

# PBA Clippings

NEWSLETTER OF THE POTOMAC BONSAI ASSOCIATION



Volume 31, Number 10  
October 2001



## INVICTUS

*Out of the night that covers me,  
Black as the Pit from pole to pole,  
I thank whatever gods may be  
For my unconquerable soul.*

*In the fell clutch of circumstance  
I have not winced nor cried aloud.  
Under the bludgeonings of chance  
My head is bloody, but unbowed.*

*Beyond this place of wrath and tears  
Looms but the Horror of the shade,  
And yet the menace of the years  
Finds and shall find me unafraid.*

*It matters not how strait the gate,  
How charged with punishments the scroll,  
I am the master of my fate:  
I am the captain of my soul.*

-- W E Henley

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**PBA**  
**Clippings**  
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**Editorial** by Jules Koetsch

There is no way that I can escape saying something about the horrific events of September 11, 2001, much that I wish that I could erase it all as a horrible nightmare. We can pray for those who lost their lives and those who have been injured and for their families. There is a debt that is owed but can never be fully repaid to the very, very brave fireman, policemen and those who risked their lives trying to rescue others. Here at our house we are flying the American flag from dawn to dusk and finding strangers are even bidding us the time of day.

I am thankful for my few bonsai and many potted plants since the mere watering of them can calm my mind and bring me joy. It's like Saburo Kato said – that the happiest part of his day is when he is lost among his bonsai - watering them. An escape for one's mind from the inescapable scenes that TV has shown and is still showing us.

There is a tale I remember about the placing of a bonsai on a conference table in Japan before a meeting commences. The presence of the bonsai seems to make a conference go more smoothly and be more productive. There is a certain magic to trees. The old Indian recognized this when the white man talked about his majestic cathedrals. The Indian pointed out that his cathedral was where he was standing, under a forest canopy. Perhaps these extremists need to live with some real trees not scrubby growth and rocks that their homelands have become. Maybe then their hatred of our way of life, in spite of its inadequacies, will disappear. Perhaps too much sun has fried their brains.

If you're contemplating creating a bonsai or dedicating one that you have in memory of those who have been affected by the cataclysmic events of September 11<sup>th</sup>, I think that an oak would be the suitable species. It has always stood as a symbol of enduring strength. After all, it was the wood chosen to construct Old Ironsides, and which saw it through many a sea battle with the British in the War of 1812. But then again, there are no native oaks in this part of the U.S.A. which have leaves small enough for a bonsai. At the suggestion of Ruth Lamanna some years ago - "Why doesn't one make a bonsai out of a Willow oak?" I've got one in a training pot, but it's not going anywhere fast. The West Coast has native oaks with small leaves –

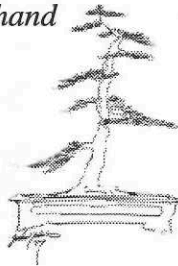
John Y. Naka's recently donated California live oak is proof. Fortunately, there is a native oak in the National Collection.

I always silently recite to myself the poem *Invictus* when I need a shot in the arm to keep going. It was written by the Englishman William Ernest Henley (1849 - 1903) who spent much of his life suffering from tuberculosis.

For the extremists who believe that there is no cause but theirs, and all others must perish, the following illustrates their misguided ways. It was taken from a small book titled *FIREFLIES* by Rabindranath Tagore who lived in the latter half of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century and early part of the 20<sup>th</sup>. He was a native of India, a recipient of the 1913 Nobel prize for literature, and was knighted in 1915. The following poem from his book is one of many he found in his travels through China and Japan. They have been translated from what was written on fans or gay bits of silk.

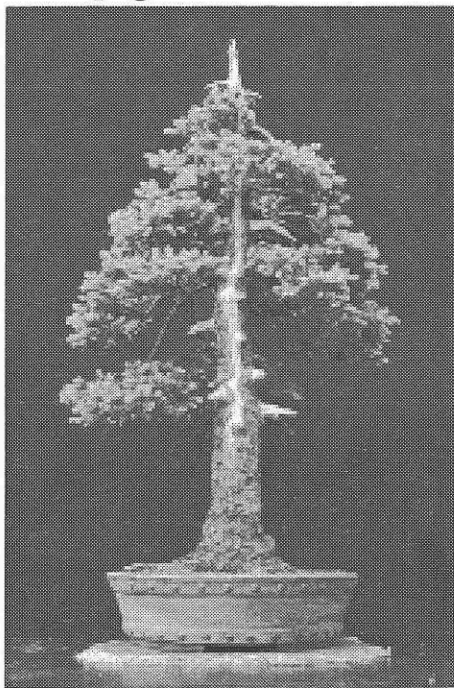
*Bigotry tries to keep truth safe in its hand  
with a grip that kills it.*

*Wishing to hearten a timid lamp  
great night lights all her stars.*



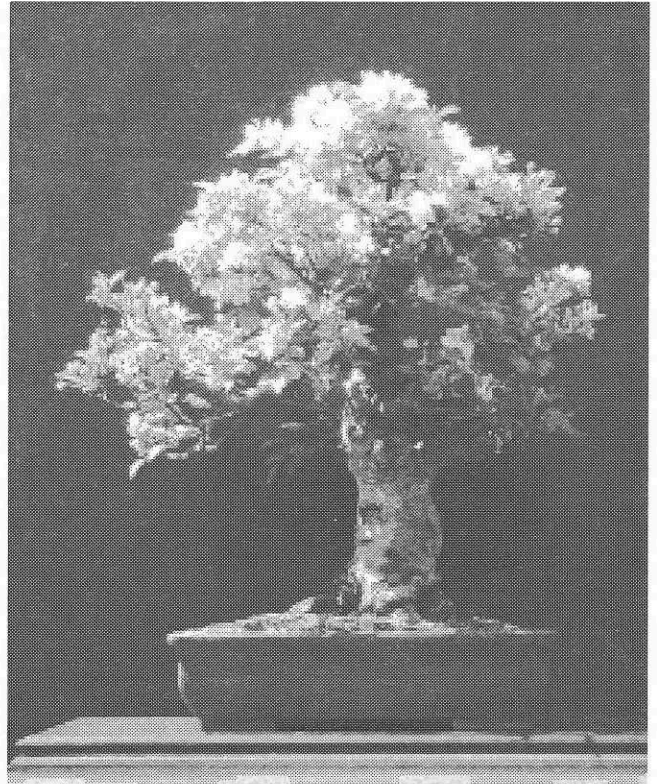
Wondering about the photos?

See page 7.



## Welcome back to PBA Dorothy

**Warren.** For members who don't know, Ms Warren is a founding member of PBA. Pick her brain for clues to the early adventures. Dorothy has rejoined through PVSG.



We who serve the Potomac Bonsai Association are deeply saddened by the tragic events of September 11th and wish to extend our deepest condolences to everyone nationwide affected by this heinous act. We sincerely hope that you, your families and friends are safe and secure. Our prayers and thoughts are with all of those whose lives have been altered by these terrorist activities.

