



CEDAR ELM

In searching for trees suitable for the BCI '76 exhibit at the Shoreham-Americana Hotel, persons all over America were solicited. One area was around Baton Rouge, LA. Circumstances prevented any trees from that area from being included, but the pictures forwarded by Don Tranchina of Imahara's Nursery seem to indicate what BCI '76 missed. This Bunjin style beauty is a Cedar elm (*Ulmus crassifolia*) owned by Jack Shaffer. It is 21½ inches tall by about 20 inches wide. The container is 9½ inches in diameter and about 2½ inches deep. The tree's age is unknown, but it has been potted for 8 years. (Photo by Tranchina)



**NEEDLE
JUNIPER**

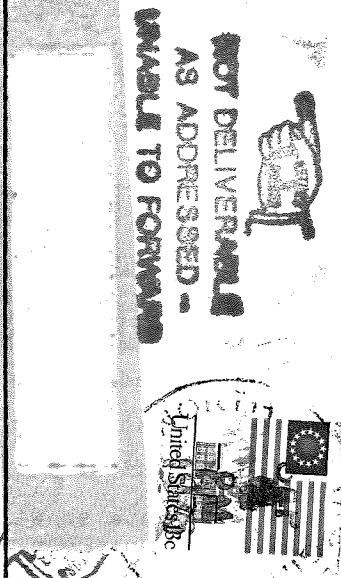
(see OPINION,
page 2)
(USDA Photo)



THE JOY OF BONSAI One of the fascinating aspects of bonsai is watching the trees progress from season to season. As training continues, the trees themselves take on new proportions, different volumes, changing views. The Juniper on the left (*Juniperus chinensis* var. *Robusta Green*) was a demonstration tree at Tyson Corner Horticultural Happening two years ago. It is ready to be pruned and shaped further to define its stately height. On the right an American Honey-suckle (*Lonicera dioica*), collected along a fence row in Maryland three years ago, shows the characteristic rapid spring growth atop its naturally twisted trunk. It, too, awaits the pruner's touch to take on a more sedate look prior to being placed in a pan of water for the drier months.

(Photos by Newton)

POTOMAC BONSAI ASSOCIATION
c/o National Arboretum
24th & R Sts, NE
Washington, D.C. 20018



Volume 6, Number 9 September 1976



**Red
Cedar**

(*Juniperus virginiana*)

13 inches
trained since 1974
owner: Jeffrey L. Wright
Philadelphia
photo by:
J. Michael Herr

a GEORGE F. HULL MEMORIAL BONSAI PHOTOGRAPHY AWARD entry

PBA NEWSLETTER



PBA Newsletter

published
by the **POTOMAC BONSAI ASSOCIATION, Inc.**

a non-profit organization, in the interests of its affiliate member clubs and societies to inform and educate amateur and professional growers of miniature trees in the philosophy, principles, and techniques of the living art form called BONSAI.

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POTOMAC BONSAI ASSOCIATION, Inc.
c/o National Arboretum
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Did you know...

Most rhododendrons do better in filtered shade rather than dense.

Opinion

Near-Loss Averted

Jim Newton
Editor

President's Message

A Leaner PBA

The third PBA affiliate to decide to suspend operations within the last six months is the Columbia Bonsai Club. They follow Forest Glade (Reston, Va.) and Laurel, Md. This leaves the Association strength at six.

Although the Board of Directors has expressed concern over the demise of three groups, there are definite signs that PBA is stronger than ever and growing in maturity despite the loss of clubs. Many members of the defunct affiliates have transferred their memberships to other PBA groups.

One sure growth sign is the successful convention we hosted for Bonsai Clubs International. How successful? Well, feedback has been unanimous that it was one of the best BCI conventions held, despite an initial problem of oversold hotel rooms. Somewhere in the neighborhood of \$9,000 will be split between PBA and BCI when final tabulation of costs and income are made.

Another is that plans are underway for a second annual fall symposium. Bill Merritt of the Northern Virginia Bonsai Society will again coordinate the arrangements and program. This year the event will include invitations to other east coast societies, making it a truly regional affair.

These are not signs of a deteriorating organization. Rather, PBA is assuming a leaner, fitter profile that promises to provide more and better programming, greater benefits, and better enjoyment for all who care to partake.

Are you among the partakers?

By now the story about the tree stolen August 21 from -- and, thankfully, later returned to -- the U.S. National Bonsai Collection is old news. This time the ending was a happy one, and the lovely 100-year-old needle juniper (*Juniperus rigida*) is again home safe and sound. A picture of the tree is on the back cover and was carried on the front cover of the May 1976 PBA Newsletter.

(to page 6)

PBA Board Acts On:

Arboretum Convention Attendance Publication Symposium

The Potomac Bonsai Association, Inc. Board of Directors, meeting on August 10, covered several items of business of interest to the PBA membership.

