

# Iowa Bonsai Association Newsletter

[www.iabonsai.org](http://www.iabonsai.org)

<https://sites.google.com/site/cedarrapidsbonsai/>



April 2022

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## From the Editor

Happy April, Bonsai Enthusiasts. Repotting season is here. The ground is thawing and the collecting season is upon us. Accordingly, most of us don't have much time to read. Short and sweet this month!

See the Calendar of Events for a quick rundown on what's going on and coming up. See Scott Allen's report for more information on IBA activities. EIBA has a new President and Vice President. We have a little post from Michael Hagedorn about pot depth. We have Timely Tips, an update on the Novice Work-study Group and a pictorial rundown about Members' Activities.

**Please consider writing an article for the Newsletter.** Remember that this is your club! If you have ideas, thoughts or comments, we'd love to hear from you. Please feel free to contact me at any time.

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## EIBA Report

John Clemens is the New President of the Eastern Iowa Bonsai Association. Bill Englert is the Vice President. Jim Rajtora continues as Treasurer and Buck Stark as Secretary.

John Clemens  
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Bill Englert  
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There will be no change in meeting schedule. Board meetings are the second Thursday evening of each month and are open meetings. Club meetings are the third Thursday evening of each month. For more information contact John or Bill.

## From the IBA President

Dear IBA members and friends,

I hope you are all well and your spring Bonsai work is well under way.

The IBA's first workshop of the year was this Friday, April 1, 2023, and it was full with 6 participants and 3 silent observers. Thanks to all for supporting this event.

We still have a few gallon bags of pre mixed soil to sell at \$10 a bag. The long awaited shipment of Akadama has arrived, so if you need some of that let me know. It ended up at \$47 a bag for club members and \$55 a bag for non-club members. Not sure how long it'll last, so I recommend getting some while we have it.



Our next show is the Spring Show at the Greater Des Moines Botanical (GDMBG), April 23-24, during their Earth day weekend. Hopefully, a lot of you are planning to show trees. Please contact me if you're planning to show trees so I have an idea of what we'll have for a show. After much discussion with the GDMBG administration, we will be having a bizarre table at the Spring Show - so if you're looking to unload some bonsai related stuff here's another chance. Ten percent (10%) of all sales go back to the IBA.

Reminder - The IBA BOD has scheduled three workshops for 2022.

Friday Apr 1st with Jennifer Price at my place. 9-5 \$100 - Full

Friday June 17th with Todd Schlafer at my place. 9-5 \$100 – Slots available

Friday August 12th with Julian Tsai at my place. 9-5 \$100 – Slots available

The IBA will provide lunch for all participants in the above workshops.

There is also a silent observer options at \$20 per individual (lunch isn't provided for silent observers).

If you want to register for any of the above, contact me and I'll get you registered.

We still have some of the new T-Shirts as well as some of the old ones, so if you're looking for IBA swag let me know. See attached pictures. New shirts are \$25, the second generation shirts are \$20 and first generation shirts are \$15. All proceeds will help grow bonsai right here in Central Iowa.

Hope to see you all soon!

*Scott Allen*  
*IBA President*

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## Calendar of Events

**Note: IBA Activities are also on the IBA website. Click on the "Calendar" Link.**

**April 1, 2022 (Friday)**

**IBA workshop with Jennifer Price at Scott Allen's home in Des Moines. For more information, see the IBA President's report.**

**April 2, 2022 (Saturday)**

**Jennifer Price Work-study group at Susan Daufeldt's home in Conroy, Iowa. This is a privately sponsored activity. Full**

**April 14, 2022, 7:00 pm**

**EIBA Board Meeting via Zoom. Contact an EIBA Board Member for more information, if you wish to attend.**

**April 16, 2022, 9 am to 1pm (Saturday)**

**IBA Meeting and Open Study Group & Program at the Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden, (Check with the front desk for location within the Garden). Program: Grafting and Air-layering.**

**April 21, 2022, 7pm (Thursday)**

**EIBA Club Meeting: Repotting Workshop. Pierson's Flower Shop & Greenhouse, 1800 Ellis Blvd NW, Cedar Rapids, IA 52405. For more information, contact Bill Englert (319) 471-1594.**

**April 23-24, 2022 (Sat/Sun)**

**Iowa Bonsai Association Spring Show & Sale, Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden. See the IBA President's report for more details.**

**May 14-15, 2022 (Sat/Sun)**

**Midwest Bonsai Society May Exhibit, Chicago Botanic Garden, 1000 Lake-Cook Rd., Glencoe, IL.**

**May 26-29, 2022 (Thurs-Sun)**

**ABS Learning Seminars and Brussels Rendezvous, Olive Branch, MS. Forms and details available on the ABS website at : <https://www.absbonsai.org/abs-learning-seminars>**

