

PBA
Clippings
 NEWSLETTER OF THE POTOMAC BONSAI ASSOCIATION

Volume 30, Number 12
December 2000



*New
 Branch
 Bending
 Method
 Tried by
 Unorthodox
 Bonsaist*

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Editorial by Jules Koetsch

December is the time of the year when bonsai people heave a sigh of relief after bedding down their bonsai for the winter. It's also a time to reflect on the year's successes and failures. I've had a few and I'll pass them along to you. I'm certain that many a reader of this article can recount a few and we welcome your passing them along so that other readers can benefit from them.

Sometimes enlightenment comes slowly. It finally dawned on me how to get rid of the weed oxalis when it sprouts smack-dab in the roots and right next to the trunk of a bonsai. I often wonder how the danged weed gets started in bonsai soil that consists mostly of non-organic items. Do the oxalis seeds ride on the breezes and/or do insects carry them? The oxalis that sprouts away from the trunk/root juncture can be removed by poking a sharp pointed object such as an ice-pick into the soil at the bottom of the oxalis stem. This helps free the tenacious roots of the oxalis. (Wish my bonsai would throw roots so well.) With the oxalis that roots around the base of the bonsai's trunk, the only solution I had was to keep cutting off the oxalis until the next repotting. Then when the tree's roots at the juncture with the trunk were exposed, the oxalis could be pulled free. Now I take a small paint brush or a Q-Tip dipped in a weed killer such as *Roundup*, *Brush-B-Gone*, or *Weed B Gone*. Carefully paint the oxalis leaves with the undiluted liquid weed killer. Do the leaf painting delicately so that none of the liquid weed killer drops on the bonsai's trunk or roots. In about one week, the oxalis leaves will turn brown signaling it has bitten the dust. The downside of the process is that weed killers are expensive, and if you only intend to kill the oxalis on your bonsai - you'll have it around for a long time. (For those who have no use for a full container of weed killer some club members may be

willing to share the contents of one container of weed killer.)

Watering bonsai has often been listed as the foremost activity affecting the life and well-being of one's bonsai. When I was earning a living, I would attempt to water my bonsai once every morning with a lawn sprinkler system. This was in accordance with Japanese bonsai literature, except for the winter seasons when watering could be spaced every two to three days apart. Also, the preferred time to water was in the early morning so that the plant could have the water at its disposal during the time of day when it is awake, so to speak. The water dissolves the ions in the nutrients in the soil; and the rate of absorption by the roots increases to reach a peak about high noon. Thereafter, the rate diminishes to be essentially zero when the sun has gone down. Hence watering after 3:00 to 4:00 p.m. is not recommended because the roots will lay fallow in the wet soil and root rot may be the ultimate killer of your bonsai.

Nowadays since I'm retired, I can spend the morning checking each bonsai with a moisture meter. The criterion I use is one advocated on the moisture meter package - *when the moisture meter reads 50% or less*, I water the bonsai until the water comes out of the drainage holes in the container. Sometimes I even let the meter reading drop well below 50% to give the plants a breather. It's interesting to find out how differently your bonsai absorb water, which is what you might suspect since there are a number of factors - the physiology of the plant species, the soil mix, the location of the bonsai (sun or half day of shade), and so on. So every day, like a doctor putting a tongue depressor in your mouth, I poke the moisture meter probe into the soil of my bonsai to see how happy they are. The moisture meter is also a harbinger of bad news when daily checks of the moisture level in the soil do not change but remain close to 100%. The

plant is ailing and needs some corrective action.

The last 2 years have seen me use a pelletized, slow-release fertilizer (Wood Ace) to feed my bonsai. I understand there is a similar product on the market called Turf Assurance 4 Trees. This approach seemed to combine the best and eliminate the worst of two other approaches to fertilizing the bonsai.

First, the use of fertilizer balls entailed the messy and smelly task of making them and monthly replenishment when required. But that procedure gained the advantage of the slow release of the fertilizer with every watering. Liquid fertilizer was a one-shot deal once every week or two, and involved the chore of mixing the fertilizer solution and applying it to the bonsai - plus it could be leached out of the soil with the next one or two waterings. The Wood Ace was measured out according to the instructions on the bag for potted plants and sprinkled as evenly as possible around the edge of the bonsai pot. According to the directions on the package, the Wood Ace would have lost its potency around the beginning of July. During September and early October, I would give the bonsai two applications of a liquid fertilizer with a high phosphate such as an NPK of 10-52-10 to encourage root growth at the time of year when the plants turn to doing just that.

One year John Naka visited the National Bonsai and Penjing Collection and supervised the repotting of Goshin. One of the steps he took was to take common nails (ones without any protecting coating) and laid them two on each side of the bonsai container's drainage holes. He then took some large size pellets and placed them over the drainage holes. The reason for doing that was to make a source of iron available to the plant. Naturally I tried this out a few years ago; and when I repotted in the spring, I wondered what the solid rod-like objects were in the

4
otherwise granular old soil mix. The two nails lying side by side had fused together and were encrusted with particles of soil. In fact, it seemed that they were an impediment to drainage through the holes in the bottom of the container.

According to a recent article in the science section of a newspaper, there is some thinking that the small things that live in the intense heat of the volcanic jets at the bottom of the sea (temperatures in excess of that on the surface of the sun) survive on iron since there is no oxygen down there. It was mentioned that the same reasoning could apply as to how life started on the earth. The cells were transported in meteorites where they survived on iron. So to keep the bonsai from being starved for iron, I stick the common nails into the soil after the repotting is over.

It doesn't pay **not** to have firmly tied down a plant in a pot when repotting. I have been lackadaisical about tying down every tree that I've repotted. Especially as with many of my trees, when the root ball does not fill the container, the tree sits on an unsteady base. Watering and wind tend to loosen the soil, and the root system never seems to grow to fill the pot.

Perhaps the above may help make life easier for you in caring for your bonsai. During the winter months catch up on your reading/rereading of bonsai books. It's always a revelation as to the many new ways of doing things, as well as those you've forgotten. Also, winter is a good time for the readers to write down and send in to *Clippings* articles or just short bonsai-related blurbs.

