

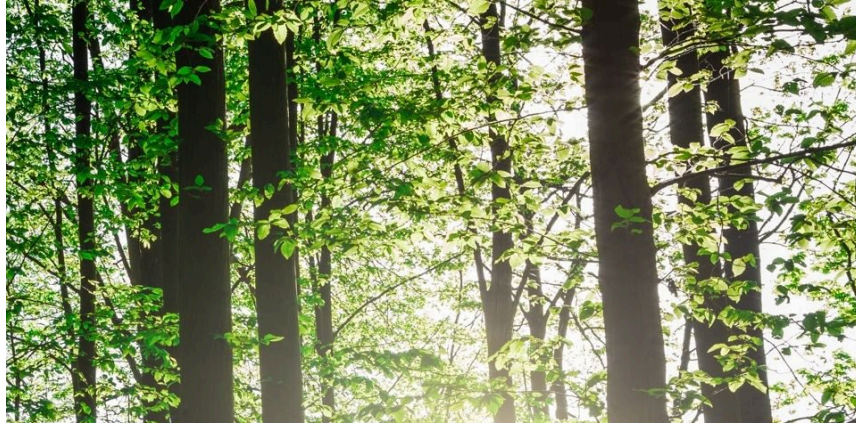


(Bonsai Yes)

BONSAI HAI!

Prairie State Bonsai Society Newsletter

Prairie State Bonsai Society Newsletter | APRIL 2026



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Spring always feels like a fresh start. As our trees come out of dormancy and the season

begins to take shape, it is a reminder of why bonsai is so rewarding. We are right in the middle of repotting season, and I was glad to finally get around to repotting two of my own trees. It is a busy time of year, but also one of the most exciting, as we begin working on and assessing our trees for the growing season ahead.

Last month's meeting focused on repotting. While attendance was a little lighter than usual, we had a great time working on a few trees, discussing techniques, and helping some of our newer members repot their trees. It was a good reminder that even smaller meetings can offer a lot of value and a great chance to learn together.

I want to thank everyone for the support and encouragement as I begin serving as President of the Prairie State Bonsai Club. It is a privilege to be part of a club with so much knowledge, passion, and dedication. Each time I interact with our members, I am reminded of what makes this club so special.

There is a lot to look forward to in the months ahead, and I am especially excited that we will be hosting Mauro Stemberger next month. I had the honor to attend and work with Mauro last year during the first year of his three-year class and having an artist of his caliber join us is a tremendous opportunity. This month's meeting is a unique chance to hear firsthand from a well-known and respected bonsai artist and gain insight that can help take your trees to the next level.

Thank you for being part of the Prairie State Bonsai Club. I am looking forward to a great season ahead and to seeing what we can accomplish together!

Alexander Surlles

President, Prairie State Bonsai Society

FEATURED ARTICLE

Special Events Updates!

Craig Cronquist, Special Events Director

Registration for 2026 Destination Asia Workshops

As most of you have already heard, we have a special guest artist at our Bonsai Show at The Morton Arboretum's annual Destination Asia festival, scheduled for August 1 & 2, 2026.

- *Peter Chan is an internationally acclaimed bonsai master and educator and the founder of Herons Bonsai - Britain's premier bonsai nursery. He began practicing bonsai in the late 1960s and turned his passion into a full-time profession when he established Herons Bonsai in 1986. Over the decades he has introduced thousands of people to the art of bonsai through demonstrations, workshops, books, and educational media. He now has the largest following on YouTube for Bonsai with over half a million subscribers and over 75 million views.*
- *Peter has won 21 Gold Medals at the RHS Chelsea Flower Show and has authored several widely read bonsai books, including The Bonsai Bible and Bonsai: The Art of Growing and Keeping Miniature Trees. He has a unique teaching style which takes the mystique out of bonsai, making it accessible to enthusiasts at all levels.*

If you are not familiar with Peter, go to YouTube and search for "Peter Chan Bonsai". You will find dozens, perhaps hundreds, of his videos.

Peter is based near London, England and does not travel to the United States regularly. Judging from the people contacting us, we expect a huge demand for his workshops. Each of Peter's workshops is limited to 15 participants and we hope each PSBS member who wants to enroll is able to do so before the workshops are full. We will present eight workshops, four taught by Peter and four presented by other PSBS members.

Those workshops are as follows:

August 1st, Saturday morning from 9AM to Noon:

- Guest Artist Bonsai Workshop: Dawn Redwood. Taught by Peter Chan. Cost will be \$295 for members and \$305 for non-members.
- Introduction to Bonsai Workshop: Dwarf Japanese Garden Juniper. Juniper nana class taught by Jim Beck of BC Bonsai. Cost will be \$108 for members and \$118 for non-members.

