



BONSAI SOCIETY OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA

APRIL 2026 NEWSLETTER

Notes from our March meeting, by Rick Simon

The meeting was called to order at 9:05 AM by Karen Cogswell at our regular monthly meeting hall in the Berne Davis Garden Council Headquarters. New members were introduced and a warm round of applause to welcome them followed.

The monthly raffles were run by Dave Bovio. Anything you'd like to contribute to Saturday morning raffles is appreciated. Dave will be hosting a large raffle selection at this month's auction. Next month the new T-shirt design will be finalized and orders will be taken according to plan.

Auction Notes

Donations for Auction April 18, 2026 are being solicited by the Club. This is our main source of revenue for the year. The Auction is held on our regular third Saturday at Berne Davis Garden Council Headquarters in lieu of our regular meeting. Lunch will be served to members on Friday and Saturday. Friday is set-up day, and Saturday is the annual Auction. There are two types of auctions: Silent and live auctions. Most all auction items will also have a "buy it now" (BIN) price allowing the buyer to immediately take possession of the item. Every member is asked to donate one item.

Here's a more detailed description of dates and times:

Friday April 17, 2026

10AM: Two or three of us meet at the SmartStop, 18301 N. Tamiami Trail, NFM Unit# 1643. We pick up stands, tables, cloths, PA System, a "Lunch" Tent, etc.

11AM: We arrive at the Park and unload.

11AM: We cover the inside tables, (don't have to move them, just protect them so we don't have to do as much cleaning) set up a few outside (Grab'NGo) tables and set up the outside lunch (hospitality) tent. Weather permitting, we could start moving some tables outside.

If it's raining, we can still put some of them under the eave or in the lunch tent.

12: Lunch for Crew

1-6:30 PM: We accept items for the auction and organize paperwork.

Saturday, April 18, 2026

7AM: Put auction trees outside, accept stragglers' items.

9AM-11:30: Silent Auction

12-1 PM: Live Auction

1 PM: Clean up and pack storage items....deliver items to storage unit: SmartStop.

Donations can be split between Club and members at 80/20. Members can donate entire sale to Club if they desire. Everyone is asked to donate one tree for the auction tables.

Dave will also have a grab and go table with many Bonsai items for sale.

BSF State Convention Info May 22-24, 2026

Karen announced the BSF State convention in Orlando, Florida on May 22-24, Memorial Day Weekend. Displays and numerous workshops, demonstrations are taking place the entire weekend. The second night, Saturday, is Club night and is loads of fun. Volunteers are also needed for the State Convention, and all the information is available on the State's website at [Bonsai Societies of Florida web site](#). Vendors will be on site. Many items for sale and there's an auction of donated trees. Jaye Saarinen reviewed weekend's schedule for the Annual State Bonsai show.

Rick Owens reviewed this year's theme for the State Convention is "small". Any size tree will be accepted and compete. Submit your tree for Club competition on Saturday night. Bring in your Mame (trees typically less than 4 inches tall). Further review followed by Jim Demarest. State convention web site was displayed on the front large monitor. Navigation of the web site and where information could be found were outlined. Go to <https://bonsai-swf.com>.

Volunteers are needed for the State Convention. Sign up began March 9, 2026. Discount hotel rooms are made available to our participant members. If possible, plan on volunteering a couple of hours up to the whole weekend. If you volunteer, you'll save approximately \$40 a night on your hotel room. Sandy Spikes requested one day group to travel together to the convention center in Orlando for the May Convention.

The Torii Gate:

Jay Saarinen has volunteered to rejuvenate the Torii Gate. It has been there for about two years and although it was never built to survive the summer rains, it has held up pretty well, but is showing its age. For those of you not familiar with its history, it has been in our possession for at least a decade. We assembled it each year and placed on the walkway area for our annual show. Otherwise, it was stored at someone's home or in a storage area. Two years ago, the Lee County Garden Council asked us to make it a permanent display, but there were a few issues to resolve. The Gate was made of soft pine, and although it had suffered only minor damage i

Jaye is going to lather it with sealant and paint, and hope for the best. We may get another two or three years out of it.