POETRY CORNER - CALM YOURSELF

*The following are from MORNING MIST Thoreau and Basho
Through the Seasons by Mary Kullberg; Weatherhill, NY:1993.*

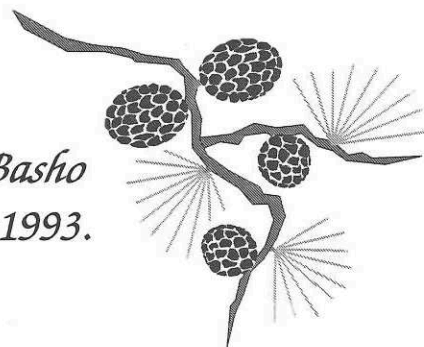
*Snow-bound,
once more I press my back against
my thinking post.*

-----Basho

*Winter, with its inwardness is upon us. A man is
constrained to sit down and think*

-----Thoreau

*Icy winds blowing
Silk like swirls on Drifted snow
My bonsai now sleep
-----Morell*



Calendar of Events

Send your club's input to Arschel Morell by e- ajmorellsr@hotmail.com or snail mail to: 9 Six Notches Court, Baltimore, MD 21228

December

Rappahanock Bonsai Society

2 Planning for 2001. Further details to be announced.

Kiyomizu Bonsai Club

3 3:00 pm Potluck Dinner, Members will be apprised of details.

Potomac Viewing Stone Group

3 1-4 pm Diaza Making with Sean Smith, Yoshimura Ctr, USNA

Baltimore Bonsai Club

Holiday Party, Time and Place to be determined.

Northern Virginia Bonsai Society

8 Holiday dinner (9-course) at China Garden in Roslyn, VA. Contact is Claire Segawa, segawa_johnson@qwestonline.com or 703.823.9396

Brookside Bonsai Society

14 6:30 p.m. Annual Club Christmas Dinner at the Far East Restaurant, Rockville, MD, Fee: \$18 per person, Join us for this annual get together. The food is excellent and plentiful. Please mail your registration to Roberta Schneidman.

Lancaster Bonsai Society - No program reported.

January

Bonsai Pot Competition - The deadline for submissions is February 1, 2001. For details call (202) 245-4523 or visit www.bonsai-nbf.org/nbf/potterycompetition.htm

Northern Virginia Bonsai Society

13 Warren Hill will speak on the importance of pot and stand matching, as well as demonstrating the techniques.

Brookside Bonsai Society

18 8:15 pm Japanese Tokonoma Display, Chris Cochran

Chris is from Richmond, VA. He will share his knowledge of the aesthetics of Japanese Alcove Display. He will set up several examples focusing on scrolls and viewing stones. Chris is a long-time dedicated student of Japanese arts.

Kiyomizu Bonsai Club

28 2:00 pm Planning meeting for 2001 Club monthly topics and events, Clearwater Nature Center, Cosca Regional Park, Clinton, MD

Baltimore Bonsai Club No program reported.

Lancaster Bonsai Society - No program reported.

Rappahanock Bonsai Society - No program reported.

Non-PBA Functions

USNA Full Moon Hike

9 January, 7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

8 February, 7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

9 March, 7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.



Enter through the R Street Gate for this magical hike through moonlit gardens and collections. At special stops, your guide shares selected Arboretum and horticultural facts. During the walk, let your senses come alive as you see with natural light and listen for nighttime sounds (perhaps even our resident owls). Wear good walking shoes and dress for the weather as this is a 5-mile, mildly strenuous hike. Fee: \$7 (FONA \$6). Canceled in severe weather. No rain date. Registration required.

Bonsai Winter Silhouette Show - National Bonsai and Penjing Museum Special Exhibits Wing

20 - 28 January, 10:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Those who study bonsai know that a deciduous tree's leafless form is a work of art. Branches droop gracefully or lean dramatically; twigs twist and turn in endless original patterns. While nature creates the tree, the bonsai master produces its art. View masterpieces showcased in this elegant exhibit created from the Museum's permanent collection. Free.


21 2:00-3:30 pm Rhododendrons in India, Administration Building Auditorium (Sponsored by the Potomac Valley Chapter, American Rhododendron Society)

Frances Plunkett shares images and tales of her travels to study and photograph the native plants of India. After her presentation, stay for a hands-on lesson in sowing rhododendron and azalea seeds. Free. Registration is not required.

Call your club vice president or Ed Suarez to volunteer for a fun job at the Washington Home and Garden Show. You'll find Ed at suarez1@mnsinc.com

This article comes to you by way of a happy circumstance. For several years, Jules has been sharing information with his counterpart, David Bogan, Editor of the Newsletter of the Greater Evansville Bonsai Society. For about 2 years, Dave has been sending me the nicest, most supportive e-mails and we have become real e-friends.

Recently he e-ed that he'd be working in Baltimore and would be coming down to visit the Bonsai Museum for the first time in several years. I couldn't let the opportunity pass and insisted he would need us as guides to share some inside stories which don't always escape the immediate area. Arschel Morell (BBS) was invited to class up our act, and Dave brought along a gentleman who had never been exposed to bonsai, Don Meyers of Houston. I think all five of us enjoyed the encounter.

This is one of the many semi-forgotten stories that were told for Dave's edification. As I was listening, it didn't take a pot falling on my head to realize many of us need reminding of how some fine bonsai have come to be. And now and then newcomers need to have some of the "woo woo mystery" knocked out of the picture so that they will feel the artistry is attainable to them, too, . . .and not always by the most orthodox methods. 

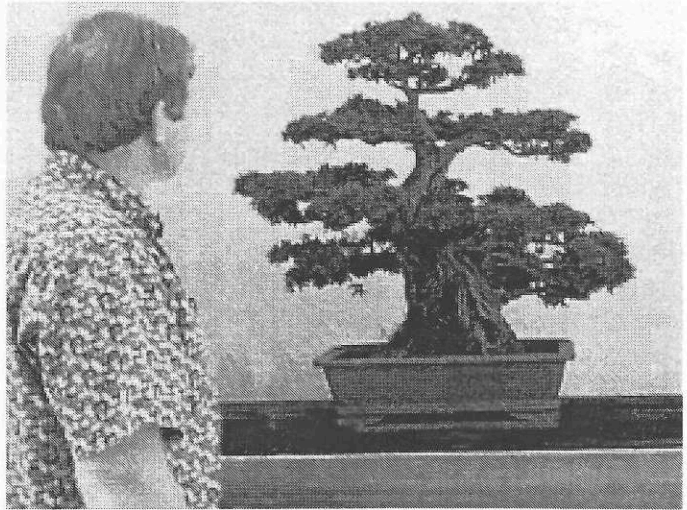


The crew: Jules, Don, Dave, Arschel

Azalea Reincarnation by Jules Koetsch

A number years ago, there was this beautiful 250-year-old azalea that the renowned bonsai master Yuji Yoshimura had brought from Japan. The style was an informal upright - about 32 inches high, and with a trunk about 15 inches wide at its base. Janet Lanman worked with Yuji Yoshimura back then and recalls that the dead trunk lay on the ground for four years. Seeing the gorgeous trunk and remembering its former beauty was too much for Yuji and one of Yuji's students, Muriel R. Leeds. So Yuji devised the following procedure to bring the azalea back to life. One might say it involved several phoenix or *tanuki* grafts.

