



Saturday 14,2024. noon

Christmas Party

Ilio DiPaolo's

3785 South Park Ave, Blasdell 14219

President's Corner

Greetings everyone,

Now that many of our trees have lost their leaves it is easier to see the branches, especially the secondary and tertiary branches. By now you have already set the structure of the primary branches and the secondary branches. Making sure none of the secondary branches are growing straight up or straight down. Having either wired and twisted the primary branch to reposition the direction of the secondary branches or removing the secondary branch. Leaving the tertiary branches. With the Tertiary branches, you want to do the same thing. While you can wire, and twist the secondary branch to move the tertiary branches you will most likely end up with branches growing straight up and down. Let me clarify here when I say anything growing straight down I mean if you look at the branch as a 180-degree flat plane, anything growing from 170 degrees to 10 degrees downward remove. Then apply the same to what is growing upward. Now you may be thinking if you do this the tree it will not look as full, and you are correct. However, the tree is going to back bud and new growth will fill it in over time. Remember you are always sacrificing how the tree looks today for a better-looking tree tomorrow. So, when can you start to do this? Your initial trimming of the tertiary should be done in the spring when you can see the buds on the branch. You want to pay attention to where you are cutting back and where the buds are on the branch. If where you are going to cut there is a bud on the left side below the cut that bud will grow out on that side. This is called directional pruning and it is another way to control where things grow and how you avoid having things growing in a disorderly manor.

Conifers, Junipers and Pines, you can also apply the same rule to these trees also with a caveat. You want to do the same thing to the needles. The needles you only want the ones growing upward. When I say upward, again thing if you are looking at a pad, the pad is on a 180-degree plane. You want to keep everything growing straight up at 90 degrees and keep everything from 90 degrees down to about 60 degrees in each direction. All of these numbers are not etched in stone but they should be close to where you end up and provide a reasonable guide to what you are editing to get that classical look.

We all know placing moss around a tree helps to give it a look of being older not to mention it looks good. But also provides some benefits, like helping to keep the soil moist on a hot summer day. It acts as a filter for when you water. By covering the soil critters are less apt to dig in the soil. Once the moss is established it helps keep the soil in place. You can get moss one of two ways, collect it or grow it. I have never had much luck growing moss and find it easier to collect it. When collecting moss, you need to dig it up leaving some of the soil in place. If you take a piece moss and start scraping the dirt from the underside you will eventually end up with some dirt and very fine roots poking through the soil. The roots are not always easy to see and if you scrape too much dirt away the piece of moss will start breaking up. It is a good idea to practice on a couple pieces to see how much soil needs to be removed. If you leave too much dirt it will hold too much water and the moss will drown. Moss does not require a lot of water and you want the water to be able to pass through to the soil, having too much

dirt will hinder the ability to water correctly and moss will die from being over watered.

When placing moss, it is up to you if you want to use one or several different types of moss. Place the moss so it looks natural, do not try to put an even amount around the tree, pressing it down into the soil. This will eliminate air gaps between the soil and the dirt on the bottom side of the moss. Once the moss is established you will need to maintain it, making sure to keep the moss off any surface roots or the trunk of the tree. Moss will destroy the bark. Using a toothbrush and lightly brushing is a safe way to do this. Yes, you can use a stiffer type of brush but you need to be gentle so you do not damage the bark.

This year the Upstate Bonsai Society of New York lost Ron Maggio, Ron passed earlier this year. Ron was a bonsai artist but many knew Ron for his suiseki. He was a wealth of knowledge when it came to all the aspects of suiseki. Ron was a very straight forward guy, with a dry sense of humor who could make you laugh while standing there being stoic for a while, before he would start laughing. Ron was the type of guy that when he would see you at a distance he would not wait to see if you would come to him, he would come right over and start talking to you.

Earlier this year we lost Hank Miller. Many of you know Hank and I were very close friends and it is hard to say a little something about Hank without it becoming a novel. Hank enjoyed helping people and it was not limited to bonsai. He enjoyed making display tables for bonsai almost as much as he enjoyed working on bonsai trees. Hank was a wine connoisseur with a very impressive collection. Hank even came up with his own recipe for Margaritas that had vanilla ice cream in it that were amazing. Just about every Saturday Christine (Wilkolaski) and I would go down to see Hank and work on trees. Sometimes we would spend more time talking about everything under the sun then work on a few trees. Then go upstairs for a “snack” that Mary would put out which was more like a meal and always had a desert made by Mary. Where the four of us would drink espresso, eat, laugh and joke. Hank always made you feel welcomed and no matter what he was doing or wanted to do he would stop to make time for others. He was truly a remarkable person and a great friend who is deeply missed.

For those who cannot make the Christmas party I

hope this past year has been enjoyable and fun. Next year we think we have an exciting program with some great demonstrators. See you in February. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!!!

Scott Russo

2024 BBS Monthly Agenda:

December 14th Christmas Party
Cash bar 12:00 Lunch served at 1pm with
auction to follow.

2024 Board Members

Scott Russo- President

Paul Pearson- Treasurer

Bill Barker- Board

Sandy McDougal- Board

Jerry Rucker- Board

Christine Wilkolaski - Board

716-662-9429 membership