



PBA Clippings

NEWSLETTER OF THE POTOMAC BONSAI ASSOCIATION

ISSN 0160-9521

PBA CLIPPINGS TIME TABLE

To all clubs' officers, please read the following to your members at the next opportunity - after all if you're not getting the Clippings you won't get the message.

So! You haven't received your issue of PBA Clippings? Make certain that Judy Wise, PBA Membership Chairman, (202) 554-3045, 1259 4th St NW, Washington, DC 20024, gets your new address, especially ZIP Code changes. (Heard about ZIP Codes being changed recently.)

The Clippings is mailed Bulk mail every month by Jules Koetsch. When mailing using Bulk mail there are very strict rules and regulations to be followed. The rules are based on ZIP Codes, and that is why it is so important to have the correct ZIP. Bulk is NOT FORWARDED, so if you have moved, your new address needs to be reported.

In order to get an article in a specific month's issue of Clippings, it should be to the editor by the 1st of

month two months prior to that specific month, otherwise it will be run at a later time. The following example for an OCTOBER issue is illustrated as follows:

August 1st to 15th: Articles are reviewed by Jules Koetsch, Editor-in-Chief.

August 15th to 20th: Computerization of submitted information (articles drawings, photographs, etc.....)

August 21st to 25th: Betty Yeapanis text editing.

August 26th to Sept. 3rd: Beth Potratz prepares layout for final editing

*August 26th to September 1st: All October/November Club Calendars and Special events (plus any future activities welcomed) to Doug French at 703-502-9426 and E-mail: Dfrench200.aol.com. Forms available.

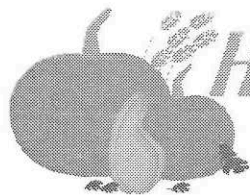
September 3rd to 5th: Final layout/editing check by Judith Wise

September 6th to 15th: To the commercial printer with database for processing and running all 400 to 550 copies.

September 16th to 19th: Delivered and prepared for bulk mailing by Jules Koetsch and Jeff Stephanic.

September 20th: In the mail to members for delivery by October 1st (with USPS cooperation).

Every month, a small group of people volunteer their time, and work very hard to give the members of PBA a quality newsletter. This is YOUR newsletter and we need help to keep ALL information updated and correct, along with fresh articles and ideas. I hope that the above will help everyone understand how VERY important it is to have current, correct, and timely submission of information.



Happy Thanksgiving

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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 on the last page of this newsletter.

NON-MEMBER SUBSCRIPTIONS:

Individuals residing within the Baltimore, Washington, D.C., Philadelphia or Richmond metropolitan areas are encouraged to become members of a club to receive the newsletter. Annual subscription for 12 issues of the PBA Clippings only is US \$15.00 (US \$35 for International Mail) which should be made payable to the Potomac Bonsai Association and sent to Judy Wise, 1259 4th St., SW, Washington, DC 20024.

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

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE by Joe Gutierrez

After a very pleasant and surprisingly benign summer (except for the rain generated by a couple of hurricanes), we are now well into Autumn. Chrysanthemums have bloomed and the magnificent show of foliage color which we are blessed with in the Washington area is now just about completed. It is time once again to prepare our trees for Winter storage and dormancy, and concern ourselves with the many mundane tasks associated with getting ready for next Spring. Many Bonsai enthusiasts prefer to gradually get ready for Spring during the long winter evenings. Others prefer to wait until Spring approaches and then do everything in a feverish flurry of activity. For many of our member Clubs, preparations are being made for the winding down of the year's affairs and preparing for the Holiday Seasons, but your Board and Educational Vice-President and his Committee will be preparing for our Spring Bonsai Festival and next year's Fall Symposium. Any and all ideas with regard to either one of our two major educational programs are always welcome. Your Officers and Board are here to serve you and to facilitate a continuing learning experience for all. Please communicate any thoughts or ideas you might have to your Officers to be brought to the attention of the Board.

On behalf of the Potomac Bonsai Association, I would like to extend a warm welcome to Warren Hill, who has been designated the new curator of the National Bonsai and Penjing Museum. Warren replaces Bob Dreschler, who has now retired. We all thank Bob for his many contributions to bonsai activities at the Arboretum, as well as to PBA; and we look forward to welcoming Warren and making him feel at home. We also look forward to working closely with him and sharing his expertise and love for Bonsai.

Have a great Thanksgiving!