A phoenix graft is done by taking one or more living saplings and bending their trunks to conform to grooves carved into the sides or rear of an attractive piece of deadwood. The deadwood has possibly been carved to enhance its eye appeal and pre-treated with lime-sulfur to preserve it. The Japanese give the name *tanuki* the technique. *Tanuki* is the name for the badger in Japanese folk-lore, a very foxy animal that can materialize into any person



Dave with subject azalea

or animal and bedevil unsuspecting victims. In other words, a *tanuki* bonsai is an impostor impersonating a bonsai. But if the *tanuki* bonsai is attractive, relax and enjoy it. However, the subject azalea proved to be the result of a number of phoenix grafts, so to speak, with one single exception - the roots of the plants being grafted to the azalea were not embedded in the soil in the pot as with the usual phoenix grafts. The following paragraph explains how it was done.

Six rooted azalea cuttings were bare-rooted and attached to the dead tree. The accompanying diagram shows how one cutting was attached. The repotted dead trunk and bare branches are shown in the upper left-hand corner of the diagram. Going clockwise around the diagram, the bare-rooted cutting is tied with string to a branch with its roots splayed around the dead branch. Then peat moss that has been pre-soaked in water is packed around the roots and held in place with gauze bandage firmly tied with string. Someone had to water the entire tree three times every day during the first year. During the ensuing years the roots of the cuttings grew down the trunk and into the trunk deep enough to reach the soil in the container. Janet Lanman said that there seems to be nothing left of the dead trunk and branches on the plant as it now exists. The roots of the grafted cuttings growing into the soil have recaptured the shape and beauty of the original tree trunk.

Now when you visit the North American Collection in the National Bonsai and Penjing Museum, look for the azalea pictured

herein. The nameplate below the bonsai states that the azalea came from the Muriel R. Leeds Collection. The Muriel R. Leeds Collection consisted of bonsai and viewing stones. The bonsai were the result of her studying and working with Yuji Yoshimura, and in a sense reflect much of Yuji Yoshimura's bonsai artistry. Some of the trees from her extensive collection were accepted as part of the North American Collection and it is so indicated on the nameplates. Others were auctioned off and the proceeds went to the National Bonsai Foundation.

The book containing the story about the azalea which is the subject of this article can be found in the book Yoshimura School of Bonsai Commemorative Album Marking 25 Years of Bonsai Instruction - The Muriel R. Leeds Collection by Yuji Yoshimura; 1977. It contains photographs of 48 bonsai and 5 viewing stones along with short descriptions relative to their care or history. Mr. Yoshimura noted that "This will be the first book in the history of bonsai to show year-by-year changes of individual bonsai for over 10 years."

Maybe this is chapter two getting it's start . . . Don's looking interested, don't you think.

Dave sent a brief message at deadline: ". . . Don's construction office is in Braiden Fl. His first and foremost comment was how friendly you all were. He just couldn't believe this was our first meeting in person. He just couldn't believe the age and size of the bonsai on display. He talked about bonsai the entire day. I think the world has a new bonsai nut. I tried my best to explain the true meaning behind bonsai. He

commented that it was a great way for a person to relax, but just as importantly, a way of developing friendships all over the country.

After arriving back home, I sent him a tree to get him started. . ."



WINTER PROBLEMS by Berni Gastrich

This article is reprinted from the January 2000 issue of Yama Ki Newsletter of New York.

At this time of year, all our trees are safely in their winter quarters. But are they really safe? I personally have lost more trees in winter than any other time of year. No, it wasn't the cold that got them, not even a single one. The most common problem was insufficient water to certain individual trees. All those trees that retain winter foliage, especially the broad-leafed evergreens need quite a bit of water in winter. When the temperature is above 40°, they need almost as much water as in summer. Between 40° and about 25°, they are in a semi-dormant state. The key word here is semi. They are not fully dormant at these temperatures and are still using water. Below this they are as dormant as their deciduous bonsai neighbors. Because they have foliage however, they still lose water to the air more quickly than deciduous trees. This is why we shelter them from wind and sun. If possible, maintaining a relatively high humidity in the winter shelter is helpful. Even deciduous trees in which dormancy is easily recognized by lack of leaves, require some *though much less* water. Deciduous trees will remain fully dormant during mid-winter as long as the temperature in the shelter does not rise above 40° for any length of time. Even these trees which have no leaves at all do lose some water to the air, and therefore must be watered occasionally. How did I lose my trees? I'm not paying enough attention to the individuality of water needs of the different trees. When they're all jammed together in winter, it's easy not to notice that certain individual trees, especially those in small pots, are drying out. The only way to be really sure of soil moisture content is to scratch soil surface. If you dig into the soil down to 25% of the pot depth and do not find moist soil, it's time to water.

While keeping a high ambient humidity is beneficial, it is also conducive to fungus attacks. One of our very highly

respected teachers entered her winter storage building some years ago to find everything covered with a white mold. Many fine trees were lost. And above all, spray with a fungicide should be used as a preventive, not as an afterthought. Two or three times per winter is sufficient. Those who use a subterranean pit are very familiar with this problem and do a thorough spraying before they close their pit for winter.