Jules, Judy, Betty, Chris  
Chuck, Arlene, J Sullivan, P Kumar, J  
Ashley, Essie and the whole Kiomizu family  
of families, E Suarez, S Sharafi, J Antel,  
F Thomas, J Hughes, A Morell, and C Roelofs

## Calendar of Events *compiled by Arschel Morell (BBC)*

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

### OCTOBER

#### Baltimore Bonsai Club

**5-7 10:00 am to 9:00 pm** Friday and Saturday,

**10:00 am to 6:00 pm** on Sunday. Fall bonsai show at Valley View Farms Nursery, 11035 York Road. Call 410.744.6478 for additional information

#### Rappahannock Bonsai Society

**6 11:00 am** Trident Maple grove planting workshop

#### Northern Virginia Bonsai Society

**6** Time TBA Kingsville boxwood collecting trip to Ginny Bird's for the November workshop.

#### Lancaster Bonsai Society

**10 7:00 p.m.** A team styling event. Three teams will each style a donated tree to be raffled at end of meeting

#### PBA Board Meeting

**14 11:00 am** Admin Bldg, Upstairs -

#### Northern Virginia Bonsai Society

**20 9:00 am** Open question session

**10:00 am** Jim Doyle and Walter Pall of Germany will be featured speakers. (see pg 6)

Brookside Bonsai Society will meet with Northern Virginia to share program

#### Washington Bonsai Club

**20 2:00 pm** Refining workshop - BYO trees to work on Baltimore Bonsai Club

**28 1:00 pm** Refining workshop - BYO trees to work on Kiyomizu Bonsai Club

Attend Symposium in lieu of meeting

#### Bowie Bonsai Club

**29 7:00 pm** Refining workshop-wiring/rewiring and detailing. BYO trees

Chesapeake Bonsai Club - Hangin' in there

### NOVEMBER

#### Rappahannock Bonsai Society

**3 11:00 am** Shimpaku juniper workshop

#### Northern Virginia Bonsai Society

**10 9:00 am** Tree o'month - Pine - BYO pine

**10:00** Carole Roelofs workshop with Kingsville boxwoods collected in October

#### PBA BOARD MEETING

**11 11 am** location TBA

#### Lancaster Bonsai Society

**14 7:00 pm** Pacific Rim Collection Slide show provided by David DeGroot

#### Washington Bonsai Club

**17 2:00 pm** Refining workshop - BYO trees

#### Baltimore Bonsai Club

**18 1:00 pm** Redesigning a large Hinoki cypress group planting

#### Bowie Bonsai Club

**26 7:00 pm** Preparing for Winter - observations and strategies

#### Kiyomizu Bonsai Club

Thanksgiving Holiday, no meeting

Chesapeake Bonsai Club - Hangin' in there

## Non-PBA Events - October through November

### International Scholarly Symposium on

#### Bonsai and Viewing Stones

**26 October 10:00 am - 6:00 pm**

**27-28 8:00 am - 5:00 pm**

Herbs Used in Asian Cultures - National Herb Garden  
Through **October 31, 8:00 am-5:00 pm** Self-guided treasure hunt w/your personal curator. Learn interesting facts about selected medicinal, industrial, and culinary herbs in Asian cultures. 'Discovery symbols' throughout collection mark plants described in educational brochure available at Garden entrance.

#### Conifers for the D.C. Area - Admin Bldg Classroom

**3 November 10:30 am - 12:00 p.m.** Curator of Conifer Collections presents a 45-min slide lecture on conifers best suited for our area. Sue will discuss cultural requirements for each selection and then lead participants

on 45-minute tour of Gotelli Collection (Dwarf/Slow Growing Conifers). Fee: \$10 (FONA \$8)

REGISTRATION REQUIRED

#### The Fruits of Fall: A workshop in Botanical Sketching

**10 November 10:00 am- 4:00 pm** Admin Bldg Classroom - Join award-winning botanical artist William Keith Harrison for sketching workshop. Topics covered include seeing accurately, sketching techniques, tonal values and reflected light, foreshortening, perspective, negative space, and basic plant morphology. Class is recommended for beginner/intermediate students. Pack a lunch and dress for the weather. This class may move outside for practical work. A materials list will be provided with your registration confirmation. Fee: \$50 (FONA \$40) Class size is limited, so register early.

## Conjecturing on Suiseki + Art or Simply a Pleasure?

*Submitted by Chris J. Yeapanis, President, Potomac Viewing Stone Group*

This is from the Internet viewing-stones-list@bonsai-nbf.org server. When a comment, question, request, etc, is posted by e-mail, the message is then sent to all who subscribe to the list server. [To subscribe go to <http://www.bonsai-nbf.org/stonelinks/vslist.htm>] A couple of comments about the upcoming fall symposium were posted. One comment\* in particular caused quite a reaction and the e-mail started to fly. It specifically provoked Alan Walker (Editor, Lake Charles BS Newsletter) to make a logical reply; and provoked Khaimraj Seepersad of Jamaica to send a most thoughtful reply which made us want to share it here. "Jim's" original message was akin to saying to a bonsaiist, "They're just trees. I don't see how you can take up two days discussing trees at a symposium!"

*From: Jim, member of the viewing stone list:*  
 Hmm . . . I'm a one-time geologist and tend to key in on any "what-kind-of-rock-is-that?" discussions, and I haven't noted much of that among suiseki-ests [sic]. And teaching mineralogy is more something a rockhound might do than a suiseki seeker, who is less concerned with the \*kind\* of rock than he is of its shape.

As for collecting, all collectors (of most anything) I know are quite leery of telling others where they go to collect whatever it is they collect. So teachers would tell us to look in stream beds, old lava flows, drumlins, and ancient beaches and waterways? End of lesson.

Ethics of collecting . . . well, I consider myself an ethicist\*, especially an environmental ethicist, having taken several graduate level courses, attended as many ethics conferences as I can get to, and then writing about it every now and then, but I don't see much of an ethical problem here. We/ They don't pick up EVERY rock we/they see -- unlike some gem collectors or some generic rockhounds I've met -- and especially because the world's total supply of suiseki-ests probably would not fill up a large auditorium.

Display? I see VERY little to teach in display. In fact, suiseki-ests seem to cling stubbornly to what everyone else before them has done (polished wooden tray carved to fit the stone, or sand-or-water-filled suiban). TRADITION reigns! And Japanese tradition, at that.

Care and maintenance: Don't drop them on a cement floor. Dust them occasionally. Rub stone on forehead now and then to add some oil and gloss (or cheat, and brush on a little olive oil), then rub

them down -- the same thing you'd do to most any shiny display object.

etc? I can't think of many. Stone shapes? Here again, someone ELSE's imagination is the rule here as collectors slavishly go for the same two dozen styles described in the Japanese literature (See Bonsai Today, issue 9 for a fairly thorough list of the accepted shapes).

All this said, I do enjoy collecting and displaying viewing stones, especially small (under 8 inches) ones. But I don't think there's a heckuva lot for an "instructor" to do here.

And, while I'm being a gadfly, I can't imagine how anyone can call suiseki an "art," either (despite the insistence on the Viewing Stone list that it is). All dictionary definitions of art include an element of the conscious use of some skill obtained by "experience, study, or observation." Suiseki are objects that you collect and display in as attractive a manner as you can devise (within the previously mentioned limit that others must have done it that way before you). That ain't "Art." You need a fairly good eye (and sometimes imagination), but that's not "art." We don't "DO" anything to the stones to "improve" them, other than maybe add some gloss to stones that naturally lean toward that.

*Response from Alan Walker dated: 19 August 2001 10:19*

Subject: International Scholarly Symposium on Bonsai and Viewing Stones

Well, Jim, I don't know what to say. I'm a bit curious as to why you're bothering to go to the symposium in Washington, if you really believe all you are saying.

Jim, I'm certainly not a suiseki expert, but even I can think of several things to be taught about suiseki. There is the matter of geology, collecting, ethics of collecting, standards and art of display, how to make a daiza, care and maintenance of suiseki, etc.

-- Alan Walker, Lake Charles, LA, USA

*Khaimraj Seepersad's message sent Sunday, August 19, 2001 5:37 PM*

Subject: International Scholarly Symposium on Bonsai and Viewing Stones / Western Thoughts, Eastern Ideas.

Just a General Comment .

You know the Chinese are a very practical and social people. A man of culture takes a walk to clear his head. He sees the world about him and realizes that perhaps his troubles are not so bad.

Crossing a stream or a stony area, he imagines he sees a familiar shape in one of the stones. (Very much like cloud viewing.) He picks up the stone and takes it home.

In order to see the side of the stone that inspired him and is now a memory, perhaps pleasant, he sticks it in a container with sand as the support.

The walk refreshes his thoughts and beauty inspires a painting or poem. Out come the ink, brush, inkstone, paper and weights to keep the paper flat. While he is engrossed in painting, a friend or two may arrive. They are quietly acknowledged. He

## BONsaiMOT

The following is from Bill Orsinger's notes taken March 8, 1998, at the National Arboretum and is one of the many sayings with which John Y. Naka has entertained us, as well as given us food for thought.

