



(Bonsai Yes)

BONSAI HAI!

Prairie State Bonsai Society Newsletter

Prairie State Bonsai Society Newsletter | July 2026



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Destination Asia is almost here, and there is a lot of excitement building for the weekend of August 1–2 at The Morton Arboretum.

At our July meeting, Phil Malhiot walked us through how to prepare trees for the show. He demonstrated how to moss a tree for display and covered a number of other details to watch for when getting a tree ready. Phil also generously donated his demo tree and stand for the raffle. Thank you, Phil, for sharing your time and knowledge with the club.

We are also very excited to have Peter Chan at the show this year. His workshops are already full, which says a lot about how much interest there is in having him with us. We still have openings in some of the other workshops, and we are always looking for more volunteers and trees for the show. Anyone interested in helping should contact Craig Conquist at [REDACTED].

Destination Asia is one of the biggest events of the year for our club, and it takes a lot of people working together to make it successful. Thank you to everyone who are helping us prepare. I look forward to seeing our members, volunteers, and trees come together for an incredible weekend at Destination Asia!

Alexander Surles

President, Prairie State Bonsai Society

FEATURED ARTICLE

Special Events Updates!

Craig Cronquist, Special Events Director

Details of 2026 Destination Asia Bonsai Show for PSBS Members

Thursday, July 30 -

Tables will be delivered in the afternoon and we will pick up equipment at the storage unit and be in the Sycamore Room setting up our tables, tablecloths, and backdrops in the early evening.

Friday, July 31 -

Members will be delivering trees for the show from Noon to 5PM. Contact Craig Cronquist (info below) if special arrangements are needed.

Members are allowed to enter up to three trees in the judged portion of the show and additional trees for the Trees in Training tables.

We want to gather as much information about the trees beforehand to minimize delays in registration. We will ask for information via email.

There will be some Destination Asia events scheduled for Friday evening, but we will not open our show on Friday.

Peter Chan, our guest judge, will be judging the trees on Friday evening, beginning about 5:30PM. Access to the Sycamore Room will be limited during judging. Peter will complete a form assessing each tree in the show, and possibly a few of the Trees in Training. The owner will receive that form after the show.

Saturday, August 1 -

The show will open at 9AM and run to 4:30PM.

We will have two demonstrations in the courtyard adjacent to the Sycamore Room - one at 10AM (Jennifer Price with a Cedar Elm) and one at 2:30PM (Matt Mazza with a Japanese Maple Sharp's Pygmy).

Peter Chan will be teaching two workshops at the Thornhill Education Center on the west side of the Arboretum starting at 9AM and ending around 4:30PM. His workshops are sold out for both days.

As soon as possible following 4:30PM, we will record Peter Chan's video commentary about the trees in the show. A limited number of members will be welcome to attend the recording and listen to Peter's comments. The cost is \$20/person, collected by Badar Zulqarni.

Following the recording, we will be taking Peter to dinner. Members are invited to join us. Everyone pays for their own meal. The location is not yet chosen. That will likely be 8 or 8:30PM.

Sunday, August 2 -

Largely a repeat of Saturday. The show will open at 9AM and run to 4:30PM.

We will have two demos in the courtyard - one at 10AM (Phil Malhiot with another Cedar Elm) and one at 2:30PM (Larry Magee with a Thuja White Cedar).

Peter Chan will be teaching workshops at the Thornhill Education Center.

After 4:30PM, PICK UP YOUR TREES. We will break down the show and return our equipment to our storage unit.

Some Miscellaneous Thoughts and Information -

Where is the Sycamore Room?

For new members who may not be familiar with The Morton Arboretum, we will be in the Sycamore Room, part of the Visitor Center complex. When you walk up to the Visitor Center, there is a breezeway through the middle of the building. The Visitor Center Information and Members' desks, restaurants, book store, etc. are to the left. The Plant Clinic and the Sycamore Room are to the right.

Help Wanted -

Some people signed up to work shifts during the show, but we need more volunteers.

Duties include welcoming our guests, answering questions about bonsai, and manning the Membership table. No matter how new a member you are, you know more about bonsai than the people touring the show. Shifts are from 9AM to 1PM and 12:30PM to 4:30PM. Please try to arrive a little early for any needed training.

This is always a fun job!

If you would like to volunteer to work at the show, please contact our Volunteer Coordinator, Susan Andrese, at [REDACTED] or call [REDACTED].

Charlotte Field, our registrar for the past several years, had a recent fall and will not be able to help in registration. We need someone with good keyboarding skills and preferably some experience with Excel to help with registration. Please call Craig Cronquist (info below).

