

December
2025

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Billboard

Newsletter of the Bonsai Society of Upstate NY



From our President

Greeting Friends,

Bill and I are traveling to beautiful Kannapolis NC for the Winter Silhouette Exhibition. It is a great Regional event with trees and vendors attending from the entire East Coast and also as far as the Mid West. In addition to vending Bill and I will be doing demos and Sunday morning Bill does a walk through critique which is super popular! Our Holiday meeting is coming up quickly and is a great time with great food & drink (I was asked to bring my hot spiced cider again) and is a Major Fund raising party so please be generous! Next year's programs promise to be special and I am looking forward to hearing our Shohin Study Group plans as well as our Suiseki Study group too!
Merry Christmas & Happy Holidays Everyone!

Mark 🌲



Displayed last
year Winter Silhouette
Bare Larch



NOT a Christmas Tree but a
very fine Japanese Black Pine
from Taikanten Photo by Bill



Accent for this year's
Winter Silhouette

Next Meeting

Tuesday, December 16 at 6:00 pm Annual Holiday Party and Fundraising Auction

Join us to celebrate the Holiday Season, AND clean out your cellar AND pick up some holiday gifts for - YOU! Our annual Holiday Auction is always a great time. Bring wrapped auction items that you are willing to donate - all proceeds go to the club. See more details about the auction on page 3, including payment methods, and more.
BUT, there's more. We'll start the evening with a PARTY to share bonsai stories, bonsai gripes and more, over appetizers and dessert. After sharing some food, we'll enjoy Bill Valavanis' extra special travelogue. You can oooh and aaah over Bill's beautiful photographs, and delight in his many stories and inside observations of famous bonsai folks.

Buckland Lodge at Brighton Town Park

Refreshment Manager, Marti Macinski will provide shrimp, coffee, and individual drinks. If you are willing to bring something to share, please email Marti at mmacinski@mac.com.

2025 - 2026 Programs:

- December 16 - 6 pm Holiday party and Auction
- January 27 - 7 pm Sean Smith: Scrolls

See page 4 for dates and programs into 2026

Suiseki Corner



Thanks to Milt Kilpatrick for contributing to the Suiseki corner this month.

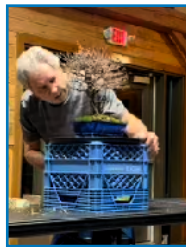
The 2 pictures on the left are stones collected on our club's Tanseki this year.

It has two daizas presenting different views of the stone.

The picture to the right shows five suiseki from different parts of the world presented on a John Stewart display stand.



November Design Studio



Our annual Design Studio program was quite popular this year. Many thanks to our in house experts: Bob Blankfield, Mark Arpag and Jim Dolce. Each offered many fine observations about the trees, along with very helpful suggestions. But perhaps most interesting was the starting point: each asked the participant to explain their vision for their tree. The advice offered was non critical, supportive and enthusiastically appreciative of the trees being presented.

Interestingly, almost all participants stayed until the end - paying careful attention to the work of other folks and not just taking their own session and leaving.. Well done all, leaders and participants alike. Please mark your calendars and remember to come to this meeting next year - the value is incredible.

Holiday Party, Travelogue and Auction

Mark your calendars for December 16 at 6 pm. Our annual Holiday Party and Auction is a fun get together and a chance to socialize a bit. It is also a wonderful fundraiser for our club. Clean out your shelves now, and bring your extra/unused/duplicate pots, tools and more. Trees are also welcome. Wrap your items so we have a surprise factor, but no gag gifts please. Most importantly, bring your cash, checkbooks and cards and plan to do some holiday shopping.

First, though, a social time with appetizers and desserts. The club will provide the ever popular shrimp, festive mulled punch, and the usual coffee, tea, water and seltzer. You can contribute: either an appetizer if you plan to get there on the early side (around 6), or a dessert if you need to arrive a bit later. We'll socialize a bit, share stories of bonsai success over the past year, and bask in the glow of the US National Exhibition. During that time, you can also register for a bidder number. At 7, Bill will offer a presentation on his travels through the year. At 7:30 the auction starts, so make sure you register for a bidder number during the social time. Bid early and often, score a couple of good bonsai finds, and help our club raise some money.

One note for planning purposes: please bring normal size servings of apps or desserts. No need to cook for a crowd, as we are often left with too many leftovers!

Once more: don't forget to bring your wrapped items for the auction. These should be bonsai related, and no gag gifts. Our auctioneer will keep a lively pace of bidding and running commentary to encourage all of us to raise our hands in a frenzy! Bring your checkbook or cash. We can sometimes make the charge work, but not always. And please plan to stay until the end, as it is too difficult to take payment while keeping track of what is going on. Diane Koretz, our Treasurer, does an amazing job keeping this all straight, so let's help her!

And this year, let's add a bit of intention to our socializing at the party by making an extra effort to wear name tags, greet everyone by name, and having a conversation with at least a couple of our newer members. So that you can prepare, these are the names of those that have joined this year: Matthew Anauo, Bob Harding, Dan Hrabar, James Jeffery, Brigitte Klement-Fleming, Norman Madsen, Rick Mergler, Patrick Russo, Jim Sorrentino, Maxwell Stwertka. Please look out for these folks, introduce yourself, and invite a few to sit with you if you are a more 'experienced' member. AND you can help these folks with some advice on what to bid on.

Bonsai and Suiseki events around and about

Every year, Bill, Mark and many others find it difficult to stay home, and go trekking across the country in search of additional Bonsai knowledge and camaraderie. Going to other club events and exhibitions is an excellent way to learn something new, gain a new perspective and meet like minded Bonsai folks.

- Winter Silhouette Bonsai Exhibition, December 6 & 7, 2025
Kannapolis, NC www.winterbonsai.net
- Mid Atlantic Bonsai Societies Spring Bonsai Festival, April 17 - 19 2026
Holiday Inn Harrisburg (Hershey) www.midatlanticbonsai.org
- Fall Fruit & Foliage Bonsai Exhibition, October 17 & 18, 2026
Hidden Lake Gardens, Tipton, MI <https://ipf.msu.edu/hidden-lake-gardens/fall-exhibition>

SHOHIN BONSAI FEATURE OF THE MONTH



Shohin Bonsai, Variety: Winter Hazel

Style wise, there's 2 possibilities, a Broome style with all the branches growing from the top of the stumpy trunk. Two, a Multiple trunk group style. Which ever the style, it has a rounded outer contour, it also could be Square, Triangular or Oval. I am not a fan of one leg in the center of the pot, I prefer two legs for visual stability, but it is properly potted dead center. The dark Green pot contrasts nicely with the bright Yellow flowers, which are the Focal Point. There's also a hint of Yellow in the top edge of the pot color creating a visual harmony with the flowers. I haven't decided yet if the pot is a little bit too deep, but that's my taste.

Harvey Carapella

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Please submit any ideas for the Billboard to Marti & Tom. If you have ideas for the Billboard, please email Marti & Tom:

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2026 Program dates:

- February 24 7 pm - TBD
- March 24 7 pm - Bill Valavanis TBD
- April 28 7 pm - Andrew Robson
- May 16 & 17 TBD times, Club Show
- June 23- 6 pm Club picnic @ Auction
- July 28- TBD, summer outing
- August 25- Bring your own tree
- September 29 - TBD