

PBA NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 7 NUMBER 9

OCTOBER 1977

WINTER PROTECTION REVIEW BY YAMA KI BONSAI SOCIETY

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Beginning with this issue your Newsletter is publishing two articles from the YAMA KI Newsletter, edited by Mr. Jerome Meyer for the YAMA KI Bonsai Society, Stamford, Conn. The first article appeared in the first issue of YAMA KI in January of this year.

There seems to be a preponderance of opinion among upper air physicists and meteorologists that the coming winter on the Eastern Seaboard will be as severe as the last. Unless you have the problems of winter protection well in hand, a careful reading may preclude spring-time sadness.

FACTS ON FILE

Bonsai wintered outdoors need protection from sun and wind. This can best be provided by surrounding the trees with burlap stapled to stakes in the ground. Be sure to pound the stakes in before the ground freezes hard, otherwise you will have to wait for a temporary thaw.

Polyethylene plastic also can be stretched between the stakes but it is very important, when using plastic, that there be free circulation of air all around. If the bonsai are completely surrounded with plastic, heat may build up inside. As a result, new growth will be stimulated and moisture transpiration will increase. With the soil frozen, roots will be unable to replace moisture loss at the top and result in winter-kill.

When the soil is frozen and trees are shaded from sun and protected from wind, there is no problem. Dehydration is reduced and there is no demand for moisture which is not available, anyway.

Dehydration Insurance. The plants should be well watered before the soil freezes to provide a moisture reservoir within the tissues in case of temporary dehydration. During periods of thaw, the soil should be checked for dryness.

The important thing, then, is to protect from sun and wind regardless of the method you use to winter bonsai. Don't worry about frozen soil for species acclimated to this zone.

Deciduous species need no light during dormancy. Evergreens and conifers need some light, even if it is just a matter of removing the trees from winter protection on mild days for temporary exposure to daylight - but not in the sun if the soil is frozen. Evergreens and conifers become languid if kept in total darkness for prolonged periods and, if the tree is not in good condition, the result may be fatal.

Indoor Protection. If trees that cannot endure a hard winter (Kingsville box, Catlin elm, serissa, for example) are protected in unheated garages, sheds or cold basements, the pots must be watered at least once a week. The air in these environments becomes deceptively dry. Again, bring these trees outdoors for a treat of fresh air and light on mild days.

One way to maintain an aura of moisture around trees kept garaged and even indoors is to stand the pots over a bed of peat moss in a plastic tray or box. While the air won't exactly become saturated with moisture, the immediate vicinity of the plant will be improved. Many orchid fanciers keep these tropicals alive and healthy indoors through the micro-environment created with this simple device.

Beware of Exhaust. Another problem with trees wintered in unheated garages is that of automobile exhaust. Just how and why this is hazardous never has been fully explained. Nevertheless, if the car is pulled out of the garage immediately, not allowed to warm up inside, and if the door is kept open thirty minutes or so after the car is out, this should be sufficient. Also, allow the air in the garage to be flushed when you pull the car in for the night.

Wintering tender species under these conditions is not difficult if you are alert to ambient moisture requirements. Dehydration is, perhaps, the greatest hazard.

BCI PRESIDENT BOARDMAN GIVES GOOD ADVICE ON CHICKEN GRIT

The Newsletter's recent articles on CHICKEN GRIT results in the following memorandum from Mr. Ray Boardman, Bonsai Clubs International President.

"Several references to CHICKEN GRIT have prompted my writing regarding our use of the material since early 1973. The Shibui NEWSLETTER of March 1975, copy enclosed, gives you our version of a soil mix using CHICKEN GRIT that has proven very effective from the standpoint of both holding moisture at the root level (use of Terragreen) and preventing an overwatering condition (use of Chicken Grit instead of builder's sand).

"Please note the use of Black Magic Houseplant Mix and Redi-Earth as an initial first year's fertilizer in the mix, instead of a monthly application as usually recommended. We hold off fertilizing until the second year because of the addition of these two products.

