



JAPANESE AZALEA BONSAI. Ken Nakamura, whom attendees at last year's PBA Christmas Banquet met at the Japan Inn, has been receiving the Newsletter regularly. His father-in-law (in Japan) is a bonsai specialist. Last summer he sent Ken these two photos of flowering bonsai (although not identified, the species is obviously Rhododendron). Note particularly the exposed roots over the rock peeping from under the full white-flowered beauty at left. Flowers on the sinuous-trunked tree at right are pink. (Photos courtesy Ken Nakamura)

Annapolis Changes

The Annapolis Bonsai Club will change its meeting place, beginning in May, Club President Dave Brown announced recently.

The organization will begin meeting on the second Friday of each month at the Main Public Library on West Street in downtown Annapolis. The first meeting in the new location will be on Friday, May 10.

Until that date, ABC will continue to meet at the William Paca House.



Potomac Bonsai Association

c/o Brookside Botanical Gardens
1500 Glenallen Avenue
Wheaton, Maryland 20902

TO:

FIRST CLASS

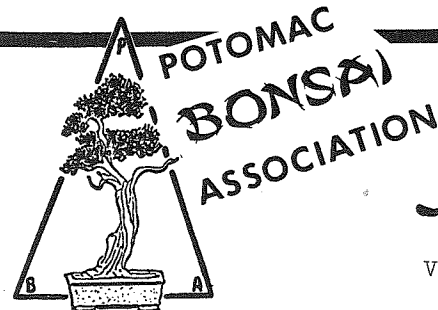
Priorities / February

During the milder parts of the month, do your winter pruning. Heavy pruning of evergreens should be done before the sap starts to run, but wait for spring to do fine pruning. Make sure every small branch ends in a bud. Azaleas and maples are more flexible when dormant and are less inclined to crack and snap when being wired. Fruiting trees should be pruned before flowering; do it as soon as flower buds have swelled enough to be recognizable.

Check your trees now and schedule your potting chores; spring will be on us before some of us are ready. The potting sequence should be worked out so you will go from early to late starting trees. Be sure the trees needing repotting the most get attention first. Tools, soil, pots, and potting areas should be cleaned and inspected. Sterilize tools as needed.

Do you or your club have an unusual idea or way of doing any of the many chores relating to bonsai? Share it with the readers of this Newsletter by sending it along. Don't forget to also send pictures, sketches, diagrams, etc. along with your copy. The purpose of this Newsletter is to help members gain experience; why not share your way of doing things? Send materials to:

James R. Newton, Editor
6394 Eighth Circle
Alexandria, Virginia 22312

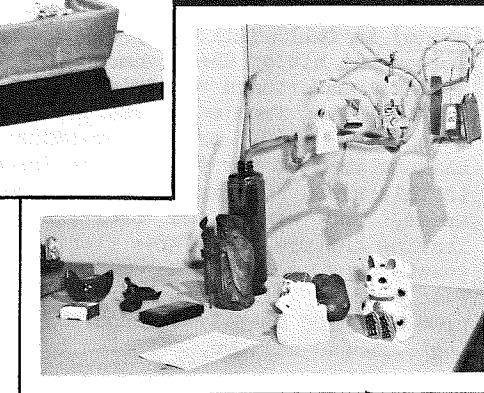


POTOMAC
BONSAI
ASSOCIATION

Newsletter

Volume 4 Number 2

February 1974





POTOMAC BONSAI ASSOCIATION

Newsletter

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Published solely in the interests of the POTOMAC BONSAI ASSOCIATION, a non-profit organization, and its affiliate member clubs and societies, under the authority of its Board of Directors.

