

## Potomac Bonsai Association Membership Application

Welcome! We conduct a Spring Show and a Fall Symposium as well as other events. PBA is made up of the clubs listed to the right. Join one club and be eligible to attend any club meeting in addition to receiving the PBA Newsletter monthly. Residents of the Potomac Region and the Philadelphia Metropolitan area are expected to join a club to receive all membership benefits. Individuals beyond commuting distance of a club are invited to subscribe to the PBA Newsletter.

To become a member, call the contact person of the nearest club for current rates and where to send your dues. For subscription to the PBA Newsletter only, mail a check (payable to PBA) for \$15.00 to Cy Mill, 10300 Bushman Dr., #111, Oakton, VA 22124.

*Regular meeting times and places are listed. Meeting times and locations are subject to change, call first! Events are listed in the monthly PBA Newsletter.*

- |   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Family                              | <input type="checkbox"/> Subscription Only       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Baltimore Bonsai Club            | <input type="checkbox"/> Bowie Bonsai Club                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Brookside Bonsai Club   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chesapeake Bonsai Society        | <input type="checkbox"/> Kiyomizu Bonsai Club                | <input type="checkbox"/> Mei-Hwa Penjing Society |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Northern Virginia Bonsai Society | <input type="checkbox"/> Greater Philadelphia Bonsai Society | <input type="checkbox"/> Washington Bonsai Club  |

NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
 ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_  
 CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_  
 TELEPHONE: (Office) \_\_\_\_\_ (Home) \_\_\_\_\_

POTOMAC BONSAI ASSOCIATION, INC.  
 % U.S. NATIONAL ARBORETUM  
 3501 NEW YORK AVE., NE  
 WASHINGTON, D.C. 20002

- BALTIMORE BONSAI CLUB**  
 Cylburn Arboretum, Baltimore, MD.  
 3rd Sunday, 1 PM  
 Elaine Kendall, (301) 426-5421
- BOWIE BONSAI CLUB**  
 Bowie Community Center, Bowie, MD  
 Last Monday, 7 PM  
 Terry Adkins, (301) 350-3586
- BROOKSIDE BONSAI SOCIETY**  
 North Chevy Chase Recreation Center  
 Chevy Chase, MD.  
 3rd Thursday, 7:30 PM  
 Jerry Antel, (301) 320-5251
- CHESAPEAKE BONSAI SOCIETY**  
 Paca Garden, Annapolis, MD  
 2nd Tuesday, 7:30 PM  
 Stephen Choi, (301) 261-8131
- KIYOMIZU BONSAI CLUB**  
 Clearwater Nature Center, Clinton, MD  
 3rd Saturday, 2 PM  
 Joan Stephens, (301) 423-8230
- MEI-HWA PENJING SOCIETY**  
 (Chinese language spoken)  
 Banneker Middle School, Silver Spring, MD.  
 Sunday, 2PM (School year only)  
 Akey Hung, (301) 390-6687
- NORTHERN VIRGINIA BONSAI SOCIETY**  
 Green Spring Horticultural Center  
 Annandale, VA  
 2nd Saturday, 10 AM  
 Chris Yeapanis, (703) 591-0864
- GREATER PHILADELPHIA BONSAI SOCIETY**  
 Pennypack Watershed, Willow Grove, PA  
 4th Thursday, Eve.  
 Larry Chiger, (609) 753-0311
- WASHINGTON BONSAI CLUB**  
 U. S. National Arboretum, Washington, D.C.  
 3rd Saturday, 2 PM  
 Julie Walker, (202) 547-8497

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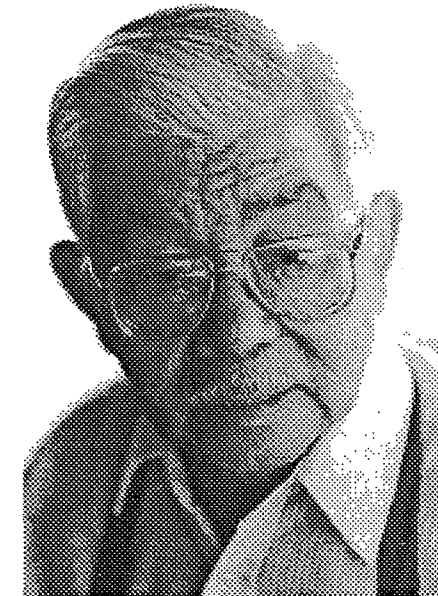
# PBA

# Clippings

NEWSLETTER OF THE POTOMAC BONSAI ASSOCIATION

ISSN 0160-9521

## JOHN YOSHIO NAKA HONORED BY NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS



John Yoshio Naka

On September 22nd in a ceremony in Room 235 of the U.S. Senate Office Building on Capitol Hill, Washington, D.C., that began at 10:30 a.m., John Yoshio Naka was one of 13 persons receiving a National Heritage Fellowship, the government's highest award to folk artists. This prestigious awards ranks along with Japan's Living Treasure designation. The National Endowment for the Arts, under whose aegis the awards are given, provided the following press release:

### MASTER FOLK ARTISTS HONORED ON CAPITOL HILL

Lawmakers Join Arts Endowment in Celebrating 11th Annual National Heritage Fellowships

WASHINGTON—Thirteen "keepers of tradition's torch" whose enduring music and masterful crafts have moved and awed generations of Americans were honored today on Capitol Hill with National Heritage Fellowships, the government's highest award to folk artists.

Arts Endowment Acting Chairman Anne-Imelda Radice, together with Members of Congress, hailed the fellowship recipients as "master traditional artists" contributing to "the shaping of our artistic traditions and preserving the cultural diversity of the United States."

"These men and women we honor today are the keepers of tradition's torch," said Dr. Radice. "They learn the old ways—of song, dance, crafts—and through their skills invigorate those traditions, shaping them with their own vision and artistic excellence. Through their generosity of spirit, they pass along these traditions into their communities and enrich all of our lives and those of generations to come."

Now in their 11th year, the one-time-only fellowships of \$5,000 honor the master practitioners of the traditional arts. They were selected from among 229 folk artists who were nominated by their peers. Nomination criteria for the fellowships are authenticity, excellence, and significance

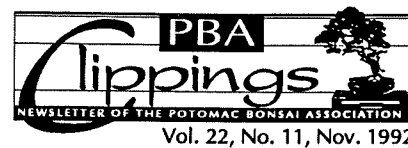
*continues on page 9 . . .*

## SPECIAL NOTICE

The Juniper styled by Ernie Kuo at the PBA Symposium, October 10-11, 1992, and raffled on Saturday afternoon remains unclaimed. The winning number is 1385468 (some tickets were found to contain typographical errors at the third digit position and the winning number may be 1395468). The holder of this ticket should contact Bill Spencer at 1-301-871-5768 to claim the tree. In the event that the winning ticket is not produced, the tree will be auctioned at the PBA Spring Show, 1993.