The Board approved a change of concept and format of the present PBA Newsletter. Editor Jim Newton presented a proposal based on his contention that, since PBA has reached a degree of maturity, as evidenced by the successful completion of BCI '76, so should the PBA publication reflect this maturity and broader scope. PBA has something to offer to a larger bonsai community, Editor Newton contends, and more educational content in the publication will serve this larger community as well as better serving PBA. A new name also was approved: THE NATIONAL BONSAI COLLECTOR. Target date for the first issue is January 1977. It will be published monthly in an 8-page format, with an expanded edition quarterly. Subject matter for the first three months will include genesis of the U.S. National Bonsai Collection logo, plant physiology, collecting tips, unusual containers for bonsai, and more.

Due to pressure of time, the fall PBA auction will not be held this year. The

Board did decide, however, to again sponsor a fall symposium, again to be chaired by Bill Merritt, who also chaired last year's successful first symposium. Date will be announced when final arrangements have been made. The Board also approved a symposium bazaar and a PBA booth so that members who wish to sell bonsai stock and materials on consignment may do so.

President Meszler, with approval of the Board, appointed a new committee to represent PBA to the National Arboretum. Joyce Pelletier of the Annapolis Bonsai Club was designated chairperson. Committee members are Bill Merritt of Northern Virginia Bonsai Society and Molly Hersh and Mary Houlton of Brookside Gardens Bonsai. The committee's charter is to identify the areas of monetary needs for the U.S. National Bonsai Collection and to investigate how PBA may assist the Arboretum in other ways.

A proposal to partially finance the incumbent president's attendance at annual Bonsai Clubs International conventions was made and met with general Board acceptance. However, the issue is such that the general membership should have a say, and the Board decided to submit it to a referendum at the annual PBA meeting in March 1977.

Mary Houlton
Secretary



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White Pine

A challenging choice for a coniferous bonsai in the Washington area is the white pine (*Pinus strobus*). Although it is a relatively fast grower (landscape specimens can shoot up about a foot a year), it has other characteristics that offset the rapidity of growth feature.

For one, it transplants easily. Repotting can be done in early spring or fall. Even poorly dug collected white pine have a good chance of surviving where other native conifers would succumb.

To achieve optimum healthy growth, pot in a rich soil that will retain adequate moisture but is well drained. It should, ideally, have a pH ranging from 4.0 to 6.5 (acid). Most soils from around the Washington/Baltimore areas are in this range, which should work well for in-ground trunk-thickening periods and for collecting soil locally.

Pruning is a primary technique for restraining white pine growth. They may be pruned at any time of the year, but cuts will heal much more rapidly when pruned in the spring. Pruning cuts should never be made into a section of branch on which there are no needles. Otherwise, the branch will die back to the previous year's growth.

Also, part of the pruning process is "candling." Removing new growth in the candle stage effectively halts (candle completely removed) or slows (one or two needle rows left on) the tree's exuberant growth at the removal points. But take care, a healthy, happy white pine can almost literally put on growth spurts that will outstrip the sluggish owner who doesn't move fast enough!

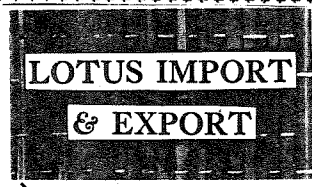
Strobus is quite readily available in most area nurseries, since it is a favorite for landscaping use in both large properties and as a background plant for small gardens. Judicious shopping will usually turn up several suitable stock plants. Check for trunk size and shape, branch placement (branches tend to grow

in whorls, so study well before buying), and general health. Full sun and prompt pruning will help keep needles shorter and growth within reasonable bounds.

White pine shows a high resistance to pests. In extremely moist conditions a fungus may take hold of needle bases, but is easily controllable with forceful water spray or a mild fungicide. Otherwise, reasonable cleanliness and its natural resistance keeps *strobus* quite pest-free.

Besides the "standard" round or pyramidal natural shapes, there are a number of white pine cultivars that have intriguing differences. One is a weeping form (*P. s.* 'Pendula'), also often available at local nurseries. It has long branches which reach downward, and is perhaps the most graceful member of all the pine family.

In the final analysis, the white pine offers a challenge to the bonsaiist. Its ideal characteristics of long life, stamina, and gracefulness outweigh its habit of rapid -- sometimes almost frantic -- growth to make *Pinus strobus* a fun tree, even if you have to run to keep up with it!



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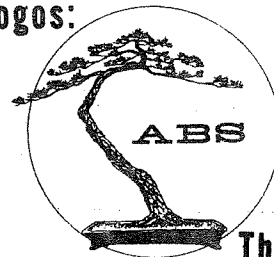
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ABS Logos:



The Winner

Back in April and May this year, the Newsletter carried stories about the American Bonsai Society's search for a new logo. After a lack-luster start, a large number of submissions were submitted. The final choice is the one you see here. Each month we'll show other entries.

For Indoor/Outdoor Bonsai

There is nothing wrong with most commercially available potting mixtures except that for a mature plant it is like baby food for a grown person. It has to be coarsened up and given substance.



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Bonsai

Root

Tree roots exposed to light over a long period will take on some surprising characteristics. They will actually develop chlorophyll, which normally belongs in the leaves, and begin to act as food manufacturers. Bark forms as their normal function of absorbing water and soil nutrients changes to one of trying to act like leaves.