*If you have a problem branch, cut it off. Then you don't have a problem.*

Sometimes (or maybe more often than not) in styling a plant to be a bonsai, one finds a branch that one is reluctant to remove. If you do cut off the branch, eventually you will forget it was ever there. On the other hand, one's thought may be that the branch can be pruned and wired so that at some time in the distant future it will enhance the plant as a bonsai. The way to solve the dilemma to *cut or not to cut* is to bring the tree to a club tree critique held periodically and get the opinions of club members, as well as those of a visiting bonsai master. Also, a second source for an opinion is one's spouse or child - if you catch them in a good mood.

nods at his latest find and they too begin to admire the imagination in the container.

Finishing his work, the painter turns to his friends; and one who is also a wood carver, suggests a support of wood. They speak myth, dragons that have become the hills, and an idea arrives for carving the shapes on the wood to enhance the imagination.

Tea arrives in a handmade claystone pot. Memories of cool mornings make their way up as smoke. The stone takes on further memories.

Much discussion passes, laughter, tears and sorrow.

As the garden lantern is lit, farewells are given and garden gates close. The air grows heavy with night blooming jasmine. Lovingly, the new child is laid to rest in a silk box. In the barbaric tongue, it is known as - jade resting on stone dragon under the autumn sun.

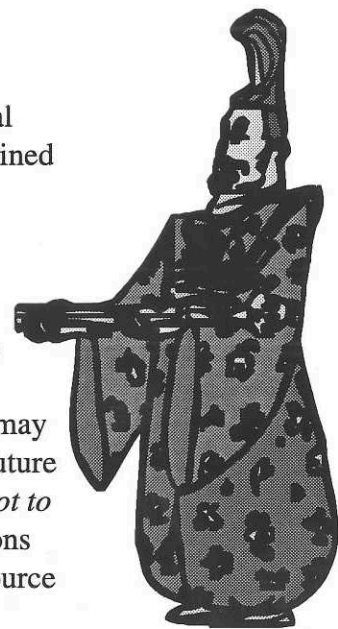
When you can grasp these simple acts of friendship and revitalization, then the stone will be more than just a stone.

-- Khaimraj

\* Don't try to use *Western Ideas on Art* to understand Chinese Stones.

They are not ART, nor Found ART, they are memories, relaxations of the mind and soul.

\*Ed.: Houghton Mifflin defines ethicist as: "A *specialist in ethics*" and makes no no mention of needing to live the ideals.



# Poetry Corner - Calm yourself

## *The Human Form*

*Moonlight has sketched the shadow from the pine:*

*How elegant its pose, compared to mine.*

- by Baishitsu

## *Hiroshige Print*

*An autumn moon looks round the mountain wall;*

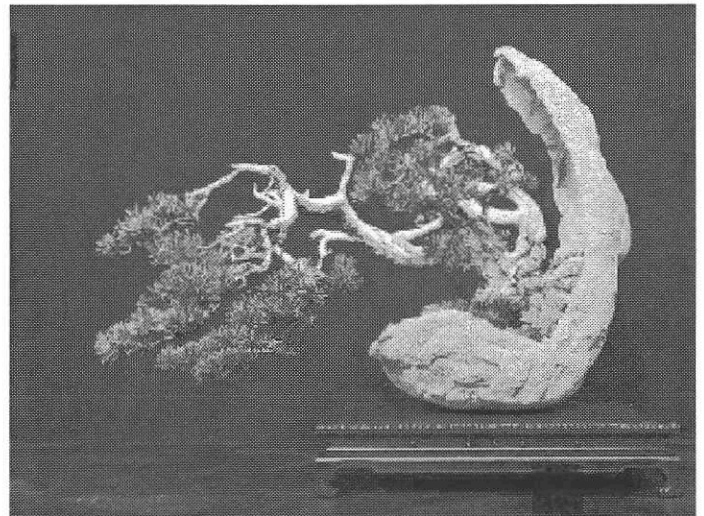
*Maple-leaves chase the headlong waterfall.*

- by Houhou

The above are from the book *A NET OF FIREFLIES Japanese Haiku and Haiku Paintings* with verse and translations and an essay by Harold Stewart; Charles E. Tuttle: Publishers, Rutland, VT, 1993.

VOCATUS ATQUE NON VOCATUS DEUS ADEREIT ~ VOCATUS ATQUE NON VOCATUS DEUS ADEREIT ~ VOCATUS ATQUE NON VOCATUS DEUS ADEREIT ~ VOCATUS ATQUE NON VOCATUS  
Randy: See the pot!

## Company's Comin' ...



All tree photos in this issue were provided by Walter Pall. He was most generous and speedy with his reply to our request for help. Because Northern Virginia and Brookside are gathering to learn from Pall and Pal, Jim Doyle, we wanted to allow attendees to get minds prepared by doing their homework ahead of time. If you're able, visit Walter's website before the meeting:

<http://home.t-online.de/home/Walter.Pall/>

It has become quite a problem lately that e-mail, even between acquaintances, can be misunderstood, probably a reflection of the many years that written communication has been considered passe'. This will give you a rare opportunity to get answers to your questions in person, with all the clues to meaning available (twinkles in eyes, humility in voices, mock hair-pulling).

## BAMBOO - SECOND YEAR (Part 2)

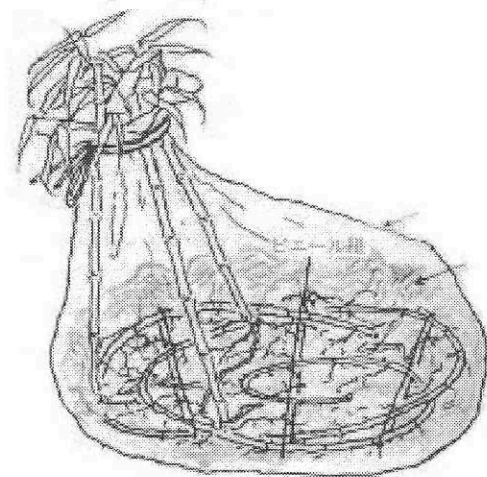
Digging up the Root Section: If you have not dug up the 6- to 7-foot section of bamboo root in September of the previous year, you can do it when the cherry blossoms appear. That is around the first week in April in Japan. One should slowly excavate the roots (just as an archeologist exhumes an item) so as not to injure the young stems and roots. As shown on page 13 of the Sept. 2001 issue of *Clippings*, the notation marked (4) was meant to indicate that all the various root junctures represented in the circles should be trimmed as shown.

Transporting the Roots: Immediately after completing the above operation to reduce the number of small roots, the remaining root section must be thoroughly wet with an atomizer to prevent it from drying out.

Next, carefully tie the roots with string in an elliptical shape as shown in the previous section of this article, and place the bound roots and culms in a plastic bag and cover them with wet Canadian peat moss. Be very careful in moving the bag so as not to break off any of the new growth. If you are taking the bag in an automobile, the Japanese author of the article advises that you should not put the bag in the trunk of the auto, but keep it on your lap so it gets as smooth a ride as possible.

Potting the Roots: The potting operation of this "newborn baby" should be done in the shade.