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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 and its annual dues, are listed under the "Calendar of Events" section of this Newsletter.

**Non-Member Subscriptions:** Individuals residing within the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area or the Philadelphia metropolitan area are encouraged to become members of a club to receive the newsletter. Annual subscription for 12 issues of the PBA Newsletter only is \$15.00 which should be made payable to the Potomac Bonsai Association and sent to Cy Mill, 10300 Bushman Drive, #111, Oakton, VA 22124.

#### Advertising Rates:

Monthly rates: 1/2 page, \$7.50; 1/6 page, \$12.50; 1/3 page, \$15.00; 1/2 page, \$25.00, full-page, \$40.00. 20% discount for advertisements that run 3 or more months. Direct inquiries/copy to: J.L. Stephanic, 1305 Bayliss Drive, Alexandria, VA 22302, (703) 671-6881.

Please send articles to the editor: J. F. Koetsch, 6709 Caneel Ct., Springfield, VA 22152; (703) 569-9378.

#### PBA Officers:

<b>President</b>	Russ Kinerson
<b>Vice-President</b>	Chris Yeapanis
<b>Educ. Vice-President</b>	Arschel Morell
<b>Secretary</b>	Julie Walker
<b>Treasurer</b>	Jerry Antel, Jr.
<b>Public Relations</b>	Tony Meyer (301) 654-1854
<b>Membership</b>	Cy Mill
<b>Newsletter Editor</b>	Jules Koetsch

#### PBA Newsletter Staff

<b>Editor</b>	Jules Koetsch (703) 569-9378
<b>Art Director</b>	Jeff Stephanic (202) 994-9052
<b>Calendar Editors</b>	Hal Wise Judy Wise
<b>Copy Editor</b>	Beth Potratz
<b>Contributing Artist</b>	Steve McCarthy

## From the Editor . . .

Winter is approaching and the daily chores related to bonsai are diminishing. It's been another busy summer, attending to trees, participating in monthly meetings, auctions, or symposia and other bonsai related activities. Winter is the time to clean tools, refine plans for spring repotting and styling, update neglected records and consider submissions to the *PBA Clippings*.

Yes, another editorial on sharing and participating in the activities of your club! The newsletter is receiving many favorable comments and the staff thanks all for their support. However, we must not presume that all is in order and no longer requires active participation by all members.

Continuing needs are as follows:

Feature articles on any topic with or without illustrations.

Questions or tips for *The Turntable*

Illustrations: We'll gladly accept any bonsai related illustrations and publish them as stand alone graphics or if they relate, as part of a story. (artwork/photographs should be no larger than 8 1/2" x 14")

Calendar events - monthly club events as well as national or international events

Submissions must be received by the editor no later than the first of the month to be included in that month's issue.

Thanks for your continuing support.



A stereographic photo card published by Underwood and Underwood, Washington, D.C., 1904, illustrating Count Okuma's greenhouse, bonsai collection and gardener. Count Okuma was a Minister of Foreign Affairs and leader of Japan's Progressive Party. From the collection of Jules Koetsch.

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### NOVEMBER

Meeting location and club contact number for additional information is as listed unless otherwise noted in calendar listing. A member of any one club is eligible to participate in any PBA or PBA member club event.

**Baltimore Bonsai Club**  
Cylburn Arboretum  
(410) 668-1868

**Bowie Bonsai Club**  
Bowie Community Center  
(301) 350-3586  
(202) 667-1010

**Brookside Bonsai Society**  
North Chevy Chase Recreational Center  
(301) 365-7621

**Chesapeake Bonsai Club**  
Paca Garden, Annapolis, MD  
(301) 261-8131

**Kiyomizu**  
Clearwater Nature Center, Clinton, MD  
(301) 645-3519

**Mei-Hwa Penjing Club**  
Banneker Middle School  
(301) 390-6687

**Northern Virginia Bonsai Society**  
Green Spring Horticultural Center  
Annandale, VA  
(703) 591-0864

**Greater Philadelphia Bonsai Society**  
Pennypack Watershed  
Willow Grove, PA  
(609) 753-0311

**Washington Bonsai Club**  
U.S. National Arboretum  
(202) 296-2441

Organizations sponsoring regular events of interest to PBA members:

**Richmond Bonsai Society**  
Imperial Plaza, 1717 Bellevue Ave.,  
Richmond, VA  
(804) 749-4956

**U.S. Botanical Gardens**  
(202) 226-4082

**U.S. National Arboretum**  
(202) 475-4857

Please mail calendar events to:  
Jeff Stephanic  
1305 Bayliss Drive  
Alexandria, VA 22302

### NOVEMBER

**Mei-Hwa Penjing Society**  
In process of reorganization. Please call Akey Hung, (301) 390-6687, for meeting information.

**Sunday 1**  
National Arboretum Yoshimura Center  
Bonsai docent on duty to answer questions from 1-4 PM.

**Sunday 1**  
Brookside Bonsai Society  
Collect Virginia and Pitch Pines. Meet at Peter Bauer's home 8:30-9:00 am. Trip to Buddhist Wildlife Refuge. Allow two to three hours.

**Wednesday 4**  
National Arboretum Admin. Bldg.  
John Easley, former Horticulturist Kew Gardens will discuss new plants for gardens with emphasis on old and new shrub roses. 11-12 Noon. Fee \$10/FONA \$8.

**Saturday 7**  
National Arboretum Auditorium  
*Tropical and Indoor Bonsai*, Lecture and demonstration, Marian Borchers, Tampa, FL, 1-4 pm.

**Sunday 8**  
National Arboretum Yoshimura Center  
Bonsai Demonstration with Baltimore Bonsai Club, 1:30 pm.

**Tuesday 10**  
Brookside Bonsai Society  
Artist's Circle: Bill Spencer and Dave Garvin. At Janet Lanman's, 7:30-9:30 pm. Registration required, limit 10, free.

**Tuesday 10**  
National Arboretum Yoshimura Center  
"Refinement Workshop," with staff, 1-3 pm. \*Prerequisite - Beginners Bonsai Class. Material not provided. Registration required. Fee \$12/FONA \$10. Call Arboretum.

**Wednesday 11**  
National Arboretum Yoshimura Center  
Refinement Workshop, with staff 6:30-9 pm. \*Prereq. - Beginners Class. Material not provided. Registration required. Fee \$12/FONA \$10. Call Arboretum.

**Saturday 14**  
Northern Virginia Bonsai Society  
"?????", with Arschel Morell, 10 am. Beginner's hour, 9 am. Workshop, 1 pm, reservations required, BYOT, Limit 10.

**Thursday 19**  
Brookside Bonsai Society  
"Trident Maple: Root Over Rock," Stanley Chinn, 7:30 pm. Beginner's corner, 7 pm.

**Saturday 21**  
Brookside Bonsai Society  
"Trident Maple: Root Over Rock Workshop," Stanley Chinn, 8:30 am at home of Stanley Chinn. Registration required, \$10.00 per participant (limit 10), \$5.00 silent observer (limit 2).

