

February, 2025
GLBS Newsletter



Calendar of Events

Feb. 18 General Meeting. Program: Tool Sharpening and Soil Order Pickup.

Waterfront Botanic Garden. 6-8pm.

Feb. 28-March 2 GLBS Display at Louisville Home and Garden Show. Kentucky Expo Center.

March 5 Board Meeting. Keith Residence 7pm.

March 18 General Meeting. Program: Bring Your Own Tree Repotting Workshop. Waterfront Botanic Garden. 6-8pm.

April 2 Board Meeting-TBD 7pm.

April 15 General Meeting. Program: Forest Planning Workshop. Waterfront Botanic Garden. 6-8pm.

May 7 Board Meeting-TBD 7pm.

May 20 General Meeting. Program: Roundtable Tree Evaluation and show prep for Annual Bonsai

Weekend. 6-8pm.

May 30-June 1 Annual Bonsai Weekend Show at the Waterfront Botanic Garden.

June 4 Board Meeting-TBD 7pm.

June 17 General Meeting. Program: Tropical Workshop. Waterfront Botanic Garden. 6-8pm.

Vice President's Message

Welcome to a new year of bonsai. This year started off in January with below average temperatures and above average snowfall. February has been somewhat of a reprieve from the bier cold and snow with above average temperatures. Hopefully your trees were tucked safely away for the winter. As we move towards the second half of February the

temperatures and sunlight are beginning to increase, which means that our trees are going to begin coming out of their winter dormancy. Already you can begin to see signs of this in your trees as the buds begin to swell. It won't be long before those nighttime temps are above freezing on a consistent basis, and we start to put our trees back on our benches and begin the annual ritual of the spring repotting season.

I enjoy the spring, it's the magical me of year for bonsai. The roots of the trees begin to grow and transfer of nutrients to the branches begins. It's the best me of the year for repotting your trees.

When I lived in Chicago I would begin repotting my deciduous trees in late March to early April before bud break. Here in Kentucky I start the process a couple weeks earlier as temperatures here average 40F for a low and 58 for a high. We will be having a bring your own tree repotting workshop as the program for the March 18 meetings. With the beginning of a new year please welcome our new board for GLBS. Elections took place at the December Christmas/Holiday Party. The new board consists of

President - Russ Stevens

Vice-President - Jim Keith

Secretary - Troy Takagishi

Treasurer - Jim Doiron

and board members

Joe Broadhurst

Kristy Tredway

Oscar Mendez.

Thank you to all for your contributions of me and talent. The new board had their first meetings this month that ran almost two hours. There is a plethora of activity planned for the next few months. In addition to the general meetings, we will have Booth #1 at the front entrance of the Louisville Home and Garden Show at the Kentucky Expo Center, which runs from February 28 to March 2. Jim Doiron is coordinating with the venue and we will need to have at least three members present at the GLBS booth. Jim Doiron will be sending out a email with details and seeking volunteers to man the booth for the weekend but the link to sign up for slots can be found here <https://forms.gle/iNZ7UST4reZ1Eh8P9>. We have 50 tickets that the Home and Garden Show has provided the club for members. We will have free tickets available for members at the general meetings. This year the Annual Bonsai Weekend at the Water-front Botanic Garden featuring the Greater Louisville Bonsai Society will be held from May 30 to June 1. Please begin to look over your trees and consider entering a tree in this year's show. I will be sending out a call for entries to the show to the

membership in April. Entering a tree into a show is a great way to learn about this art form and learn how to present your trees for display. Everyone, including the experienced members of the club, started somewhere. If

you want feedback, the club is the best place to get it. Don't be afraid to ask questions. I have learned much more as a result of mistakes I've made. But you have to learn to extend yourself and be willing to put yourself out to do so. We are also looking for sponsorships for the awards. If anyone has a thought about companies that may be interested in sponsoring an award please contact Treasurer Jim Doiron at artdoiron@gmail.com.

There is more information about the Home and Garden Show and the Annual Bonsai Weekend in this newsletter. We have a new general meetings venue. Meetings will take place starting this month in the Leslie Classroom at the Waterfront Botanic Garden, 1435 Frankfort Ave., Louisville, KY 40206. Big thanks to the Garden for agreeing to let us have the meetings there. Please note that the time for the general meetings has changed to 6:00 pm. The February general meeting will be our first meeting at the Garden. The topic will be tool sharpening. President Russ Stevens will also have the bonsai soil that members have ordered available for pickup. If you want to order soil components click this link to add your order to the list. Please add your order by Feb 16th we can be sure to have your order ready for the 18th meeting <https://forms.gle/qMp8DVHvdWmmL5q17>

As you have probably figured out by now, we also have a new format for the newsletter. We are having a challenging time with the formatting in various platforms (Wix/Microsoft Publisher etc). Please forgive me if it has errors, omissions, or a lack of visual appeal. Hopefully this will improve as I work through future newsletters. Any suggestions on improvements to the newsletter or other, easier, ways to produce it are appreciated.