SIGNUPS STILL NEEDED

We still have spaces available for Display and Hospitality and Cleanup Crew. For Display, this is a great way to learn 'how to.' Basically, you need a tree, a stand for the tree, and a complimentary plant or item on a stand. The club will provide the tablecloth and backdrop. For Hospitality, the club provide all paper products and all supplies needed for coffee. You would provide the food. We usually have around 30-40 people. The Cleanup Crew is not responsible for your individual table. You must do that. Hospitality will take care of the kitchen. The Cleanup Crew makes sure the trash is taken out and the floor is clean and all things are put back in order.

TO ALL NEW MEMBERS

Don't forget to pick up your Member's Booklet on the sign-in table. It has all the information you will need about the club and who to contact.

"Martha's Corner"

Each month we feature one species. It is selected based on the month that it may need your attention. Several years ago, Martha Goff wrote a voluminous work called Tropical Green Sheets. In this two-volume set, Martha goes to great length to detail everything about hundreds of trees.... Type, Species, Soil, pH, watering and much, much more. You can purchase Tropical Green Sheets at [Wigert's Nursery](#) or [Bonsai Jack](#).

Ficus

History: Ficus are members of the Moraceae family of plants. There are reported to be over 1500 species of Ficus, over 800 of these being trees. They are native to southern Asia and India but grow successfully in any tropical climate. In general, the ficus have gummy sap (it “bleeds” when injured), stipules cover and protect new leaves as they emerge and fall away, aerial roots, and fruit (figs). Although ficus grow all over the tropics, they are most often associated with Taiwan. That region uses the fig as one of their main bonsai materials. For the tropics, Ficus is probably the most rewarding plant. Even for the novice, it is very forgiving. The Ficus grows quickly, leaf reduction is generally easy, and it fits a number of different styles. The list of those available and suitable to bonsai is lengthy. The care of all Ficus is, generally speaking, similar. [Read more.](#)

Here are some things that You can do with a Ficus





Here are two Quick-Reference Potting Guides

[Part 1](#) [Part 2](#)

Our Local Talent

POTTERY

Joe Mayhew

impotteryllc@gmail.com 941-650-7635

POTTERY

Don Rosio

don.rosio@gmail.com 321-890-8353

STANDS

Bill Smith

smittysmit23@aol.com 410-869-6650

BONSAI SOIL

Rick Johnstone

rickj55@verizon.net

WIGERT'S BONSAI NURSERY

For all your Bonsai Needs: Trees, Tools, Pots

Wigert's Bonsai Nursery, 2930 South Road, N. Ft. Myers, FL 33917

239-543-2234 www.wigertsbonsai.com

TOOL SHARPENING

Check me out on Facebook @
Bruce's Bonsai Tool sharpening, repair and cleaning
Bruce Riggins, 239-297-7361, grybrd77@gmail.com

Stone Lantern Bonsai distributors are used by many of our members
Their website is at <https://www.stonelantern.com>.

ABOUT THE BONSAI SOCIETY OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA

We meet on the third Saturday of each month at the Berne Davis Botanical Garden building located just north of the Edison-Ford Winter Estates at 2166 Virginia Avenue.

Doors open at 9 AM. A friendly member will make you feel welcome. Coffee will be fresh.

Membership Dues

2026 Dues are still the same price! \$45 for single membership, \$55 for family membership. Please download and print the [Membership Form](#). If you haven't paid dues for 2026, you won't get this Newsletter or any of the fine publications put out by the BSF.

The Bonsai Society of Southwest Florida, Inc. P.O. Box 61945
Fort Myers, FL 33906-1945 www.bonsaiswfl.org 239 935-5860