**Saturday 21**  
Washington Bonsai Club  
Indoor Bonsai Workshop by Martha Meehan at Meehan's Miniatures, Boonesboro, MD. 2 PM.

**Sunday 22**  
Kiyomizu Bonsai Club  
"Pottery Making," at Chuck Bird's, 2 pm.

### DECEMBER

**Saturday 12**  
Northern Virginia Bonsai Society  
Annual Dinner Party

**Wednesday 16**  
Brookside Bonsai Society  
Christmas Dinner

### ETCETERA

Wolf Trap Nursery provides free lecture/demonstrations on Bonsai care. Lectures are held on the last Saturday of the month from 9-10:30 am. For information call (703) 759-4244. 9239 Leesburg Pike, Vienna, VA.

November 5-8, 1992  
Golden State Bonsai Federation  
Annual Convention, Red Lion Inn, Sacramento, CA.  
Features Chase Rosade, Hiroshi Suzuki and Kathy Shaner. For info: Dorothy Place, P.O. Box 959, Davis, CA 95617, (916) 758-5763.

May 27-31, 1993  
IBC and World Bonsai Convention  
*New Horizons* convention including Saburo Kato, John Naka, Yuji Yoshimura and many other world class bonsaiists. For more information write or call: Registrar, Robert Hutchinson, 7900 Mindello, South Miami, FL 33143 U.S.A., (305) 665-2950.

## Youth Program Update

John Cardon has submitted the following update on the PBA Youth Education Program.

Here is a report on what I have been doing with the Youth Program.

(1) At the request of the horticulture teacher at Wheaton High School, I conducted four tours through the Bonsai and Penjing Museum for students enrolled in a summer program called "Vocational Interest Exploration Workshop". The kids were students with learning problems.

(2) I gave a demonstration at the school for this same group.

(3) Both events went well and the teacher wants to participate in the PBA program during the upcoming school year as part of the regular course in Horticulture. He is particularly interested in having the students start a bonsai and keep it growing through the year in the greenhouse at the school.

(4) As of the present time, there will be two schools in the program this coming year—Wheaton and Blair (which I visited in May).

(5) I plan to write again to all science teachers in Montgomery County and remind them of the existence of the PBA Program. I also want to extend the program to Prince George's County and to Northern Virginia. This will require recruiting more help and if any of the Board Members has any suggestions as to who might be good at lecturing or demonstrating I would be glad to have some names.

Sorry I won't be at the meeting, but the foregoing covers what has transpired since the last meeting.

I continue to be optimistic about the program and its appeal to the teachers.

## NVBS Auction Outstanding Success!

The September AUCTION was a success. NVBS raised \$5,530.00 from the auction after expenses and there was an anonymous donation of \$1000.00 from a NVBS member for a total of a \$6,530.00 donation to the National Bonsai Foundation. This does give the foundation enough money to move ahead with glass houses, but they still can use a few more dollars.

I want to thank everyone who helped at the auction and those who bid on items. A

special thanks to those who donated auction materials; and those who arranged donations from commercial establishments. Many thanks to Todd Ellis who helped put things together. I cannot thank each individual as too many people helped. Thanks also to all the PBA clubs and businesses that sent donations to the auction.

Chris Yeapanis  
PBA 1st Vice-President

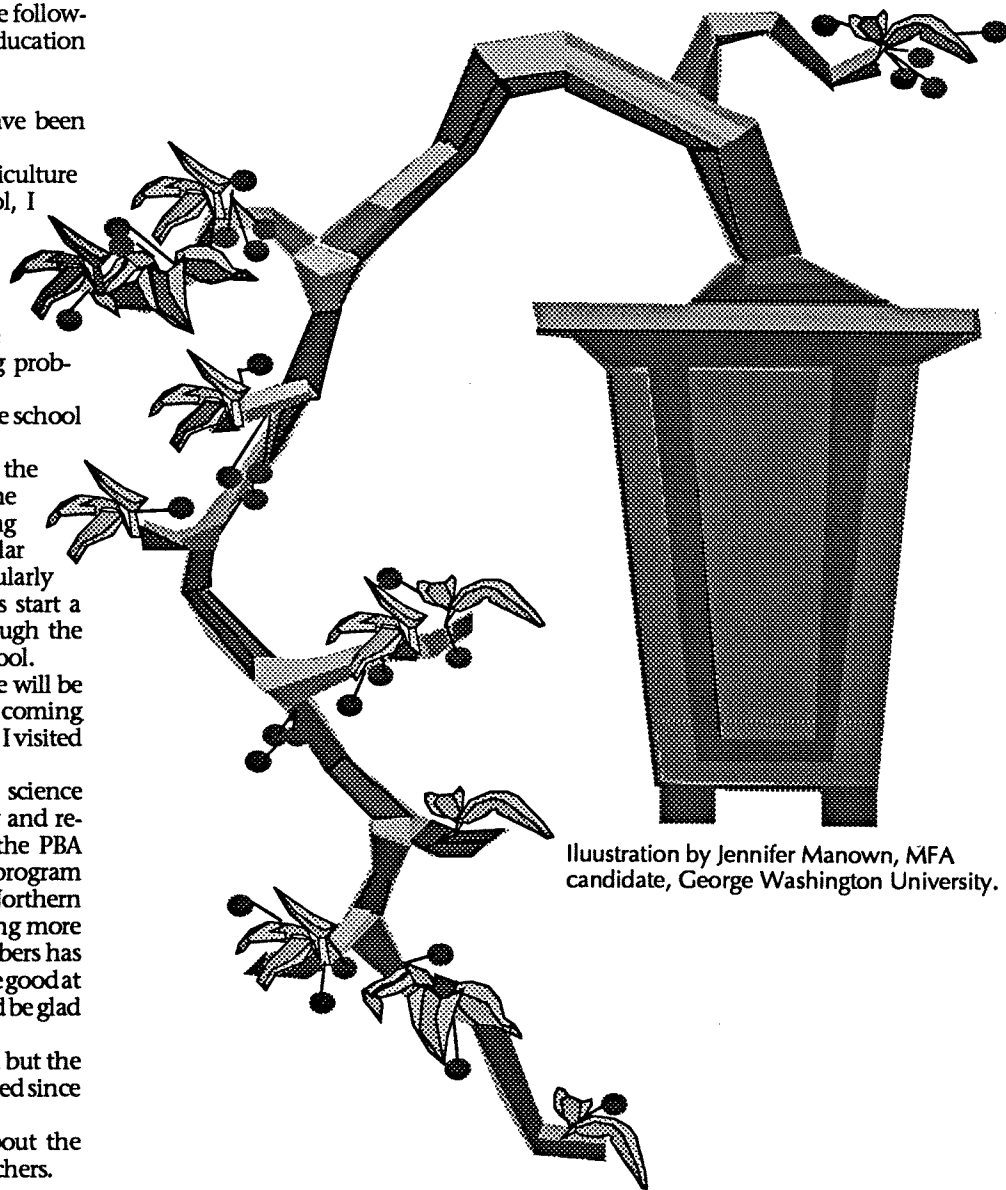
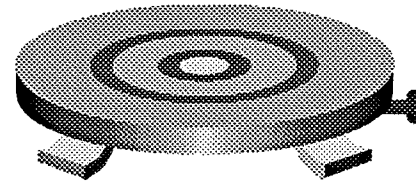


Illustration by Jennifer Manown, MFA candidate, George Washington University.