November Monthly Care Tips

Sub-tropicals and root-over-rock or root-on-rock plantings and those on slabs should have been put into whatever winter protection program you have. Other bonsai can be left unprotected until they have been exposed to two frosts and then winterized. Winters in this area do not get too severe, but there is always an exception such as the winter of 1977-1988. Temperatures fell to between -2 F and -10 F. I remember that the temperature plummeted to that range on Christmas Day. I lost a few bonsai as the result of overlooking the closing of one exhaust vent in my polyhouse. The only advice I can give is for you to place your bon-

sai so that you can cover them with a trash can or plastic sheet when the temperatures get around 0 F.

Watering can be cut back to once a day or every other day if the plants are not taking up water on a daily basis. Remember Jack Wickle's advice to let the soil almost dry out before rewatering. Then again, when in winter storage do not let the plants dry out.

Fertilizing is discontinued starting in November and is not resumed until late February and/or March of next year.

Pruning to shape can be done on cotoneaster, gardenias, holly Ilex, and pyracantha. Black pine - dead or 2-year-old needles can be removed over the period of time between mid-November and the end of December.

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, Baltimore, MD.
3rd Sunday, 1 PM
(410) 668-1868

BOWIE BONSAI CLUB

Bowie Community Center, Bowie, MD
Last Monday, 7 PM
(301) 350-3586
(202) 667-1016

BROOKSIDE BONSAI SOCIETY

North Chevy Chase Recreation Center, Chevy Chase, MD
3rd Thursday, 7:30 PM
(301) 365-7621

CHESAPEAKE BONSAI SOCIETY

Call for meeting time and location
(410) 263-2748

GREATER PHILADELPHIA BONSAI SOCIETY

Pennypack Watershed, Willow Grove, PA
4th Thursday, eve.
(215) 663-1678

KIYOMIZU BONSAI CLUB

Clearwater Nature Center, Clinton, MD
4th Sunday, 2 PM
(301) 839-2471

LANCASTER BONSAI SOCIETY

Manheim Twp. Park, Stauffer Mansion
Lancaster, PA
2nd Thursday, 7 PM
(717) 872-5941

MEI-HWA PENJING SOCIETY

(Chinese language spoken)
Bowie Community Center, Bowie, MD
2nd Sunday, 1 PM
(301) 390-6687

NORTHERN VIRGINIA BONSAI SOCIETY

Greenspring Horticultural Center, Annandale, VA
2nd Saturday, 10 AM
(703) 575-5616

RAPPAHANOCK BONSAI SOCIETY

Call for meeting time and location
(540) 775-4912

RICHMOND BONSAI SOCIETY

Imperial Plaza, 1717 Bellevue Ave., Richmond, VA
4th Monday, 7 PM
(804) 527-4000 Ext. 4621

WASHINGTON BONSAI CLUB

U. S. National Arboretum, Washington, D.C.
3rd Saturday, 2 PM
(202) 543-7433

Organizations sponsoring regular events of interest to PBA members:

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

U.S. National Arboretum
(202) 245-2726

November

Northern Virginia Bonsai Society
Saturday 9
Martha Meehan - Tropicals

Baltimore Bonsai Club
Sunday 17
Tools for bonsai

Kiyomizu Bonsai Club
Sunday 24
Winterizing

December

Baltimore Bonsai Club
Sunday TBA
Holiday Party

Kiyomizu Bonsai Club
Sunday 8
2 pm Annual "Potluck" Dinner.

Northern Virginia Bonsai Society
Friday 12
Annual Chinese Dinner. Held at China Garden, Rosslyn Virginia (USA Today Bldg.). \$16.00 per individual, starting at 6:30 for a multicourse banquet. Contact Judy Wise (202-554-3045). All PBA members invited.

Editorial by Jules Koetsch

When you read this editorial, many of you will have bedded down your bonsai for over-wintering. An article in this issue on winterizing your bonsai can be a checklist for those who still have to do the job, as well as for those who have completed it. Once the winterizing has been done, there isn't much else to do for the bonsai except to make certain they do not dry out and do not get damaged under a snow load. If you're an ardent bonsaiist, you'll probably find a multitude of bonsai things to do during the Winter months. As I'm writing this, I'm thinking of things to do before the annual Spring scramble to break out the bonsai from Winter quarters.

One task I've always tried to undertake is to lay out a whole year of 'bonsai things to do' on one of those calendars we receive by mail somewhere around the beginning of the year from vendors and organizations. If the last holiday season is any indication, there ought to be at least a half-dozen in the mail this time 'round. Some calendars arrive before Christmas when you're involved

in matters more pressing than laying out a month's schedule, much less a year's. Usually most calendars arrive after January 1, and since I'm already into the year, I tend to let the whole idea slip by. Then, as the year goes by, I'm seeing things too late, like the mildew on my Crepe myrtle, when I should have made a preventative spraying about one month earlier. Relative to the making of a calendar, over the years, copies of other bonsai clubs' newsletters have been mailed to me on reciprocal agreements - they get PBA Clippings - we get their newsletters. Some of them have a monthly section on what to do that month to care for one's bonsai. Those newsletters are stashed away in various parts of my home, and I'm going to make a sincere effort to locate them. Then I'll try to boil them down and update future Monthly Care Tips columns in next year's PBA Clippings. Betty Yeapanis has already started the project by assembling monthly care articles from previous PBA Clippings.