**June 4, 2022**

**EIBA Newbo Exhibition. Contact Bill Englert (319) 471-1594 for more Information.**

**June 17, 2022**

**9am to 5pm (Friday)**

**Workshop with Todd Schlafer at Scott Allen's home in Des Moines. For more information, see the IBA President's report. Contact Scott Allen to register.**

**June 23-26, 2022 (Thurs-Sun)**

**Mid-America Bonsai Alliance Convention, Four Points Milwaukee North Shore, 8900 N. Kildeer Court, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.**

**July 16, 2022**

**EIBA Newbo Exhibition. Contact Bill Englert (319) 471-1594 for more information.**

**August 12, 2022 (Friday)**

**IBA workshop with Julian Tsai. For more information, see the IBA President's report. Contact Scott Allen to register.**

**August 14, 2022 (Sunday)**

**Iowa State Fair Show**

**August 22, 2022 (Sunday)**

**EIBA Newbo Exhibition. Contact Bill Englert (319) 471-1594 for more information.**

**August 19-21, 2022 (Thurs-Sun)**

**Midwest Bonsai Society August Exhibition, Chicago Botanic Garden, 1000 Lake-Cook Rd., Glencoe, IL.**



## Pot Depth—Don't Cut it Close!

Michael Hagedorn

The guideline runs: pot depth should equal trunk diameter. This, though, is an aesthetic guideline. Many bonsai prefer a deeper pot.

A deep pot is like sneakers. Good for romping around in. The high heels and dress shoes are for primp, kept in the closet with the shallow show pots for special days.

There are species preferences in pot depth, shared in the following photos:



*This Japanese White Pine bunjin is mounded. This adds additional depth to a pot already twice as deep as the thickest trunk. Pines are happiest in deeper pots.  
(Photo courtesy Bonsai Empire.)*



*The guideline works better with maples. The pot is as deep as the thickest trunk—a great show pot, and with care can function as a year-round pot. Slightly upsizing this pot would allow greater ease of care and plant vigor.  
(Shishigashira Japanese Maple in April)  
(Photo by the Omiya Bonsai Art Museum)*



*Shore Pine with a trunk girth half the depth of the pot—a good year-round growing pot.*





*A Japanese Maple 'Beni-kawa' in a shallow pot. (This is an oval pot, photographed from the side.) Maples grow well in shallow pots year-round.*



*Shrubs are another matter. They do better in deeper pots. I don't recommend growing Chojubai or Azaleas in shallow pots. Most of my Chojubai are in much deeper pots than this one. This one only works horticulturally as a year-round pot because the soil is mounded.*



*Skinny-trunked azalea in a deep pot.  
(Photo courtesy Andrew Robson.)*



*Another Chojubai. Deeper pots offer easier year-round shrub care.*





*Carmen, my current apprentice, demonstrating proper wand technique. (Actually what I want you to notice is this Azalea's largest trunk is about half the diameter of the pot depth. A good year-round growing pot.)*



*John Eads, past apprentice, with Carmen, both clearly excited by this azalea trunk's girth being half the depth of the pot. (even though flowers are hiding it)*



*A favorite photo of my teacher, Mr. Shinji Suzuki. This photo is from ages ago. Maybe 2004. He's sitting next to a Cotoneaster in a pot twice as deep as the trunk girth. A good pot to grow in year-round.*



*Once you reach this girth, the pot depth can be similar to trunk girth and all is well in shrub land. Deep pots offer better drainage to a greater percentage of the soil mass.*



## NOVICE WORK-STUDY GROUP

**The first organizational meeting of the Novice work-study group will be Saturday, April 23, 2022 during the Spring show at The Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden at 11:00 AM. Please gather in the exhibition hall at that time.**

This new program is intended to provide an answer to the first of those challenges. The program is open to IBA and EIBA members and is intended to take Novice practitioners through the first five years of their bonsai practice - but the program is open to anyone who feels the need to start again at the beginning. This is NOT a substitute for regular club meetings, but is intended to provide structure and more intensive assistance for those who need it.

Participants will learn, first, how to keep their trees alive and healthy and, secondly, how to develop and maintain trees through seasonal work, including repotting, early summer pruning and wiring, late summer maintenance, and fall pruning and/or wiring.

Participants will have the opportunity to select five to ten young trees appropriate for their experience level (e.g. Trident Maples) and will continue with those same trees over a period of years. Participants are also encouraged to acquire at least two or three modestly priced more developed trees from other club members or from Dasu Bonsai. The more developed material will provide inspiration and opportunity to work on skills not appropriate for young developing trees.