## The Turntable

Sensei Sam



Help has arrived! Here are some answers from Bill Merritt to questions posed in the October Turntable.

**Q** Today I discovered that Diazinon is being phased out by the U.S. government. What should I use instead?

**A** The chief value of Diazinon is for control of grubs and other insects in lawns. Consideration of phasing it out is based on concerns for runoff into potable water supplies and for possible harm to ground-feeding songbirds. For bonsaiists there are still insecticidal soaps, sprays such as malathion and systemics such as cygon. More important, keep your trees healthy, with proper sun, air, water and fertilizer; examine them daily for infestations, and spray the foliage with water to remove bird droppings and insects. Such attention should minimize the need for insecticides.

**Q** Can you suggest a fertilizer that has the usual N,K,P, but also iron and essential minerals for growth?

**A** Please reread Russ Kinerson's excellent article on fertilizers—PBA Clippings, July 1992. If you prefer to use a commercial fertilizer, look for one that claims to be "balanced" and read the contents which should include the micronutrients. If your favorite fertilizer does not contain micronutrients, they can be added from such sources as Peters S.T.E.M.-Soluble Trace Element Mix, or Dlicromax. Again, from Russ' article and an analysis of some of my trees by our county agricultural agent, I have changed fertilizers to ones with a high phosphate content to encourage root growth. These include "Roots plus for Houseplants" (2-4-2 with macro and micro nutrients), Peters Professional: Blossom Booster 10-30-20, African Violet Special 12-36-14, Houseplant Special 15-30-15, or Liquid Plant Food 5-10-5. It is very important that you follow directions on dilution and frequency of applications. Russ is correct in advising that there have been no controlled experiments to determine which

one is "best." While I am pleased with improvements I can see in my trees already, it will be a year before I know what fertilizer practices I want to adopt permanently.

**Q** Is it safe to use Sequestrene as an iron supplement on my bonsai?

**A** Sequestrene is sold as an "ideal iron supplement for all types of soil and most kinds of plants." Which plants are not specified. Please read the label—if there are still doubts, telephone the manufacturer and share your information with Sensei Sam.

**Q** I can not get moss to grow in either sun or shade, from dry powdered takings from under an oak tree in the yard, from teaspoon sized pieces from bonsai, or from spores bought at a nursery. The soil is damp and nearly Ph neutral. What am I doing wrong?

**A** Different kinds of moss have different growth requirements. Generally, moss prefers a moist, shady and acidic environment, but I have found luxuriant clumps growing in sidewalk cracks. The best chance for propagating moss is to collect it in the spring when sporophytes are showing. These are tiny hair-like stalks, often red or brown, barely visible above the bed of green moss. At the top of each sporophyte is a capsule containing spores, ready for the next reproduction cycle. Transplanted at this stage, moss has a better chance to survive and grow. Buttons of the moss, with some of its natural soil, can be placed directly on bonsai soil to create an ancient appearance. However, this should be done only in the spring or when showing the tree on special occasions. If moss survives the summer it suggests more water than is good for the tree. All moss should be removed before putting trees away for winter. Moss will absorb moisture denying it to the roots below, and if in contact with the trunk or surface roots, the wet moss will likely rot them. (See Shuttleworth and Zim, "Non-Flowering Plants," Golden Press)

**Q** I have trouble with bamboo (a rhizome from a neighbor). The rooting developed this spring into a nice young bonsai, but stopped growing, with only two culms larger than 1/16" and many about 1/32" in a group setting, with well drained, but moist soil at just below Ph neutral. I think I should get thicker diameter culms, especially since I started with a rhizome from about 1", normal size about 10' tall. Why am I not getting more growth? Please don't respond by saying "count your blessings."

**A** Culms of bamboo grow up from rhizomes at their full diameter. They will not thicken during their lifetime. Culms that grow from the same rhizome each succeeding year will be thicker than the ones that grew the previous year. It has been my experience when transplanting bamboo, regardless of the size of the culm or rhizome, new shoots will be the smallest size appropriate for that species. The trick is to find a stalk growing naturally the size you desire, excavate the rhizome and keep it alive in a bonsai container. New shoots, smaller than the one excavated, will grow during succeeding years, but each year they will be bigger than the prior ones. These can be cut off just below the soil surface retaining only the ones desired for your composition. (See Lynn R. Perry, "Bonsai: Trees and Shrubs—A Guide to the Methods of Kyuzo Murata," Ronald Press)

Hope all this helps—I will be anxious to learn if there are other responses with different experiences. You are providing a great service.

Bill Merritt

Please send inquiries/responses to:

Sensei Sam  
4228 Berritt Street  
Fairfax, VA 22030

THANKS,  
Sensei Sam

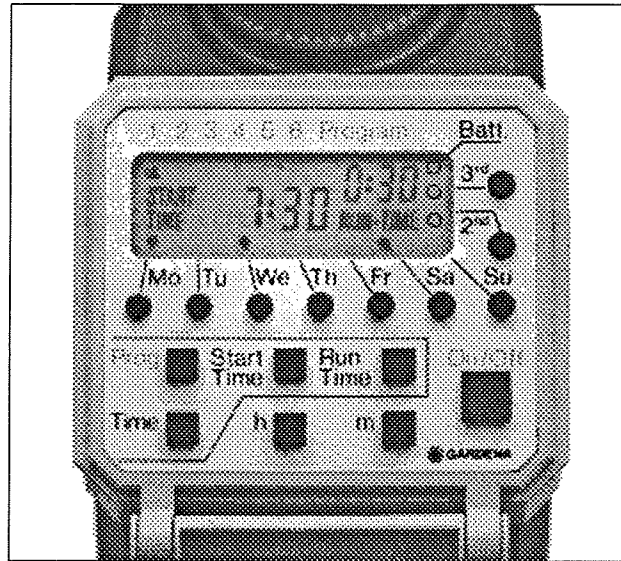
## AUTOMATED WATERING

Jules Koetsch and Jeff Stephanic

One of the items that immediately discourages some would-be bonsai custodians is the mention that bonsai resemble household pets in that they must be watered once or maybe twice a day when mother nature does not oblige with a drenching. Faced with the thought that one is forever a prisoner of one's domicile and vacations or even stolen weekends will be taboo as long as the bonsai survive, some bonsaiists have enlisted a neighbor to "baby-sit" their trees. Often it is the neighbor's child who gets saddled with the chore of tending to the daily watering. Such an approach is fraught with any of a number of dangers including some that one may not even envision. At any rate, bonsaiists who have chosen the above approach usually 99 times out a 100 are inviting their bonsai to commit harakiri (Japanese ceremonial suicide). People who volunteer or are pressed into service may forget from day to day or even worse that they have planned to go on vacation corresponding with some of the dates you will be away from home and then actually go on vacation!

