



Forty-two Years of Bonsai Education and Volunteerism - 1970 - 2012 V: 42, Issue 1, Oct. 2012

President's Corner - Steve Miller

Greetings All,

The first thing I would like to say is, I have a very big set of shoes to fill. Thanks to Chuck Croft who graciously held this organization together. I have a lot of great plans in store for PBA in the upcoming year. Our new web site is almost up and running thanks to BBS member Sean Coleman. If you have any pictures from club events, especially a PBA event like the Spring Show or Behnke's or one of the workshops, please share them with Sean.

There is an updated calendar of events for all of the clubs activities. I hope to see all of you at the "You Dig a Yew" event October 20. As President of PBA, my main goal is to focus on the education and promotion of the art of bonsai. I intend to have more guest speakers come to the clubs for workshops, as well as more future demonstrations and lectures. The Ryan Neil workshops were a huge success and everyone attending was eager to do it again. I would like to see the separation between clubs diminish and have more club unity doing more activities as PBA. I would like to see a PBA Christmas Party in addition to the individual clubs parties. I would also like to have a PBA picnic at some point in time. Gatherings of like minded individuals to have fellowship regarding bonsai is also a goal. PBA is a non-profit volunteer organization - with that said in order for this organization to prosper, we all need to pull together and work for common goals. I'm very passionate about bonsai, and would like to share my enthusiasm with each and every one of you. I want to see the PBA grow and together we can do just that.

Steven Miller
5th Degree Kohai

2015: North American Bonsai Comes to Baltimore/Washington - John Ruth

The Potomac Bonsai Association is very pleased to announce that we have agreed to co-host the 2015 American Bonsai Society Learning Seminar. This will give us the opportunity to showcase the National Collection, trees native to the mid-Atlantic, and our region itself. It means that we will be able to enjoy a striking exhibition of trees from across the continent, and learn from the best talent that North America has to offer, right in our own backyard.

This meeting will also give us the impetus to work hard together. It will allow (or force, maybe) us to work closely across club boundaries. The tasks that need to be completed between now and 2015 seem more than a little daunting. We have a very broad idea of the shape of the convention. Many decisions as to our faculty and course content need to be made. We need to collect hundreds of quality trees for workshops. We will need to gather an array of items for raffles and auction. We need to figure out the details of where various functions will take place, and when. The menus need to be determined. And we need a plan to make it all work come June 2015.

In broad strokes, what will the convention look like? First, we plan on using the ABS Learning Symposium model. All registrants will be entitled to attend an opening reception, probably including a demonstration by one of our headliners, on Thursday evening, June 11, 2015. They will then be able to attend four half day lectures of their choice over Friday, Saturday, and Sunday morning. Lunch and dinner on Friday and Saturday will be included. In addition, there will be an array of workshops offered for an additional fee. Our tree exhibition will be the centerpiece of the show. There will be regular critiques, and ABS will

award its prestigious John Naka Award on Saturday night. Similarly, the National Bonsai Foundation will host a North American Bonsai Container Competition here. We will have a Friday night function at the National Arboretum, celebrating the reopening of the renovated Japanese Pavilion. The Saturday banquet will be followed by an auction benefitting the NBF, ABS, and PBA. Our venue will be the Turf Valley resort, in Ellicott City, outside of Baltimore. This is a very family friendly, spacious, well appointed but comfortable facility. We intend to offer first rate bonsai talent and workshop material. We will be able to attract vendors from across the country. It should be a very memorable event.

What can each of us do to help? First and foremost, we need to have people plan on attending the meeting and taking advantage of having such a great meeting here. We need people to register as full participants, and, ideally, to stay at the hotel. Our organizations are at some financial risk should we not have enough people stay at the hotel. Registration will be in the \$300-350 range for those who stay at Turf Valley, and roughly \$375 for those who do not. Room rates will be very reasonable, starting at \$105 per night. Attendees will be busy from before 8 am until 10 or 11 at night, and anyone who has been to one of these meetings knows that you cannot underestimate the feeling of camaraderie shared by bonsai fanatics such as yourselves over an adult beverage in the hotel bar at night. You should plan to stay at Turf Valley. There are pool, tennis, and golf facilities for your families. We will have buses available to take anyone interested into Baltimore's Inner Harbor and to the mall in Washington. Chuck Croft and I are co-chairing the staging committee for this event. We have been gratified by the response of PBA leadership in accepting responsibility for moving the symposium forward. A list of committee chairmen follows. Please look it over, and volunteer to help out in areas where you have expertise, or where we have need. Every club should be represented on the "Volunteers" committee and on the "Raffle/Auction" committee. I urge everyone to sign up for the collecting committee. You will dig trees for this event, for future workshops, and for yourselves. There are few things more enjoyable, or more rewarding, than spending a day in the woods, swamp, or mountains looking for unique material.