Officers for 1973-74

Cliff Pottberg.....President
 Milton Kidd.....First Vice-President
 John Hreha...Educational Vice-President
 John Hinds.....Secretary
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* * *

PBA meets regularly the third Friday of each month at

BROOKSIDE BOTANICAL GARDENS
 1500 Glenallan Avenue
 Wheaton, Maryland 20902

* * *

Member, American Bonsai Society
 Member, Bonsai Clubs International

* * *

Submissions may be addressed to
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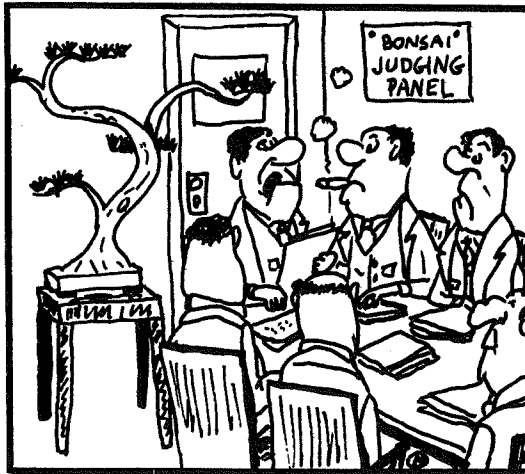
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the cover

JAPANESE GARDEN MAPLE GROVE (*Acer palmatum*) in full fall glory of orange-red leaves was hit of the November 1973 meeting of the Northern Virginia Bonsai Society. Raised from seed started in California in 1960, propagator-owner Ruth Lamanna brought the trees when she moved to this area. Originally there were more trees, but some died over the years, leaving the present 9-tree planting. The inset shows some of the many artifacts Ruth used to illustrate her talk on appreciation of bonsai through understanding Japanese culture. (Photos by Newton)



"Awright! Who's the wise guy who put crosscut saw in the Suggested Improvements section?"

ADVERTIZING RATES

Due to rising printing costs, we find it necessary to increase PBA Newsletter advertising rates, effective March 1, 1974, or at the completion of currently contracted ads. We regret this necessity but pledge to continue providing quality work for our customers. New rates are:

- 1 column inch (before reduction)..... \$ 1.75
- 1/8 page..... \$ 2.25
- 1/4 page..... \$ 4.50
- 1/2 page..... \$ 7.75
- Full page..... \$15.00

Classified remains at 7¢ per word for a minimum of 10 words.

We will continue to offer a 10% discount for repeats of identical copy in three or more Newsletter issues, and still make no charge for display lay-out. Photo screening is extra; rates depend on the individual job desired.

For further information, write or call Advertising Director Tory Pottberg, 4412 Colmar Garden Dr., Baltimore, Md. 21211, 301-472-2664.

POTOMAC BONSAI ASSOCIATION

ANNAPOLIS BONSAI CLUB
 BALTIMORE BONSAI CLUB
 NORTHERN VIRGINIA BONSAI SOCIETY

SPRING SHOW PLANNING

Planning for the 1974 PBA Annual Bonsai Show moved into high gear this month with a meeting called by Show Committee Chairman Milt Kidd. Meeting at the home of Molly Hersh, the Committee considered the many aspects of presenting the finest of PBA trees to the public. The Committee members include: Joyce Pelletier (sitting in for absent member Pete Abresch), ABC; Richard Meszler, BBC; Jim Newton, NOVA-BONSOC; Molly Hersh, PBA and the newly forming Maryland club; and John Hreha, ex-officio, PBA.

As requirements are firmed and evaluated, calls will go out for volunteer assistance. It is certain that hosts and hostesses will be needed to direct the flow of visitors through the National Arboretum's auditorium and answer the many

questions certain to arise from the public viewing our displays. Also, helpers for set-up, tear-down, and special tasks will be needed. Construction of display areas, including one, or possibly two, tokonoma are being considered in the overall artistic planning. "We want a showcase worthy of the fine trees to be exhibited," Chairman Kidd said.

PBA Potomac
Bonsai Association

(R) = Regular meetings, held at Brookside Nature Center, 1500 Glenallan Ave., Wheaton, Md. on the third Friday of each month at 7:30 p. m. Sites of other meetings specified below.