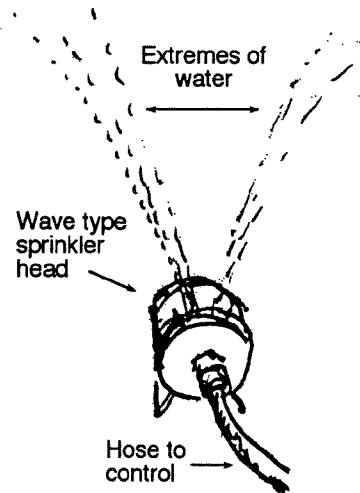
Recently an article appeared in the Journal newspaper's The Gadget Guru column by Andy Pargh that extolled the virtue of electronic watering meters for gardeners. Bonsaiists may possibly benefit from the use of this item. These meters connect between the outlet and a hose or irrigation system and controls the duration of water flow. All are battery operated, easy to program and vary from one to six cycles per day. The basic models provide a minimum of 15 minutes on cycle in addition to a manual on/off override. More advanced models provide for 1 minute time increments as well as specified days for skipping the watering. Models range in price from approximately \$25 to \$100.

I've resorted to a device similar to the above product for over 10 years. The sprinkler end should not be an impulse sprinkler but one that sprays the water so that it falls like rain. I use a wave-type sprinkler head as shown which is mounted on one of my benches.



Gardena Water Computer model 1060. This model is fully programmable in one minute increments and will store up to six individual programs.

Watering of outdoor bonsai in the winter is usually not a daily requirement as one is likely to have moved the bonsai to some protective area. Furthermore, parts of the watering system probably would be exposed so that there is the likelihood that they would freeze. Watering can be done by lugging it in a sprinkling can from inside the house.

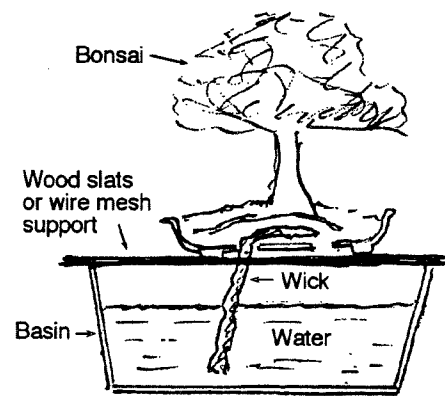


Wave type sprinkler which may be controlled by the water computer.

A drip irrigation system may be used with a water computer to fully automate the watering process. A 1/2" plastic main supply hose is used to route the water from the computer to near the plants to be watered. Feeder hoses of 1/8" or 3/16" diameter are connected to the feeder hose and directed to a plant. Regulator tips are available with a variety of drip or spray rates per hour to attach to the feeder hoses. Liquid fertilizer may also be metered into the water. If any reader has used or is using such a system, I'm certain that the readers would like more information.

### INDOOR PLANTS and BALCONY PLANTS

Of the above suggestion the only one that might be useful is the drip method for balcony plants. Another method for plants kept on balconies or indoors is a wick or water-absorbing material placed in the pot so that it extends through the drainage hole and into a basin of water beneath the plant. For weekend trips of 2 to 3 days or bonsai kept in an office over the weekend, some plants like *Ficus benjamina* have been known to survive by placing a plastic bag over them for that period of time. Readers with any other suggestions, please let us know.



Wick watering method for indoor bonsai.

## Bunjin-gi: Lecture/Workshop Notes

Mike Kling

### BUNJIN-literati, GI-tree

Really more of a feeling than a style, Bunjin-gi may be thought of as the bonsaiist's bonsai. Bunjin-gi may occur as any of the five major styles and most of the minor styles, or even no style at all. Literati "style" is the "art of space"<sup>1</sup>, emphasizing what is not there (but is). Rules are generally said to be non-existent for Literati bonsai, or irrelevant; however, a strong sense of bonsai "correctness" and "Nature logic" are needed by the artist to produce a Bunjin-gi. Elegant simplicity; essence of the tree, its species and its surrounding environment are vital to the Literati mood. "Light, easy, free, unconstrained, witty, clever, humorous, and unconventional"<sup>2</sup> describe the Literati feeling.

Literati bonsai originated among the bunjin, or "men of letters" of Japan and China. These were poets, philosophers, artists and intellectuals, many of whom had rejected their high positions and chose more simple, less materialistic lives. These people found personal satisfaction in the arts, music, games and living close to Nature. The Southern Sung style of Chinese landscape painting became very popular among the bunjin, largely because of its unfinished or incomplete qualities which invited the viewer to complete the scene with his own imagination. The bunjin liked bonsai, too, particularly the tall, thin, barely existing mountain Pines like the Southern Chinese painted. Thus, the Bunjin-gi, or Literati style of bonsai was developed.

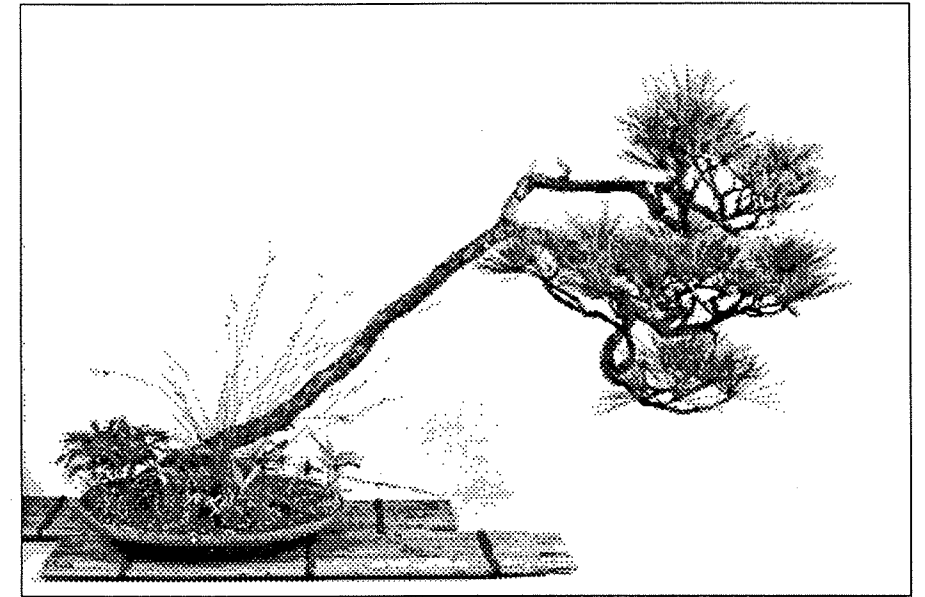
### CHARACTERISTICS OF BUNJIN-GI

**ROOTS**- Surface roots must be present, may be thin, irregular. Do not have to radiate evenly.

**TRUNK**- Relatively tall (or long) and slender. Little or no taper. Often exaggeratedly tall. May be straight, gently curved or recurved. May be broken, have driftwood (jin, shari). Often has "C" shape in upper reaches of trunk.