Peter Chan -

The Saturday evening judging and dinner appear to be the best opportunities to meet Peter Chan. If other opportunities are planned, we will notify members by email.

Workshops -

The Peter Chan workshops are sold out, but a limited number of other workshops seats are still available. If you are new to bonsai, you can still register for the Introduction to Bonsai – Dwarf Japanese Garden Juniper workshop taught by Jim Beck on Saturday morning. Also, there are seats available in the Introduction to Bonsai – Chinese Elm workshop taught by Linda Camp on Sunday morning. If you are interested in introducing a young person to the art of bonsai, we have workshops both Saturday and Sunday afternoons for a kid up to age 16 along with an adult.

They will be working with a Dwarf Japanese Garden Juniper (Juniper nana).

Food -

We normally make a pizza run for the workers around lunchtime on both Saturday and Sunday and we will also have pop and water available in the Sycamore Room.

In the Visitor Center there are restaurant facilities. In addition, there are typically some food trucks at the show offering various Asian cuisine.

Vendors -

We have four vendors lined up for the event. You know Jim Beck and Linda Camp of BC Bonsai. Green Witch Gardens from Michigan is a new vendor selling bonsai products. PSBS member Craig Morse, also known as Bubba's Backyard Bonsai, will be selling bonsai trees. Craig vended with us at the Destination Asia show last year and at this year's Silhouette show. The fourth vendor will be Lisa and Kirk, AWindowsillParadise, selling succulents. They joined us for the 2024 Silhouette Show.

Access and Parking -

When you drive in to the Arboretum you should tell the ticket booth attendant that you are part of the Prairie State Bonsai Society bonsai show to avoid paying entrance fees. For delivery of trees on Friday, there is a curved driveway adjacent to the Visitor Center to unload. To get there you proceed from the ticket booths and the road curves to the left to a stop sign. You will drive straight ahead through that intersection and then immediately turn right into a road with a sign which says something about passenger drop off. That is the curved driveway. Park along the curb.

If you are working on Saturday or Sunday, we will need to give you a parking pass and direct you to the correct parking lot. The Arboretum often has a special entrance to avoid the crowds on the days of the show. Details are yet to come.

Questions?

Contact Craig Cronquist at [REDACTED] or call [REDACTED].

CLUB MEETINGS

AUGUST CLUB MEETING

Juniper Bonsai Workshop by BC Bonsai

August 5th | 7:00 - 9:00 pm | College of DuPage TEC 1038B | ZOOM

Join us for a Juniper Styling Workshop led by Linda, geared especially toward newer members!

Some images from the #Naperville Riverwalk #bonsai event! Thank you to all the members that came out to support the club and Matt Mazza for the styling demos!



OTHER UPCOMING EVENTS

BC Bonsai workshops



Upcoming Events at our Wheaton location:

Events

July 18th BYOT workshop. \$25. 1:30 to 4:00. Call us at 630-386-1515 for more information and to reserve a spot.

July 25th BYOT workshop. \$25. 1:30 to 4:00. Call us at 630-386-1515 for more information and to reserve a spot.

Aug. 2nd & 3rd we are closed. See you at the Morton Arb. Asian Festival & Bonsai show.

Aug. 8th BYOT workshop. \$25. 10:00 am to 12:30. Call us at 630-386-1515 for more information and to reserve a spot.

Aug 14th, 15th & 16th we are closed. See you at the Midwest Bonsai Show at the Chicago Botanic Gardens.

Aug. 29th BYOT workshop. \$25. 10:00 am to 12:30. Call us at 630-386-1515 for more information and to reserve a spot.

Learn the art of bonsai from prize winning artists with 70 years combined experience. BC Bonsai is where you can find over 2000 trees and bonsai pots. Open 7 days a week by appointment. Call 630-386-1515 or 630-386-7585.

BYOT, but not this big



Member Spotlight

Larry Magee Garden Open House.

Senior Member Larry Magee hosted an open house this month, and shared his beautiful garden with members. He also gave a brief tour to everyone who showed up.

His garden is structured like a Japanese garden. It had a beautiful path with bonsai on either side, along with moss and water features, which then led to a courtyard full of specimen bonsai.

Larry's trees routinely win awards, and his trees have won Best in Show at the PSBS show at the Morton Arboretum. He has also exhibited his trees at the US Nationals and was us showing a couple of his trees that he is preparing for next year's event. Enjoy the pictures below of his garden and the open house.



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: [REDACTED]

JOIN THE CLUB



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