Lastly, an aside: A question that comes up with some regularity at club meetings is, "What does PBA do for us?". The answer, now, resoundingly, is: a lot. We are the only bonsai organization that I know of that offers a yearly show, the Spring Festival, FOR FREE. It has tree displays, a great vendor tent, and the opportunity to visit with one of the greatest collections of trees in the new world. Meeting in a federal facility has real drawbacks, but the setting is unmatched. We are exploring innovative ways to keep the level of workshops up to our high expectations. PBA has also brought national talent, like Roy Nagatoshi and Ryan Neil, to our individual club meetings, in a way that makes access to these people affordable for many of us. This program has been remarkably well received so far, and we are looking to expand it to four "tours" each year, with Colin Lewis or Suthin or Steve Tolley added to the rota. Hosting the 2015 symposium now gives us a strong incentive to come together, work hard, and enjoy a world class meeting. It allows us a chance to give our fellow enthusiasts across the country a reason to come and reconnect with the National Collection. These are exciting times for the Potomac Bonsai Association.

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The Collecting Committee: A New (but permanent) PBA Club Committee - John Ruth

This is a group that everyone in PBA should look forward to joining. It also is a committee that needs to get out of the blocks fast. The economics of running a first rate show mandates that the workshop material be of excellent quality, unique, and at the same time cheap. This has "collected material" written all over it. We need to identify the best material that we can procure, and we really need to dig it up and establish it viably in pots by spring of 2013, giving it two years to adapt to pot culture and start to flourish. This committee will decide where to get the best material and will then conduct organized digs. It is anticipated that after appropriate material has been collected for the workshops, participants will be able to dig up trees for their personal collections. Novices will work side by side with aged veterans (like Barry and Jim). Barry Figard, a legendary collecting hound, has agreed to chair this committee. Participants will learn modern collecting techniques (like using Craigslist to identify sites) from Clinton Scott. Rural native, abandoned nursery, and urban yamadori will be targeted. I expect that this group will stay intact after 2015, collecting a trove of trees for use in future Spring Festival and Fall Symposia workshops, and allowing those with enthusiasm for the outdoors to indulge themselves.

If you are at all interested, please email Barry, Jim, or myself. We need, of course, people willing to dig, but we also need to know where quality material is available. Does anyone have access to abandoned nurseries, or to overgrown crabapple, apple, or pear orchards? Do you know of old churches or schools that are being razed? Foundation plantings of yews, junipers, or azaleas might be of interest. Does anyone have access to pitch pine? Do members of our newest clubs, in Norfolk and Richmond, have the ability to dig large-trunked naturalized wisteria, or bald cypress, or tapered corrugated sweet gums? Also, who in our group has facilities to handle a few dozen newly potted trees? Happy hunting!

Committee

Venue

Volunteers

Tree Exhibition

Ceramics Exhibition

Stone Exhibition

Finance

Publicity

Website

Vendors

Faculty

Collecting/Material

Raffle/Auction/Development

Registration

New Talent Competition

Chairperson

Judi Schwartz

Jim Sullivan

jvsullivan@aol.com

Arschel Morell

ajmorellsr514@aol.com

Ron Lang

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Glenn Reusch

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Ross Campbell

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Steve Miller

neogenesis515@yahoo.com

(any takers?)