**BARK**- Fine quality, flaky but not too peeling. If smooth, should be relatively scar-less. **MUST LOOK OLD, OLD, OLD!!!**

**BRANCHES**- Relatively sparse and few. Often only in top third of tree. Often very zigzagging. Branches may cross trunk and/or other branches. May have jin, shari.



Branches usually not heavy, should have light, open, airy feeling. May repeat "C" shape found in trunk.

**APEX**- May be live or dead, if apex is jin, top of live growth is called the terminal.

**FOLIAGE**- Should be very dwarfed, may be very sparse, or compact and clustered.

**FRUIT and FLOWERS**- One school of thought holds that Bunjin-gi should be extremely quiet, subtle and muted, therefore fruits and flowers are inappropriate. Since Bunjin-gi is the style without rules, some artists have created fine Literati bonsai from Persimmon (featuring fruit), lime (featuring its delicate blossoms) and other non-conifers. If flowers or fruit are used, do so with restraint.

**CONTAINERS**- Unglazed, shallow, informal, irregular, round or free form pots are generally chosen for Bunjin-gi. Stone slabs also work well. Namban containers, styled like the inverted lids of antique Chinese incense burners are highly prized. The container for Bunjin-gi should be small, as a very small amount of soil is used to keep the Bunjin-gi barely alive in order to foster its essential qualities.

### GROWING TIPS

**LIGHT**- Keep plant in full Sun, no shadows, all day, conifers especially. This should keep foliage dwarf and tight. Sun will also bring out the best features of the bark.

**WATER**- Give water sparingly and less frequently, just enough to sustain life and minimal development. It is important to water this way in the developmental stages as well as for an exhibitable bonsai.

**FERTILIZER**- Feed just enough to sustain life and minimal growth. Keep nitrogen low, just enough to maintain leaf color. Be more generous with phosphates and potassium to encourage strength and root development. Supply trace elements occasionally.

**CONTAINER**- Keep the Pot small in all stages of healthy development to limit growth and encourage dwarf foliage and short internodes. Put plant in a larger pot or in the ground for a period of time to recover from trauma, if necessary.

**SOIL**- Should be gritty, spare and fast draining, especially for conifers. Lots of sharp sand, less clay and a bit of organic material is a good starting point. Vary component amounts according to species.

<sup>1</sup>BONSAI in CALIFORNIA, Vol. 23, 1989. Pub. by The California Bonsai Society, Inc. "Bunjin-gi Or Bunjin Bonsai", by John Naka. p.49.

<sup>2</sup>ibid., p.49.

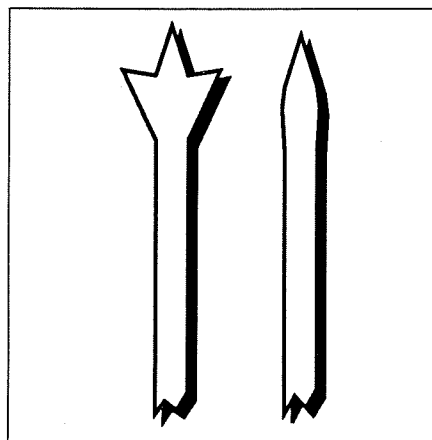
## New Grafting Techniques

Jules Koetsch

An interesting article appeared in the January 1987 issue of *Rodale's Organic Gardening* relating to two innovative grafting techniques.

Gary Meltzer of Los Altos, CA was trying to reshape a Christmas tree and drilled holes in the trunk and inserted branches sharpened with a pencil sharpener. Much to his surprise, a month later while removing the tree, he discovered the branches had grafted to the trunk. Inadvertently, Meltzer had connected the cambium layers of the trunk and branch which resulted in the natural grafting.

Gary continued to experiment with this technique and refined the process. He eventually arrived at reshaping a wood bit to allow drilling a hole matching the shape of the pencil sharpened scion.



Standard wood drill bit on the left and suggested reshaping on the right.

Carpenter/gardener David Frybarger of Ben Lomond, Calif., came up with a similar approach around the same time. He was dissatisfied with the traditional side graft, which produces a steep angle and the carpenter in him conjured up an image of the scion as a dowel fit into a hole on the tree. David tried it with success on a Pear tree. This technique is simpler than Gary's because it requires no reshaping of the drill bit. It will, however, leave a small gap on the tree at the end of the scion.

David's procedure starts with a fresh cut on the scion wood. Then he selects a drill bit the same diameter or slightly

smaller than the scion without bark and cambium. A starter hole is made and the hole is drilled at the desired angle with a sterilized (hot water) bit to a depth of  $\frac{3}{8}$  to  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch. Long scions may require a deeper hole to prevent a bird perching on it to pull it out. The scion's bark and cambium is carefully whittled away with a sterile knife until it fits snugly into the hole. Make sure there is a good fit all around. The graft is then painted with tree sealant.

With either method be sure the scion is oriented properly. Buds should point outward from the trunk.

Gary's method involves reshaping a drill bit, but also means that the size of the scion is not as critical. The pencil sharpener point on the scion matches the drill bit shape. Either method shows some promise for the bonsaiist. The ability to precisely set the angle of the graft has distinct advantages.

I do not know how many of the readers have thought of doing the above just as I have fantasied over the years of using just such a technique. Now that the above experimenters have cleared the path so to speak, here's the chance for enterprising readers to try and develop their own techniques.

As of this reading is there any reader who has a Banyan with any branches that are about  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch in diameter that they are willing to part with? About 5 weeks ago an oak snag about 20 feet long and 2 feet in diameter fell onto one of my bonsai benches. I had left it standing about 15 years ago after the dead oak tree was topped because I wanted to leave it as a snag for the woodpeckers to peck at and birds to nest in. However I should have suspected that something was amiss when one afternoon my wife noticed swarms of insects flitting about the base of the snag. My identifying them as termites caused my wife to immediately go into a frenzy which only abated by my rigging up a sprayer and hitting them with Malathion. Actually and to my relief they were swarming off on a direction away from our house. About one month later the snag fell.

The catastrophic results of the falling snag included broken pots of which none were of any value but more regrettably, three of my better bonsai were damaged. Namely the main bottom branch of a 14

inch high banyan was ripped off precisely at its juncture with the trunk leaving a roughly  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch diameter area of gaping heartwood. The moral of the story just points to emphasizing what one Japanese bonsai book illustrated as a no-no: that bonsai benches should not be placed under or near trees. Not only can tree limbs break from the tree and fall on your bonsai but so can other undesirable objects of which insects are the most notable.