It is suggested that a 6- to 8-inch deep elliptical bonsai pot should be used. The author does not suggest any length for the pot, but I assume it will be



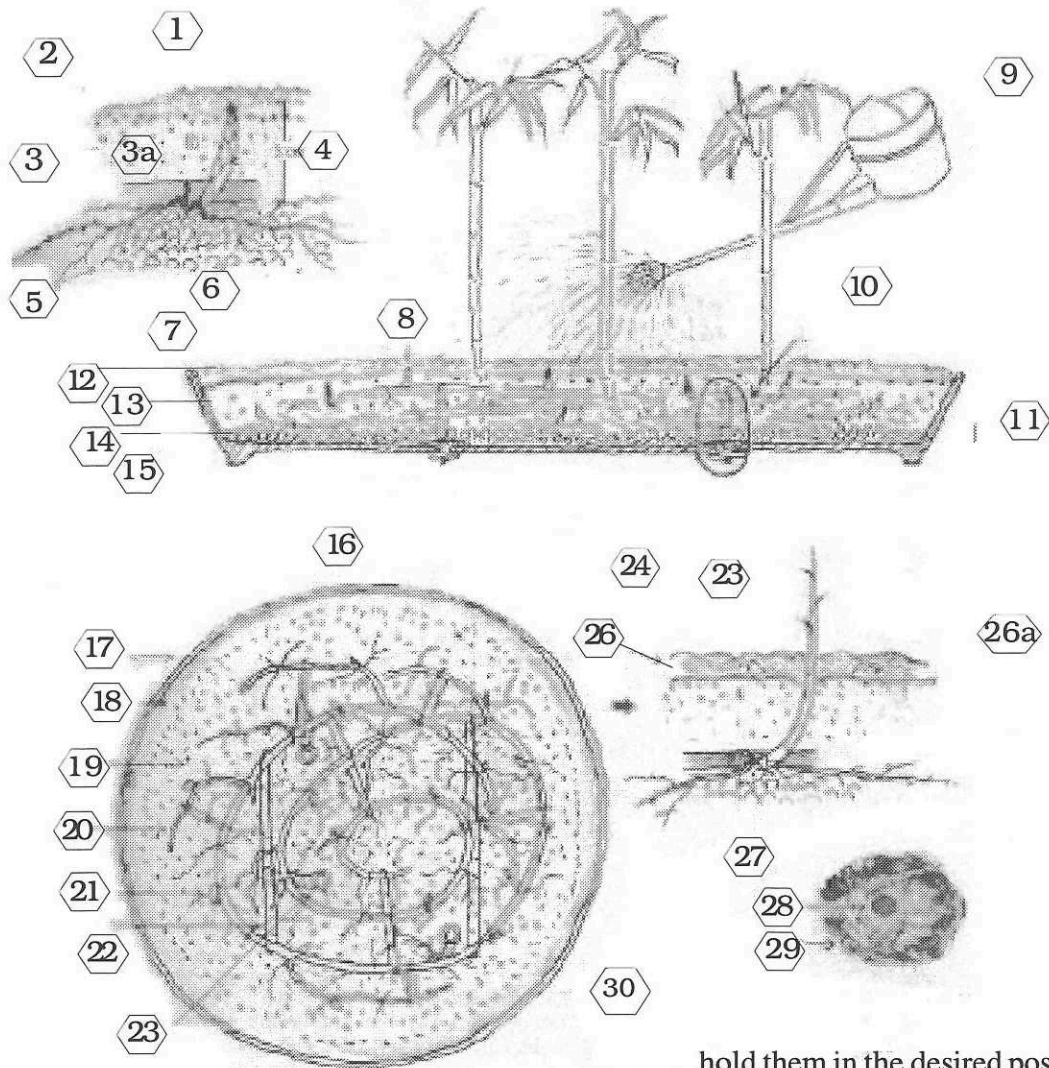
at least 18 or more inches. The color should be a light shade, and should not clash with the bamboo color - perhaps the shade of the bamboo foliage.

The author of the article suggests covering the bottom of the pot with a drainage layer of pea-sized akadama soil. *First* - akadama soil has been the favorite media for bonsai masters in Japan. The *Stone Lantern Discoveries* catalog lists imported akadama soil for sale and describes it as fired granules which seems to make it similar to the American product Turface. *Second* - in the 20 or more years since the Japanese article was written, the use of a drainage layer has been discarded and the potting soil mix is spread over the bottom of the pot. The thickness of the drainage layer of pea-sized soil should be about 3/4 inch; and for just potting soil, it should be 1 to 1-1/4 inches. The size of the granules of the potting soil, akadama or your own mix, should be that which passes through a 1/4-inch mesh sieve. Bamboo seems to be able to thrive in soils with a wide range of pH 5.0 - 7.0 so you need not worry too much about the mix of ingredients in a potting soil mix.

If you're using a drainage layer of pea-sized soil, place about a 1/2-inch layer of potting soil over the drainage layer. Next place the coil of roots on that layer in the pot. Rotate the coil of roots until the sprouts are positioned such that, when they become culms, they will be positioned to form the optimum grouping for your bamboo grove when viewed from the front. Next, with tie-down wires, fasten the roots to the pot at the drainage holes as shown in the diagram. It is suggested that a section of wire wide enough to span the drainage hole be placed across the bottom of the hole and the tie-down wire be attached to that and not the screen.

After filling the container with potting soil and completing the potting operation, immediately water the soil and cover the surface of the pot with moss so that it will not dry out. Keep in the shade for 10 days.





### Second Year - April 1 to 10

1. Planting day
2. Moss
3. Akadamasoil
- 3a. Bamboo shoot
4. 1 1/4 inches
5. Coarse akadama (drainage layer)
6. Cross-section of Planting (above)
7. Front elevation of planting (to the right)
8. Average size of bamboo shoots
9. After potting, water thoroughly.
10. Wire affixing root rhizome to the bowl
11. 6 to 8 inches
12. Moss covering surface of soil
13. Akadama soil.
14. Coarse akadama soil
15. It is essential for the well-being of the new shoots that the potting be done in the shade. Turn the ring of rhizomes before covering them with soil to obtain the desired placement of the stalks in the finished bamboo grove. Bind the roots with cord to

hold them in the desired position. Finally, bind the rhizomes to the bowl at the drainage holes. Then finish adding the soil.

### 16. Plan View of Planting

17. Circular display pot.
18. Moss
19. Akadama soil - medium size - what doesn't pass through 1/4-inch mesh sieve.
20. Root rhizome
21. Bamboo shoot
22. String binding.
23. Parent bamboo culm
24. Enjoy bamboo shoots - May 1 to 10
25. Bamboo shoot cross section
26. Moss
27. Plan view - bamboo shoot
28. Bamboo shoot
29. Moss

30. During this time frame, with adequate watering, you can enjoy the bamboo shoots growing to 4 or 5 inches. Do not remove the moss during this time (May 1-10).

April 10 - May 20: By April 10 to 20, the moss will have established itself and the planting can be put outdoors on a shelf in an airy and sunny place. In order to keep the moss from drying up, continue to water once a day. Between May 1st and 10<sup>th</sup>, the bamboo shoots will have grown 4 to 5 inches.

Husk Peeling - May 20 - 31: The Japanese words for the process of peeling the husks or sheaths translates literally into *Capture the Men's Formal Divided Skirt* or *Capture the Women's Pleated Skirt*. One might view the expressions as having a naughty implication - I wonder how they came about. Perhaps it was a way of describing the wind lifting up (capturing) a man's or woman's kimono. John Y. Naka describes a procedure for peeling the husks or sheaths in his book, **Bonsai Techniques Part II**, and you should refer to his description so that you can compare it to what follows and act accordingly.

The accompanying diagram shows that the procedure involves not completely removing the husk, but peeling away about half of the husk from where it joins the culm. Leave the uppermost sheath in place. When the husks whiten in 7 to 10 days, remove each husk completely from the culm. Branches will be sprouting and those that are unwanted can be removed. Make certain that the moss and soil have been watered.

Cutting off the Old Culms and Plucking off the Moss: Between 1 to 10 June the new bamboo culms

will have reached 20 to 24 inches. Also the branches will have leafed out. At this time cut off the old or "parent" culms from at the root. Also at this time pluck off the moss and replace it with a layer of akadama soil. According to the Japanese author, some species of bamboo must be in the "direct fire of sunlight" during the day - i.e., full sun all day.

Appreciation and Fertilizing: When July comes, one can enjoy the bamboo leaves moving in a cool breeze.

The article suggests using a powdered fertilizer which is sprinkled around the edge of the pot. The Japanese fertilizer cited in the article, "abura kasu," is made from rape seed. In this country *cotton seed meal* is a good substitute. Apply the fertilizer starting on July 7<sup>th</sup> and repeat on the 7<sup>th</sup> day of each month till the last application on October 7<sup>th</sup>.

Passing the Winter: The author suggested putting the bamboo in a greenhouse during the last 10 days of November before the first frost. This may be too late in this area. When frost is forecast, put the bamboo in a place where it is covered. Wintering is best in a polyhouse or coldframe. If the leaves are exposed to frost they will experience frostbite and not look attractive; and also there is a possibility that the rhizomes will be damaged. As always continue to keep up the watering routine.