Continued on next page

Editorial continued from previous page

Then there's the old adage: Re-read bonsai books unless you have a steel-trap memory and can remember all you have read on the first pass through. When I'm doing some activity like repotting or pruning, I may go back to some basic texts like the old standbys - John Y. Naka's and Yuji Yoshimura's books - to check out the procedures. But then I'll miss other important things that I've forgotten if I don't go through the such as that tucked away in the text, "SAIKEI: Living Landscapes in Miniature," by Toshio Kawamoto. Just browsing through the last chapter, Care of Bonsai, I felt admonished for an act I have been prone to commit in the past - "...giving too much fertilizer to a weak tree will kill it thinking it would help the tree get well." Incidentally, the above book because of the word, 'Saikai' in the title is usually passed over by people looking for something on bonsai. Au contraire. The book has very clear drawings, tables, and text on the basics of creating and maintaining a bonsai. All boiled down in very clear, concise tables and step by step instructions. Your bonsai club library

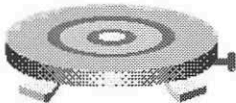
may have a copy of the book. Also, Winter is a good time to go back over the year's bonsai magazines to which you subscribe.

There's always the task of cleaning pots, which in my case more often than not are reminders of failed attempts at growing bonsai. It gives me a chance to reflect on what might have gone wrong. As for me this year, I have a number of group plantings on slabs which have dwindled down to one or two trees each. I cannot come up with a reason, but I'm going to try again. This Winter, I'm going to try to make one of those slabs using hydro-stone.

Last, there's the annual soil-mixing ceremony that either takes place at your club or in the privacy of your home. For most of my bonsai, I've settled on a soil-mix of Turface and grits, plus some bark as an additive. The grits I can get from Southern States Cooperative - a local operation. They also handle a form of Turface, but it is not sold under the "Turface" label. I found this out last Spring when I decided to do what I had heard about - use Turface as a top-dressing on my lawn. The

Turface would fill in between the mounds of grass where soil had washed away. Also, low spots could be eliminated by adding thin layers of Turface over a period of time. To find out the recommended procedure, I concluded I should talk directly to the Turface people. Luckily, I found an 800 telephone number on an old bag of Turface I had purchased from Lea's Green Meadows when they were still in business back a number of years. They gave me the information I needed for the lawn and also steered me to the nearest Turface vendor - Pro-Seed Turf Supply in Chantilly, (703) 968-3535. The reason for mentioning all this is because their price was the lowest I know of in the area - \$6.95 for a 50 lb bag of medium sized Turface grit. Incidentally, one of the men operating Pro-Seed Turf was formerly a part of Lea's Green Meadows. If you wish to find your nearest Turface vendor, telephone Turface in Illinois, 1(800)654-8793.

In conclusion, if things go the way they usually do, I'll be lucky if I've completed half the things I should have before the Spring thaw. Right now, it's easy to dream.



Sensei Sam

It's really funny, but sometimes we in bonsai take some things for granted. For years I've pruned trees, throwing away the cuttings. Well, this year I wanted to begin restocking the nursery. Instead of throwing the prunings away, I've stuck the cuttings in a medium of pro-mix B, in black growing flats.

The elm, trident maple, Japanese maple, and Serissa cuttings were taken around the middle of June on this year's new growth. I like to have 4-6 leaves on each cutting. The flats were then placed under some bonsai benches to shade them from the very hot sun. So, if any of the cuttings

root, I'm ahead of the game with a few extra trees that, in time, can be bonsai.

Hopefully, many readers went to IBC in Washington and learned and enjoyed. I know I did.

P.S.: Mid-September my success rate with rootings was 50 percent. Sensei Sam

TREE OF THE MONTH

Editor's Note: The Tree of the Month article appearing here was the front page of one of the forerunners to PBA Clippings. The author of the article, John Simpson, has moved to California last summer and the President's Message that appeared in the July 96 issue of Clippings gave a brief biography about John. If there are any PBA members who would like to update John's article with a Tree of the Month article (which we are always lacking {NO GUTS, NO GLORY} about *J. virginiana*, please do! I've always wanted to try it as a bonsai, but have never gotten around to it.