This phenomenon is familiar to most bonsaiists, but perhaps not recognized for what it is, when the tops of basal roots are gradually exposed to form the buttressed effect typical of a mature tree. Although here the root is not exposed sufficiently to destroy its food manufacturing function, the principle of exposure remains valid, and in a few years the bark covering on the root cannot be distinguished from that of the trunk itself.

A little-known technique described in some texts takes advantage of this principle to create a new bonsai. A healthy root with good tapering length and well-branching rootlets growing fairly close to the surface is carefully exposed for its entire length, brought up into the air, still attached to the parent tree, and staked upright. Protected from undue air movement, misted frequently, and otherwise mothered with tender loving care, the exposed root system will gradually grow a layer of hardened bark skin. As chlorophyll develops and the normally white (or light colored) roots turn green the system will gradually turn into a true tree-form, with leaves developing in time. When this happens, and enough fibrous roots have formed under the soil at base of the former root, the whole scion may be carefully separated from the parent tree and potted as any other bonsai.

As you might expect, this process takes time and great care, the time depending on the species involved and a host of other factors. It won't produce a new bonsai overnight, but the concept is fascinating. Anyone want to try it?

Opinion...

(from page 2)

Now Arboretum guard resources have to be beefed up (they have been) and electronic intruder alarms (silent that Saturday because of non-availability of vital parts) are high on the action priority list.

The implications of this incident -- the first since the 53 priceless bonsai arrived in this country -- are ominous. They mean more money -- tax money -- and less openness about visits to the trees. The many who truly love these magnificent living pieces of art suffer because of the few who are selfish, or unprincipled, or misguided, or stupid, or greedy enough to perpetrate such desecration. It is a sad commentary on our social order.

Yet we -- the good guys -- can help. Support Dr. Creech and Curator Drechsler in all their efforts to provide an attractive and secure home for the trees. Be alert, and report any unusual or suspicious activity remotely involving the Collection. Keep your ears and eyes open as you talk and listen about bonsai both in the usual haunts of bonsai hobbyists and outside as well.

All of us have this responsibility, for the superb U.S. National Bonsai Collection belongs to us -- to all Americans. I, for one, want such a national treasure protected so that I can fully enjoy it.

As to the young men accused of taking part in the theft, I pity them. Also, I am angry at such selfish actions. If found guilty, I think they should receive the stiffest sentence the law allows. An object lesson now might go far toward discouraging other would-be thieves.

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Symposium Set For Late October

The second PBA Fall Symposium will be held on Oct. 30, Chairman Bill Merritt has announced. Site will be either the University of Maryland, where last year's successful symposium was conducted, or the National 4H Center on Connecticut Ave. in Chevy Chase. Final selection of the site will be announced in next month's Newsletter.

Advanced registration will be \$12, and must be received by Molly Hersh, PBA

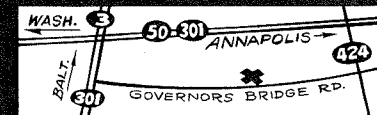
Treasurer, on or before Oct. 12. The registration fee at the door will be \$15. An innovation this year will be separation of sessions into advanced and beginner.

Sessions for both will be conducted by East Coast bonsai experts; several have already indicated a willingness to participate. The names and program presentation topics will be listed in the October Newsletter.

The program will include lectures, demonstrations, skill sessions, a bazaar, and the opportunity to rub bonsai elbows with other East Coast bonsaists.

PBA Affiliate Club Activity Schedule

10	ANNAPOLIS - Workshop; bring own tree(s) to work on, and problem plants; Annapolis Library, 7 p.m.
11	NORTHERN VIRGINIA - Tour of U.S. National Bonsai Collection, conducted by Bill Merritt; National Arboretum, 24th & R Sts, NE, Washington; 10 a.m.; for car pooling or directions, call Julius Koetsch, 569-9378
17	BROOKSIDE - "Advanced Styling" by Cliff Pottberg, Baltimore Bonsai Club; Tree Critique, bring tree(s) for advice, help; Brookside Nature Center, 7:30 p.m.
19	BALTIMORE - Visit to Croton Hill Farms; refreshments provided; 3 p.m.; call Helen Lauenstein, 256-5612, or Cliff Pottberg, 366-8844, for directions
19	KIYOMIZU - Workshop; bring tree(s) worked on during spring and summer for wiring and possible potting; Clearwater Nature enter, 2 p.m.
25	WASHINGTON - Styling Workshop and Election of Officers; National Arboretum, 24th & R Sts, NE, Washington, 2 p.m.
28	ANNAPOLIS - Discussion and Display of Unusual Bonsai Techniques; slides of U.S. National Bonsai Collection; view slab planting won at BCI '76; at home of Dave Brown, 8175 Govenor Ritchie Hwy, Pasadens, Md; for further directions and information, call Dorothy Bading, 757-2857, or Joyce Pelletier, 262-8578



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