

Iowa Bonsai Association Newsletter

www.iabonsai.org

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



May 2021

Volume 79, Issue 4

From the Editor

Hey, Everyone! I hope you are all well and enjoying this rather brutal spring. This month premieres our column on **Member Activities**. Thank you to those of you who sent pictures and information about what you are doing this spring. To the rest of you: Where's your stuff? What are you doing? We want to feature club member activities in this Newsletter!

As for me, I started the repotting season with Cherries in February. Everything was extremely orderly and exact, with tools and all equipment sanitized and arranged between trees and everything tidily put away at the end



Mid April 2021

of each day. Every repotting project was carefully documented with notes and photography. It is mid-April and everything is utter chaos. I can't find anything. I can't get to anything. Bonsai tools and power tools, pallet wood, soil components, sifters, sphagnum moss (shredded and long fibered), all over the place and on top of one another. I can't remember what I've done. I can't remember the last time I took a picture. I can't remember my name. But somehow the work is getting done. I think.

Noah Butler is taking a break this month, but you should look forward to his next article in the June Newsletter. However, we have a great story from **Gary Genade** about his trip to Japan

during the early Spring of 2019. We hope to have Gary do an in-depth presentation, with LOTS of pictures, at a meeting sometime this year. But in the mean-time, enjoy this preview! **Scott Allen, Tim Peterson and Ron Heinen** have been out to South Dakota on a collecting trip. See Ron's great article in this Issue! And, of course, there are Timely Tips.

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Mid April 2021

AND NOW INTRODUCING **BONSAI INFO ON THE WEB!** In the course of our last meeting, an EIBA member suggested that we should share weblinks that we found interesting. What better way to do

hat than the Newsletter? In this Issue, you will find a couple of really good suggestions from club members. SEND ME WEBLINKS, PAGES or POSTS YOU THINK SHOULD BE SHARED WITH THE CLUB AND I'LL PUT THEM IN

NEWSLETTER CLASSIFIEDS. Is there something you need? Do you have something you want to trade, sell or just give away to a happy home? Send me your adds! Bonsai related ONLY, please!

Remember that prior Newsletters are available on the Iowa Bonsai Association website, www.iabonsai.org There's a lot of good information there.

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Susan Daufeldt

From the IBA and EIBA Presidents

IBA

IBA members and friends,

Wow...What a roller-coaster we've had for weather. The bonsai shuffle isn't a favorite of mine but hopefully were done with below freezing night temps.

May 15th the club will resume our monthly meeting at the Greater Des Moines Botanical Gardens. The meeting locations have changed so please check with the front desk for meeting location. Masks will be required.

New Workshop Announcement: The IBA will be hosting a Workshop with Todd Schlafer on Friday June 18th from 9-5. Workshop will be limited to 6 participants. Cost is \$100 and lunch will be provided by the Iowa Bonsai Association. This workshop is open to IBA/EIBA members alike on a first come first serve basis. If you want to register, please contact Scott Allen at scott@vividpix.com. The workshop will be held in the Des Moines area. The exact location will be communicated when it has been determined.

The IBA will be doing another Bonsai for Beginners class at the GDMBG in June so if you're interested in that please contact the garden and get registered.

Also...If you haven't done so already please renew your membership. Hope to see you all soon!

Scott



Scott Allen, IBA President

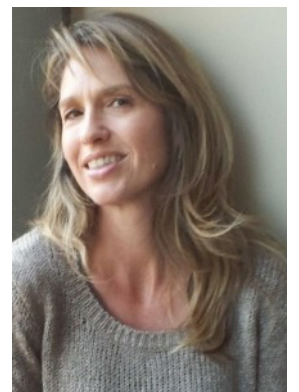
EIBA

May 13, 2021, 6:30 pm

EIBA Board Meeting via Zoom. The link will be sent out the Monday or Tuesday prior to the meeting. Please contact me by phone prior to the meeting if you think you have not received the link.