TREE ARTICLE:

Several years ago my son was mowing the lawn for the first time in the Spring. He came in and said, "Dad, there are a bunch of small trees growing in the yard and I hate to cut them with a lawn mower." I went out with him and found a large number of Eastern Red Cedar seedling volunteers. Not knowing what else to do with them, I dug them up and put them in a large pot. That fall, I took Cliff Pottberg's advanced course in Bonsai and needed some trees for a forest. I drastically cut back a larger Red cedar which had a trunk of about 3/4-1 inch in diameter and used the seedlings to fill out the forest. I used them in their natural shape with no wiring. Thus, quite by accident, was born one of my favorite bonsai.

Eastern Red Cedar is not really a true cedar. It is actually a juniper, as its botanical name indicates. It

was given the name *Juniperus virginiana* because the first botanical specimens were from the Virginia colony. Although Red Cedar is truly a part of the juniper family, it has many of the characteristics of a cedar. Its wood is a bright pinkish red to deep reddish brown, surrounded by a thin layer of nearly white sap wood. It is highly aromatic and thus is used as lining for clothes chests and closets. It also has a shreddy light red brown bark which is quite thin and peels off in narrow, fibrous strips. This bark is characteristic of even relatively young trees, thus giving it that aged look of *sabi* which is so prized in bonsai.

The red bark and red wood led French Canadians to name this tree *baton rouge*, which means red stick. It is said that when they traveled to Louisiana and found the same tree, they gave this name to their state capital, Baton Rouge.

Being a juniper, it has the two forms of tiny evergreen leaves which are characteristic of many junipers, i.e., (1) the round "juvenile" foliage found on seedlings and vigorous twigs; and (2) the mature foliage which is scale-like in appearance. This foliage may be trimmed like any other juniper simply by pinching it off with the thumb and forefinger. Thus, the shape of the tree can be controlled easily for a bonsai. On the other hand, the downside is Bill Merritt's classic remark that "anyone who has a juniper bonsai is consigned to a life of constantly pinching back."

Small inconspicuous male and female flowers appear on different trees, and occasionally on the same tree from February to May. By Autumn, the flowers develop dark purplish-blue berries. These berries are highly aromatic and are used to flavor gin. The natural reproduction of Red Cedar is by seed only, and these are often scattered by birds.

The natural range of the Eastern Red Cedar extends throughout the entire East and Midwest, with the exception of the far northern and far southern states. It grows in a wide variety of soil and climactic conditions, with its size being highly affected by such conditions. In poor soil in a northern climate it may be scarcely larger than a bush. However, in fertile alluvial soil in a warm climate, it may grow as high as 120 feet, with a trunk as much as 4 feet in diameter. Normally, however, the tree grows to a height of 20-50 feet tall, with a trunk 1 or 2 feet in diameter.

Perhaps the primary value of Eastern Red Cedar from a bonsai standpoint is its ready availability. Creating a forest of about 15 trees can be a burden if you have pay \$5 or \$10 per tree at a nursery. Red Cedar is readily available in large quantities in the wild at no cost.

I doubt that Red Cedar would be good for any other style of bonsai except a forest. However, I can't really say because I have never tried it in any other style. I do, however, recommend it for a forest planting.

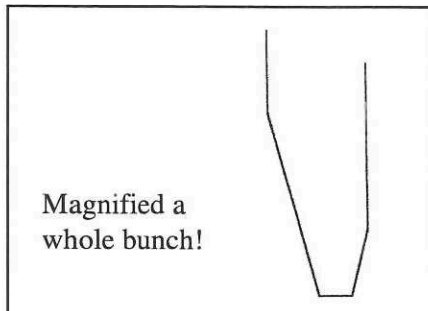
A Bonsai 'New Guy' Learns to Graft - Lee S. Mairs E-mail: sagcorp@clark.net

My introduction to Bonsai occurred over 30 years ago when I was stationed in Hawaii. I was married then and bought my wife a bonsai plant (probably a Juniper of some sort) as a penance for missing dinner the previous night. I'd been with fellow shipmates plotting the war's end over beer in the Pearl Harbor Officers' Club. This bonsai introduction proved rather short-lived as Falstaff (my cocker-poodle) took offense at anything on the picnic table. Perhaps he mistook it for dinner leftovers, but the poor tree was destroyed a day later by the young pup.

It was another 30 years before I thought about bonsai again. Last year as I was driving down Route 4 to see a friend in Southern Maryland, I realized that it was her birthday and I'd flat forgotten to get either a card or a present. As luck would have it, I'd just passed a big sign proclaiming "Bonsai Ahead." I pulled over quickly, and a short time later headed south again with my wallet \$70 lighter (I told you I was a new guy), and two Junipers in plastic pots complete with white stones! I was off the hook with my friend with one tree, and I kept the other for myself.