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Chuck Croft

crcroft@mindspring.com

Barry Figard

bfigard@verizon.net

Jim Hughes

Judi Schwartz

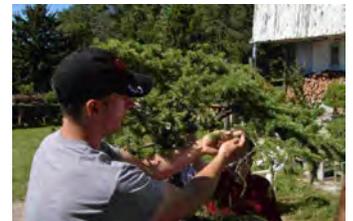
Chuck Croft

crcroft@mindspring.com /

John Ruth

shipsquartersfarm@msn.com /

John Weissinger



Ryan Neil Workshop

Better Late Than Never-Jim Sullivan

It is October 25, 2011 and I have just removed the one quart transparent plastic container from around the base of a special Japanese Maple. Thirty four days ago I air layered that maple, which Steve Miller and I had collected along with several other interesting looking seedlings. The collecting was done about a year and a half ago, and the plant mentioned here subsequently displayed beautiful pumpkin orange fall leaf color. This year its new growth resulted in pendulous branches reminiscent of Ryusen, an unusual Japanese Maple cultivar. I decided that it would make a nice patio specimen, so rather than a bonsai container, I chose a vase shaped planter so that if the branches continued their drooping growth, it would be well displayed.

It grew well until about late August when all growth stopped and the leaves began to look a bit pale. I at first thought it was just normal slowing of growth, even though other seedlings were still growing vigorously. There is a lot of variation in growth habits in Japanese Maples, so initially I was unconcerned. But one branch looked worse than the rest and the leaves on that branch soon withered. Close inspection revealed that a ring of bark about a quarter inch long had been removed from the trunk outward (Trunk is an exaggeration; as the diameter was only 1/4"). I then closely inspected the rest of the tree. Another branch was also girdled, but had not withered. But more alarming was the missing bark from the base of the trunk upward for about three inches! I suspect the damage was caused by the European Wasp, although I have only witnessed it removing bark from lilacs. They are present in my yard every year from summer to mid fall. They apparently chew the bark, combining it with saliva to make a sort of paper mache for nest building. They may also feed on the sap under the bark. Apparently, the wound on the withered branch was deep enough to have severed the xylem, the water conducting tubes, while the damage at the other branch and on the lower trunk was more superficial and had only destroyed the phloem, the food conducting tissue. The tree was staying alive because water was still being conducted to the leaves, but the products of photosynthesis were unavailable. Growth had stopped and the tree looked, and was, malnourished.

For a few days I considered the options. 1: The heck with it. I have plenty of interesting Japanese maple seedlings. 2: Do a bridge graft which would involve using one or more seedlings grafted above and below

the damaged area to restore flow and later remove the portion of the seedlings above the graft and possibly the roots of the seedlings. 3: Approach graft one or more seedlings above the wound and later remove the damaged lower section along with its roots. 4: Air layer the tree, establishing new roots above the damaged area. Option 1 was out; I liked the tree too much. 2 & 3 would be technically too difficult because the tree was so small in diameter. I chose option 4 even though it was now September 21, considered by some knowledgeable horticulturists to be too late for success. Rather than using the typical method of air layering using damp sphagnum moss held in place with plastic wrap or aluminum foil, I chose to use a transparent quart container to hold the rooting media. The container was the type used for Chinese carry-out. I have used plastic nursery containers with success for air layering, but I wanted a transparent vessel so I could see if, and when, the roots were sufficient to remove the enclosure. In using a nursery container, a hole the approximate size of the trunk or limb to be air layered is cut in the bottom center. The pot is then cut down one side and across the bottom so that it can be opened enough to surround the plant. The plant is prepared for the layering in typical fashion (removing a ring of bark and applying a rooting stimulant). I then bind the cut pot with duct tape and fill the container with a mix of approx. half bonsai soil and half ground sphagnum moss.

Since the wound on this maple extended to soil level, and since I intended to leave the tree in place after layering, there was no need to have a bottom in the container I was going to use for the rooting media. I cut the bottom from the transparent quart container and cut through one side from top to bottom. I applied Hormex #8 rooting powder to the upper end of the wound on the trunk, opened the container so it would slip around the tree and centered it. I bound the cut in the container with duct tape and filled the container with the mix described above and watered thoroughly.

To my amazement, roots appeared on one side of the container in about three weeks and in several place in about four. I will be prudent about keeping the new root zone covered with the bonsai mix and possibly a layer of mulch, and keeping it moist. Hopefully the roots will continue to grow, but harden off before a deep freeze. I may store it in my unheated garage for the winter. In any case, I will protect it from the winter winds. And come next summer, I will stand guard day and night if necessary to protect the gem from those black and yellow, winged @\$! %^&*!