Hope to see you at the meeting,

Jim Keith

Dues for 2025

Membership dues are \$35.00 per year. To join GLBS Membership dues are \$35.00 per year. You can pay your dues online through the club website:

<https://www.louisvillebonsai.org/join-us> or send a check made payable to the Greater Louisville Bonsai Society (GLBS) to 2102 Woodbourne Ave, Louisville KY 40205, or bring a check or cash to the next scheduled meeting. We look forward to meeting you at our next gathering! Your dues help to fund the operations, programs and activities of the GLBS. Please renew your membership as soon as possible.

Discord is coming to GLBS

Thank you to new GLBS Board Member, Joe Broadhurst who is in the process of developing a Dis-cord server for the Greater Louisville Bonsai Society. As soon as Joe is finished tweaking the site we will advise you how to access it. For those of you who never heard of Discord, it is a voice, video, and text chat app that's used to talk and hang out with their communities and friends. People use Discord daily to talk about many things, but it's most widely used by small and active groups of people who talk regularly. The vast majority of servers are private, invite-only spaces for groups of friends and communities to stay in touch. Users have control over whom they interact with and what their experience on Discord is. Conversations on Discord are driven by the people you choose and the topics you choose to talk about.

Update on Demonstration Tree

At the November meeting Jim Keith and Russ Stevens worked on styling a San Jose Juniper. At this month's board meeting it was decided to put the tree up for silent auction at the upcoming 3rd Annual Bonsai Weekend at the Waterfront Botanic Garden. Here are photos of the tree before and after the styling took place.



Before Work Began.



After Styling Completed.

Home and Garden Show

We will have a booth right in the front entrance of the show this year to hopefully up our traffic during the show. We will also be giving a presentation on Friday and Saturday about the history and practice of bonsai. Hopefully it will be well attended this year but it will be a great way to drum up interest in the club and the upcoming show at WBG.

Sign up form: <https://forms.gle/iNZ7UST4reZ1Eh8P9>.

Show Hours & Dates

- Fri., Feb. 28 10:00am -8:00pm
- Sat., Mar. 1 10:00am -8:00pm
- Sun., Mar 2 11:00am -5:00pm

Speaking times

- Fri 4pm
- Sat 6pm



3rd Annual Bonsai Weekend

We are incredibly excited to be doing this show again this year. As was mentioned before please start looking at your trees thinking about ones that may be good options to enter.



WATERFRONT BOTANICAL GARDENS
featuring the GREATER LOUISVILLE BONSAI SOCIETY

May 30 - June 1, 2025

Dozens of bonsai on display
Guest artist & judge Owen Reich
People's choice award
Workshops & Demonstrations
Bonsai vendors
Food & Drinks



WATERFRONT
BOTANICAL
GARDENS



Greater Louisville
Bonsai Society

BONSAIWEEKEND.COM



3rd Annual Bonsai Weekend

May 30

11 AM - 5 PM

May 31

10 AM - 6 PM

June 1

11 AM - 4 PM

TICKETS

\$12 in advance

\$15 at the door

\$10 Waterfront Gardens &

Bonsai Society Members

FREE for Ages 16 & under

SCAN FOR MORE INFO



Waterfront Botanical Gardens

1435 Frankfort Ave.

Louisville, KY 40206

BONSAIWEEKEND.COM

Save the Date! May 29-31, 2026



**AMERICAN
BONSAI
SOCIETY**
—◆ EST. 1967 ◆—

The show in May had a full page add in the ABS January newsletter which is fantastic publicity! If you are not a member we highly recommend joining this great organization.

<https://app.joinit.com/o/american-bonsai-society/>



From the archives- Jan 2016

This article was written by long time member Goerge Buehler. Apologies for any errors sometimes the cut and paste function messes with formatting and spelling.

WIRING: part 1 of a 2-part series by George Buehler

INTRODUCTION

What is the purpose of wiring a tree? What is the best time of year to wire your trees? Should I use aluminum or copper? How do I put wire on a branch to “bend” it? Is there another method we can use to shape a tree? We hope to answer these and several other questions in this article. When you look at a bonsai, one of the first things to notice is that in general, branches and trunks have bends in them. This twisting or bending creates what is called movement. Older trees have movement, and a young tree can be made to appear older if it has this movement. There are two main ways to obtain the desired movement—the

clip-and-grow method, or wiring. The clip-and-grow method can only be used on certain tree types. Therefore we will leave that subject for a future article. Wiring can be performed on almost all types of trees. The sole purpose of wiring a bonsai is to change the direction or shape of the branches or trunk. In bending the wood, you stress the cells in the branch or trunk. The tree, while repairing the damage, grows into the shape imposed on it by the wire. Since wiring is stressful for a tree, you should not wire a weak branch or tree. You may lose the branch or even the tree.