The next week I stopped at the book store and bought several books on bonsai care. I checked on bonsai on the Internet, and was soon seeking out classes. Chris Cochrane from the Internet news group at address rec.arts.bonsai suggested that I join the Northern Virginia Bonsai Society. I finally got a Saturday morning free in February and found the meeting at Green Springs Park. The speaker was Peter Jones and the topic was grafting. For the next 90 minutes I was simply enthralled.

The Northern Virginia Bonsai Society should be famous for its monthly speakers, and the dedication to teaching and passing on skills to new, inexperienced members (read dumb guys like me!). Jules Koetsch even made a house call to assure me that my winter storage facility was satisfactory.



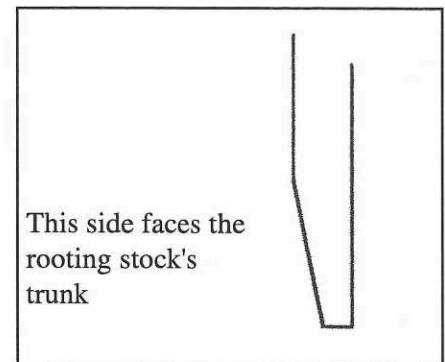
The first part of the meeting was short pieces excerpted from a commercial video tape. One of the members had previewed the tape and marked out the worthwhile sections for the group's viewing. These sections included the shape of a grafting knife and the proper procedure for sharpening the knife prior to use. Essentially, it said then you must "strop 'til you drop!" The video also covered an approach to cutting the scion - the piece you are going to graft to the rooting stock. The video suggested making a wedge with a long end and a short end - sort of like the shape here.

Peter Jones then took over, and the real show began. Peter is an extremely interesting fellow. His personal cards simply state Peter C. Jones - Bonsai Enthusiast. And Peter is exactly that. During the course of his lecture, we came to find out that he has over 100 black pines growing as rooting stock for the various other pines that he is trying to propagate. It also became obvi-

ous that he might be under the influence of a famous western pine grower, as he admitted to buying about 10 different cultivars in his last order from a recent catalog.

Peter barred no punches when he disagreed with the video tape. He immediately took issue with some of the techniques depicted as absolutely necessary for success by the video lecturer. For example, the video tape stated that one had to bag the newly grafted tree in plastic in order to maintain the proper humidity level. Peter's response, "Well I'm just a working man so I can't afford to do all that fancy stuff." For a new guy, this information was pure gold waiting to be panned. About every minute or so, I found myself writing down verbatim something that Peter had noted.

This side faces the rooting stock's trunk. Before getting down to the highlight of the lecture, Peter demonstrated how to sharpen the grafting knife his way - a minimum of 200 strokes across a leather belt reclaimed from his father's barber shop years ago. Peter had also made a cutting bench consisting of a piece of hard, black rubber attached to a block of wood. This homemade tool serves as an anvil when Peter makes his cuts shaping the foot of the scion. Peter made only two cuts on the scion rather than the three indicated in the



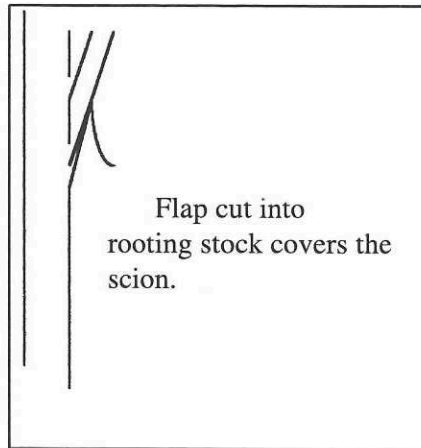
Grafting, continued

Figure above. He preferred a long, slightly angled-in cut on the side that would face the rooting stock's trunk, and a short cut across the bottom.

Peter demonstrated that you only need cut a flap in the bark of the rooting stock, but it had to be just deep enough to get to living tissue. The cut in the rooting stock should be as close to the soil level as possible so that any grafting scar would not be noticeable as the tree grew. Grafting scars are easy to see in nursery trees grown for landscaping. They indeed would spoil the beauty of a carefully crafted, finished bonsai.

