

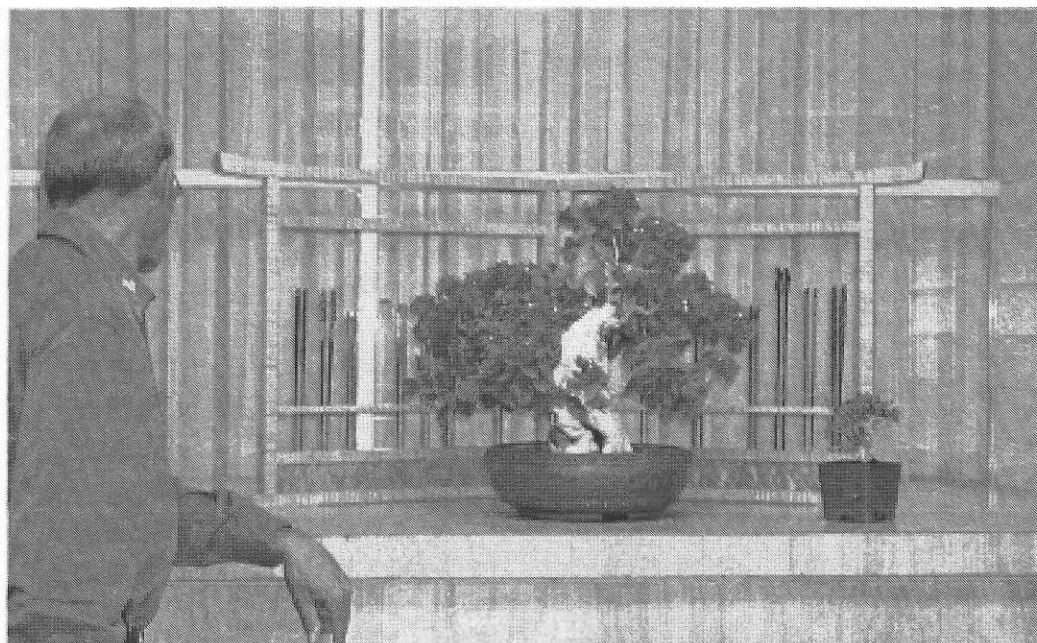
PBA Clippings

NEWSLETTER OF THE POTOMAC BONSAI ASSOCIATION



Volume 32, Number 2
February 2002

Bonsai in Sites, in Sights, Opportunities . . .



Causing Sighs

Well, folks, this photo just couldn't be fitted into the pages on the Phoenix Bonsai Society. Couldn't resist sharing it. Here's Jim Claycomb, President of Phoenix Bonsai Society, with Doug Acker's display. Doug had commissioned a matched maple stand to display his chopstick collection and had just received it from the artisan. This was it's first public showing. Photo by CJ Yeapanis

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PBA
Clippings
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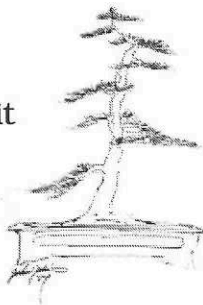
Now that we've entered the year 2002, some interest has arisen concerning palindromes. Webster's dictionary defines a palindrome such as 2002 as a *word, line, number, etc., reading the same backward as forward*. Hence, one can create the palindrome: *I a snob I bonsai*. However, I know that calling a person who does bonsai, a *snob* is indeed a misnomer. This was brought out by a speaker at one of the Valavanis fall bonsai events in New York State. The speaker had been in bonsai just over one year and mentioned that when he was in other non-bonsai clubs that the members offered a minimum of conversation. However, after he joined a bonsai club, once he started talking to a members about bonsai, it was hard to stop them. Also, before he got into bonsai, he said he could relax on a ride through the countryside. Once he started bonsai, the rides changed to being more stressful since he would try to spot potential bonsai while driving. Talking individually to as many club members as you can, may in time provide you with all of the knowledge those members have about bonsai; however, here's the punch line - it does not necessarily get the knowledge to other club members. Usually the way to tap the bonsai knowledge retained by individual members is to have them talk to the club on an aspect of bonsai. Often what is said in a talk is never recorded and published so that other members of PBA can read what was said. It would be great if individuals or clubs would send in such bonsai-related information to *PBA Clippings*. There are often great ideas or suggestions on how to do things like wiring, sharpen tools, making fertilizer balls, etc. Members invent new ways of doing things and these would be welcomed in *Clippings*.