August 1st, Saturday afternoon from 1:30PM to 4:30PM:

- Guest Artist Bonsai Workshop: Cedar Elm. Taught by Peter Chan. These are yamadori collected from an 800-acre cattle ranch near Houston TX. Peter will be assisted by fellow PSBS member Jennifer Price, who is also an internationally known bonsai artist. Cost will be \$230 for members and \$240 for non-members.
- Kids' Bonsai Workshop: Dwarf Japanese Garden Juniper. Juniper nana class taught by Jim Beck of BC Bonsai. Limited to six kids from ages 8 to 16, each with a parent. Cost will be \$80 for members and \$90 for non-members.

August 2nd, Sunday morning from 9AM to Noon:

- **Guest Artist Bonsai Workshop: Japanese Maple. Taught by Peter Chan. Cost will be \$250 for members and \$260 for non-members.**
- Introduction to Bonsai Workshop: Chinese Elm. Taught by Linda Camp of BC Bonsai. Cost will be \$105 for members and \$115 for non-members.

August 2nd, Sunday afternoon from 1:30PM to 4:30PM:

- Guest Artist Bonsai Workshop: Bring Your Own Tree. Taught by Peter Chan. Cost will be \$90 for members and \$100 for non-members.
- Kids' Bonsai Workshop: Dwarf Japanese Garden Juniper. Juniper nana class taught by Doug Bradbury. Limited to six kids from ages 8 to 16, each with a parent. Cost will be \$80 for members and \$90 for non-members.



Registration Process

Registration can be accomplished online or by telephone. Members of The Morton Arboretum and members of Prairie State Bonsai Society each are eligible for a \$10 discount. If you are a member of the Arboretum you can register online and receive your discount using your membership number. Members of PSBS who are not Arboretum members must call in to register and receive their discount. If you find yourself on hold for a while you may just want to register online and skip the \$10 discount, your choice. Later we can apply for a \$10 refund.

Enrollment will begin on June 3, 2026 at 10:00AM.

Online registration can be accomplished by going to The Morton Arboretum webpage at www.mortonarb.org.

I find going to **Explore / Things To Do / Adult Programs** gets you to a listing of our workshops amongst all the other programs and classes offered by the Arb, arranged in chronological order on multiple pages.

If you have difficulty finding the workshops online, you can also call in to register. The telephone number is **630-719-2468**. I do expect the telephone number will be quite busy most of the day on June 3rd, but we want you to have the option. That line works 9AM-4PM M-F, but will not be available on the 3rd until after 10AM.

There will be three people answering the telephones. I have been told that we can send an email to my contact in the Registrar's Office and request a \$10 refund if a member registers online, but was entitled to the discount.

Two Clarifications

- At one time I announced members would receive a \$15 discount. That was incorrect. The discount is \$10.
- I told some people registration would begin on June 2nd. Since that time, I was informed by the Arboretum that the registration date has been delayed one day to June 3rd.

I will keep PSBS members advised of any updates as they occur between now and registration.

Contact me at craig_cronquist@yahoo.com or at 630-244-0155 if you have further questions.

2026 Prairie State Bonsai Society Picnic on June 14th – Reserve the Date!!

The Society's annual picnic will be held at the North Pavilion of the Blackwell Forest Preserve, part of the DuPage County Forest Preserve District, and located just west of Winfield Road on the north side of Butterfield Road in Warrenville. This will be our second year at Blackwell. Previous picnics were held at Cantigny. The picnic will be held on Sunday, June 14, 2026 from 11AM to 3PM.

If you attended the picnic in 2025, it is the same pavilion as last year. If you were not at the 2025 picnic, we will include complete driving directions to the pavilion in the May Bonsai Hai newsletter. There is no admission fee.

The North Pavilion has the nicest facilities in the Blackwell Forest Preserve. It has its own bathrooms with flush toilets, not pit toilets, running water, and a built-in barbecue grill.

The club will provide hamburgers, cheeseburgers, hot dogs, buns and condiments, drinks (soda and water), and ice. Members are requested to bring a dish to share. Alcoholic beverages are not allowed in the DuPage County Forest Preserves.

We have arranged for Chris Baker, curator of the bonsai collection at Chicago Botanic Garden, to attend, as he did last year. Members are encouraged to bring a tree to

work on and receive advice on its potential future development from Chris or other experienced members of the club.