Feb 15 Organizational Meeting to form new Maryland Club; all current PBA members should attend to select Club name, draw up new constitution and by-laws, elect Board of Directors and Officers and set meeting dates; the new Board will meet afterward for a business meeting

NOTE: PBA will no longer schedule club activities concurrent with start of the new Maryland club's Board and Officers. As they pick up the organizational reins, their schedule of programs and activities will be reported under their new name (yet to be selected). PBA special activities and events will be reported as news items or under this PBA head.

Nakamura Alive

Last month a rumor surfaced to the effect that Zeko Nakamura, famed Japanese television performer and perhaps the world's greatest Mama bonsai raiser, had died. He is in his 70s.

Your Newsletter editor immediately contacted the Japanese Embassy in Washington who referred him to the Kyodo News Service downtown. That agency checked their files, but found no published notice of Mr. Nakamura's demise. They then made an oversea phone call to their head offices in Tokyo. Two days after our first inquiry, Kyodo's response came back.

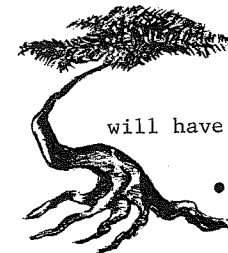
We are extremely happy to squelch the rumor -- Zeko Nakamura is alive and well.

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Rosade To Visit Both Md. & Va. Clubs

Chase Rosade, bonsaiman from New Hope, Pa., will present a program before the Annapolis Bonsai Club on Thursday, February 14. He is appearing the preceding evening, Feb. 13, at the Northern Virginia Bonsai Society in Arlington, Va. (see article, last month's Newsletter).

The ABC meeting will take the place of their regular third-Thursday meeting date and has been called to take advantage of Chase's presence in the area.

For both the Virginia and Maryland appearances, Chase will use two or three members' trees to illustrate styling improvement potentials and to demonstrate fine wiring techniques. The remainder of the programs will be personalized critiques of trees members care to bring in for this unusual opportunity to have a professional's expertise applied to problem trees.

ABC Annapolis Bonsai Club

(R) = Regular meetings, held at William Paca House, 5 Martin St., Annapolis, Md., the third Thursday of the month at 7:30 p.m. Sites of other meetings specified below



Feb 14	Demonstration and Rap Session by Chase Rosade of Rosade Bonsai Studio, New Hope, Pa.; William Paca House, 7:30 p.m. takes place of regular February meeting
Mar 2	Tour of Annapolis Area Nurseries, led by Dave Brown; meet at Main Library, West St., at 9 a.m.
Mar 21	(R) Tree Workshop, monitored by John Hreha, PBA Educational VP; bring your own tree, materials

BBC Baltimore Bonsai Club

(R) = Regular meetings, held at Cylburn Park Mansion, Cylburn Park, Baltimore, at 3 p.m.

Due to the current fuel crisis and nonavailability of gasoline on Sundays in the Baltimore area, BBC meetings have been moved to Saturdays.

Feb 16	(R) Display of potting soil components and how to prepare them; also, satisfactory fertilizers and how to use them; Tree-of-Month discussion: Boxwoods
March (early)	BBC-sponsored trip to Philadelphia Spring Flower Show
Mar 23	(R) Lecture on Mosses; Club Sales Corner, with mosses for sale; Tree-of-Month discussion: San Jose Juniper
Apr 20	(R) All-day Spring Tree Workshop at BBC President's home (see article this page)

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Rock Planting Slides

Rock Planting was the subject of the slide-and-tape program presented at the January 9 meeting of the Northern Virginia Bonsai Society. Number 1 in a series of slide programs prepared by and rented from Bonsai Clubs International, of which PBA is a member, the slides showed different types of rocks suitable for planting on, tools needed in working it, and a planting sequence in which a Mugo Pine (*Pinus mugo mughus*) is positioned on a rock with muck and soil.