Sensei Sam

Smithsonian Surprise - John Griffin

I was surprised reading the October issue of Smithsonian Magazine to find a new bonsai book featured. It was as follows:

This Just In

Root and Branch

The Japanese art of bonsai, or growing miniature potted trees, requires such devotion that the plants are treated almost like religious artifacts, treasures and rarely photographed. So it was extraordinary when John Singer was invited to photograph the premier bonsai collections in Japan and the United States last year—an invitation gained partly on the strength of *Botanica Magnifica*, singer's 2009 book featuring close-up photographs of flowers. "Your work will make my work look larger than life," bonsai master Masahiko Kimura told him. Now Singer, a former podiatrist from Bayonne, NJ, has given the Natural History Museum an oversized portfolio showcasing five bonsai specimens, a sampling from his new work, *Fine Bonsai: Art & Nature*. Singer had published the book, which features more than 300 of his photographs, to raise funds for tsunami relief in Japan.

AVIVA SHEN

Thought for the Month

The late John Naka, the famous Japanese American bonsai master, once said, "Don't let your tree look like a bonsai, but let your bonsai look like a tree."

GREENHOUSE FOR PENNIES John Griffin

Well, that time of year is here when all that enjoyment we had with our outside bonsai is coming to an end. Our attention now focuses on the tropicals and subtropicals we have brought inside for the winter or keep inside all the time. All bonsai need four things: light, food, water and humidity. You might wonder why humidity is separate from water. We all know to check our plants regularly and water as needed but without a relatively high level of humidity, leaves can turn yellow and fall off.

Most of us would love to have a greenhouse but space and/or expense make this unfeasible. The nice thing about a greenhouse is you can closely monitor humidity and light. This is especially true for trees that are new, sick or just repotted. All of these have the same problem, they are in shock. They need a carefully monitored environment. You might say that trees in nature don't get this kind of treatment. That is some-

what true but a large tree puts out hundreds to thousands of seeds. If they all grew to be full size trees there would be no room on the planet for anything else. Luckily, only a few of the seeds ever make it to adult tree status.

Our problem is we need to create the best possible environment for our trees since we don't have thousands of them. There is a way to treat a new bonsai, a repotted bonsai or a sick bonsai that will imitate the 98% humidity that large bonsai nurseries have. Water a plant. Take a clear plastic bag such as can be found in most kitchens and place it over the plant so that an air pocket is formed over the foliage and then tuck the bag under the pot. You should see condensation on the bag within a day or two showing that you now have that great, healing humidity of an expensive greenhouse for pennies.

Place the pot in a shaded area out of direct sun or the tree will bake. For inside plants, they can go back under lights since no heat is developed there. Do not fertilize at this point as part of what is happening is that new hair roots are developing. Fertilizer would burn these new roots. Open the bag up once a day or mold will develop. Leave it pretty much alone except for the daily bag venting and let it recover for at least two weeks. You may see new growth in as little as two or three days but leave it alone. Since the humidity is trapped inside, reduce watering. After two weeks or longer as needed, take it out of the bag for an hour and then put it back in the bag. Repeat this adding an hour for one week. It should now be ready to join your other tropicals. Watch it carefully for a few days and if it still struggling, put back in a bag for another two weeks. You may want to add some way of increasing the humidity around your plants such as a humidity tray. All the trees would appreciate this.

I used this method on a new Dwarf Weeping Barbados Cheery that I purchased and repotted. The poor little tree went into shock and started losing leaves. It had lost all of its leaves when I put into a bag and a week later it was putting out new growth. I left it in the bag for three weeks and now it looks great again. It has made me happy to see it recover without having to buy a greenhouse.