*This article will be continued in subsequent issues of Clippings.*

*Please don't freak here. Numbers 1 & 34 do not exist.*

2. May 10 - 20 - Status of Planting

3. Parent bamboo culm.

4. Bamboo shoots

5. Moss

6. There are numerous sprouts to enjoy.

During May 10-20, sprouts will reach 10-12 inches. Keep watering.

7. Culm's sheath of husks - May 20 to 30.

8. Initial appearance of sheath

9. Culm

10. Interval between sections of the sheath

11. Interval between sections of the sheath

12. 12 to 18 inches

13. Sheath Removal

14. With fingers separate the sheath from the culm, but do not remove it.

15. Sheath

16. 7 to 10 days later.

17. Remove sheath

18. Sheath

19. Moss

20. Results of Sheath Removal

21. During this time frame, the bamboo shoots will reach 12-18 inches in height. First separate the shoots from the culm, but do not remove them. Do not touch the upper section. In 7-10 days, the sheaths will turn white-ish. Then they can be removed.



22. June 1 - 10

23. Remove parent culms

24. Remove moss

25. Spread akadama soil

26. Cut parent culm

27. 2-24 inches

28. Parent culm

29. Bambooshoot

30. Cut culm here.

31. When the bamboo shoots reach 20-24 inches, the rhizome has become established and the parent culms can be removed.

32. Remove moss

33. Apply akadama soil

35. Moss

36. Bamboo chopsticks

37. Bamboo shoot

38. Remove all the moss.

39. Akadama soil

40. Fertilizer

41. Remove all the moss and spread akadama soil in its place. Spread a thin amount of powdered fertilizer.

## Beyond Wonderment and Curiosity by *Frederic L. Ballard*

**Tokonoma display.** The highest calling of a Japanese bonsai is not to sit on a bench among its fellows, but to be displayed by itself in an alcove (called "tokonoma," denoting both singular and plural) in its owner's house. There, it is placed on a low table or stand, with suitable lighting, a small plant (known as an "accent plant") to mark one corner of the triangular composition, and a background scroll to define the mood. (Figure 9) Occasionally Japanese bonsaiists add small 'bronze, ceramic or wood sculptures such as incense burners or symbolic animals. Chinese compositions often include 'miniature houses, boats and human figures. The choice of accessories for a tokonoma display is an exercise in artistic taste: Stand and tables, like pots, are of almost infinite variety in shape, color, texture, and finish. The best are masterpieces of the cabinet maker's art. They would inspire admiration standing alone. At the same time, they must contribute to the display of the tree.

Again there are norms, some of which are shown in Figure 10. Figure 10a and Figure 10b suggest that the height of the stand should be such as to bring the visual center of the bonsai to a level that is comfortable for the viewer's eye. Figure 10c invites study of the relationship between the visual weight of the tree in its pot and the visual strength of the stand.

Accent plants are dainty and ephemeral, evoking a scene of natural beauty in a particular time of year.

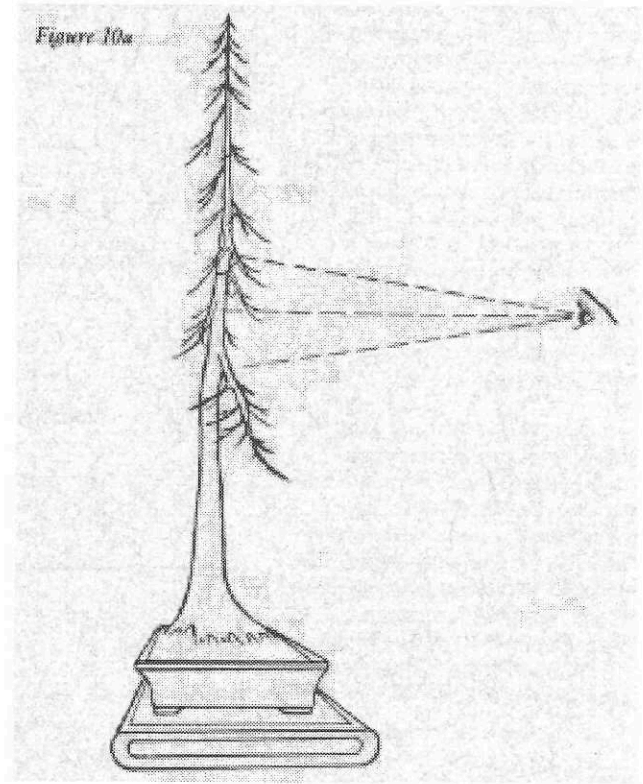


Figure 10a

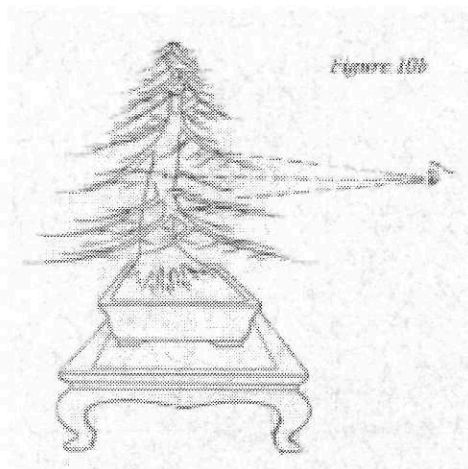


Figure 10b

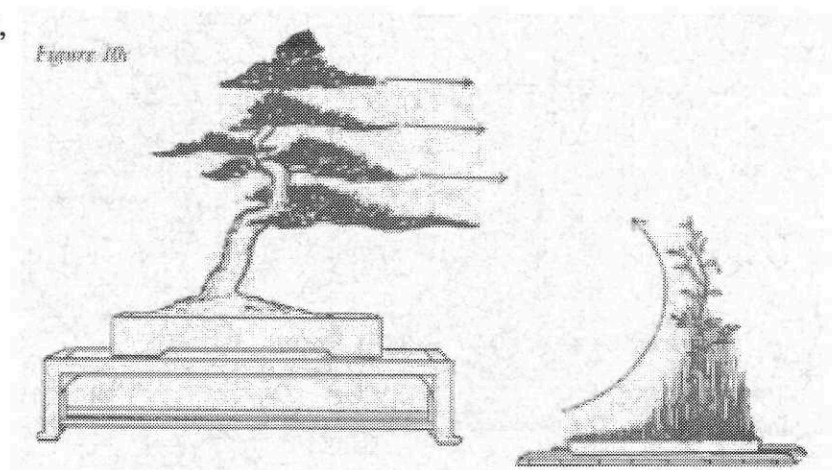
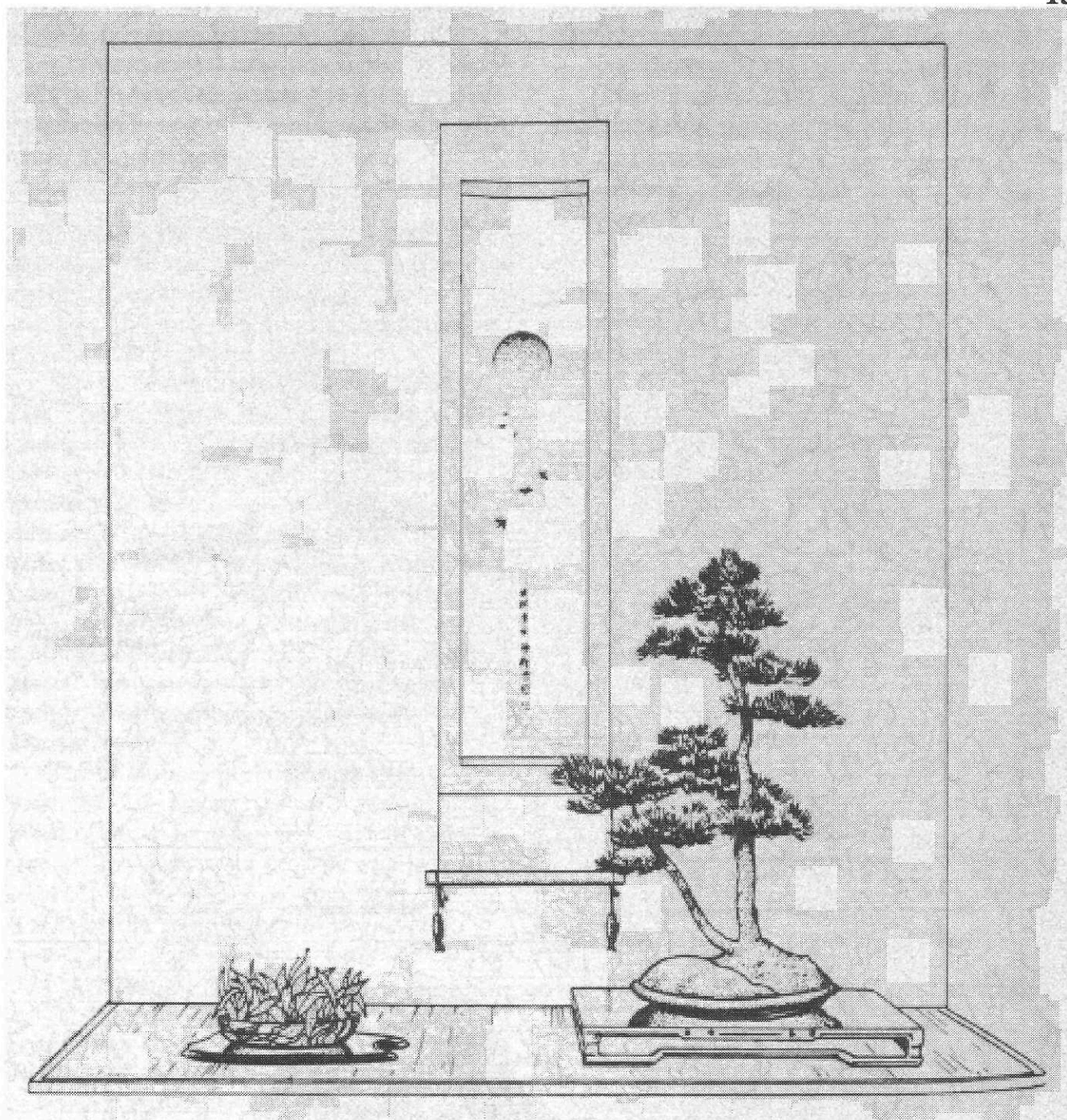