"As usual, a layer of COARSE GRANITE CHIPS is used as drainage material over a small piece of Fibreglass screening. On repotting, save the old mix, let it dry, then sieve out the Coarse Chips with a 1/4" sieve. Then, the addition of some Black Magic Houseplant Mix and Redi-Earth will renew the mix to be used over again.

"We store the mix in a 25 gallon plastic ashcan, and sieve it just before using it to pot up our bonsai. "Super-thrive" is used in all cases as a booster after potting or repotting.

"Our mix checks out, roughly, as 1-1/2 parts soil, 2 parts neutral, and 1-1/2 parts humus. It can be varied as explained in the Shibui NEWSLETTER to pot up trees needing both a sandy mix or an acid mix.

"It suits my lazy way of caring for my Bonsai!"

/s/ Ray

Ray's basic mix formula and comments were published in his home bonsai organization, The Shibui Bonsai Society of Metropolitan Detroit:

Ray Boardman has been concocting and testing a mixture "to suit," he says, his "lazy method of caring for his plants." For instance, most books caution that sand and soils be sterilized. In order to omit the time and trouble of that chore, he uses 'chicken grit' and 'Terragreen' instead of sand, and 'Fertilife Top Soil' and 'Michigan Peat' instead of ordinary soil. All of these items are available on the open market in 40 to 50 pound bags.

In order to eliminate the task of fertilizing, Ray mixes two readily available commercial mixes into his soil. The entire formula adds up to:

BASIC MIX	SOIL	NEUTRAL	HUMUS
1 Part Fertilife	1		
1 Part Michigan Peat	1/2		1/2
1 Part Chicken Grit		1	
1 Part Terragreen		1	
1/2 Part Black Magic Houseplant Mix			1/2
1/2 Part Redi-Earth			1/2
Totals:	1-1/2	2	1-1/2

This results in a fairly stable mix of soil, sand (neutral) and humus, with a slight edge on the neutral (sandy) side for better drainage.

Two sieves, a #16 mesh and a #8 mesh are used to grade the mix into three parts, coars, medium and fine.

For a tree that needs an ACID MIX, take 1 part of the Basic Mix, 1 part of Canadian Peat Moss. Mix and sieve this Acid Mix through a #2 mesh screen and discard the very coarse material (lumps of peat moss).

For a tree that needs a very SANDY MIX, take 1 part of the Basic Mix, 1 part of Chicken Grits. Mix and sieve this through a #16 and #8 sieve. Put in three plastic bags according to grades, coarse, medium and fine.

PBA PRESIDENT MESZLER TO DEMO BONSAI AT ANNUAL IKEBANA SHOW

PBA president Dr. Richard Meszler will be the closing highlight of the Fall Flower Festival of Ikebana International, Washington, D.C. chapter.

Dr. Meszler will do a five-tree rock planting of Shimpaku at 2:00 p.m., Sunday, October 16. He also will have bonsai trees from his collection on display.

The Ikebana show will be held at the U.S. Botanic Garden Conservatory, Maryland Avenue at First Street, S.W. in Washington. The show opens on Tuesday, October 11, and has demonstrations and/or shows each day at 11:00 a.m., 12:30 p.m., and 2:00 p.m.

The Saturday, October 15, shows include a lecture on Samurai Swords at 11:00 a.m.; Ichiyo School Ikebana at 12:30, and Odori, the classical Japanese dance at 2:00 p.m.

On Sunday, October 16, the Japanese Tea Ceremony will be presented at 12:00 noon and Dr. Meszler's bonsai demonstration at 2:00 p.m.

---John W. Hinds

NOW HERE IS A CHALLENGE! NEWTON TAKES ON ALL COMERS!

The title "Impossible Tree Clinic" only partially describes the workshop I'll be conducting at the PBA Third Annual Symposium on Saturday, October 15.

Actually, I challenge anyone to bring me a piece of nursery material -- healthy, not over three feet tall, and not previously worked on -- that I can't shape into a bonsai style. The result will not be a finished bonsai, of course, for there is no such thing as an "instant bonsai." But a start will be made that, if followed through, will produce an acceptable tree in time.