The scion is then inserted into the flap so that its long slanted cut is pressed directly against living tissue exposed by the graft cut. He then demonstrated that somewhere in his family history lies either an octopus or an ancestor with a real strong gene for manual dexterity, as he tied a rubber grafting band around the scion and rooting stock to hold them together firmly. A grafting band is no more than a 1/4-inch wide rubber band that has been cut in half. Peter wrapped it around the trunk a few times and deftly tied a slip knot to hold the thing together. All the time he is demonstrating these skills, Peter keeps the crowd entertained with stories about his trees, how he makes suitable soil, and how he managed to talk his wife into letting him take a favorite pine to one of the Kimura sessions at IBC'96. But the highlight for this fumble-fingered new guy was yet to come.

In what I thought was at most fifteen minutes, Peter's one hour presentation was over. At the conclusion he stated that he had brought some rooting stock (I'd been coveting the nice, small black pines at the front of



his demonstration table) and some cuttings from several rare white pines. As life had taught him people appreciated things that they had paid for, any of the attendees could graft their own pine under his supervision for a \$10.00 fee. I haven't moved that fast since a grizzled old Marine gunnery sergeant almost caught me sneaking back on the base well after curfew when I was a midshipman thirty-five years ago! Yet I was only second, as about five of us took the opportunity to "cut at the Master's feet."

One by one, we picked our rooting stock and selected one of the white pine scions. My choice was a clipping from a white pine that Peter had referred to as "Joe Burke's bonsai," a tree that had been given to him years ago by another NVBS member. Peter showed us how to select stock that had roots close to the soil surface in their small pots. As a new guy, it took me awhile to grasp what he meant; however, several other senior members of the Society were there and actively kibitzed and otherwise helped me along. You actually had to dig into the soil with your forefinger to look

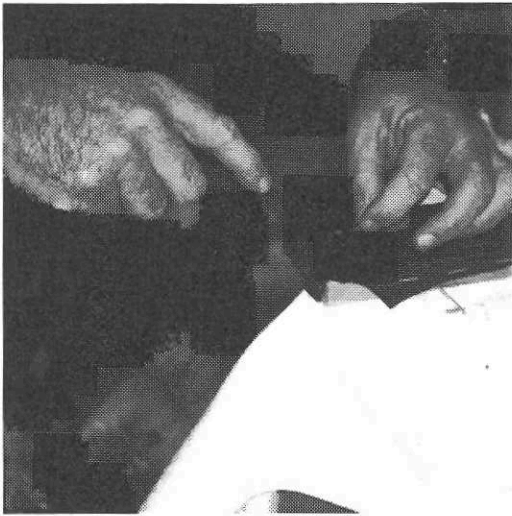
for the large roots. The ideal rooting stock would have large roots just beneath the surface.

Finally, it was my turn to cut the scion. As I complained about my large, wide, fumble-fingers, Peter showed me that his fingers in fact were larger - though I assure you nowhere near as fumblesome. Under his guidance, I carefully cut the scion (Peter's way) and made the slit in the rooting stock. After a few minutes struggle, I actually got the rubber grafting band tied and was ready to go. Peter carefully instructed us to be sure we kept the tree damp (or is it plural now that it has been grafted!), and even gave us some sphagnum moss that he had brought to the demonstration just for this purpose.

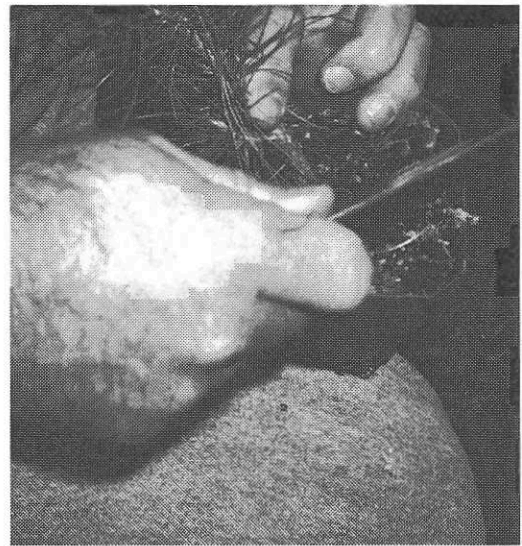
As soon as I got home, I made a spot for the pine near a basement window and misted the moss again. For the next week all of my neighbors, friends, and colleagues at work heard about the fantastic Saturday morning I'd had with the Northern Virginia Bonsai Society and Peter C. Jones - Bonsai Enthusiast!

Today I am happy to report that my graft is doing exceptionally well. The white pine scion has two new candles growing strong, and the parent rooting stock is growing well with four well-pinched candles. While this was one of my smallest dollar expenditures in my first year of attempting to become a bonsai artist (if you don't count the \$45 grafting knife that I just couldn't resist at the PBA show in May), it clearly is my most satisfying tree. You new folks out there might just want to check out the Northern Virginia Bonsai Society's next meeting. A good time will be had by all!