It would be interesting if clubs would run surveys as to what soil mixes or fertilizers the members are using. Also there are bonsai or suiseki-related topics or items of general interest that would be welcomed. There are bonsai and suiseki related books coming out from time to time and after you have read them, you could give our readers a book review.

I will usually put in *Clippings* anything within reason except rerunning an article that appeared in the October 1990 issue of the *PBA Newsletter* on a *Night Hybrid Bonsai Rubber Plant*. It paralleled what was going on in the art world at that time, when the Robert Mapplethorpe exhibition was deemed indecent. However, a month later the plant was featured in *USA TODAY*.

Sooo - dust off your thinking caps and send anything to either Betty or me either via e-mail, or handwritten, or typed and in the mail, and even by word of mouth. They say Lincoln wrote *The Gettysburg Address* on the back of an envelope, and that will be acceptable. [ahem, Betty, The Lowly Apprentice, does not welcome long verbal input OR scribbly handwriting. If that's your style, visit it on Jules, who is a lot more patient than I. Neat script on envelope backs is fine by me - and don't forget helpful diagrams or photos (though I am sure you more skilled folks have noticed, scanning is not my forte').]

We CERTAINLY are sorely in need of articles written by PBA members. If your club has a newsletter and contains anything that may be of interest to other PBA members, please send it to us so that it can be published in *PBA Clippings*. We're desperately in need of some BONSai Mots.



Poetry Corner - Calm yourself

The following were taken from *MORNING MIST Through the Seasons with Thoreau and Basho*, selected by Mary Kullberg; Weatherhill, NY; 1993.

Against the wintry gust

*how sharp the rocks are
amidst the cedars*

~ Basho

*Now there is nothing - not even the cold beauty of
ice crystals - and snowy architecture. Nothing but
the echo of your steps over the frozen ground.*

~ Thoreau

The Central Virginia Bonsai Society
Presents

Spring Symposium '02
Forest (Group Planting) Bonsai
Featuring William N. Valavanis

CVBS is pleased to again sponsor Bill Valavanis's appearance in Lynchburg. His presentation will consist of a morning lecture/demonstration followed by an afternoon workshop.

The theme of presentation will be forest bonsai (group plantings). Forest bonsai are always enjoyable to see and have the additional advantage of being simpler and quicker to create than bonsai with a single tree. Novices and experts alike should find much useful information in Bill's presentation as the design elements (balance, silhouette, composition, and perspective) are critical to the creation of all good bonsai. Participants in the afternoon workshop will work with European beech. Twenty trees of varying caliber and height, a large oval bonsai training pot, and potting soil will be provided to each workshop participant.

The public is welcomed to all events. Registration fee(s) will be charged to defray the cost of Spring Symposium '02.

DATE: Saturday, February 23, 2002

PLACE: Community Room of the Lynchburg Public Library

Registration & Exhibit: 9:15 a.m.

LECTURE/DEMONSTRATION: 9:55-12:00
limited to fifty registrants

WORKSHOP: 1:00-3:30 p.m. limited to 18
participants and 18 observers

For more info, contact Julian Adams, days:

434.845.3456; evenings: 434.384.7951; e-mail

JRABONSAI@aol.com; snail mail: Julian R. Adams,
1721 Langhorne Road, Lynchburg, VA 24503

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

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

FEBRUARY

Rappahanock Bonsai Society

2 10:00 a.m. Workshop: Literati style with Shimpaku juniper graft/approach graft

PBA Board Meeting

3 11:00 a.m. **USNA Admin Bldg** - All dues-paid members encouraged to attend.