May 20, 2021, 6:30 pm

Club Meeting: Club Meeting: THE BONSAI BIZARE (IBA Members Welcome!) Bring anything Bonsai-related that you want to sell or trade; The Club will have pots, shirts, books, magazines and TREES for sale.



Susan Daufeldt, EIBA President

Location: Castek Park, Swisher, Iowa. Directions: Coming from the East – Turn right on Summit Avenue NW and follow that road around to the park. Coming from the West – Turn left on Summit Avenue NW and follow that road around to the park.

June 10, 2021, 6:30 pm

EIBA Board Meeting via Zoom. The link will be sent out the Monday or Tuesday prior to the meeting. Please contact me by phone prior to the meeting if you think you have not received the link.

June 12, 2020, 12:00-4:00 and June 26, 2020, 12:00-4:00

Tentative Date for a Bonsai Work Day (IBA Members Welcome!). Let's get together and do the June work. Outdoor location to be announced. This takes the place of our picnic. You should bring your own food and drink, as you like. Because of COVID, we will not be bringing dishes to share and Jim will not be grilling. So sorry!

June 11, 12 and 13, 2020

Possible Work Study Group and/or Workshops with **Jennifer Price**. This is still in the planning stage. If you are interested, please contact me to discuss. If we have a club work day on Saturday, June 12, 2020, Jennifer could do a half day workshop or two half day workshops depending on club member participation. If you want to be part of the Work Study Group(s), this is an ongoing group that meets three to four times a year. At this time, I have one or two places available in the first study group. If there is enough interest, we can have a second group. Study group members split the costs (\$500.00/day, plus shared expenses or \$350/half-day, plus shared expenses).

If you haven't had the opportunity to pay your dues yet, you can send dues or donations to our club Treasurer: Jim Rajtora, 3512 Sue Lane NW, Cedar Rapids, IA 52405. Checks should be made out to "EIBA." Dues without soil: \$15.00. Dues with one bucket of Soil: \$30.00

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Name that Tree

**What kind of tree is this?
(Answer on page 9.)**



Timely Tips

Susan Daufeldt

Wow. We have some wind! And some freezing temps. Remember that trees will dry out a lot faster in windy conditions. Keep those recently repotted and collected trees out of the wind. Spray foliage of recently repotted or collected trees with water in dry conditions. Trees lose moisture through the leaves or needles and until the tree has recovered from the root work, you can help your tree by wetting down the foliage. I have a lot of wind here and may do this several times in a day, as necessary.

If your trees wintered inside, they will have to come back in during freeze warnings. If you have developing trees, it's time you started fertilizing, if you haven't done so already. You may also want to make your first application of any systemic fungicide or pesticide you are planning to use this year. Hold off on the sprays for deciduous until leaves have hardened off. But once leaves have hardened off, you may want to

spray preventatively for black spot just before the hot humid weather hits. Watch for rust on junipers that generally hits early in cold, wet weather. Copper fungicide is a good place to start.

As you start your fertilization schedule, wait to fertilize developed bonsai until new growth has hardened off. Fertilizing too early can result in large internodes and leaves on deciduous and undesirable youthful vigor in old conifers. Don't fertilize newly repotted or collected material for the first month after repotting or collecting. Most people start with mild applications of fish emulsion, but see Bjorn's video (link in this Issue) where he recommends a high nitrogen synthetic fertilizer out of the box for deciduous trees in early development (to thicken the trunk).

Pruning: Resist the urge to prune your deciduous trees until new growth has hardened off. They may look like little kids with bed-head, but they need to do that early growing unimpeded if they are to remain healthy. With respect to conifers, particularly spruce and fir, Todd Schlafer has a really good article in the ABA Journal on pre-flush pruning. If you didn't get your November work done, or you have been letting a tree rest for a year or two, you can prune back to interior buds in early spring if the tree is strong. If you have wire on deciduous trees, mark those pots with something really bright and keep a close eye on them. Get that wire off when the branches begin to thicken. Wire scars on deciduous trees don't fade away with alacrity!