Member Ruth Lamanna brought two Suiseki viewing rocks, both "distant mountain," illustrating yet another aspect of the Japanese naturalistic bent which produced bonsai, saikei, suiseki, bonkei, and other artistic techniques.

The evening's program ended with a discussion of various bonsai books. Conducted by President Jim Newton, he tied his remarks in with 19 selections from his personal library. This gave an opportunity for new members to obtain a feel for the extent of literature current in the field.

Due to the small number attending, the NOVABONSOC election of officers was postponed until the February 13 meeting.

NOVABONSOC Northern Virginia Bonsai Society

(R) = Regular meetings, held at the Gulf Branch Nature Center, 3608 Military Rd., Arlington, Va., at 7:30 a.m. Other meeting sites specified below

Feb 13	(R) Lecture, Demonstration, Rap Session with Chase Rosade, owner-operator of Rosade Bonsai Studio, New Hope, Pa.; this is your chance to see, hear an expert, then ask your questions about any facet of bonsai
Mar 13	(R) Fundamentals of Propagating Plants at Home, talk by Mrs. Judy Shirley, Chief of Plant Propagation at National Arboretum, including seeding, cutting and grafting (see article this page)

全米盆栽大会

JULY 11-14 NATIONAL BONSAI CONVENTION '74

It is not too early to start planning for the National Bonsai Convention '74. This event, the last combined annual meeting of the American Bonsai Society and Bonsai Clubs International, will be held at the Huntington-Sheraton Hotel, Pasadena, Calif., July 11-14.

Theme selected for the convention is "California - Window To Japan." The host will be the California Bonsai Society.

In charge will be Sam Nakano, who has worked under John Naka's guidance for more than 10 years. Sam is a landscape gardener, insect and fertilizer expert, and sought-after lecturer.

The possibility of charter flight arrangements is being studied, and information will be announced as obtained. novabonsoc

Dues Due May 1

March Topic

Mrs. Judy L. Shirley, chief of Plant Propagation at the National Arboretum, will headline the March 13 meeting of the Northern Virginia Bonsai Society. Meeting time is 7:30 p.m. at the Gulf Branch Nature Center, 3608 Military Road, Arlington, Va.

The guest lecturer will explain the fundamentals of raising plants, including trees, from seeds and cuttings in the home. She also will demonstrate the art of grafting.

A graduate of the University of Cincinnati with a Bachelor's Degree in Botany, Mrs. Shirley obtained her Master's Degree in Horticulture from Michigan State.

Before coming to Washington, she taught at the Botanical Garden at the University of California, Berkeley. Her husband, William, is a Forester with the U. S. Department of Agriculture.

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tree of the month

Bamboo

by JAMES R. NEWTON

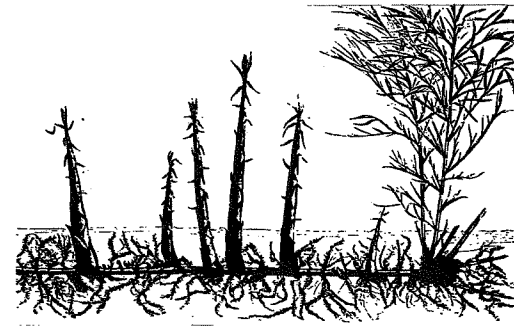
Whether grown as an individual bonsai planting or as an underplanting there are few trees which evoke a greater feeling of orientalia than Bamboo. Its slender trunk and leaves are quite at home in the motif of the oriental art we call bonsai.

Since about 1900, when the U.S. Department of Agriculture began introducing promising Bamboos to this country, some 750 individual introductions have been recorded. About 200 represent species of *Phyllostachys*.

This genus for centuries has been a principal source of paper, timber, and food in the Orient. An astonishing array of objects and materials fabricated wholly or in part from Bamboo are in common daily use. Yet Bamboo's economic potential on the farm and for land-use purposes remain largely on a trial basis here.