Northern Virginia Bonsai Society

9 9:00 a.m. Pot selection considerations

10:00 a.m. Air layering - Peter Jones

Lancaster Bonsai Society

13 7:00 p.m. "Soil, water, and fertilizer" by Howard McNeil

Washington Bonsai Club

16 2:00 p.m. Soil preparation and repotting

Rappahanock Bonsai Society

16 10:00 a.m. Advanced workshop (part II) Phoenix

Baltimore Bonsai Club

17 1:00 p.m. What do you use in your soil mix? Round-table discussion. Choosing the right pot. Bring difficult to pot trees for discussion

3:00 p.m. Beginners workshop

Chesapeake Bonsai Society

17 11:30 a.m. Winter season tree tune-up for Spring. Discussion and demonstration

Brookside Bonsai Society

21 7:30 p.m. "I never bought a bonsai" Bill Orsinger

Bowie Bonsai Club

25 Pruning and wiring in Winter
Potomac Viewing Stone Group - No meeting

MARCH

Rappahanock Bonsai Society

2 10:00 a.m. Workshop: Japanese maple

3 11:00 a.m. PBA Board Meeting, mezzanine, Admin Bldg., USNA, Everyone is welcome

Northern Virginia Bonsai Society

9 9:00 a.m. Open discussion, Spring show and phoenix grafts

10:00 a.m. Photographing bonsai and virtual bonsai design

12:00 p.m. Beginner workshop

Lancaster Bonsai Society

13 7:00 p.m. Presentation by Martha Meehan with a Saturday workshop planned to put the info received into practice (Contact Frank Thomas)

Washington Bonsai Club

16 2:00 p.m. Preparation for Spring Show

Baltimore Bonsai Club

17 1:00 p.m. Preparation of trees for the Spring Show. All members should submit trees for consideration in the Spring Show

3:00 p.m. Beginners' workshop

Brookside Bonsai Society

21 7:30 p.m. Presentation by Bill Spencer

Chesapeake Bonsai Society

23 11:30 a.m. Soil making and repotting party at the home of Brian Koehler

Kiyomizu Bonsai Club

24 Soil mixing at The Clearwater Nature Center

Bowie Bonsai Club

25 7:00 p.m. Repotting and understanding drainage. Preparation for the Spring Show

Potomac Viewing Stone Group

No meeting this month

Non-Association Events of Interest

Native plant sale

23 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m., Admin Bldg. East terrace, USNA. Co-sponsored by FoNA

The best regional native plant nurseries offer a wide selection of native wildflowers, trees, shrubs, and vines. A portion of the proceeds support the Arboretum's native plant collection

Native Azaleas in the Southern Appalachian Highlands

24 2:00 p.m. - 3:30 p.m., Admin Bldg. Auditorium sponsored by Potomac Valley Chapter American Rhododendron Society

With stunning slides, Jim Gears will lead you along the Appalachian Trail through magnificent stands of orange and yellow flame azaleas and through acres of brilliant hybrids. Share Jim's enthusiasm and take home a young seedling for your garden. Free.

The Arts of Pacific Asia Show

Asian Art Weekend in New York City held each year at the following two armories:

22 - 24 The Arts of Pacific Asia Show, 69th Regiment Armory, Lexington Ave. and 26th Street

22 - 24 The International Asian Art Fair, 7th Regiment Armory, Park Ave. at 67th Street

Bonsai inSites from Ron Lang, BBS

This photo shows the piece finished but as yet unfired. It is by a Taiwanese ceramic artist named Ah Leon. Along with his ceramic work, which he often finishes to look like weathered wood, he is also a practitioner of bonsai.

