked like small seedlings or sticks for many years then one day you look at it and you start to see a tree developing with bark, surface roots, and branches!

Not only does the tree develop over the years, but so do your skills and your eye for beautiful trees. Success and failure is part of the training process and I look forward to the many years of joy and frustration that lie ahead.

The upcoming meeting is my favorite of the year. It is our annual silent auction and Christmas party! Members bring in bonsai or Japanese gardening related material for the auction. A time limit is given and the person with the highest bid on the paper beside the item gets to take it home. Items traditionally include pots, soil, wire, trees, display stands, books, magazines, seeds, cuttings and anything else you can think of! This is an excellent place to get a bargain. We also bring in some baked goods or finger food for the feast. It is nice to have some display trees to decorate the room and for members to see how your trees are developing.

Your hardy trees should definitely be in the ground by now as the hard frosts are fast approaching. Bury them in the ground up to the first branch. Remove the pot if it is a good one to avoid the chance of cracking. ....continued on page 2

### Upcoming Events

**Next General Meeting:**

**NOVEMBER 16TH AT 7:30PM**

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### Time and Place.....

Meetings are held on the third Wednesday of each month (except July, August and December) at 7:30 pm at the Adult Recreation Centre, corner of King and Allen Streets in Waterloo.

### Zen Wisdom

(sometimes, less is more)

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Provide some kind of protection from rabbits, they like to chew on our little trees.

Your indoor trees will most likely be almost dormant at this time of year. A general rule is the cooler the location, the less water they will need. I like to keep them cool until late January. This gives them a rest period and spring growth is much more vigorous. You do not need to fertilize your trees in winter unless they are under bright grow lights and are being kept warm.

I hope to see everyone at the next meeting and for the people who can't make it, Happy Holidays!

### **Tips and Tricks**

#### **A new Method of Overwintering Your Bonsai**

by George and Joanne Vanner

Digging your Bonsai into the ground for overwintering does a fine job usually, but Joanne and I found that with 36 hardy trees it was time consuming, and tiring and even though we tried to protect the pots with a covering of pantyhose, it was still messy to dig them out in the spring and the pots were sometimes soiled as well.

We have been using a simpler solution for the past two winters, and it works well and is much less messy.

We place our Bonsai in cardboard boxes and surround them with Styrofoam pellets which are clean, simple to use, and can be obtained free of charge at gift shops and other smallwares stores.

Really good boxes can be obtained at aquarium supply houses which get them with shipments of live fish, and they will give away the boxes which are surplus to them. The boxes are lined with 1/2 inch Styrofoam - bottom and four sides - and even have a Styrofoam lid which we discard.

The regular cardboard boxes should have a plastic liner inserted to prevent deterioration from water spilled while watering. We have done this by using clear plastic available in rolls from Home Depot etc, which we stapled inside. However, the boxes available from the Aquarium Supply houses have a plastic liner as well as a Styrofoam liner so they maybe used as is.

We place one or more potted Bonsai in each box on a 3" bed of Styrofoam, then pour in additional Styrofoam up to about 3 - 4 " of the trunk - or even higher if you wish to protect the upper branches. The spaces between the

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### **Gallery**

If I don't forget to bring the camera to the Christmas party, I will take pictures for the next newsletter. In the mean time, here are some picture of trees from our club:



Acer ginnala (Amur maple) in fall colours



Serrisa foetida

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pellets allows the trees to "breathe" yet offers excellent protection from the cold.

We keep our entire collection in a back porch which is screened in summer, and there are plexiglas "windows" which cover the outside of the screens in winter and yet allows some light in. We have inside bamboo screens which we can lower if the sun gets too intense, and might harm the foliage of the evergreens but we are just fortunate in having such a facility. . Your garage or other outbuilding will do just as well we believe.

If you want to water your plants you can temporarily push back the Styrofoam, water sufficiently, and push the Styrofoams back in place with a minimum of fuss. The Styrofoam is not harmed by the water which spills on it.

When we take our Bonsai collection out in the spring we take care to not spill too much Styrofoam in the storage area - but it doesn't matter anyway since the small amount spilled can be easily swept or vacuumed up. We save it from year to year in our storage barn in large size black garbage bags, but it can be obtained freely each year if you wish.

Joanne and I would recommend this method to you. Anything which makes having a Bonsai collection easier just furthers the hobby, possibly saves some trees which may not do as well in the ground where they are subject to animals and severe frosts, and is kinder to your best Bonsai pots. G.V.

### Gallery ...continued



Crassula aborescens

### Mike's Musings

I am very happy to report on the progress of our little newsletter. This month's issue features a great article contributed by George and Joanne Vanner after the various contributions by Leszek Rybek in the past. Thanks for your effort – and thanks for the great articles.

I hope that all of you enjoyed the newsletters during the last year, that you had a laugh or two, and that you perhaps learned something along the way.

And now, just before Christmas, you're getting to be in the spirit of the Season, it's time to return the gift: the next newsletter – yours truly is going to China for a week and will take a newsletter break – won't be issued until January giving you plenty of time to write a short story, or send some pictures, about your experiences. You (yes, you, don't look away) can write something that will be published here.

So don't be shy!

Merry Christmas!  
Michael

P.S. I really enjoyed the recent sharing of bonsai related resources via email. Keep it up!

## Glossary of Japanese Terms

This may be helpful when polite dinner conversation turns to the subject of Bonsai. Pull it out, put it in front of your significant other who has no clue what the difference is between an oak and a maple and watch her face turn from confusion to complete disbelief. On second thought, just keep this kind of talk to our club meetings.

- \* CHOKKAN formal upright form
- \* MOYOGI informal upright form
- \* SHAKAN slanting form
- \* FUKINAGASHI windswept form
- \* SABAMIKI split-trunk
- \* SHARIMIKI driftwood
- \* TANUKI 'cheats' *form where sapling is attached to deadwood/* also known as a 'Phoenix Graft'.
- \* HOKIDACHI broom form
- \* KENGAI cascade
- \* HAN KENGAI semi-cascade
- \* SHIDARE-ZUKURI weeping
- \* BUNJIN literati form
- \* NEGARI exposed root form
- \* SEKJOJU root over rock
- \* ISHI SEKI planted on rock
- \* SOKAN twin-trunk
- \* SANKAN triple-trunk
- \* KABUDACHI multiple-trunk
- \* NETSUNAGARI root connected
- \* YOSE UE group planting
- \* SAI-KEI landscape planting
- \* PEN-JING landscape planting
- \* SHARI deadwood on trunk
- \* JIN deadwood branch

\* NEBARI trunkbase/ surface roots

\* YAMADORI collected material  
\* SUIBAN shallow water tray for display rock plantings

\* TOKONOMA traditional Japanese display area

\* BONKEI tray landscape containing rocks and small accent plants as well as trees.

Size classifications: exact sizes for each individual class varies from one authority to another; those below are taken from the 20th Grand View Bonsai Exhibition / Nippon Bonsai Taikan-ten.

\* MAME bonsai less than 7cm in height

\* SHOHIN bonsai up to 20cm  
\* KIFU bonsai between 20 and 40cm

\* CHU bonsai between 40 and 60 cm

\* DAI bonsai over 60cm