Insects are generally not a problem in winter, but the red spider mite can be an exception. Even though they don't multiply rapidly in the cold, they do not have wind or overhead watering on foliage to reduce their populations. Spraying is again the answer. Kelthane is best if you can find it, as it is specifically for mites. If not, most of the other insect sprays will at least reduce their populations significantly. This should not be necessary more than twice a winter. The spraying should be very thorough however. If your trees are accessible, this is an excellent time of year to remove old wires. It is also one excellent time to prune and rewire. When deciduous trees have no leaves it is much easier to see the branch structure and to wind wire around the branches. All sizable pruning cuts must be sealed with cut paste or an equivalent. Since there is no healing at this time of year, such wounds will dry back if not treated. If this is not done, you can lose branches above the wound if the drying goes far enough.

Add-on: Hal Mahoney removes his winter hardy plants from their containers and plants them in the ground during dormancy. He states that roots need a warmer temperature than branches, but the roots and branches on plants kept in their pots above ground are exposed to the same temperature.

PAMPERING GARDENIAS INDOORS *by Scott Aker*

Mr. Aker is the Integrated Pest Management (IPM) specialist at the US National Arboretum who also authors a question and answer article every Thursday in the *HOME* section of *The Washington Post* newspaper. Of late, he has put in articles related in one way or another to bonsai. As flowering gardenias are a favorite material for bonsaiists, we include the following from the November 11th issue of the *Post*. The November 23rd issue had an article on how to care for *Serissa foetida* with a very nice pen and ink drawing of a bonsai *Serissa foetida*. Hence, in the future, don't forget to look in the *HOME* section of the *Post* for you might see something on bonsai. Better yet send in your questions to *Scott Aker at The Washington Post, Attn: Scott Aker, HOME Section, 1150 15th St. NW, Washington, D.C. 20071.*

Q. I would like to know how to take care of a gardenia. It was outside all summer and now is too big. I have heard, though, that if I trim it I will not have blooms next year. Also, some of the leaves are turning pale yellow.

A. Gardenias should be the last of the houseplants to bring indoors. They can even tolerate frost and may live over the winter in protected courtyards and downtown locations that never experience temperatures much below 25°F.

Some of the leaves may yellow and drop after cool weather, but this is a normal process.

Leave the gardenia outdoors in a partly shaded location until mid-November or even longer if the weather is mild. When winter's cold threatens, place the plant in the sunniest, coolest location you can find indoors. An unheated sunny room is ideal.

Mist the plant daily to keep the humidity high, and water to keep the soil evenly moist but never saturated. If you can maintain temperatures of about 70°F during the day and 50°F at night, along with ample sunlight, your gardenia may reward you with flowers as the days get longer in late winter.

Normal indoor winter conditions - warm temperatures, especially at night, and low humidity - will almost always result in wholesale shedding of the flower buds. The plant will grow fine, but you will miss flowering for a whole year.

To reduce the size of the plant, prune it by cutting back the longest stems just after

flowering in early spring. Return the plant to the outdoors by mid-March so it can grow a new supply of flower buds for next winter's show.

Q How do I grow Japanese black pine trees from seed and then train them as bonsai? I have several black pine trees on the property and an ample supply of black pine cones.

A Japanese black pine seeds, unlike many seeds, don't demand special techniques from the gardener to induce germination. Viable seed should germinate without delay when sown in moist potting soil.

The seeds are winged and disperse naturally in the wind as soon as the cones open. In late winter, inspect cones frequently for signs of the lower scales beginning to crack open. When you see this, bring the cones indoors and dry them in a tray lined with newspaper. Once dry, the scales will separate and the seeds will fall out. Release stubborn seeds with a shake.

As they grow, you will see young trees with different growth habits. Some may be fast growing, with straight trunks. If you are lucky, some will grow irregularly and slowly making them perfect for bonsai culture. You will then want to visit local bonsai club events. Shows and demonstrations are listed in the Home section.



Bonsai - The art of training, and growing in a pot, a small live plant which is given attributes of a large, beautiful, magnificent old tree.

Saikei - The art of creating a living landscape, in miniaturized form, representing an entire natural composition.

Minimalism An art form which endeavors to shed everything extraneous to the esthetic process. In Japan, the ultimate concept of beauty is shibui (shibusu is the noun for this concept.) Seven characteristics which define this concept of beauty follow:

- **Simplicity** - Complex things are alien to shibusu. Austere, unadorned, plain, unfigured are words that fit this quality. In bonsai, overly ornate decoration of either tree or pot would detract from design of the tree. The discipline of simplicity is a vital aspect of bonsai esthetics.

- **Implicitness** - This is the quality of intrinsic meaningfulness or depth. Superficial things are alien to shibusu. Blank spaces in brush paintings and open spaces in bonsai give meaning to this quality of implicitness. It is this quality in some bonsai that impart a sense of inexhaustibility and which command a deep sense of respect while communicating subtle profundity in their own special way.

- **Austere Sublimity** - All surplus parts are discarded, leaving behind only the bare essentials required to convey feelings of the artist. This quality should inspire deep emotion through a severely simple, unadorned presentation. Humility and modesty are words associated with this quality. The literati style of bonsai is one of the best examples of austere sublimity.

- **Tranquillity** - Loudness or turmoil and shibusu are irreconcilable. This quality reflects a long-term serenity, quiet and the tranquillity associated with resolving

inner conflicts. Composure, sobriety or calmness describe this aspect.

- **Naturalness** - To create a completely natural feeling, the appearance of artificiality must be avoided. Shibusa should impart a feeling of inevitability or spontaneity. The result should give an impression of the accidental or incidental—it should look as if it were untouched by the hand of man.

- On the sixth quality, there appears to be a conflict: Dr. Soetsu Yanagi suggests Uneventfulness or Normalcy. He asserts that shibusu is far removed from sickness and abnormality. Rather, shibusu is more closely associated with the usual, the commonplace, and with spontaneity and health. This quality would form a natural relationship with the first quality—simplicity.

Peter Chan prefers Freedom from Attachment. He describes this quality as the freshness which comes from abandoning convention, custom, and formula. Only by adopting the unorthodox can one achieve a freedom which is marked by freshness and originality.

- **Asymmetry** - A seventh quality recognizes beauty in irregularity which flows automatically from naturalness. Harmony is achieved by means of asymmetrical balance, not from perfect symmetry or by over-perfection. A Zen philosopher suggested that “perfection is achieved through imperfection.”