Calendar of Events

Compiled by John Griffin (PBA)

Send your club's input to John at LttleTreeBuddy@gmail.com

Potomac Bonsai Society Club Schedules

Baltimore Bonsai Club, 4th Sunday, 1pm, Miller branch of Howard County Public Library
Barry Figard (410)531-3937 bfigard@verizon.net

Bonsai Society of the Eastern Shore, 1st Wednesday, 7pm, Talbot Hospice, Easton, Susan Jones-Armari, (410)943-9866, susanja@bcctv.com

Brookside Bonsai Society, 2nd Thursday, 7:30pm, 7901 Meadowbrook Lane, Chevy Chase, MD, Jim Hughes (301) 779-2891 jim6909@msn.com
Nov. 8-7:30pm Glen Rausch shares his passion for Suiseiki!

Chesapeake Bonsai Society, Call for meeting time and location, Sharon Katz, (410) 263-3307, sharonkatz@gmail.com

Kiyomizu Bonsai Club, 4th Sunday, 2pm, Clearwater Nature Center, 11000 Thrift Rd, Clinton, MD
Essie Wilson, (301) 839-2471, wilson@howrey.com

Northern Virginia Bonsai Society, 2nd Saturday, 9am, Walter Reed Community Center, Arlington, VA, (703) 938 2272, JackFitzsimons, fitzsimons@verizon.net

Potomac Viewing Stone Group, Meets irregularly (~6 times per year), Glen Reusch, (540)672-5699, Ghreusch@aol.com

Richmond Bonsai Society, 4th Monday, 7pm, Activity Room, St. Mary's Woods, Richmond, VA, Richmondbonsaisociety@yahoo.com

Washington Bonsai Club, 3rd Saturday, 2pm, call first (no July or August meetings), U.S. Arboretum, Washing, DC, Ross Campbell, (301)5874-6898

Virginia Bonsai Society, 1st Thursday, 7PM, Norfolk Botanical Garden's Holly Room in Baker Hall, Norfolk, VA

PBA Clippings

Newsletter of the Potomac Bonsai Association

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Subscriptions: PBA member Clubs/Societies. Annual subscription is included in the membership dues paid to the PBA club or society of your choice. Telephone numbers of points of contact for information about any member club or society are listed above

Non-member Subscriptions: Individuals residing within the metropolitan areas of our clubs are encouraged to become members of a club to receive the newsletter. Individuals outside of these areas must submit a request in email form to John Griffin at LttleTreeBuddy@gmail.com for consideration.

Advertising Rates: Annual Rates: 1.4 page, \$100; larger than ¼ page are accepted. Direct payments make checks payable to Potomac Bonsai Association. Please send paper ad copy or articles to the editor, John Griffin (LttleTreeBuddy@gmail.com). E-mail contributions are preferred and can be sent as Word, Word-Perfect or Text documents to John Griffin. Pictures must be in jpg format.

SPRING OPEN HOUSE & SALE

Spring Open House and Sale

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Potomac Bonsai Association Membership Application

Welcome! PBA is composed of the clubs listed to the right. Join one and be eligible to attend any club's meeting in addition to receiving the *PBA Clippings* on a quarterly basis. We present a Spring Bonsai Festival and an annual auction, as well as other events. Residents of club communities are expected to join a club to receive all membership benefits, including *PBA Clippings*.

To become a member, call the contact person of the club convenient to your location for the current rate and where to send this application and the dues (Please make the check payable to the club you are joining). Individual clubs set their own dues. Check for Beginner's hour and other functions. Meeting locations, times and club contact numbers (for additional information) are subject to change. We suggest that you call before sending in your membership application.

Individuals residing beyond commuting distance of a club are invited to subscribe to *PBA Clippings*. For a subscription only (does not include entitlement to participate in club events), complete this application and mail with a check payable to PBA to Ross Campbell, 728 Guilford Ct., Washington, D.C., 20901-3218.

Type of Membership:

- Individual club membership (includes *PBS Clippings*)
- Family club membership (One *PBA Clippings* subscription per household)
- PBA Clippings* only, US \$20.00 (does not include club activities)
- PBS Clippings*, International subscription, US \$35.00 (E-mail version, \$15)

Circle one of the following Association activities with which you can help:

Membership	Club Library	Exhibit Planning
Newsletter Staff	Publicity	Raffle Table
Exhibit Construction		Hospitality
Web Page	Meeting Clean-up	OTHER

Name

Address

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Nation

Telephone: Home: ()

Office: ()

PBA Member Clubs

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