Figure 10c



*Figure 9 Tokonoma with tree, stand, accent plant, and scroll.*

*The next issue of Clippings may contain the end of Fred's writing for the Dedication Catalog for the JYNaka Pavilion and The National Collection of North American Bonsai which took place 1 October 1990. How many of you attended the ceremony, brought home the catalog (produced by the NBF), and filed it away. What a treasure it is. *

## A Few Tips on Bonsai Photography *by Richard Green*

Composition and lighting are two of the most important elements in creating beautiful photographs. Composition can be studied in the photos in bonsai books and magazines. Photographic lighting information can be found in how-to books. Time and planning will be necessary to create the best photographs possible.

Quick snapshots are useful only for your growth records of bonsai. First, carefully prepare your tree; groom and trim it as you would for a show. You may even have to wire branches out of the way to set up the shot. You will have to decide whether you want to use a stand and prepare that, too.

The simplest lighting setup would be to place the tree on a table indoors next to a large window. A bright, cloudy day would be best. Position the tree so that the soft window light falls onto the tree at a 45° to 90° angle. To fill in the shadow side of the tree, place a large white reflector board off to that side just out of the camera's view. The light coming from the window will hit the reflector board and bounce onto the tree filling in the shadows.

To focus attention on your bonsai, a plain background should be used. It helps to clearly define your tree and eliminate distracting elements that could take away from the beauty of your composition. Most photographers use a specially made continuous roll of background paper. Other backgrounds that work just as well are any solid-colored smooth surface, such as a wall, a door, a bed sheet, a length of black velveteen. A 4'x8' sheet

of hardboard or plywood without cracks or knots can be painted any flat (matte) color you wish. Shiny paint can make the background glare. Try not to place your background any closer than 3' (1 m) from your tree. Any nearer, distracting shadows show up on the background.

To get the sharpest pictures possible, mount your camera firmly to a tripod. The proper focal length lens will depend on the size of the tree. From 50 mm to 85 mm is ideal. Most 35 mm cameras come equipped with a standard 50 mm lens. Avoid using a wide angle lens. With a wide angle, you will have to get very close to the tree for it to fill the camera frame, and the result will be a distorted tree. Focus to get the sharpest image with the greatest depth of field. One easy technique is to measure the distance from the closest part of the tree to the furthest part and focus on the point that is one-third that distance into the tree. Use an f16 or f22 lens stop.

Slide films that are sharp, fine grained, and reproduce colors well are Kodachrome, Ektachrome, and Fujichrome. Slide films reproduce best for publication, especially colors. If you want prints, Kodak makes Kodacolor and Ektar, which can be found as low as ASA (ISO) 25. Fujicolor is good, too. You get finer grain and, therefore, better detail with a lower ASA (ISO), but you need lots more light.

Reprinted with permission from the *Puget Sound Bonsai Association Quarterly*, Vol.19, No.3, September 1992, p. 5.



Walter Pall's Mugho

*If we had a research assistant, all the available info on these WPall trees would be shared here*



**IPM Tips for September** - *The following in so far as they pertain to bonsai, have been excerpted from the U.S. National Arboretum's web-site authored by Scott Aker, IPM Specialist, <http://www.usna.gov/Gardens/pestmgmt.html>. Unfortunately the web-site is not updated before the current month's Clippings has gone to press. Scott also authors a weekly column, "Digging in" in Thursday editions of The Washington Post's "HOME" section wherein he answers gardening questions submitted by the readers.*

**Trees:** Late summer is a good time to evaluate trees in your yard for any health problems. Here is a checklist to help you know what to look for.

Stand far enough back that you can see the entire tree. Are there lots of dead branches? Dieback is an early symptom of decline, especially if the dead wood is on the outside of the canopy. Lower branches normally die out from shading and should not cause alarm.

Did the tree grow well this year? Look at the tips of several branches and note if there has been very little growth.

How was the tree's fruit or seed production this year? Do you feel the crop was abnormally high? This is often mistaken for a sign of good or revived health. These bumper crops really indicate a last attempt at reproduction before death.

Did fall coloring begin early this year? Depending on the year, it could be a sign of stress, decline, or both.

Is there any proliferation of succulent growth on the trunk or any of the larger branches? Watersprouts usually indicate a tree in a state of advanced decline.

Are there any signs of decay? Look for mushrooms and shelf fungi on the trunk and roots. You can also tap a rubber mallet on the trunk to check for hollow spots.

What has happened to the tree lately? You want to think back several years since it sometimes takes trees a while to show damage.

Is your bonsai located where it is getting the proper amount of sunlight, i.e., too much or too little for the species?

The tree may have been subjected to drought stress at least once. Leaves in the canopy may look healthy, but the root system could be damaged. The most common symptom to watch for is tip dieback in the upper branches. Dieback

will continue into the larger branches as the tree continues to decline. Annual growth is reduced and susceptibility to infestation by borers, bark beetles, and cankers is increased.

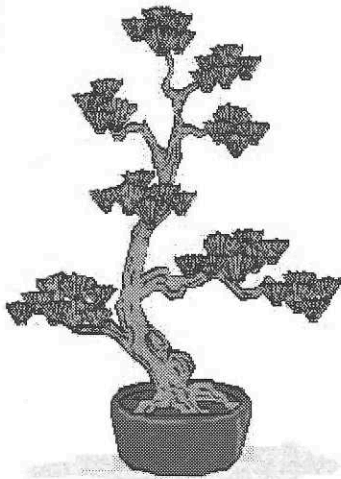
**Pest Control:** Physical control of pests is simple and highly effective. Damage to your plants is stopped in its tracks and it takes less time than applying a pesticide. Simply remove pests from plants as soon as you spot them. Small insects such as aphids and mites can be removed with a **thorough washing down** of the infested plant with your garden hose. Other pests can be picked off or tapped into a bucket of soapy water.