Check wire on your conifers. If the wire bite is more than a quarter of the width of the wire, get it off. It's time to rewire.

If you have questions about tree care, the club has a lot of resources to help you. Contact your club president or a board member and have them direct you to a club member who has experience with your particular problem. Have a great spring!

A WARNING FOR COLLECTORS – Be very careful of poison ivy during the collecting season. Poison Ivy has not yet broken (it is about to break). You can get poison ivy very badly from vines and roots of this plant that are dormant and in the soil. Older vines are easily recognizable because they are very hairy. Hairy vines are poison ivy vines. However roots and portions of the vines that are traveling under the soil are not easily recognizable.

My Bonsai Experience in Japan Early Spring of 2019 Gary Gnade

In the Spring of 2019, I traveled to the Federated States of Micronesia to assist a good friend of mine in his work with the government of Micronesia. There are only two ways to fly to this island nation. One of these is through Hawaii, then taking a five stop Island hopper. The other is through Tokyo, then making three stops. I have wanted to go to Japan for decades. This was my opportunity. I immediately bought a 30 day rail pass so I could spend a month or more in Japan before returning home.

I had several goals: I wanted to experience the real Japan, visit some major temples, and major gardens, live, eat and sleep as locally as possible, and find Bonsai. I had no idea how easy the last one would be.

I flew AirFrance and scheduled a flight that gave me a 9 hour layover in Paris. I did this so I could take a train into Paris, have a meal in a bistro, walk along the Seine, visit the cathedral of Notre Dame (this was before the fire) and just walk around. Surprisingly while walking the streets on my way to view the Eiffel

Tower I also saw some Bonsai. There, on the totally random path I took, was a Bonsai store! I had already started to accomplish one of my goals and I had not yet arrived in Japan!

When I got back to Tokyo from Micronesia, It was early spring. It was still a bit cold and early, but the city was gearing up for the Sakura festival. It dominates the population of Japan. To be in a country where the flowering of cherry trees is a national event/holiday is an amazing experience. For the Japanese, it is a time to dress in traditional clothing, attend celebrations at temples, and buy Sakura related consumer goods. It is a retail and Sakura product extravaganza. It feels like Christmas where all the stores are filled with pink blossom images and every imaginable object contains or refers to cherry blossoms!



Sakura Festival on the sidewalks of Tokyo.

Imagine a country where a tree in bloom is the reason for the population in Tokyo, and throughout the country, to spread out blankets on the sidewalks of every public space under the cherry trees in bloom. They gather with their family and friends, to relax, picnic, share a drink, and celebrate the beauty and ephemeral life of the pink petals. That kind of devotion to the natural world makes it easy to understand how Bonsai could also be part of the national culture of Japan.

In Japan I found Bonsai in many places. Bonsai was in the yards of houses, sometimes filling small spaces that were meant for cars to park. Or on the tops of walls. It was displayed in museums devoted to Bonsai and in Bonsai nurseries and workshops. Fine old trees were on display in the masterful and ancient gardens that I visited, on the streets and in public parks and temple grounds.

I visited two of “The Three Great Gardens of Japan.” The first was Korakuen in Okayama, 500 miles south of Tokyo. This garden was started in 1687 and was completed in 1700, and has mostly retained its original appearance to the present day. This is a strolling garden, which covers a very large area and features wide open spaces, intimate spaces, bamboo forests, water gardens, and meandering streams. There are also structures like viewing platforms, bridges and tea houses. And multiple paths, and vistas to enjoy while walking, resting, and contemplating.