Pictorial of Grafting Workshop



Cutting the scion.



Cutting the slit in the root stock



Above: Teacher, Pete Jones and Student Lee Mairs.

To the Left: Pete tying off a graft.

To the Right Lee Mairs tying off graft.



Winterizing BONSAI by Jules Koetsch

This past October Arschel Morell of the Baltimore Bonsai Club was the key speaker at the NoVa Bonsai Society meeting. His topic was the timely subject of how to winterize our bonsai. This article may be in the reader's hands after the fact - you may have already tucked your bonsai into some sheltered nook. However, going through this article, you may find things that you have left undone or better ways of handling situations. The following are notes from Arschel's talk plus some added suggestions by the editor. Readers who have other suggestions, please send them in.

PLACEMENT: The paramount consideration in every bonsaiist's mind is when and where to place one's bonsai for winter protection and what to do so that they then survive the winter.

TIMING: Sub-tropicals I try to get under cover just before the first frost and definitely before the first freeze - if the latter precedes the former. Slab plantings and root-over-rock plantings are best put under cover when the first freeze warning is given. Bonsai species that are hardy in this area and in containers are left out through two nights of freezing or lower temperatures to start them into dormancy. This is important if the bonsai are to go through the Winter in a location where temperatures don't go below 32° as may be the case in a polyhouse or glass house.

LOCATION: Sub-tropicals require a location where they won't be below 32° F, such as a window getting plenty of light (not north-facing) and where they will not cook because of the sun hitting them. Preferably a cool place in the house - cooler than 60° F or in a temperature regulated polyhouse or greenhouse. For those bonsai other than the above, there are almost as many ways of tucking them in as one can think of. Often the procedure used is adapted to what is at one's disposal. The method you choose must insure that the following dictum is not violated: **BONSAI SHOULD NOT BE LEFT TO WINTER IN A PLACE WHERE THEY ARE NOT PROTECTED FROM THE WIND.** Once a plant's roots are frozen, water will not rise into the trunk of the tree, and winds will dry out the exposed parts of the tree leading to the tree's demise. Obviously, a polyhouse, glasshouse, or cold frame will, if its temperature is regulated to be above 32° F, obviate that caution. For those without any of the above facilities, the bonsai can be placed on the ground and mulched in. A layer of the leaves that have fallen during the Autumn can be used to cover the pots and slab plantings and root-on/over-rock bonsai. However, cascade bonsai pose a problem. As Jim Sullivan noted in the September Tree of the Month article, even under growing-season conditions, the lower portion of the trunk of a full cascade may atrophy because of its

angle to the oncoming light. To offset that possibility, the bonsai pot can be placed at an angle in another container with soil to keep the desired slant for the trunk. This raises another problem - how to get water into the container. A suggested approach other than righting the container every time you water is to make a baffle out of sheet aluminum and insert it in the container as shown in the accompanying sketch 10. You have a number of choices as to where to mulch in the bonsai on the ground. Against the wall of your home is one location and the exposed sides can be protected with a windbreak of burlap screening. If you are concerned about the possibility of prolonged exposure to a winter sun causing trunks to split when temperatures radically change on occasion, you might select the north side of the house for the bonsai's location. However, the north side is where the coldest winds will be hitting the bonsai unless the windbreak is a good one. If you have a large collection or the bonsai are two-man (or more) lifts, you may put them on the ground as close to where they are being displayed as possible. Smaller trees may be put under the benches and mulched in. Then tack a sheet of plastic around the sides of the benches. Others may turn the tables on their sides so that the table tops offer wind protection from one side. Polyhouses and glasshouses usually

Winterizing, continued from previous page

can be kept above 32°F with space-heaters. This affords the hobbyist with the opportunity to work on the bonsai during the winter months. Such environments also should have a fan or circulate the air and keep the chance of mildew or fungus from sprouting in the closed space. Also, there should be vents so that fresh air can circulate when temperatures are above freezing. Take a trip to the National Bonsai and Penjing Collection during Winter and see how it's done for those bonsai. A cold frame also must have a top which can be opened so that the daytime temperatures cannot reach hellacious temperatures. Automatic controls which open and close the top of a cold frame to maintain safe temperatures can be

purchased from vendors of nursery equipment. As Arschel pointed out, a good cold frame must be dug so that the bottom is below the frost line. Also, below that point there should be gravel or rock about 6 inches or more in depth for drainage. People can also resort to a garage or a basement window well or outside stairwell for winter storage. Some members of the Toronto Bonsai Society put their bonsai in window wells and cover the well, taking the covering off to throw in snow once in a while so that the plants get their water. In Japan some people winter their bonsai in concrete pits - sort of deep cold frames which are completely covered to shut out the light. It seems that the plants survive in 'no light' con-

ditions; but, above all, provisions are made so that they **DO NOT DRY OUT**. One problem with bonsai placed on the ground outside is that snow loads can sometimes damage the branch. A trash container inverted over such a bonsai will avoid that risk when it snows.