Inspect your bonsai daily to reduce insect damage to your plants. Start at the base of each plant and work your way up through the foliage. Beat test plants by tapping a branch against a white piece of paper to look for pests and beneficials - maybe weekly on plants for which aphids and the like have a preference. Take a particularly careful look at the undersides of leaves where many insects lay eggs and feed.

Did you know that 90% of the insects around your home are beneficial to or do not harm your plants? They eat pest insects, recycle organic debris, or feed on plants without causing any noticeable damage.

**Clearwing Moths** are some of the most damaging insects found in the landscape. These moths with translucent, narrow wings mimic bees and wasps and lay eggs in limb crotches close to the ground or near wounds on the trunk. When the eggs hatch, the larvae bore under the bark and tunnel into the wood to feed. Look for small holes and fine sawdust on branches and in limb crotches. If needed, an insecticide or a beneficial nematode spray can be applied in

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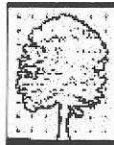
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late August. Spraying may not be necessary if natural predators of clearwings such as woodpeckers and parasitic wasps are present. Prune out any infested or dying limbs, but delay most pruning until late winter.

**Slugs:** Look for slug damage to be a problem this year due to wet weather. Check plants for silvery slime residue and look for irregularly shaped holes with tattered edges in the leaves. To help prevent problems, don't mulch around hostas and other plants that slugs prefer. Use copper flashing to encircle valuable plants. Place a saucer of beer or yeast solution (add a cup water to a teaspoon of yeast) flush with the soil surface in your garden. Change the solution every two days and remove any slugs you find. Continue to use the traps until you no longer find any slugs in the saucer.

**Deer Control:** Unchecked populations of deer are an increasing problem for gardeners throughout the country. If you want to limit deer damage, start early. Electric fencing and tall barrier fences have proven to provide the best control where

populations are high. Electric fences are usually baited with peanut butter and supply a mild shock that deters deer without harming them. Barrier fences are often constructed of plastic mesh that deer cannot see well and they are frightened when they walk into it. Both types of barriers are based on conditioned responses; deer avoid an area if they have been startled repeatedly. Fences must be checked periodically to ensure that they are functioning well. Several products which repel deer are available and may be used as a spray on the foliage of plants you are trying to protect, or in dispensers which produce an unpleasant or alarming odor to deer. These work well only when deer populations are low or moderate since deer can overcome their aversion to them when the food supply is low. If your garden has been ravaged by deer, consider planting ornamentals that are unpalatable to them. Decimated yews can be replaced with Japanese plum yew, *Cephalotaxus harringtonia*. Azaleas and rhododendrons can be replaced with our native mountain laurel, *Kalmia latifolia*.







Look everyone -- an ad. Do you realize advertising helps to keep membership costs down? How about thanking the American Plant Food Company by buying your necessities from them when you're in their neighborhood.

Do you know a business that would like to serve some nice people. We're not too fussy about whom we'll sell space: your fave restaurant/body shop/kite store/tattoo parlor, You could act as a catalyst for improvement by encouraging them to contact Jerry Antel to advertise with us (see p. 2, Col 1.).

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*If you are accustomed to sketching bonsai designs, here's your chance to get famous. **After** you have contributed them to *Clippings* (because we have begged for years), then share some of your personal work with Horace Vallas who saw a need and has tried to help others with his skills. He set up a web-site, <http://www.hav.com/tobic.html>, to share bonsai icons because what is in the firmament usually is not up to snuff.*



**POTOMAC BONSAI ASSOCIATION STATION**

**INTERNATIONAL  
SCHOLARLY SYMPOSIUM  
on BONSAI and  
VIEWING STONES**

OCTOBER 27TH, 2001  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20066

*Here's one of PBA's contributions to the Scholarly Symposium - Jerry Antel, loyal Treasurer, has for years combined his loves of bonsai and of postage stamps. He heads our campaign to encourage American Bonsai stamps; and each year finds an artistic member willing to contribute a design to be used for a commemorative stamp cancellation at what is usually our Fall Symposium. This year again, off-and-on member, Steve McCarthy is the artist.*

Japanese White Pine, *Pinus Parviflora* "Miyajima" - Donated by Masuru Yamaki

375 years old, Trunk diameter - 14 in., Height - 43 in., Width - 67 in.

## MONTHLY CARE TIPS for OCTOBER *compiled by Jules*

The following tips have been compiled from 4 Japanese bonsai magazines and Yuji Yoshimura's book.

**Watering:** How often and at what time in the day one waters one's bonsai cannot be set in concrete. Soil types, location of plant with respect to sun and wind, dry or humid weather conditions, etc., are factored in. Lurking in the background is the specter of either a desiccated plant or one suffering from root-rot. Because watering plays a key part in the life of a bonsai, the lead-in sentences to each of the below plants is underlined. However, they are only to be used as guides; and hopefully indicate when and how much water is needed to keep a plant happy. I prefer using a moisture meter, and I water when the meter reads half-scale or below.

**Fertilizing:** The fertilizer used in the fall should be high in phosphate and lower in nitrogen. The times to fertilize are based on when the Japanese apply fertilizer balls - one application lasts about 30 days. If you're using liquid fertilizers, it's up to you, the reader, to decide on the frequency and the strength of doses of fertilizer at this time of year.

**Location:** The locations cited below are where the plants are best located during the summer months. More than likely, tree locations outdoors will not be changed until they are readied for the winter.

**pH:** If the soil in the pot is not within the pH ranges shown below, it can be made more acid or alkaline. To reduce the pH, you can either drench the soil with a solution of one teaspoon of vinegar to one gallon of water; or spread aluminum sulfate crystals around the edge of the pot. To raise the pH, use agricultural lime sprinkled on the surface of the soil. Use the aluminum sulfate or lime powder sparingly and monitor the pH level before increasing the dosage to reach the desired pH.

Please be aware, when this guide says 'do X any time,' it means during this month.

### CONIFERS

**Black pine:** Water 3 times per day if needed. Repot any time if needed. Repotting is normally done every 3- 4 years. Remove unnecessary branches. Wire any time. Give plant full day of sun. Keep in full sun all day and preferably where there is air movement. pH 4.5 - 6.0

**Cryptomeria:** Water twice a day, including the leaves. Pluck or trim back and thin out new growth during the first 10 days. Keep the plant in half day shade. pH 5.5 - 7.0

**Hemlock:** Water whenever the top of soil appears dry. It likes moist soil. It is possible to wire until December. Keep in half day shade. pH 5.0 - 6.0

**Hinoki:** Water whenever the top of the soil appears dry, likes moist soil. Apply fertilizer balls during first 10 days. Wire during middle of month. Repotting can be best done during the last 10 days if needed. However, hinoki is the one species that is supposed to be capable of being repotted any time. Keep in half day shade. Repotting is normally needed every 3 years. pH 5.0 - 6.0

**Larch:** Water whenever the top of the soil appears dry. During the last 10 days remove the wiring, and it can be pruned. Wiring can be done in the end of January. Keep in half day of shade.