How can I make such a brash challenge? Because I've never seen a piece of material without some bonsai potential. The trick is to find and capitalize on that potential. I don't think you can stump me completely. Want to try?

As a matter of fact, I'm so confident that I'll pay the \$11 banquet charge for anyone who does stump me. Any takers? If so, I'll see you October 15! ---Jim Newton

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COLLECTING TIME NEARS — PLAN AHEAD FOR ITS PLEASURES

It's getting the time of year when bonsaiists are itching to get out and do some collecting. The weather is crisp and beautiful and the trees are dutifully going into dormancy. For some it's just an excuse to get outside in the country and to select the trees they will dig in the spring. For others it's serious digging time and they come home with a car full of trees and hopes high that the winter will be milder than predicted and all of their treasures will survive.

Whichever category you fall into, remember that tramping around the countryside requires some thought and preparation. This is not the place for sandals and shorts. A sprained ankle some distance from the car is no picnic, and the best trees have the regrettable habit of being located in the nastiest places. Jeans, a long-sleeved shirt and sturdy shoes or boots, without heels, should be worn.

Thought they are rarely seen, there are some venomous snakes in our area. Make plenty of noise when approaching a likely-looking spot. You don't have to sneak up on the tree, but you and the snake will both be happier if you give him plenty of warning to get away without a fuss.

A danger far more likely to be encountered is poison ivy. This author has had serious run-ins with this persistent and very obnoxious plant for two years in a row and strongly advises avoiding it at almost any cost. It is important to learn to identify the leaf, but even more insidious at collecting time are the roots, which are large, soft and fleshy, and yellow white in color. Toxin seems to concentrate in the roots during the dormant period and collectors can expect a far more uncomfortable time from coming in contact with these roots than from an encounter with the vines or leaves. I have encountered poison ivy roots after the tree is half dug, where there had been no sign of the vine. The best protection is to wear gloves - something which I preach but don't practice very well. I love the feel of the dirt on my hands, but more important to the tree is that the collector be able to feel its roots while digging, and gloves prevent this. Valuable feeder roots can be easily broken and crushed unless you feel around for them. Perhaps a good compromise might be to use thin plastic gloves like surgical gloves.

Good news is that the Golden Triangle is still untouched by bulldozers and PBAers still have permission to collect there. A word of caution if you plan to take your dog or young children there. Some animal traps were set in there last winter and having your child or pet caught in one is a traumatic experience. Best to leave them home if you can, especially if you plan to spend your time and concentration on digging and can't keep a constant eye on them.

By following a few common-sense precautions, collecting should always be a pleasurable experience. Happy digging, hiking, selecting and planning, but most of all enjoying. ---Mary Houlton

ARE YOU A SERIOUS BONSAI PERSON? PBA THIRD ANNUAL SYMPOSIUM PROMISES LEARNING AND PLEASURE

Just a reminder that the PBA annual symposium will be held October 15-16. There is still time to submit your registration, and the sooner the better in order to get into the workshops you want.

The symposium is getting better each year and is the largest single educational program PBA offers to its members. We work hard to bring you the best in speakers and programs. It's an opportunity for you, the bonsaiist, to learn new techniques and skills and to meet and rub elbows with some of your fellow PBAers you may not know as well as with some of the best bonsai people in the country.

If you've missed the symposium before, plan to attend this year.
--- Mary Houlton

PBA THIRD ANNUAL SYMPOSIUM

The program has been set for the third annual PBA Bonsai Symposium and it promises to be an outstanding one. Remember the symposium will be held at the University of Maryland Adult Education Center, University Boulevard and Adelphi Road, College Park, Maryland on October 15 & 16. Registration fee for PBAers is \$18 for the program until October 1st and \$25 after that date. Registration for non-PBAers is \$20 until October 1st and \$25 after then. Banquet fee is \$11 for everyone, but reservations must be made a minimum of a week in advance for the banquet.