Phyllostachys is evergreen, but changes leaves completely every spring. The process is gradual and inconspicuous, being noticed mostly as a new carpet of gold and brown beneath the plant. This is but one peculiarity of Bamboo.

Each Bamboo culm (aerial stem) emerges from the soil with the diameter it will always have. It never increases in diameter or height after it attains full growth. New culms produced each successive year emerge with greater diameter and reach greater height before they stop growing. This results because the plant has extended its system of rhizomes (underground stems) and roots, thus increasing its capacity to draw water and raw



(From USAD Agriculture Handbook No. 114)

materials from the soil, and enabling it to store a greater amount of food. Thus, the oldest culms are the smallest (see sketch).

Species most often used for bonsai plantings include Golden Bamboo (*Phyllostachys aurea*), Black Bamboo (*Phyllostachys niger*), Dwarf Bamboos (*Pleibolastus viridi-striatus vagans* and *P. distichus*), and Pygmy Bamboo (*Sasa pygmea*).

Bamboo training differs from general bonsai methods, since the indeterminant rhizome and root system gives rise to a progressively increasing number of trunks from a common source. In fact, in Japan Bamboo is no longer used for bonsai because it becomes too large in as short a time as three years. Since it is cheap and simple to propagate, the commercial trade generally considers it not worthwhile.

(Continued on next page)

BAMBOO...

(Continued from preceeding page)

Best choice for a Bamboo bonsai is a dwarf variety. Otherwise, it is attractively utilitarian as an underplanting for a large bonsai, or planted on or with rocks.

A small clump of roots and shoots dug in the spring is sufficient to start a planting. Select the shoots by pruning out below the soil surface with a sharp knife. The severed rhizomes should be potted by placing them on a base of at least two inches of rich, well-drained soil and covering with more soil.

Bamboos like copious water, but drainage must be perfect. After initial watering is done, keep in a warm, protected place; 75° - 85° is ideal. Give full sun two or three hours in morning and late afternoon. When fully established, it should be at least partially shaded to get best foliage color. Spraying also helps, but do not include fertilizer in the water, for this lodges in leaf-culm junctures and causes rotting.

Bamboo soil mix must be very porous. One part loam, 2 parts humus, and 2 parts coarse sand works well. Similarly, 5 parts loam, 1 part clean compost, and 4 parts sand is reported as a good mix. Any soil combination must certainly produce a rich soil, light and easily drained.

Soil may be renewed annually by gently scraping or washing the old surface soil partially off. Replace immediately with new rich mixture, recover with moss or other light mulch. Although this will generally renew the planting's nutrient supply, newly established or repotted

Bamboo should be fed with a nitrogenous fertilizer. Once every other week from May through October is a suitable frequency.


Pruning is not the usual clipping as with hardwood bonsai. One way is to cut the whole planting down to the surface in late May or early June. Recovering in a few weeks, it will have cleaner, fresher leaves and smaller growth. A second such "haircut" can be given in mid-September if growth becomes unruly.

A less drastic method of retarding height is to pick out the terminal leaf tip and the next open leaf. Doing this in late May, while growth is still soft, will stop upward growth, but will force side branching. If overall shape appears shabby later on, give a September "haircut" and new growth will occur in a few weeks. Removing the sheath from the second internode from the bottom usually will diminish internodal length.

Despite attention to detail that raising Bamboo entails, the effort is well worth it. Including this ubiquitous plant in your collection adds to the total bonsai cultural atmosphere.

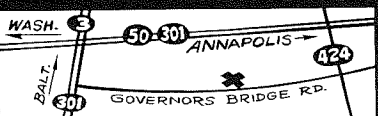
"...Remember that the ability to appreciate bonsai is as important as the ability to raise them."

Kenji Murata
Practical Bonsai For Beginners
Japan Publication Printing Co., 1964



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