Last year the day of the picnic was very hot. We had a few fans, but anyone who has access to a powerful fan which is capable of moving air is encouraged to bring it along. Jason Davids has already volunteered to bring a fan or two to move the air around the pavilion and help keep us cool. Our thanks to Jason and anyone else who can help provide substantial air moving equipment.

Questions are encouraged at the May and June meetings, or to any Board member.

FEATURED ARTICLE

BC Bonsai Open House for Jim's 80th birthday



Upcoming Events at our Wheaton location:

Learn the art of bonsai from prize winning artists with over 70 years combined experience. BC Bonsai is where you can find over 2500 trees, bonsai pots, and supplies. Open 7 days a week by appointment. Call 630-386-1515 or 630-386-7585.

Events:

April 18 BC Bonsai open house to celebrate Jim's birthday
10am to 5pm. Stop by and say hi.

April 25 Bring your own deciduous tree workshop 10 am to
12:30 pm. BYOT or buy one from us. \$25 call for more
information and to sign up.

May 2 Bring your own tree workshop 10 am to 12:30 pm. BYOT
or buy one from us. \$25 call for more information and to sign
up.

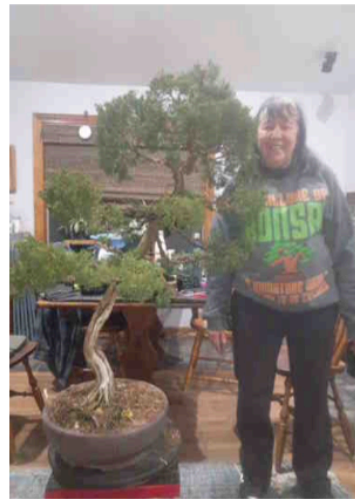
May 9 & 10 Michigan All State Show. Meyer Gardens.

May 16 & 17 MBS spring show at Chicago Botanic Gardens.

May 23 bring your own tree workshop 10 am to 12:30 pm \$25
Call for more information and to sign up.

May 30 Annual tropical tree repotting drop in. from 10 am to 5
pm. Let us help you repot your trees. Call for more information
and to sign up

June 6 first class of the 7 week "Bonsai Basics" course. Class
meets on Saturday morning from 9:30 to noon. Make up
classes available. Call for more information and to sign up.



CLUB MEETINGS

MAY CLUB MEETING

Mauro Stemberger Demonstration

May 20 | 7:00 - 9:00 pm | College of DuPage TEC 1038B | ZOOM



PSBS WELCOMES FOR OUR MAY CLUB MEETING:
MAURO STEMBERGER
Wednesday, May 20th at 7pm | College of DuPage, TEC1038B

Join us in hosting one of the most sought-after bonsai artists in the world, Mauro Stemberger, for a live demonstration! Mauro is known for his unique approach to styling and engaging instruction.

Guest Artist: Mauro Stemberger

Mauro Stemberger is one of the most sought-after bonsai artists in the world. Born in 1978 in Feltre, Italy, he trained under masters including Hotsumi Terakawa, Marc Noelanders, and Salvatore Liporace. An architect by profession, Mauro founded the Italian Bonsai Dream in 2005 and the Italian Bonsai Dream School in 2011. He has been a BCI-certified bonsai instructor since 2008 and served as president of UBI (Italian Bonsai Association) from 2008-2010.

Mauro specializes in conifers — Pines, Junipers (Itoigawa, Sabina), and especially Larch — and is known for his unique styling approach and engaging teaching style. His accolades include a Gold Medal at the Noelanders Trophy, multiple international photo competition wins, and demonstrations at the most prestigious bonsai shows worldwide. He has over 105,000 followers on Instagram (@bonsaidream).

RAFFLE Come to the meeting for a chance to purchase raffle tickets and win trees and other bonsai goods!

NEED ADVICE? Bring a tree to the meeting you have questions about. Members are always encouraged to bring personal trees to the meetings for advice on care or styling from our many club artists.

April Meeting - repotting workshop



NOT A MEMBER YET? JOIN NOW!

Enjoy all the benefits of membership and special access to videos when you join.

MORE INFORMATION & CONTACT: See our club's website for more sources of bonsai supplies and trees. Also listed on the website are fine bonsai publications to assist you in your bonsai endeavors.

RECRUITING VOLUNTEERS

Would you like to become more involved in the club? Do you have skills or other abilities that could help the club? Want to just learn more about bonsai? Consider volunteering to help with things such as the website or emails.

Contact PSBS: PSBSPresident@gmail.com

JOIN THE CLUB



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