The Kenrokuen Garden is in Kanazawa on the coast about 500 miles to the west of Tokyo. Construction of this garden began in the 1620’s but it was completely destroyed by fire in 1759 and has changed over time. With changes at the direction of multiple feudal lords over the centuries, it reached its current state around 1822. It represents the six attributes of a perfect landscape: spaciousness, seclusion, artifice, antiquity, waterways, and panoramas.

In these gardens, It was fascinating to see the gardeners at work. They are constantly pruning, snipping, sculpting, and building props and lifts to support some of these ancient trees, seeking to maintain the ideal perfection.

I also visited the Golden Temple In Kyoto, one of the temple gardens where I saw small groups of women in what I have to assume was traditional dress, manicuring the moss gardens under the trees, breaking for tea, and sweeping the garden ground. Though on a much different scale, it was a total Bonsai experience for me.

Near the end of my trip, I visited Omiya Bonsai Village in the city of Saitama north of Tokyo. This Village has about 6 Bonsai nurseries scattered through the residential neighborhood. Many of the personal gardens contain Bonsai as well. Additionally, in 2010, the Omiya Bonsai Art Museum opened. It includes a wonderful collection and serves to inform and educate its visitors about the art and practice of Bonsai.

Omiya Bonsai Village was established in 1925 after the great earthquake of 1923 forced the Bonsai nurseries and garden workers out of central Tokyo. I can imagine some of these nurseries have been in business since

then. It is clear that they are very active businesses now. They each presented themselves in a variety of ways. Some were more workman like, and others were more commercial and retail oriented.

In one of the “workshop nurseries” they were repotting very large specimens. I watched them pruning and moving trees that took



Golden Temple, Kyoto. On the left are gardeners in the treetops.



*Omiya Bonsai Art Museum
Japanese Maple, estimated age 150*



Entrance to one of the Bonsai nurseries in Omiya.

three to four men to move. Sometimes they had to use fork lifts. This was not a demonstration for tourists, they were hard at work with very many large trees to work on. As usual there are very few Japanese who speak English, so I was lucky when I heard a young man talking on a phone not in Japanese nearby. When he finished I asked if he spoke English and he said he was German, but spoke English! We had a wonderful conversation.

He was a recently minted Landscape Architect who came to Japan to observe the gardening tradition.

While doing this he discovered that Bonsai was his passion. He was in this nursery to study with the master of that nursery. He told me that most of the trees I was surrounded by were being cared for and maintained and improved for their actual owners. They would then sometime in the future be returned to their owners when the trees were ready to be seen. This nursery was primarily a service provider, though there were trees that were for sale too. Very expensive trees. He was half way through his 3 year mentorship, and clearly loved it.

My Japanese experience proved to be what I hoped it would be and more. It was surprising, it was challenging, and it was beautiful!

Member Activities

Susan Daufeldt

IBA members **Scott Allen, Ron Heinen and Tim Peterson** have been out west collecting trees. See Ron's article in THIS ISSUE!



*Noah Butler's Cedar Elm,
April 12, 2021*

EIBA member **Noah Butler** is having a quiet spring (in the Bonsai Garden – Not so much at work!). He has done some repotting and is enjoying watching the trees break. His Cedar Elm is estimated to be 35-40 years old and has been in training with him for the past 4 years.



*EIBA member **John Daufeldt** collected this Elm on a foray with Harvey Ireland on Easter Monday.*

EIBA member **Harvey Ireland** has been collecting Elms from a cattle pasture near his home.



*Harvey Ireland's Collecting Site
Spring 2021*



*Elms Collected by Harvey Ireland
Spring 2021*

Members Activities continued

IBA member **Dan Morton** collected a large yew out of his yard this spring. He has a number of collected oaks and has been out to his collecting site to check on trees he plans to dig this spring. Oaks break late, but by the time you receive this, I'm betting Dan has been out digging!



Dan Morton's Collecting Site Spring of 2021



One of the Oaks that Dan intends to collect this Spring.



Some of Dan's collected Oaks in the Spring of 2020.