Concerning undesirable objects, a squirrel around this time of year must have a symbiotic relationship with the Tulip popular tree located on one edge of my bonsai tables. I don't know if the squirrel plays bombardier and drops off the almost egg-sized seed pods in an effort to hit my bald head when I'm under the tree among the bonsai benches. However, I frequently find the seed pods in the surface of the soil in the bonsai pots and from the way they are discretely placed either the squirrel has a bombsight that the government should look into or he comes out of the tree and positions them in the pots.

According to *WYMAN'S GARDENING ENCYCLOPEDIA* by Donald Wyman (of course) and published by Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., New York, grafting is best done just before vigorous growth commences on the understock. Hence in this area the appropriate time should be late February to early March. This applies to the above techniques where trees are being "made over". Grafting small plants out of doors does not result in as much success as doing it inside under controlled temperature and moisture conditions. See Wyman for further information.

One might question how much of the cambium layer of the round hole mates with that of the branch if it is not precisely a circle in a cross-section while the hole in the trunk of the tree is round. However, it seems reasonable that if the hole in the trunk is just under size so that the branch can be pressed into the hole forcing the shape of the hole to conform to that of the branch, reasonable contact between the cambium layers will occur.

## NAKA FELLOWSHIP

continued from front page

within a particular artistic tradition. Nominees should be actively participating in their art form, have a record of ongoing artistic accomplishment, and be worthy of national recognition.

The Folk Arts Program of the National Endowment for the Arts supports the traditional arts that have grown through time within the many groups that make up our nation — groups that share the same ethnic heritage, language, occupation, religion, or geographic area. Its main objectives are to preserve and enhance this multicultural artistic heritage and to make it more available to a wider public.

On the evening of September 24th at 7:30 p.m. in George Washington University's Lisner Auditorium a free public performance of the 1992 National Heritage Fellows was held. It was hosted by CBS newsman Charles Kuralt who gave the following introduction:

"Traditional arts are so compelling and so powerful and even though they are practised by individuals they are not the creation of just one mind alone. Alan Lomax who has spent his life in this field is always telling us that generations of people have poured their their creative genii into every form of folk art to make it what it is today. I've had the pleasure of talking to dozens of National Fellows over the years and I can tell you that the most frequent answer you hear to a complement to them is that, 'If you think I'm good, you should have seen the one who taught me.' You will hear people say things like that on this stage tonight and what gets me about these artists again this year is that they are so keenly aware of their connectiveness to others in the past and in the present and in the future. In the past couple of days they have been honored by the President, by members of Congress, and the National Endowment for the Arts. Tonight they honor us with their presence and their generosity of spirit that has been part of their artistic lives."

After the above introduction, Mr. Kuralt then introduced each of the award recipients. Those whose art consisted of producing a tangible item were able to display their creations and in one instance play the Cajun accordion that one had made. The musicians, dancers, and singers brought

myself but for all of you people, my wife, and my family, my friends and bonsai. I don't think you get that as an individual you can achieve one thing - we all get it together. That's what I really feel."

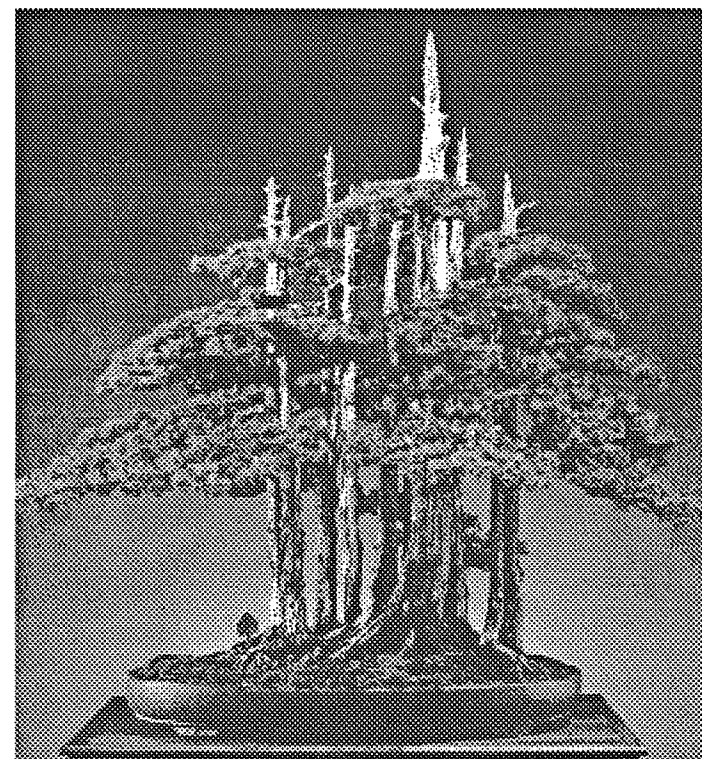
"Well, there's another thing I'm so happy about - bonsai is acknowledged as an art.

And I think this National Endowment for the Arts, by golly, I think it's a wonderful thing that they did this for every bonsai person because I'm not saying that bonsai is not an old culture but most important that it is an art. By golly, without art I don't think bonsai would be anywhere, because it's sort of new in our country, the United States, even though it has existed for many thousands of years. I wish I could live another 78 years."

To John's last remark, someone commented that, "We do expect you to make it to 100."

Jeff Stephanic, the man who puts together this elegantly revised newsletter, PBA Clippings, as it is now named, introduced himself and his wife Barbara to John and made the following statement, "Every time I go the Arboretum I stand in front of [John Naka's] Goshin admiring it - I don't know how long!"

John's reply was interesting, "Thank Bob [Drechsler] and Dan [Chiplis] too because it is a living thing and if the wrong person takes care of it you know [what will happen]. Really not all the credit is mine but give Dan and Bob credit too. It's very difficult to maintain [a bonsai] even though the face [general outline] is always there, some details will always change. This will prove that bonsai is not your own dominating art, you have to go along with nature and whatever nature offers you just have to be smart enough to grasp that. That I think is what makes it [bonsai] a little different. A person can grasp it, another person cannot and that makes the little differences."



Goshin by John Naka. National Bonsai and Penjing Museum, U.S. National Arboretum, Washington, D.C.

along their accompaniment of musicians and dancers to demonstrate their specific folk art. There was an intermission midway through the program, - John Naka did not come on until next to the last one.

During the intermission we had a chance to visit with John and his lovely wife, Alice Naka, in the audience. Here's some of John's remarks during this interlude.

John was asked what he would be doing when he goes on stage and he responded that he would play a drum and Alice would dance.

John allowed, "This is one of the best memories I ever had, all of these days, although the dedication (of the John Naka Pavilion at the U.S. National Arboretum) was wonderful too. This is indeed special! I think that it is not that I deserve it for

continued on next page . . .

