

Annual Dinner January 11 – Imperial Garden - 2039 Allen Blvd

DON'T go to Olbrich on the second Thursday this month – you (and the desk clerk) will be the only ones there. Instead, head on over to the Imperial Garden Restaurant on the corner of Allen Boulevard and University Avenue for the annual Badger Bonsai January Dinner. Social hour begins at 5:30 in the bar, followed by dinner at 6:30 in a private room of the restaurant. You may order from the usual menu and separate checks will be given. Santa may make an appearance – but only if you are good! Hope to see you all there.

Program Suggestions From December Meeting:

Thanks to everyone that offered program ideas for the coming year. The officers will work these into our 2018 calendar.

“The club has received many plastic bonsai pots. All we need is soil and starter plants, and we could have a spring workshop. Pots range in size from 3x5 to 6x8 approx.” Devon

“Repotting demo in March.” Ron has volunteered.

“Plant diseases – viruses, molds, fungi, etc.

Bonsai styles – one style per month. Could be brief or entire meeting.

Mini workshop/discussion: tools, Kimura, ...” Tim

“Shaping maples.

Workshop on creating cascade bonsai.

Offer to host July picnic – pending moving plans” Molly

“Summary and feedback on specific bonsai books.

Discussion/debate regarding controversial bonsai techniques.

Photos/Sketches of tree development/progression.

Overview/test of computer simulations.

Display/show concepts.

Speed demos: Like those at annual show

On-line videos with subsequent discussion.

Pure beginner topics.” Wayne

“Trip to Anderson Garden – Rockford.

Trip to Rotary Garden – Janesville.

Master demo, if we can afford it.

Another three-at-a-time demo.” Anon.

“Trip to Rich's FoxWillow Nursery.

Collecting outing.” Bill

Moravian Stars

Thanks to Wayne for donating his hand-carved Moravian stars for our December door prizes. What delightful ornaments these are! Here is a little background on these amazing stars:

“You may have seen them before, but did you ever ask yourself “What is a Moravian Star?” This beautiful 26 point Moravian Star, also known as a Herannah Stern, has been a popular decoration during the Christmas Season... the beginning of Advent until the Epiphany... in parts of Germany for almost 200 years. Moravian Stars are used to represent the Star of Bethlehem, and are hung in churches and homes, in windows, or on top of Christmas Trees.

It was at a Moravian School in Niesky, Germany, that the first Moravian Star was created. A teacher, trying to explain the details of Geometry, created the Star as part of a lesson plan. The Moravian Star became popular, and was soon adopted by the Moravian Church to represent the Star of Bethlehem. I can just imagine the boys from the school taking home their “projects”, and proud parents hanging them up in their homes, much like I tape my own kids’ projects to the refrigerator.

In 1880, one of the graduates of the Moravian School, Pieter Verbeek, opened a bookstore in Herannah, and started selling these decorative stars. His son expanded on the family business by opening the Herannah Star Factory, and began selling the stars and directions for making them worldwide. The Factory operated until World War 2 when the factory was destroyed by the Soviet Army. The East German government took over the factory briefly after the war, and then finally turned the operation back over to the Moravian Church. Today, the Abraham Durning Company runs the company in Herannah, and distributes Moravian Stars worldwide.

The most common Moravian Stars have 26 points... made up of 18 squares and 8 triangular cones that join into a sphere (the math word for this is rhombicuboctahedron). However, you can get Moravian Stars with up to 100 points. It’s all about geometry... the combining of squares and triangles to make a sphere. I remember watching Mama puzzle the pieces together with brads.

These beautiful stars make the most simple, yet complicated, of Christmas decorations. They are found all over the world. Initially the spread came as a result of the many Moravian Church Missions, but the beauty of the Advent Stars made them popular with everyone from Leibzig to Winston-Salem, North Carolina, to South America and India.”

From ‘German Girl in America’ web site

I am going to spring ‘rhombicuboctahedron’ on a future Scrabble opponent. ;-)

Dues Due

Remember that dues are due at the start of the new year. If you haven’t paid your 2018 dues, Gary, treasurer, will be happy to take your cash or check. (We no longer accept Green Stamps – sorry).

David DeGroot

In the December Bonsai Newsletter I wrote briefly about David DeGroot, the first, and until recently, the only curator of the Pacific Rim Bonsai Collection. His two books, **Basic Bonsai Design**, and his second **Principles of Bonsai Design** are excellent. Both of these are published by the American Bonsai Society and can be purchased from them, or other bonsai outlets. The former is priced at \$15.95 and the later at \$34.95. A reviewer on Amazon says about **Basic Bonsai Design** “If you are learning the art of bonsai, this book is invaluable. De Groot is clear and concise. It is a slim volume, but one of the most valuable I own.” Surprisingly, the price on Amazon for the first edition of **Basic Bonsai Design** is \$100 used and \$599 new!!!