Though shibui describes the ultimate beauty of bonsai, this description is not enough for full esthetic appreciation. Feelings associated with an appreciation of shibui are wabi and sabi. Kyuzo Murata in “The Spirit of Bonsai” has defined these terms thus:

Wabi is a state of mind, a place, or an environment which imparts a feeling of great simplicity, quiet and dignity. SABI is

a feeling of simplicity and quietness which comes from something old, used or experienced over and over again. The feelings of wabi and sabi create a certain contentment. Murata considered this feeling to be the ultimate goal of bonsai. Peter Chan describes these terms as follows:

Wabi means, quite literally, "poverty", but poverty which is not dependent on material possessions, rather has an inward richness of higher value than mere possessions. Wabi is found in the person who does not indulge in complexity of concept, over-ornate expression, or the pomposity of self-esteem. Such a person is quietly content with the simple things in life, which are the sources of their everyday inspiration.

Sabi denotes "loneliness" or "solitude" with an antique element implied. The

essence of sabi is gracefulness combined with antiquity.

Peter Chan summarizes: Wabi implies poverty, simplicity and contentment; sabi entails loneliness, solitude, some deliberate antique imperfection, and the absence of over-sophistication. Interwoven with these attributes are the innate qualities of a love for nature, preference for imbalance and asymmetry, avoidance abstraction, intellectualism, and practicality.

Sources:

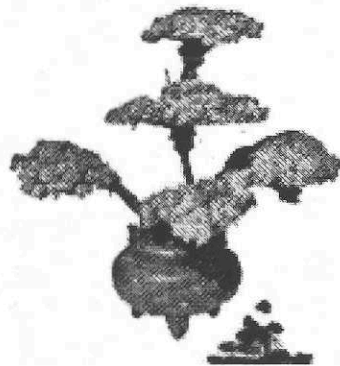
- ò Dr. Soetsu Yanagi, Director of the Museum of Folk Crafts; Tokyo, Japan.
- ò Peter Chan; "Master Class"; Sterling Publishing Co.,Inc.; New York, New York; 1988.
- ò Kyuzo Murata, "The Spirit of Bonsai".
- ò Toshio Kawamoto; "Saikai: Living Landscapes in Miniature"; Kodansha International Ltd.; Tokyo, Japan; 1967.



*On the Eve of a **New Millenium***, a look back . . .*

Does anyone remember this place? Don't rush out to take advantage of the sale! This ad (circa 1969) was the first in the area spotted by Dorothy Warren, charter member of PBA.

arcadian garden centers



annual bonsai sale and exhibit

5.98 and up

An ancient art . . . an exquisite tree. Distinctive shapes growing in oriental pottery. Large selection. Quantities limited.

early bird specials
sunday and monday only!

open sun. 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., mon. 10 a.m. to 9:30 p.m.

**Yes, some of us still know how to count from Year 1.*

shade, fruit and ornamental trees

1.98 your choice

Choose from red maple, weep . . .

Minutes for PBA Board Meeting Of 22 October 2000

Members Present: Jerry Antel - Treasurer; Ross Campbell - President Washington Bonsai Club; Chuck Croft - President; Jim Hughes - Brookside Bonsai Society; Pete Jones - Northern Virginia Bonsai Society; Jules Koetsch - Editor PBA Clippings; Shari Sharafi - Educational Vice-President; Frank Thomas - Lancaster Bonsai Society; Betty Yeapanis - Layout Editor PBA Clippings; Ed Zipeto, 2001 Auction Chair

Chuck Croft opened the meeting at 1300 and the minutes for the last meeting were read and unanimously approved.

The Treasurer's report was presented by Jerry Antel and indicated that PBA had \$200.13 in our checking account, \$6,468.85 in our savings account, and a \$6,000.00 Certificate of Deposit. The total amount in all accounts was \$12,668.98. Jerry also indicated that the loan of \$10,000 to Nick Lenz for producing and publishing his book has been repaid in full.

Finally, Jerry discussed the results of his letter to Friends of the National Arboretum (FONA) requesting information on how they use money we give them. Over the years, we have given them \$14,000. Their response indicated that \$1,000 had gone into a Bonsai account, \$222.07 had been used to support the National Arboretum's bonsai sales, \$100.11 went to FONA membership requirements and the rest of the \$14,000 or \$12,677.82 was placed in the Bonsai Grant program. The Treasurer's report was passed unanimously, and it was decided to contact FONA again to find out what the Bonsai Grant account is used for.

Next, Jerry Antel reviewed the Fall Symposium. Our total receipts were \$7,494 and our expenses totaled \$7,715.46. Thus we lost \$220.54 on the Fall Symposium. We had approximately

25 full-time attendees, with an additional 15 on Saturday and 4 on Sunday. This gave us an approximate total of 45 attendees for the symposium.

The Board discussed the situation wherein Frank J. Mihalic obtained the services of Mr. Kim and Mr. Lee for a tour and demonstrations without contributing to the travel costs of Mr. Kim and Mr. Lee. It was decided to explore contractual options that would set up guidelines for outside access to speakers and demonstrators who are brought in by PBA. Chuck Croft took an action item to obtain a sample of the contract and guidelines used by the Mid-Atlantic Bonsai Society for their speakers and demonstrators. When we have the information, we will run it by Mr. Felix Laughlin, NVBS member and lawyer.

Several ideas for increasing attendance at the Fall Symposium were presented and discussed. Among them were 1) clubs would sponsor attendance under 'yet to be defined' circumstances; 2) PBA Scholarships; 3) publishing journal articles which reinforce the importance of using these activities to further each individual's understanding and grasp of the bonsai art; 4) PBA sponsoring trees to clubs for demonstrations and exercises; and 5) a call for other educational opportunities.

Chuck Croft then reviewed the activities going on during the 2001 calendar year and in support of the Bonsai and Penjing Museum's 25th anniversary. He discussed the possible speakers, demonstrations and other supporting activities. Chuck will pass the details on to the PBA membership through the *PBA Clippings* as they become available.

The final discussion of the meeting was directed toward the costs to the vendors for participating in our Spring Show and Fall Symposium. Their attendance at these events provide most of our members

with their primary opportunity to replace tools, obtain new tools, get soil and repotting supplies, etc. In the past few years, each vendor has paid PBA \$200 for attending the Spring Show and \$175 for attending the Fall Symposium. During most Spring Shows, they break even or make some money (except for this year) and most of them do not make money at the Fall Symposium, particularly when you add in travel and transportation costs. They recognize this and attend anyway in order to show support and loyalty to PBA. After the discussions, a motion was made to keep the Spring Show costs to \$200.00 per vendor, but lower the Fall Symposium costs to \$150.00. This should help the vendors out somewhat.