---Mary Houlton

SATURDAY

- 9:00 A.M. - Welcome by President Richard Meszler and showing of the film "The Spirit of B nsai."
- 10:00 A.M. - Cliff Pottberg will give a lecture on the theory of bonsai and on advanced styling techniques.
- 11:00 A.M. - Dr. David Andrews will present slides and bring with him examples of some of the trees he has collected. His theme will be where and how to collect native bonsai material and the development of this material.
- 12:00-2:00 P M - Lunch. The cafeteria will be open. Opportunity also to browse and buy at the bazaar.
- 2:00-3:30 P.M. - Workshops. You should indicate on the registration form your first and second choice for BOTH sessions.
- 3:45-5:15
- (1) Marion Gyllenswan - forest planting lecture/demonstration.
 - (2) Jim Everman - Saikei. A hands-in-the-dirt workshop on placement of rocks and trees in creating saikei. Active participation limited to the first ten registrants. Observers welcome.
 - (3) Jim Newton - impossible tree clinic. Bring you own tree and bonsai tools.
- 7:00-8:00 P.M. - Social hour.

8:00-? - Banquet.

SUNDAY

- 9:00 A.M. - George Baker will talk on bonsai development and the maturing process, using slides and live trees to show year-to-year progression.
- 10:00 A.M. - Keith Scott will explain how to grow trees from seed, nursery stock, cuttings, including watering, fertilizing, pre-styling. He will also demonstrate the kimono coat-hanger style. (If you don't know what this is, come and find out.)
- 11:00 A.M. - Chase Rosade will wrap up the symposium with a presentation on flowering and fruiting trees. He will also bring with him some of his famous hornbeams we remember so well from previous symposia.

PBA Annual Symposium
 Vicki Ballantyne, treasurer
 538 West Drive
 Severna Park, Maryland 21146

Please accept my registration for _____ person(s) for the 1977 PBA Annual Symposium. I am enclosing a check (made out to Potomac Bonsai Association) in the amount of \$_____.

Program only	No. _____	@ \$ _____.
Program and banquet	No. _____	@ \$ _____.
Banquet only	No. _____	@ \$ _____.

My choice for workshops are:

First session	Second session
(1) Marion Gyllenswan _____	(1) Marion Gyllenswan _____
(2) Jim Everman _____	(2) Jim Everman _____
(3) Jim Newton _____	(3) Jim Newton _____


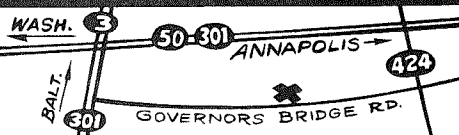
Name _____

Address _____


Club affiliation _____

CLUB CALENDAR

- ANNAPOLIS** - October. Regular meeting cancelled. Plan to attend the PBA Fall Symposium, October 15-16.
November 10 (Thursday), 7:30 p.m. Annapolis Public Library, West Street, Annapolis. Talk on secondary plantings by Tory Pottberg. Bring trees for critique.
- BALTIMORE** - October 16 (Sunday), 1:00-5:00 p.m. Cylburn Park. Annual Baltimore Bonsai Show.
November 20 (Sunday), 3:00 p.m. Cylburn Park. Richard Metzler will give a lecture on indoor bonsai. Tree of the month is indoor bonsai. Bring any indoor bonsai for critique or to share.
- BROOKSIDE** - October 21 (Friday), 7:30 p.m. Cliff Pottberg will do a lecture/workshop on tree identification. Bring trees for critique.
November 4 (Friday), 7:30 p.m. John Hruha for jin carving workshop. Bring your tree.
November 18 (Friday), 7:30 p.m. Bob Drechsler will give a slide program and talk on his trip to Japan. Bring trees for critique.
- KIYOMIZU** - October. Regular meeting cancelled. Attend the PBA Symposium October 15-16.
November 20 (Sunday), 2:00 p.m. Note date change from regular fourth Sunday. Slide tape lecture on tree styles and slides of the trees on display at IBC 77 in Chicago.
- NOVABONSOC** - October 8 (Saturday), 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Gulf Branch Nature Center, 36th & Military Road, Arlington. Show and exhibit. Members bring one or more plants. Displays will be arranged in groups beginning with up to one year in training, 1-2 years, 2-3 years, etc. Show will be open to public. Coffee and tea will be served. Demonstrations at 11 a.m. and 1 p.m.
November 12 (Saturday), 10:00 a.m. Gulf Branch Nature Center. Meeting will cover soils, fertilization and wintering of bonsai.