This is still in the planning stages. The group would meet monthly or every other month throughout the growing season.

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## Timely Tips - April

*Cat Nelson*

April is a busy time of year for bonsai. We're in the peak season for repotting, on the cusp of bringing things out of storage, and getting the bulk of the hard pruning done on most species. If your trees have protected storage this is a great time for repotting. Having a shady area without wind, direct sunlight or exposure to freezing temps is the best for post-repotting recovery. If your trees are overwintered outside you have another month to wait until you can start.

This is the time to watch temperatures. Conifers can be brought outside if daytime temps are consistently above 50-55F, as long as the lows at night only flirt with freezing and the tree hasn't been freshly repotted. Remember, 45F is approximately the cut-off for when it's warm enough for photosynthesis to happen, so if the temps are not much above that the tree isn't going to do much even in full sun. While mature needles are winter hardy, newly pushing candles can be damaged by frost and freezing temperatures, so care must be taken that they're only going out when it's going to benefit them.



Deciduous trees don't need to be outside until they have leaves, but once the leaves start growing you want to avoid freezing temperatures to protect the delicate new foliage. This can be a bit of a gamble in the midwest, and I will hold off taking my trees out of storage until later in the month when the chances of hard frosts are less. Newly repotted trees need to stay in, even if buds are breaking - you don't want freshly stressed roots to be pressured to provide more moisture than they can handle immediately post-repotting. Cool, shady areas can slow leaf emergence to provide some recovering time before the critical period of growth starts that needs full sun exposure.

Fertilizer will depend on what development stage your tree is in. You want to avoid fertilizer on freshly repotted trees so as not to burn delicate new roots. Trees early in their development can get fed as soon as leaves appear. This helps to push heavy spring growth. Trees in refinement stage should begin light feeding later in the month. Regular fertilization is a component of developing fine ramification; how much you feed is a factor in controlling how heavily a tree grows. Fertilizer is only utilized when temps are above 50F, closer to 60F, so it is wasted if applied when temperatures are still too low for absorption.

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## **Members Activities**

*Susan Daufeldt*

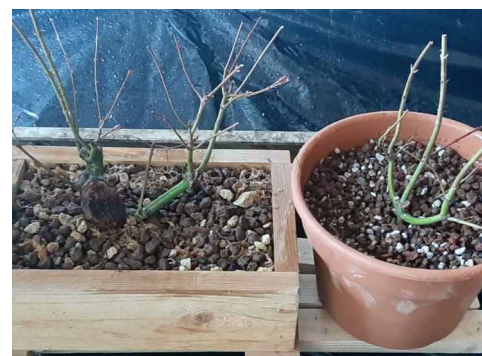


Look at what's coming up! Dan Morton will be separating and potting up this air-layered hornbeam at the IBA meeting in April.



He has also prepared a really interesting pot for this air-layer.

In March, Dan Morton separated and potted up some Japanese Maple air-layers.

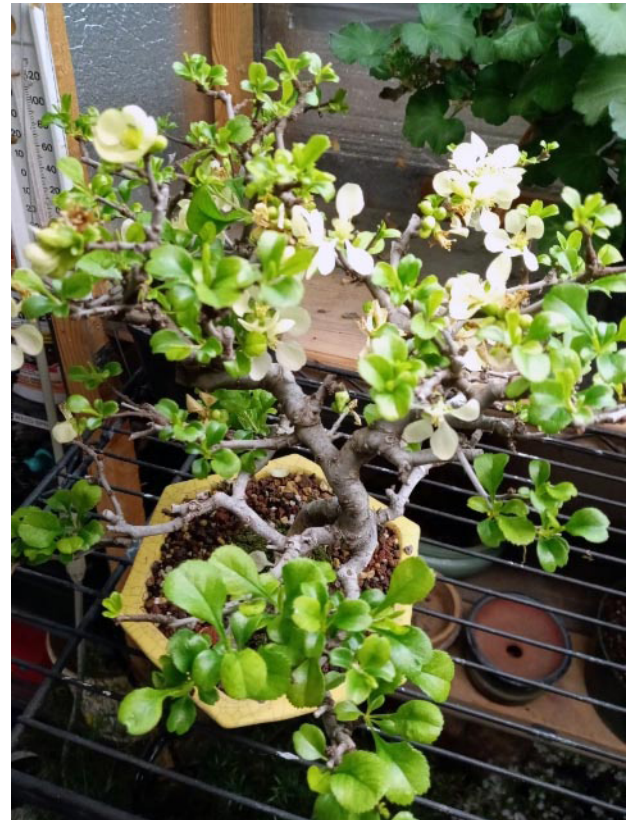






EIBA Member Bill Englert has been styling his Ponderosa Pines.