The meeting adjourned at 1500.

Treasurer's Report - 2000 Fall Symposium

Receipts

Vendors	1,750.00
Registration/full (30)	1,950.00
Registration/Saturday (18)	990.00
Registration/Sunday (6)	145.00
Workshop/Kim	1,225.00
Workshop/Sustic	510.00
Silent Auction	<u>894.00</u>
	7,464.00

Expenses

Demo tree from Korea	677.00
Printing	227.20
Postage	143.76
Speaker	1,627.00
Food	1,027.00
Wire	38.50
Tent	1,155.00
Kim Workshop	1,050.00
Sustic Workshop	396.00
Demo tree	250.00
Silent Auction (2 trees)	<u>130.00</u>
	6,715.46

Revenue	\$7,464.00
Expenses	<u>\$6,715.46</u>
	\$ 748.54


Proceeds:

FONA	\$1,000.00
PBA	\$ 251.46 loss


Attendance

	<u>2000</u>	<u>1999</u>
NVBS	21	18
Brookside	14	12
Baltimore	8	6
Kiyomizu	3	2
Washington	2	4
Chesapeake	2	4
Rappahanock	1	0
Unaffiliated	2	3
Lancaster	0	1

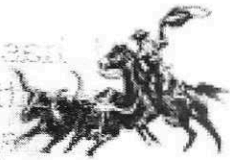
Baltimore club has requested 2 spare copies of *PBA Clippings* be sent to their VP so that they may be given to new members as they join. If other clubs would like to have one or two spares also, please let Judy Wise know to whom they should be sent.



Lancaster Bonsai Society has found an exciting, creative way to boost their club's learning curve with attendance at PBA Events. Watch this space for details next month. (Okay, LBS, I bragged on you. Now, somebody write about the fab way your wonderful snowball grew . . . and send it by 10 December to Jules (contact info, pg 2). That will give us time to print it and inspire other clubs to emulate a leader.)



CHUCK'S CORRAL



I thought you would like an update about arrangements for our 2001 Spring Show and other activities at the National Arboretum marking the Bonsai and Penjing Museum's 25th Anniversary. As events and schedules are solidified, I will continue to provide updates. Keep your fingers crossed, it is going to be an exciting year!

Potomac Bonsai Association members will have a golden opportunity at the Spring Show for 2001 and during the entire year, to be exposed to world-class bonsai artists. Our Spring Show is being held in conjunction with several other activities that will bring our bonsai efforts to the attention of the national and international bonsai community.

There is, as you are already aware, the opening of the celebration for the 25th anniversary of the National Arboretum's Bonsai and Penjing Museum. During the day on Friday, the National Bonsai Foundation will be having its annual meeting. Thus, Mr. John Naka and other nationally and internationally known members of the NBF will be present and approachable for the weekend.

Beginning at approximately 1500 Friday afternoon, the opening ceremony for the 25th anniversary celebration will take place. Friday evening (probably), there will be a dinner in honor of the Satsuki

Azalea donors and speakers. Mr. John Creech (past USNA Director) has agreed to give an after-dinner lecture.

PBA members' trees will be exhibited in the Chinese Pavilion, which provides outstanding opportunities for presentation of our trees. Each club will be notified about the number of trees they will be able to display. As of this time, display stands will be required for each tree in order to formalize the tree presentation. I realize that the weather may present a problem relative to the stands, but this is a bridge we will need to cross at that time.

On Saturday, senior members of the Japan Satsuki Azalea Association will donate seven new Satsuki azaleas to the museum. The Japanese delegation has agreed that one of their members will provide a demonstration and lecture using Satsuki azaleas on Saturday afternoon.

Ikebana International will be cooperating with us, exhibiting in the Education Center, and demonstrating in the Yoshimura Center during the weekend. They will, also have a couple of vendors sharing the vendor's tent with the bonsai vendors. Finally, the Suiseki Association will be exhibiting viewing stones in the educational center (where the museum currently exhibits their stones).

Chase and Solita Rosade have agreed to give children's bonsai

demonstrations throughout the weekend; and PBA members will also be giving demonstrations. Mr. Bill Valavanis will be attending the Friday annual meeting of the National Bonsai Foundation and has requested to attend our show as a vendor. I expect that he will be taking pictures for publication in his journal, *International Bonsai*.

Other activities currently on the schedule for the year include:

- An art exhibition of the work of Mieko Ishikawa is currently scheduled to be hung and publicly available during the period of bloom for the flowering cherry trees and the Cherry Blossom Festival. An opening reception will be held at the National Arboretum. I do not have the dates for this activity yet.
- Publication of a book on the Viewing Stone Collection by the National Bonsai Foundation.
- Mr. Toshio Kawamoto, the originator of the saikei style of

bonsai, has agreed to design a new saikei planting for the museum. His leading student and former apprentice, Mr. Fujikawa, resides in Oregon and has agreed to assemble the saikei planting. Pictures of the demonstration will be sent back to Japan for refinement; Mr. Fujikawa will finish the planting and ship it to the museum in the fall of 2001.

□ PBA Fall Symposium – Possible attendees include:

Mr. Saburo Kato – President, Nippon Bonsai Association

Mr. Arishige Matsuura – Chairman of the Nippon Suiseki Association

Mr. Hideo Marushima – the leading bonsai historian in Japan

Mr. I-Chi Su – Bonsai Association of the Republic of China (Taiwan)

Finally, the editor of *Bonsai Magazine* (IBC's bi-monthly publication) has agreed to publish an article about the 25th anniversary of the museum and may also be willing to publish some of the presentations made at the October Fall Symposium.