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WHERE DOES THE NEWSLETTER GO?

Where does the PBA Newsletter go? It goes to California, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Louisiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Missouri, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Texas, Washington State and D.C., Canada, Australia, and Japan. Geographically, it's a big audience for your articles.

It takes about six hours to collate, staple, fold and label each issue. These tasks are willingly done each month by those PBA stalwarts Molly Hersh and Jo Finneyfrock. They must also separate the newsletters by state and numerically by zip code. This done, Molly hands the issue to her Silver Spring, Maryland postoffice where she does the government paperwork and pays the fees on our non-profit permit. Their labor of love saves PBA more than \$20 a month and reinforces our love for them.

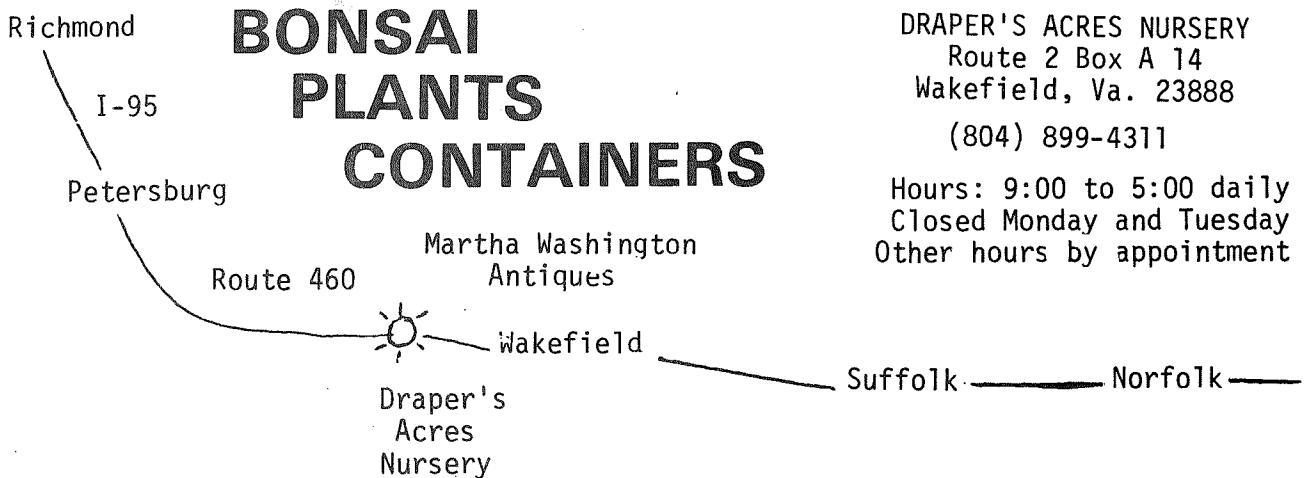
For what it's worth department: Brian Campbell has the lowest local zip code, 20001. A former local PBAer, Mrs. Joyce Newland, has the highest zip code number, 98392 in Sequim, Washington.

The typos you find in the Newsletter belong to the coordinator who once had a Chicago city editor tell him after reading one of his stories, "Someday you'll make a fine journalist but damn you, you'll never be able to spell!" He was sure correct on the spelling. ---John W. Hinds

WASHINGTON CLUB NOTES

Is alive and working. Saturday, September 17, eight members got their hands dirty learning how to make soil for bonsai, which components are best and why. Cliff Pottberg led the program and assisted members in potting up trees styled in previous workshops like the indoor workshop led by Marion Borchers of Tampa, Florida.

For November, members are being asked to R E M E M B E R to bring their bonsai and pre-bonsai to the meeting and come half an hour earlier (1:30 p.m.) because this meeting is open to the public for a membership drive. ---Tory Pottberg



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