PEST CONTROL: Bonsai wintering in the open can be seriously damaged or destroyed by predators such as mice, rabbits, and deer. The only sure-shot preventative measure is to build an enclosure around the bonsai so that predators won't get in. Arschel uses a fine chicken wire around his bonsai to keep out the mice and rabbits. If your problem is deer, good luck in whatever size barricade you choose.



Cascade Bonsai: To prevent loss of lower branches on a cascade the pot is tipped so that the main trunk is horizontal and supported in that position by placing it in a large pot or container with the lower part of the pot buried in soil. To avoid having to remove the pot and set it upright everytime one waters, an aluminum baffle shown on the right with tabs to keep it in the pot can be inserted as shown.

Matsu-Momiji
Nursery

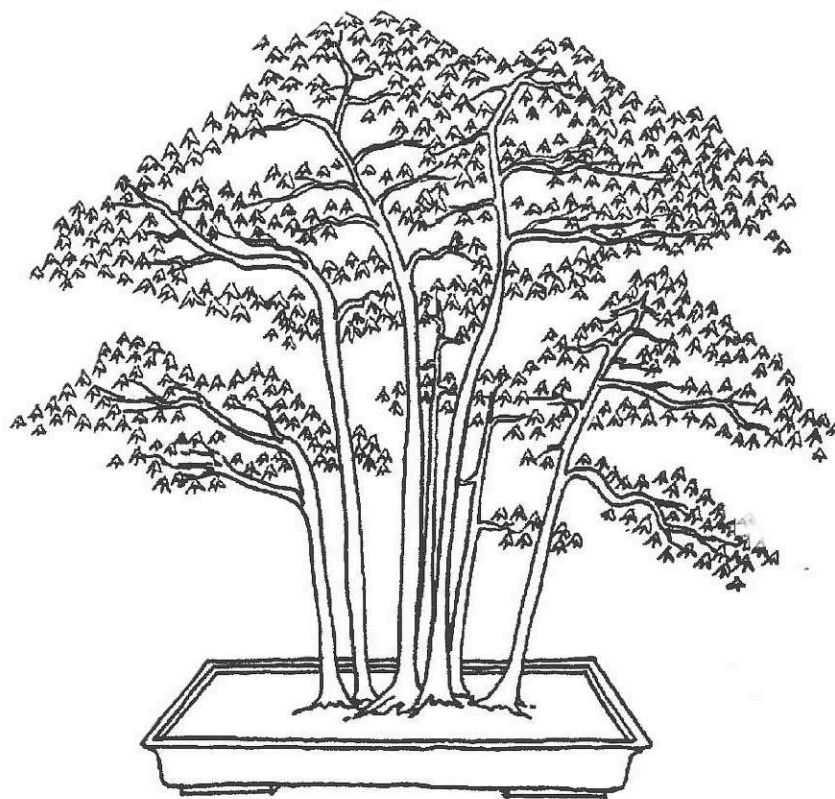


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Bowie Community Center, Bowie, MD
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Terry Adkins, (301) 350-3586
- BROOKSIDE BONSAI SOCIETY**
North Chevy Chase Recreation Center, Chevy Chase, MD
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Jerry Antel, (301) 320-5251
- CHESAPEAKE BONSAI SOCIETY**
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Marc Jartman, (410) 263-2748
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4th Thursday, eve.
Larry Chiger, (215) 663-1678
- KIYOMIZU BONSAI CLUB**
Clearwater Nature Center, Clinton, MD
4th Sunday, 2 PM
Essie Wilson, (301) 839-2471
- LANCASTER BONSAI SOCIETY**
Manheim Twp. Park, Stauffer Mansion
Lancaster, PA
2nd Thursday, 7 PM
Ken Morgan, (717) 872-5941
- MEI-HWA PENJING SOCIETY**
(Chinese language spoken)
Bowie Community Center, Bowie, MD
2nd Sunday, 1 PM
Akey Hung, (301) 390-6687
- NORTHERN VIRGINIA BONSAI SOCIETY**
Greenspring Horticultural Center, Annandale, VA
2nd Saturday, 10 AM
Henry Wright, (703) 575-5616
- RAPPAHANOCK BONSAI SOCIETY**
Call for time and meeting location
Todd Stewart, (540) 775-4912
- RICHMOND BONSAI SOCIETY**
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