Since this word, **satsuki**, is going to be floating in the ether all year, let's all pronounce it the same way. I started with the 3-syllable style, later was told "oh no, that will never do." So I retrained to use two syllables. Now, my ear hears us swinging back to the 3-syllable style. So as not to appear as "jack-legs," I referred my burning question to Roger Benson (NVBS) who graciously took my call in the middle of Thanksgiving Day and speedily e-ed me this paragraph for our edification:

"Many years ago I spent ten years living as a U.S. diplomat in Japan, speaking and reading the language, by now forgetting the latter. So when Betty Yeapanis asked me the Japanese word for azalea I immediately replied "satsuki" (pronounced sahtz-key) as that was the only word I had ever heard for it in Japan. Upon checking Kenkyusha's dictionary, Nelson's character dictionary, and Yoshimura-Halford's *Miniature Trees and Landscapes*, I was surprised to learn that "tsutsuji" (pronounced "tsoo-tsoo-gee") also meant azalea. Spelled with different characters, but pronounced the same, satsuki means May, or the fifth month, which is when this azalea blooms.

IPM Tips for November by Scott Aker

The following has been extracted from the USDA web-site <http://ars-grin.gov/ara/Beltsville/na/> for November. Unfortunately the November tips did not come out in time for us to print in the November Clippings. The IPM Tips appear monthly on the Arboretum's web-site and are authored by Scott Aker.

Protect your evergreen shrubs [boxwood, arborvitae, and columnar junipers] from heavy ice and snow. Shrubs like these are susceptible to splaying or breaking under the weight of snow and ice. Secure twine to the bottom of the trunk and wrap it upward in a spiral pattern. When you reach the top of the shrub, spiral the twine downward until you reach the starting point and tie it off. Remove the twine in the spring after snow and ice are gone.

Store your pesticides securely for the winter. Proper storage is important for safety purposes and to ensure that pesticides remain effective for next season. Keep pesticides and herbicides in a cool, dry storage cabinet that can be locked. Post appropriate warning signs in clear view on the cabinet. Store pesticides and herbicides in their original containers. It's a good idea to double bag all pesticides. Mark each container with its purchase date and keep an inventory of all the chemicals you have. Do not store food, water, fertilizer, seeds, or safety equipment with the chemicals.

Check broad-leaved evergreens for southern red mite damage. Look for white stipples concentrated along the mid-vein of the leaves. Azaleas, rhododendrons, hollies, viburnums, firethorns, and yews are often damaged by the southern red mite in the cooler weather of both spring and fall. Adults are the size of a period, oval, and reddish with eight legs. Leaves turn gray or brown and may die if you have a heavy infestation. The underside of leaves may also have a dusty appearance due to the large number of egg shells and shed skins. Beat test the leaves to determine the number of mites present. Spray horticultural oil if more than ten

mites are found. Red eggs overwinter on the surfaces of lower leaves and are easy to spot. Spray plants thoroughly with horticultural oil to control the eggs, nymphs, and adults.

Beat testing is an efficient way to determine the abundance of pests and beneficial insects present on your plants. Beat the leaves against a white sheet of paper. Identify the type and number of insects, mites, and their natural enemies. Horticultural oil, an effective alternative to harsh chemical pesticides, has many advantages over conventional pesticides. It acts as a smothering agent so pest resistance is unlikely to develop. Oil is less harmful to beneficial insects and predatory mites due to its low residual activity. Pesticides with a long residual can kill natural enemies for many days or weeks when they contact treated surfaces. Oil kills all stages of mites and scale insects, whereas chemical pesticides often require repeat applications to control offspring from eggs and adults not affected by the chemical. Applying oil is easier and safer than spraying conventional pesticides. Avoid spraying oils when plants are weakened, stressed, or wilted. Never spray if humidity and temperatures are high or if long periods of rain are forecast. Apply oil thoroughly to get complete coverage of infested plants.

Observe your hardwood trees, especially sugar maples, for a newly arrived pest, the Asian long-horned beetle. The adult is easy to identify because it's more than an inch in length, and is shiny black with white spots. The long, segmented antennae have alternating black and white bands. They have been spotted in New York City and the Chicago area and

adults are evident from July to September in these areas. Look for signs of the beetle in your trees; sap flow, large holes, and sawdust are obvious signs of infestation. Asian long-horned beetles are serious pests, and their populations need to be contained. If you think you've seen them, contact your state Department of Agriculture.

Determining who's to blame for your unhealthy plants is well worth some careful research. Knowing the pests and diseases that commonly attack your garden or ornamental plants will narrow the quest for a correct identification. First, make sure you've correctly identified the host plant. Scrutinize the damage symptoms. Determine the damage's distribution pattern. Is it random or throughout the whole plant? Record the type of insects and mites that you find. Beneficial insects and mites are often confused with the pests. Count the numbers of each kind. Insects in low abundance are not usually the culprits. Finally, compile the information you've gathered and consult a nursery or landscape professional or your local extension agency for a definite diagnosis. Effective treatment can only be assured with an accurate diagnosis.

Determine the damage threshold for your plants. Decide ahead of time how much injury you can tolerate and don't take action until this level is reached. Premature measures, taken when they are not necessary, may lead to a resurgence of another pest or harm beneficial insects, mites, and spiders.

Use fertilizer wisely! Plants don't need to be fed every time they're watered. Fertilization should not be used as a quick cure. Only fertilize when you're sure

stunted or distorted growth, yellowing, and browning of the leaves are not caused by a pest or disease. Some problems are magnified by excess fertilizer. Nutrient toxicities are common and many times cause death, especially to indoor plants. Spider mites, scale insects, aphids, hemlock woolly adelgids, and many other pests are encouraged by over-fertilization. Instead of purchasing beneficial insects, conserve those that nature sends your way. Spray pesticides only when it is absolutely necessary, and treat only the plants that are being attacked by pests or diseases. Whenever possible, use a reduced-risk pesticide such as horticultural oil, insecticidal soap, or neem seed extract to combat pests and diseases. These pesticides have minimal impact on beneficial insects. Look for insect predators when you note a burgeoning insect problem; they may be working to bring it under control for you. You can avoid using pesticides that harm beneficial insects by exploring other control options. Physically remove pest insects from their host plants with a jet of water from your garden hose, or hand pick them into a bucket of soapy water. Be sure that you are providing your landscape plants with the conditions they need to thrive; healthy plants are less likely to be subject to pest and disease problems. When shopping for new plants, be sure to select pest- and disease-resistant varieties whenever you can.

The best way to manage pests is to use a combination of chemical and non-chemical control. Only take action when the problem is serious enough to damage the plant. If we all use Integrated Pest Management (IPM), we can control pests in an environmentally conscious manner.