BEST TIME TO WIRE

Most experts recommend that a tree be wired in late winter or early spring. However, wiring can be done at almost any time of year. Each season has its advantages and disadvantages.

SPRING: In spring, the plant is starting its active growth cycle and it is easy to break off a delicate branch when wiring. Since the trunk and branches are thickening quickly, the wire can quickly cut into them. Periodic monitoring of the wired tree will need to be done to ensure that the wire is not cutting into the tree. The advantage of spring wiring is that the tree is developing new cells around the trunk and limbs while it is being held in its new position, thus helping the process considerably.

SUMMER: Smaller branches are more hardened at this time versus spring and may be wired easier. However, the main disadvantages at this time of year is that deciduous trees are full of foliage, which gets in the way. One way around this is to strip most of the leaves off the tree, then wire it.

AUTUMN: Wiring at this time of year generally shouldn't be done since the tree is starting the process of setting new buds for next year's foliage or flowers.

WINTER: For deciduous trees, this is the ideal time to wire, since there is no foliage and you can get to all the branches quite easily. There are two things to remember when wiring at this time of year. The wood can be brittle and bending should be handled with caution. The second caution is that next year's buds for both foliage and flowers are delicate and can be knocked off easily.

WHAT KIND OF WIRE?

Bonsai wire is available in copper or aluminum. Most bonsai enthusiasts will develop a preference for either copper or aluminum. Each has its advantages and disadvantages. In general, copper is recommended for evergreens, while aluminum is used on deciduous trees. Copper wire is annealed (controlled heated to soften it and make it easier to bend).

Copper wire is generally more expensive than aluminum. However, copper is somewhat stronger than aluminum and a thinner gauge of wire can be used vs. aluminum. Many bonsai enthusiasts use aluminum wire because it is cheaper than copper and is somewhat easier to wrap onto the limb. However, since aluminum is weaker than copper, it requires a larger gauge. Both copper and aluminum wire can (and should) be recycled after removal from trees. Copper is worth more when recycled.

WIRE SIZE

Bonsai wire is available in different sizes. Aluminum is generally listed in millimeters from 1.0 mm to 6 mm, while copper is listed by AWG wire size. Table 1 lists a comparison between copper and aluminum. There is no set rule on what gauge of wire should be used for a particular branch or trunk thickness. It is normally suggested that the wire gauge (thickness) should be about one third of the diameter of the section to be wired. The decision on wire gauge also is dependent on the degree of bend desired. If you will be making a drastic bend, a heavier gauge will be required than if a minor bend is desired. Determining the proper wire size can be difficult but with practice gets easier. A method I use is to cut a 4 to 5 inch length of the various wire sizes labeling each piece with a masking tape 'flag' with the wire size on the 'flag'. Hold a wire, which you believe to be the proper size, about one inch from the end of the wire and push on the branch you are going to bend with the end of the wire. If the wire bends, you will need to go to the next larger size. If the branch bends then you may have the proper size wire or perhaps too large a wire. Try going one size smaller and repeat these experiments until the wire bends, then move back up one size. When you wire a branch, the bending and twisting of the wire, as you wrap it around the branch, causes the wire to stiffen due to

TABLE 1

mm	AWG wire size	Feet/1 KG	
		Alum	copper
1	22	1550	425
1.5	20	685	167
2	18	380	120
2.5	16	245	70
3	14	170	53
3.5	12	125	40
4	10	95	30
4.5	8	676	21
5	6	59	18

Adapted from Perry's Chemical Engineering Handbook, 4th Edition and Bpnsai, Its Art, Science, history and Philosphy; D. Koreshoff

the slight rearrangement of the metal molecules. Before using the wire flags described above you will need to 'harden' the wire pieces. This can be accomplished by bending the wire pieces back and forth several times. If you underestimate the gauge of wire, it is not much of a problem. You can simply use a second wire and wire it parallel and as close as possible to the first wire, without crossing wires at any point. The important thing to watch is that the wires are very close together and do not cross each other. A number of

'experts' sometimes recommend that it is better to use two strands of wire rather than a larger single gauge as the pressure of the wire on the branch is more evenly distributed and the wire will not cut in the bark as quickly. For more drastic bends this is probably correct. However, for smaller branches, it is sometimes difficult getting one wire on correctly, let alone two! Part two next month...stay tuned.

GLBS Website, Facebook and Instagram.

The Greater Louisville Bonsai Society has its own website, Facebook and Instagram pages which can be found at:

GLBS website address: <https://www.louisvillebonsai.org>

GLBS Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/TheGLBS/>

GLBS Instagram: Kybonsai502

Purchase GLBS Swag: <https://kybonsaiswag.itemorder.com/shop/home/>

2025 GLBS Board

President Russ Stevens—russ.stevens@gmail.com

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Secretary Troy Takagishi—ttakagish@gmail.com

Treasurer Jim Doiron—artdoiron@gmail.com

Member Joe Broadhurst—joemacbro@gmail.com

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