## NAKA FELLOWSHIP

continued from previous page

Jeff: "There's a little communication, - it [the plant] gives some and you give some, - a back and forth exchange."

John: "A lot of people say, 'Do you talk to the tree?' I always say, 'No, you must listen to it.'"

Jeff: "Exactly right!"

When it was time for John Naka to appear on stage, Mr. Kuralt gave the following introduction:

"I remember on this stage a few years back talking to a Heritage Fellow named Marie McDonald who told us that her leis were one of the most evanescent of art forms. You can appreciate the beauty of a lei for a day or two because the flowers and fresh plants that she uses wilt pretty soon. Some kinds of beauty are like that and there's another art form with its own sense of time time here tonight represented by Mr. John Yoshio Naka. Like lei making it is linked to nature, unlike lei making it's meant to last, often hundreds of years. [While Mr. Kuralt was talking a number of John's bonsai were being pictured on the screen at the back of the stage.] Bonsai sculpture, the art of cultivating miniature trees in pots, is a form of personal discipline and is as important to the sculpture as the art object itself. John Naka says, 'What I like about bonsai is that it has a beginning but no end. A bud today becomes a branch tomorrow. It's like searching for the rainbow's end, the farther it is pursued, the further away it is.' Fortunately for us Mr. John Naka is not far away, Mr. John Naka."

After John was greeted with applause, he was seated on stage next to Mr. Kuralt and there was the following dialogue:

K: John, you're the master of bonsai, everybody knows that, anybody who knows anything about the art, but how did you first get interested in it?

N: Well, I've been telling everybody when I went back to Japan with my parents, I met my grandfather but there are some memories I have even before I went back to Japan. My father was farming over 12 miles northwest from Denver and on his farm there was a silo.

K: A what?

N: You know, a silo. They keep some of the livestock food in them. Well, the story is that around the silo there was about a 3 to 4 feet wide concrete foundation there. So, also my parents couldn't get fresh Japanese food so they used to buy all the Japanese canned goods and mother used to pile those empty cans alongside a creek

which they called Cherry Creek. So I went over there and gathered some of those big cans and I lined them up around the silo. And I gathered up some soil around there. I collected some of the wheat seeds and some from trees, especially on that farm we had a cottonwood tree. And I would climb up on the cottonwood tree and pick some of those cottonwood seeds. And I used to plant them in there [the cans] but I needed more seeds so I went into dad's grain house and I brought out wheat, barley, oats, or corn and plant those in the cans. And I took buckets to the creek and I brought the buckets full of water and poured that on [the cans] and watch it soak in. And then, well I must have been a very patient kid. I waited 2 to 3 weeks and then these different things start popping out. I was so proud at that time as I was a child, it was wonderful to see the seed that I picked up, planted in my own soil. I poured the water in, watched these plants start sprouting out. I really think this was a wonderful thing and this is what made me interested in all of nature's trees, plants, especially something that I did something to it. However, that wasn't it. I was thinking back how only I got into bonsai. Well, when I was a kid, a friend, one Christmas brought me, it was a box of crayons, it had 64 different colors in it. Well, that was the present I received from dad's friend at Christmas time. Dad brought me one of those real thick tablets with an Indian chief's picture on it. I'm sure you remember that. But maybe you're not that old? [Laughter from the audience.]

But anyway I was drawing the pictures of birds, animals, of fish, trees, flowers, all of those nature things. I ran out of tablet in no time and dad couldn't afford it so in my bedroom we had wallpaper so I drew pictures all over the wall. You know what I caught, something from my parents. [Laughter from the audience.] Well I love to draw those pictures. Then I met my grandfather when I went to Japan and grandfather was doing this bonsai. Well, I looked at it, these plants, something that came out. Now not only plants, he was doing some kind of designing so this is what I think developed my interest in bonsai.

K: All that came together then. But you said you were a patient child, to be a patient bonsai artist you really, that really requires patience, right? Because you won't live to see the final results sometimes.

N: Yes. Well - yes. I hope I can answer your question but what I like about this

[bonsai] is you never finish anything, there's no end. There's a beginning, but no end. No matter what you do you'll always have to do something. Another thing is this, I could say that bonsai is the only living art and I think this is what makes it interesting. [About art forms] I was told once you get up to a peak and you have to go down. But this one here [bonsai] you always get to look forward and you have to reach out for new things again.

K: But your bonsai art just knocks me out. It reminds me, some of it, of actual Pinion pines I've seen in nature growing up in the Aierra. It's somehow very evocative, it reminds you of nature's beauty all the time. Now I know you have one real masterpiece, er well you have a lot of masterpieces, but this eleven tree Goshin can be seen here in Washington, right?

N: Yes that's right. I felt, well we have eleven grandchildren.

K: Aha, that's the explanation.

N: I always like to relate it to something, but this one here I really put my strength on it and everytime a grandchild came up I added him and it became eleven trees. [Laughter.] However, we wanted to share this kind of fun with American people. Then the time the story came out here in Washington, D.C., on the planning for the making of the North American Pavilion. So I decided, well I really like to share this with all the American people.

K: Well, we'll share it right now. Let's bring out this breathtaking eleven tree grove. [Goshin was wheeled out onto the stage to the welcome applause of the audience.] Mr. Naka, what if you have a twelfth grandchild, are you going to put in another tree?

N: Well, if a twelfth grandchild comes along, I will plant another one in it. [Applause.] I know, I'm afraid there won't be no more. But recently we have a great granddaughter so everybody asks me, "Now what are you going to do?" I say, "I'm going to buy another pot and start another Goshin the Second." [Applause.]

K: Any of you in this audience can see the exquisite work of Mr. Naka in the John Naka Bonsai Viewing Pavilion at the National Arboretum here in Washington. Work like this [referring to Goshin]. Thank you.

[John then exited the stage to the applause of the audience.]

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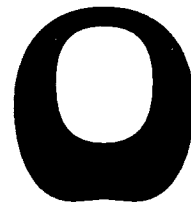
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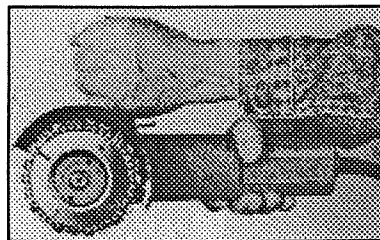
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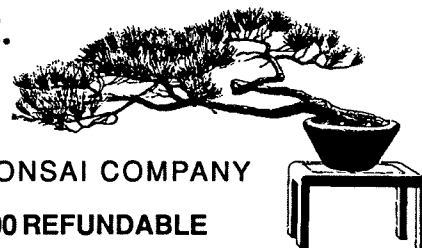
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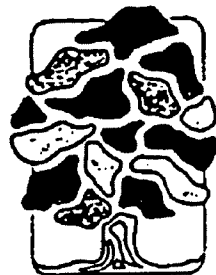
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