Club Secretaries: Kindly inform the PBA Secretary, Judy Wise (contact info, pg 2) of your newly elected officer slates with addresses/phone/e- addresses asap.

MONTHLY CARE TIPS for December *prepared by Jules Koetsch*

The following tips have been compiled from 4 Japanese bonsai magazines and Yuji Yoshimura's book. By now your plants should be tucked away under winter protection. The watering schedules suggested in the Japanese text and repeated below are not ironclad since the winter environment in which your plants are placed plays an important part as to when sequential waterings should take place. Hence daily checkups are in order to determine if the soils in different species require watering. In winter watering may be skipped as much as 3 days. If your bonsai are protected in a cold frame, polyhouse or the like where the soil in the pot does not freeze, use a moisture meter. When the reading is below 50%, drench the plant.

DANGER: One tends to relax one's watering routine in winter, neglects to check the plants for more than one to three days, and the bonsai die due to lack of water.

CONIFERS

Black pine: Water once per day. Remove dead needles. Wire any time during month. pH 4.5 - 6.0

Cryptomeria: Water once per day. Provide special winter protection - see footnote. pH 5.5 - 7.0

Hemlock: Water as needed. pH 5.0 - 6.0

Hinoki: Water as needed. Wire any time during the month. Repot any time. Repotting is normally needed every 3 years. pH 5.0 - 6.0

Larch: Water as needed. pH 5.0 - 6.5

Needle juniper: Water once per day. pH 6.0 - 7.0

Sawara cypress: Water as needed. pH 5.0 - 6.0

Shimpaku (Sargent juniper): Water 2 times per day. Wiring can be done up to the tenth of the month. Remove any old wire before it digs into the bark. pH 5.0 - 6.0

Spruce: Water once per day. Provide special winter protection - see footnote. pH 5.0 - 6.0

White pine: Water 2 times per day. Any time during the month, wire, prune, remove unnecessary branches, and remove dead needles. If the pine has wire on it, provide special winter protection - see footnote. pH 4.5 - 6.0

Yew: Water as needed. pH 5.0 - 6.0

DECIDUOUS

Non-fruiting/Non-flowering:

Beech: Water 2 times per day until the 10th of the month and once per day thereafter. Provide special winter protection - see footnote. After the 20th of the month remove unwanted branches and wire. pH 5.0 - 7.0

Chinese elm: Water as needed. Provide special winter protection - see footnote. Wiring can be done. pH 6.0 - 7.5

Ginkgo: Water as needed. Remove unwanted branches. Provide special winter protection - see footnote. Wiring can be done. pH 6.0 - 7.0

Hornbeam: Water 2 times per day until the 10th of the month and once per day thereafter. Provide special winter protection - see footnote. Anytime during the month remove unwanted growth and rewire. pH 6.0 - 8.0

Japanese maple: Water 2 times per day until the 10th of the month and once per day thereafter. Remove unwanted growth and rewire. Provide special winter protection - see footnote. pH 6.0 - 8.0

Trident maple: Water once per day. Wiring/re wiring can be done. Provide special winter protection - see footnote. pH 6.0 - 8.0

Weeping willow: Water as needed. Provide special winter protection - see footnote. pH 5.0 - 6.0

Winged Euonymus: Water as needed. Provide special winter protection - see footnote. pH 5.5 - 7.0

Flowering/Fruiting Plants:

Cherry: Water once every two days. Provide special winter protection - see footnote. pH 6.0 - 8.0

Crab apple: Water once every two days. Provide special winter protection - see footnote. pH 5.0 - 6.5

Gardenia: Water as needed. Provide special winter protection - see footnote. pH 5.0 - 6.0

Holly: Water once every two days. After exposure to one frost, provide special winter protection - see footnote. pH 5.0 - 6.0

Pyracantha: Water once every two days. After exposure to one frost, provide special winter protection - see footnote. Up to the 20th of the month one can lightly prune only branchlets. pH 5.0 - 6.0

Quince: Water once every two days. Provide special winter protection - see footnote. pH 6.0 - 7.5

Satsuki (azalea): Water once per day. Provide special winter protection - see footnote. pH 4.5 - 5.0

Ume (Japanese flowering plum or apricot): Water once per day. Provide special winter protection - see footnote. pH 6.0 - 7.5

Wisteria: Water as needed. Provide special winter protection - see footnote. pH 6.0 - 8.0

FOOTNOTE: Special winter protection

The Japanese text recommends for this area that the plants so designated should be placed where the temperature doesn't go below freezing (32°F)- such as in a cold frame or polyhouse or greenhouse. The trees so designated as needing winter protection will not survive if they are exposed to freezing temperatures. However they should be placed where the temperature ranges between 32° and 50°F.

Potomac Viewing Stone Group (PVGG) meeting will be held Sunday, 8

December, from 1 to 4 pm in the Yoshimura Center at the US National Arboretum. The topic will be "Daiza Making." Our guest speaker, Sean Smith of Marysville, PA, will demonstrate making a daiza for a viewing stone, as well as discuss the various techniques he regularly uses. Sean's creative program has been requested by many members of the PVSG. He has traveled extensively throughout the US and overseas demonstrating his techniques and displaying his beautiful results, with collected stones. The daiza he creates for us, with its stone, will be given to PVSG and may be auctioned off. Sean is certainly one of the finest daiza artists. He will be bringing other examples of his work, so we will be seeing many fine "finished" suiseki. If you already have one or more stones with daiza made by Sean, we suggest you bring them to the meeting so we all may see as much of his work as possible.

For more information you may contact any one of our officers:

Chris Yeapanis - President	703.591.0864	ibonsai@erols.com
Chris Cochrane - V-P/Prog Chair	804.355.0569	sashai@erols.com
Glenn Reusch - Secretary	540.672.5699	ghreusch@aol.com
Jean Goertner - Treasurer	301.871.8029	jgoertner@prodigy.net
John Carlson - Librarian	301.864.6637	jcarlson@deans.umd.edu

Dues (\$15) for 2001 are due. You may pay at the PVSG meeting, or you may mail it to our treasurer, Jean Goertner. Please note: make the check payable to Jean Goertner (we have done this to minimize the expense to our small checking account). Jean's address is 3208 Regina Drive, Silver Spring, MD 20906.