EIBA Member Bill Englert's Yellow Flowering Chojubai.



EIBA Member Bill Englert's Orange Flowering Chojubai.







*Fuji Cherry coming into full bloom – snow white flowers.*



*Fuji Cherry – blossoms beginning to show a hint of pink.*



*Fuji Cherry – As time passes, the blossoms continue to turn.*



*Fuji Cherry – dark pink blossoms; the tree is beginning to leaf out.*



## Pictures From the IBA March Meeting



Dan Morton Discusses a Ficus with a Club Member.

Dave Lowman works on a Pine.



Dave Richmond wires one of his Ficus.







Tim Peterson helps Jared Wall repot a pair of Korean Hornbeams.



Ron Heinen helps a new IBA club member, Michael Lee style a ficus.



Ron Heinen and Chris Martin discuss a very old Chinese Elm.

*Susan Daufeldt*

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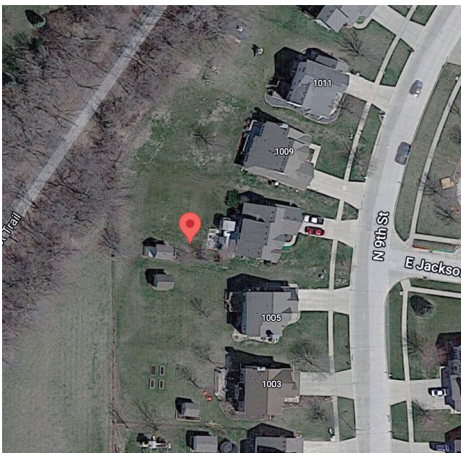
Send me a picture or two - even if you have already contributed.

Or just a few lines about what's going on with your trees!



**Bonsai Inspiration**  
*David Richmond*

This photographic image was captured on the morning of March 20, at 7:30 AM Central Standard Time. Imagine this scene as a Penjing Landscape.



You can find this imaginary landscape here,  
 $41^{\circ}22'11.3''\text{N}-93^{\circ}32'53.0''\text{W}$   
(See location indicated on the satellite photograph).

This year Shunbun no Hi, or Vernal Equinox Day, was celebrated on Saturday, March 20th. The spring equinox is the time of the year when the length of day and night is nearly equal. In Japanese culture this is a magical day. Spring Day (Shunbun no hi) in Japan is a celebration of the arrival of Spring and the end of the cold season. It is the official beginning of the cherry blossom season.

Shunbun no Hi is not only a celebration of Nature, but also time to honor the spirits of ones ancestors. The seven-day period that surrounds this holiday is called the Higan. Higan is an important time in the Buddhist tradition. In fact, according to Buddhist beliefs, when a person dies his or her soul crosses this world's "River of Three Crossings" (Shigan) to the other world –the Enlightenment shore (Sanzu No Kawa). Only when the soul manages to swim against the currents and reach that shore, can it really obtain spiritual freedom. In Japan, at Shunbun no Hi, families gather at the graves of their loved ones to honor them.

You can learn more about Shunbun no Hi at this URL, (See URL Below)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bTM-YmYiWQk>

Remember to honor your family members and work mindfully on any *Prunus* variety of tree that you may have in your Bonsai collection.

## Bonsai Classifieds

**FOR SALE:** IBA T-Shirts – \$25.00 each. Unisex sizes m l xl xxl xxxl. We still have some of the new T-Shirts as well as some of the old ones. New shirts are \$25, the second generation shirts are \$20 and first generation shirts are \$15. All proceeds will help grow bonsai right here in Central Iowa.



DaSu Studio, [lowman@netins.net](mailto:lowman@netins.net), will be getting in this spring (approximately April 8th) the following seedlings and transplants. Members who are interested should email me to reserve the items they might want this coming planting season:

50 Acer palmatum dwarf - pre-bonsai - \$ 8.50 each (a dwarf specially selected for bonsai form of red leaf Japanese maple)

10 Acer palmatum var. atropurpur. 2-3' Transplants - \$ 7.60 each (red leaf Japanese maple),

10 Acer palmatum var. atropurpur. 3-4' Transplants - \$10.85 each (red leaf Japanese maple),

50 Ginkgo biloba - \$3.60 each, 50 Taxodium distichum (Bald Cypress) - \$3.80 season.

**FOR SALE:** Pumice 50lb bag \$30 , 5 gallon bucket \$15 Need to bring buckets. Akadama (Sold Out) Bio Gold fertilizer from Japan, \$92.50 per 5kg bag. Contact Scott Allen or Tim Peterson.  
Lava - Contact DaSu.

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