The PBA members who are participating in the exhibition are: Jack Sustic;
Baltimore Bonsai Club: Arschel Morell, Richard Meszler, Mike Ramina, Cindy Blackburn, Tom Fin, Ron Lang; Bowie Bonsai Club: Jim Sullivan;
NVBS: Chuck Croft; Brookside: Fred Mies
The exhibition will open in Baltimore at Baltimore Clayworks in Mt Washington and run May 4-25. There will be an opening reception on the evening of Saturday, May 4. The exhibition will open at the National Arboretum on Oct 12 and run through the 27th. There will be an opening reception on Saturday Oct 26, during the PBA Fall Symposium. More details about time and place will follow. These workshops take place during the two weekends in May while the exhibit is in Baltimore.



Clay & Tree: Making Bonsai Containers with Michael Hagedorn

Saturday & Sunday, 4-5 May, 10am - 4pm

In this 2-day weekend workshop, Arizona potter Michael Hagedorn will teach participants the particulars of making containers for bonsai trees. Demonstrating on-the-wheel and off-the-wheel techniques, Michael will make sure that each participant will finish the workshop having made a pot for a tree. During the two days, Michael will give a short lecture on horticultural and aesthetic concerns for bonsai pots and will share a brief slide show of his personal art background. He will also demonstrate making "companion pots," making non-round pots from the wheel, using odd tools and casting. Participants will have time to work on their own pots on both days. Potters and hand-builders are welcome. All materials are included.

Michael Hagedorn's interest in bonsai started in high school. He began making ceramic containers for his trees in college and in 1994 completed a Masters in Fine Arts in Ceramics at the New York College of Ceramics, Alfred University. Following his studies, he started a business making bonsai pots and currently spends much of his time outside his Tucson, Arizona, ceramic studio training trees and teaching the art of Bonsai.

FEE: \$140 members; \$160 non-members

Beginner Bonsai: A workshop with Arschel Morell

Saturday & Sunday, 18 - 19 May, 10am - 3pm

In this 2-day course, participants will not only learn the particulars of bonsai, but also plant and begin training a tree!

On Day 1, Arschel will explain the definition and history of bonsai; and will talk about proportion, styles, tools, and the creative process of training bonsai. Students will begin working on their trees and learn different styling procedures.

On Day 2, Arschel will continue helping the students through the creative process and will talk about soils, choosing a container, and what keeps the plant alive and looking good.

Each participant will be provided with a tree, materials and a basic bonsai pot, or you can bring a pot you made on your own or in the Michael Hagedorn workshop. Please bring garden shears and wire cutters. Specialized tools will be available for use, but if you have them, bring them along!

Arschel Morell began working with bonsai in 1959; and is now the president of the Baltimore Bonsai Club, and past-president of the Potomac Bonsai Association.

Arschel has studied with numerous noted American bonsai artists and has also traveled to Japan to study. In his personal collection, Arschel has 50 bonsai and 100 works in progress. He is currently engaged in teaching privately and caring for two private collections in the Baltimore area. He also volunteers at the NB&PMuseum at the US National Arboretum in Washington, D.C.

FEE: \$120 members; \$140 non-members

Leigh Taylor Mickelson, Program Director, Baltimore Clayworks, 410.578.1919, ext-18

David Johnson is a lucky fellow. He's a member of the Toronto Bonsai Society and wrote a series of articles for their newsletter, *The Journal*, to share his good fortune. David is not lucky in the way of uncontrollable accidents where numbered balls fall into slots. He came to the wisdom of balance in life. As Jules might say, "herewith an example of that old saw, taking time to smell the roses . . ."

Getting Ready for Bonsai School in Japan

by David Johnson

As lovers of bonsai, thoughts of Japan must lie in our dreams. Bonsai, born in China, set its deepest roots in Japan. The distance, the different culture, the costs and the time, to name a few challenges, seem to place Japan out of reach. Fortunately, what appears as insurmountable is not impossible.