Todd Schlafer was in Iowa in the middle of March working at the Botanic Garden. He also worked with some IBA and EIBA members on early spring repotting and styling projects. We are extremely grateful to Todd for his assistance and encouragement in the Art.

IBA member **Bob West** has been busy this spring. He dug up a Chinese Juniper out of a landscape planting. He collected that into Pumice. He has several species growing in colanders to get motion and roots established. He's wired Ginkgo seedlings together to make a clump style tree and wired a Japanese Red pine to create movement in the trunk. He has Grey bark Zelkova shaped and growing out to increase caliper and a Hop hornbeam seedling that he is growing to establish roots and trunk size.



Bob West's Chinese Juniper

An early collecting trip to South Dakota

Ron Heinin

Checklist complete:

- Google Earth sites/have a plan
- National Forest tags/permits
- Cabin reservations
- Shovel and trowels/tools
- Burlap/tarps/cord
- First aid kit
- Water and food
- Electrolytes/power bars
- Back pack of clothes/boots/snow gear
- Tree back pack



We picked up the truck, the trailer and the topper on April 6th. and we were ready to hit the road the following morning.

Scott Allen, Tim Peterson, and I journeyed to South Dakota for our annual bonsai collection trip from April 7th. to April 11th.



We were able to get out by 5:00 AM on the 7th. Driving across S.D. was not unlike a journey across Nebraska. Head winds in excess of 40 m.p.h. made the drive for Scott difficult at best. However, we arrived early afternoon and drove to our first sight.

The weather forecast for April 6th. Was 9 inches of snow.

When we arrived on the 7th. our site was “mud” under 9 inches of snow. Given Scott’s UTV skills, the snow and mud was no challenge. Although we got to the areas we googled, there were moments of “o-damn” what are we doing?



By the end of the first “half” day, We had all been successful in collecting our first tree.

A long car wash, a shower (nice cabin), and some hot food, and we were ready for some down time and a discussion of tomorrows site.

By day two it was still a muddy nightmare getting to our site, the winds had once again picked up, but the snow was rapidly melting at higher altitudes. Removing trees from different soil structures was challenging. Some sites were straight sand, while others were sand stone with various types of clay. Some were granite and still others had “Iowa-like” soils. It seemed like every micro-environment presented its own challenge.

**There was only one commonality between sites.
The trees needed to be back packed out.**



Day three and we arrived at our final site.

We could not get to the site earlier in the week because of the snow and mud. But today the sun was out and we were in for a beautiful, sunny 65 degree day. The google search proved to be accurate and we were amazed to see some of the most incredible Ponderosas we had ever seen. Scott and I had been here several times before.

It was like returning home.

A sandstone terrain presented its difficulties but we were quick to begin to fill our tags. Most trees were not collectible, but the sheer beauty of multiple century old trees was mesmerizing.



Sunday morning and the truck and trailer were loaded with trees....**And**, a mammoth sized, centuries old stump. Only Scott could lift it. We left South Dakota with memories of ancient trees, (mountain lions) and great times.



As we left our cabin, we were rewarded with the sight of a Ram grazing in a nearby field. Perhaps a good omen or simply a reminder that it is **NOT** only about collecting trees.

Name that Tree

Answer: Box Elder (*Acer negundo* a/k/a ash-leaved maple) is a species of MAPLE native to much of the United States and Iowa in particular. *Wikipedia*. It is a fast-growing, short-lived tree (typically around 60 years) with opposite compound leaves. *Id.* This tree is widely available here in Eastern Iowa. Deadwood is a typical feature. It retains its seeds in winter, which can help with winter time identification. *Id.* I am currently working with one of these trees and would like to have more of them. The rub is that the leaves look VERY similar to poison ivy. It can be difficult to tell a young Box Elder from poison ivy when you are in the field once poison ivy is broken.