**Needle juniper:** Water twice a day including the leaves. Pluck sprouts until 10th to retain desired shape. Apply fertilizer balls during middle of month. Keep in full sun for the full day. pH 6.0 - 7.0

**Sawara cypress:** Water whenever the top of the soil appears dry. Wiring and repotting can be done during the first 10 days. Repot every 3 years. During the last 10 days, wiring should be checked and removed where necessary. Wiring can be done during last 10 days. Keep in half day shade. pH 5.0 - 6.0

**Shimpaku (Sargent juniper):** Water twice a day including the foliage. You can repot any time but first 10 days is the optimum. Repotting need only be done every 3 years. Wiring can be done any time. Keep in full sun. pH 5.0 - 6.0

**Spruce:** Continue watering 2 to 3 times per day if necessary. Prune, remove any unnecessary branches, wire, and replot any time. Repot after the first 5 years in training, and thereafter once every 3 years. Apply fertilizer balls during the last 10 days. Keep in full sun all day. pH 5.0 - 6.0

**White pine:** Water twice a day. Any time during month, wire, prune, remove unnecessary branches, and remove dead needles. During the last 10 days, fertilizer balls can be applied. Keep in full sun and where there is air movement. pH 4.5 - 6.0

**Yew:** Water as needed, likes moist soil. Repot during the first 10 days; and only replot every 3 years. Rewire any time. Apply fertilizer balls during middle of month. Keep in the shade. pH 5.0 - 6.0

**WARNING:** From the USDA IPM Tips for May: Avoid using shredded hardwood bark mulch on yews. As it decays, it often releases toxic quantities of copper and manganese. Yews are very sensitive to these metals. Affected plants are stunted, may turn yellow, and in severe cases, small branches may die. Use pine bark, chopped leaves, or another mulch; and limit its depth to 2 inches.

## **DECIDUOUS**

(Non-fruiting/Non-flowering)

**Beech:** Begin watering twice a day instead of thrice a day. Leaves turn yellow during the last 10 days, are usually left on till spring. The tree can now be pruned and wired. Place where there is half day shade. pH 5.0 - 7.0

**Chinese elm:** Water as needed. Prune branches during the first 10 days. Leaves turn during last 10 days - appreciate the fall coloring. Keep the plant in full sun all day. pH 6.0 - 7.5

**Ginkgo:** Water often. Prune unnecessary branches. Keep the plant in full sun all day. pH 6.0 - 7.0

**Hornbeam:** Begin watering twice a day. Give plant half day shade. pH 6.0 - 8.0

**Japanese maple:** Water twice a day if necessary. Keep plant in half day shade. pH 6.0 - 8.0

**Trident maple:** Water thrice a day. Keep plant in half day shade. pH 6.0 - 8.0

**Weeping willow:** Water once per day - no need to keep base of pot in dish of water. Give plant half day of shade. pH 5.0 - 6.0

**Winged Euonymous:** Water as needed, likes wet soil. Around the middle of month the leaves turn crimson. Give plant a full day of sunlight. pH 5.5 - 7.0

## **Flowering/Fruiting Plants:**

**Cherry:** Water once per day. Repot during the first 10 days . Repot every 2 years. Should be in full sun. PH 6.0 - 8.0

**Crab apple:** Water thrice per day if needed. Remove wire during the first 10 days. Repot during the first 20 days. Leaves turn color during the end of month. Keep in full sun. pH 5.0 - 6.5

**Gardenia:** Water as needed, likes it wet. Keep in full sun. Watch the temperature and winterize plant where temperature goes below 32°F. pH 5.0 - 6.0

**Holly:** Water once per day. Keep in full sun until last 10 days. pH Chinese 5.5 - 6.5; Japanese 5.0 - 6.5

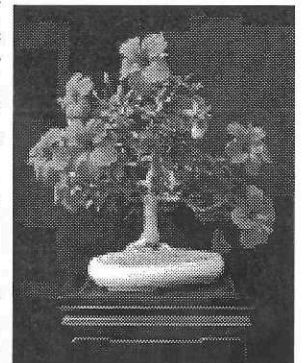
**Pyracantha:** Water once per day. Keep in full sun all day. pH 5.0 - 6.0

**Quince:** Water once to twice per day. During the first 10 days remove any wire and replot. Repot once every 2 years. Prune during the first 20 days. Keep in full sun. pH 6.0 - 7.5

**Satsuki (azalea):** Water twice a day. During the last 10 days remove any wire and cut back on the watering to once per day. Give plant half day shade. pH 4.5 - 5.0

**Ume (Japanese flowering plum or apricot):** Water thrice a day for about the first 10 days and then drop back to once or twice a day. Apply fertilizer balls during the first 10 days. Repot any time during the first 20 days. Keep plant in sun all day. pH 6.0 - 7.5

**Wisteria:** Water often, even in winter. Keep plant in sun all day. pH 6.0 - 8.0



Another Pall Creation

**Potomac Bonsai Association Membership Application**

Welcome! PBA is composed of the clubs listed here. Join one and be eligible to attend any club's meeting, in addition to receiving *PBA Clippings* monthly. We conduct a Spring Show and a Fall Symposium, as well as other events. Residents of these communities are expected to join a club to receive all membership benefits, including *PBA Clippings*.

**To become a member, call the contact person of the club convenient to your needs for current rates and where to send this application and dues. (Please make check payable to the club joined.)**

**Individuals residing beyond commuting distance of a club are invited to subscribe to *PBA Clippings*.** For a subscription only (no entitlement to participation in club events), complete application and mail with a check payable to PBA for \$15.00 (US\$35 for an international subscription) to: Judy Wise, 1259 4th St, SW, Washington, DC, 20024. For more information, please call Judy at (202) 554-3045.

Meeting times and locations are subject to change. **Call first!**  
Events are listed monthly in the Calendar section of *PBA Clippings*.

- Individual Club membership (Includes *PBA Clippings*)
- Family Club Membership (Includes one copy of *PBA Clippings*)
- PBA Clippings* Subscription Only, US \$15 (does not include club activities)
- PBA Clippings*, International Subscription, US \$35

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Bowie Bonsai Club     | <input type="checkbox"/> Lancaster Bonsai Society | <input type="checkbox"/> Northern Virginia Bonsai Society |
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|  |   | <input type="checkbox"/> Potomac Viewing Stone Group      |

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Meeting location and club contact number for additional information is as listed. Check for Beginners' Hour, and other special functions. All are welcomed to visit any club's meeting. **Also visit [www.bonsai-pba.org](http://www.bonsai-pba.org).**

- Baltimore Bonsai Club**  
Cylburn Arboretum, Baltimore, MD  
3rd Sunday, 1 PM  
Arschel Morell, 410.744.6478 - ajmorellsr@hotmail.com
- Bowie Bonsai Club**  
Woodlawn Baptist Church, 500 Church Rd, Bowie, MD  
Last Monday, 7 PM  
Jim Sullivan, 301.262.9633 - sullivanj@ors.od.nih.gov  
Terry Adkins, 202.667.1016
- Brookside Bonsai Society**  
North Chevy Chase Rec Center, Bethesda, MD  
3rd Thursday, 7:30 PM  
Jim Hughes, 301.779.2891 - JHughes@erols.com
- Chesapeake Bonsai Society**  
Call for meeting time and location  
Sharon Katz, 410.263.3307
- Kiyomizu Bonsai Club**  
Clearwater Nature Ctr, 11000 Thrift Road, Clinton, MD  
4th Sunday, 2 PM  
Essie Wilson, 301.839.2471 - wilsone@howrey.com
- Lancaster Bonsai Society**  
Conestoga House, 1608 Marietta Pike, Lancaster, PA  
2nd Wednesday, 7 PM  
Marlene Fetherbay, 717.898.0806  
Mark Emerson, mmemerson@onemain.com
- Northern Virginia Bonsai Society**  
Fairlington Community Center,  
3308 Stafford Street, Arlington, VA  
2nd Saturday, 9 AM  
Carole Roelofs, croelofs@erols.com  
Judy Wise, 202.554.3045
- Rappahanock Bonsai Society**  
Call for meeting time and location  
Todd Stewart, 804.448.4499
- Washington Bonsai Club**  
U.S. National Arboretum, Washington, D.C.  
3rd Saturday, 2 PM (no July or August meetings)  
Ross Campbell, 301.587.6898 - rossmo@gateway.net
- Potomac Viewing Stone Group**  
Meets irregularly about 6 time per year  
Glenn Reusch, Ghrusch@aol.com - 540.672.5699

Potomac Bonsai Association, Inc.  
c/o U.S. National Arboretum  
3501 New York Avenue, NE  
Washington, DC 20002

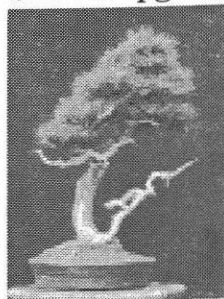
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