

November
2025

Volume 57
Number 10

Billboard

Newsletter of the Bonsai Society of Upstate NY



From our President

Greetings Friends,

As it always seems to do Fall has faded fast and many of us have already tucked our Bonsai away in winter quarters. I keep a few indoors just so I can feed my need to prune throughout the winter months.

There is still one more Exhibition this year and that is the great Winter Silhouette in Kannapolis North Carolina. It's a bit of a haul but it is free to attend the event and great vendors too. Bill and I are doing demos and Sunday morning Bill does a walk around critique which is always a highlight.

This month's meeting is an opportunity to get input on design direction for your Bonsai. Everyone is invited to bring a tree or two and hear ideas from three Senior members with decades of experience. It is a wonderful chance to improve the future of your Bonsai. Last month our Shohin Bonsai Program featured great displays and display discussions as well as three demo's which yielded three great new Shohin Bonsai!

Mark



My Camelia from last year's Winter Silhouette



*Bill's Mame
Kingsville Boxwood
Display*

Tuesday, November 25 at 7:00 pm

Critique and Design Studio,

led by Mark Arpag with Jim Dolce and Bob Blankfield

Take a fresh look at your trees with our in house experts. They will offer artistic direction, creative guidance, constructive criticism, design counsel, general enlightenment, hints, tips and pointers, all to help you think about the short and long term design of your tree(s). If you participated last year and have a "before" picture of that tree, please bring it, along with the tree as you have followed the advice you received. Bring another tree this year, and please take a before picture, and then we'll ask you to show us how the tree develops over the year. Perhaps you want to think about a tree you would like to include in our upcoming Club Show in May - now is the time to get that tree on the right path.

Please don't forget our silent auction. As you are cleaning out your cellar and bringing in trees and plant material, think about smaller items that won't go in the bigger Holiday auction. Bring your auction item donations and bring your checkbook.

**Buckland Lodge at
Brighton Town Park**

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

2025 - 2026 Programs:

- November 25 - 7 pm Design Studio, led by Mark Arpag, Bob Blankfield and Jim Dolce: an opportunity to get some design help for your favorite tree(s) with thoughtful input from 3 of our experts
 - December 16 - 6 pm Holiday party and Auction
 - January 27 - 7 pm Sean Smith Scrolls
-

See page 4 for dates and programs into 2026

US National Exhibition - A wonderful success as recognized by BCI!

Many hands make . . . still a lot of work! But thanks to “Bill’s ARMY” - as newly recognized in a wonderful BCI article, the show was very successful. There was also a nice article in The Bonsai Review. A resounding success! Bill and Diane Valavanis (and the “ARMY”) did it again!



October “3 Ring Circus” - a great event!

The title “3 Ring Circus” does not do justice to this wonderful program. Bill, Mark and Toby put together 3 distinctive Shohin Bonsai displays. Each discussed their own display, and offered comments on the others. True artistry at work, and very educational.

Then, all three worked on Kisha junipers, at the same time, while explaining what they were doing. Again, artistry on display, serious bonsai talent, and very educational. Only one of the trees was raffled off, and the other two will be featured in the December Holiday party auction. An opportunity you will not want to miss.



Holiday Auction - great upcoming programs

As you are putting your trees away for the winter, cleaning up pots, sorting out supplies and tools, this is a great time to fine those extras that need decluttering. Set them aside now, and bring them to our Holiday Auction on December 16 (all donations) to share with your fellow Bonsai Enthusiasts. Bonsai related items, please, wrapped if practical (to create an element of surprise) and ready to auction off to raise funds for our clubs many programs. No gag gifts, please.

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. 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!

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: Boston Ivy

It's just a ball of foliage. I need to see the trunk and a hint of branching. To appreciate a bonsai fully, you need to see the base of the trunk as it emerges from the soil, the basic branch structure as it supports the foliage mass. This tree does not let you. I am sure there are viewers of this bonsai who like it as it is, which is OK, but I am talking about classic bonsai. The Golden Yellow pot harmonizes with the trunk color giving a subtle quiet feeling overall. I am not a fan of one leg in the center of the pot, I prefer two legs for visual stability. Being a round pot the tree should be potted in the center, but we can't tell with the lower leaves blocking the trunk. Of course, the leaves could be hiding an ugly trunk?

Harvey Carapella

Billboard is brought to you by:

President: Mark Arpag

bsunypresident@gmail.com

Co-editors & photographers:

Marti & Tom Macinski

mmacinski@mac.com

Contributors: Mark Arpag, Bill Valavanis, Marti & Tom Macinski, Harvey Carapella

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

mmacinski@mac.com

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 22 - TBD