*Susan Daufeldt's Box Elder in an antique Chinese Pot from Matt Ouwinga.
(Originally collected by Noah Butler; carving by Noah Butler).*



Bonsai Inspiration

David Richmond

On the morning of March 29, 2021 at 7:09 AM Central Standard Time (DLS), I was headed to Pella. I pulled into my usual overlook to lake Red Rock (see location blow) and as usual I was listening to the radio. Station, 96.3 Iowa Public Radio out of Pleasantville, Iowa. The trees presented in their finest early spring dress as the radio was singing sweetly, *Only in Sleep*, by Ēriks Ešņvalds

<https://www.eriksesenvalds.com/works>



The music was rendered by a group called, Ising, a silicon valley girl-choir <https://isingsv.com>. Listen on You tube if you wish.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MbGm7DrRW04>



Photo Credit: David Richmond

Bonsai Info On The Web

IBA member **Dan Morton** sent an interesting post from Michael Hagedorn on Nurse Logs. If you google “Hagedorn” and “Nurse Log” it will come up. This is for those of you who are interested in planting on old wood.

EIBA member **Jeff Flansburg** suggested to one of Bjorn Bjorholm’s YouTube Videos , Broadleaf & Deciduous Bonsai Seasonal Tips/Bonsai-U, March 31, 2021. This is very good information for those of us interested in

Bonsai Classifieds

WANTED: Opportunity to collect or acquire **Autumn Olive** (*Elaeagnus umbellata* a/k/a Autumn Berry) and **Box Elder** (*Acer negundo*). If you know of a place where I could collect or if you have one of these trees that you’d be willing to part with, please contact me - Susan Daufeldt, scdaufeldt@icloud.com, sdaufeldt@daufeldtlawfirm.com, (319) 430-3822

FREE TREES: Coast redwood. One in 15 gal container second in a 3-5 gal container. Both were root pruned, repotted this spring. Look bad, had some frost damage, but will be fine. They grow an inch in diameter a year if watered. Could use in two tree planting. Larger is about 1.25-1.5” diameter at base, smaller is about .5-.75”. Even though don’t look good now are not junk. **Black pine.** Repotted this spring in 10 gal container. About 1.25” at base x 3’ tall. Is at start of stump growing phase. Hasn’t been grown to be small bonsai. Contact Bruce Pendland at brucependland@gmail.com.

FOR SALE: At our greenhouse DaSu Bonsai Studio, 27887 Timber Rd., Kelley, Iowa we have sixteen varieties of companion plants stock coming in!! Should arrive this Wednesday or Thursday. Ten percent off to Bonsai Assn. members with a \$100 purchase. Come get some crushed lava for your planting needs and take some very cool miniatures home!

FOR SALE: Seedlings will be available at the farm/greenhouse. I have asked for a May 10th ship date (our average last frost date here). Should arrive before the end of the week. I have ordered: 100 Washington Hawthorn for sale \$2.50 each, 50 Malus Baccata Crabapple for sale \$2.56 each, 50 Nanking Cherry for sale \$2.80 each. I will also be offering grow bags (one and 2 gallon size) for growing out in the ground and developing your seedlings. \$2.00 and \$2.50 each per bag. As an incentive free lime sulfur will be given away with a seedling or other item purchase. **BRING YOUR OWN CONTAINER TO BE TOPPED OFF** or bring a four ounce dark colored bottle with tight fitting lid. Washington hawthorns immediately make great little forests. The other two items are probably best grown out in the ground or a larger container. Bring buckets to fill or waterproof bags for any of our 22 tons of bonsai lava, \$9 per five gallon bucket. Call 515-769-2446 if you have questions or need directions, and/or requests that you would want ready/reserved for pickup. Dave at DaSu Bonsai Studio.

FOR SALE: Pumice \$30 for five gallons. Akadama \$32 per bag, \$30 for members.
BioGold fertilizer from Japan, \$92.50 per 5kg bag Contact Scott Allen or Tim Peterson

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