With a self-financed leave of absence from work and a reference from Norman Haddrick, I was able to correspond with Mr. Susumu Nakamura, the proprietor of Shonan Bonsai School and Garden Center in Yokohama, Japan. Mr. Nakamura is also a director of the Nippon Bonsai Association and Nippon Bonsai Growers Cooperative. Mr. Nakamura kindly agreed to accept me as a student to study bonsai under his direction during the month of February 1999.

Arranging for time to go to Japan and then getting permission were just the first steps. Preparations for the trip require a certain amount of attention. I've been studying basic Japanese with the help of the Japan Foundation's library of cassettes and books. The Japan National Tourist Organization's office in Toronto has provided valuable maps and brochures. A glimpse of



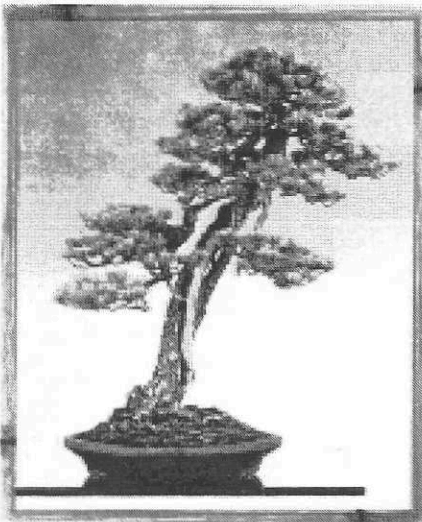
David works on a 25" *Pinus densiflora* group and S. Nakamura's school

what may await me during my bonsai studies was provided in a timely article in *International Bonsai* (1998, No. 3) by Arthur Joura, the curator of the bonsai collection of the North Carolina Arboretum who studied with Mr. Nakamura last year.

In the article, Arthur Joura mentions visiting the famous Koku-Fu Bonsai Exhibition and drawing pictures of many of the trees as a way of studying them in detail, as well as visiting bonsai nurseries and the Takagi Bonsai Museum. Mr. Joura also wrote of the training techniques, design and wiring skills he learned from Mr. Nakamura.

After completing my bonsai studies with Mr. Nakamura, I plan to visit Kyoto and Nara, two historical cultural centres of Japan, with the end of the tour in Tokyo.

As this article will most likely appear in the February issue of *The Journal*, I should be in Japan. I plan to keep you posted.



POSTCARDS FROM JAPAN

TO BOB WILCOX February 5, 1999

Sorry but I couldn't resist. This tree was displayed at the Takagi Bonsai Museum in an office building in downtown Tokyo. Great tree about 3.5 feet. A lot of trees have passed under the bridge so to speak. Continued wiring and some needle plucking on Japanese white pine. Mr Nakamura started training me on proper drawing techniques in preparation for Kokufu Exposition - the Olympics of Bonsai as they say - Have spent 6 days drawing 36 trees out of a show of 265 superb trees. Huge crowds. Learning lots. Japanese great hosts. David Johnson, Higiriyama, nr. Yokohama, Japan

Bonsai Studies in Japan by David Johnson, Toronto Bonsai Society

When I corresponded with David, he was very generous with latitude on the articles in this series about his marvelous experience with Mr Susumu Nakamura, who gave a wonderful lecture/demo in spring and will be here in May again. David even snail mailed some items we couldn't get here. When asked for some bio info, though, this thin sentence is all we got: Regarding my introduction, I have been a member of the Toronto Bonsai Society for 12 years and have been one of Norman Haddrick's students. He did share that he is a linesperson for the local public electrical utility, and in the articles somewhere mentions that he was accompanied by his partner, something I had not heard of before.

We hope this series will set your heads spinning with the possibilities in your own lives.

I first wrote of my plans to study bonsai in Japan in the February issue of *The Journal*. With an introduction and a reference from Norman Haddrick, I was accepted as a student with Mr. Susumu Nakamura, a director of the Nippon Bonsai Association. My bonsai studies took place during a four-week period in February 1999. Training was centred at Mr. Nakamura's Shonan School of Bonsai in Yokohama but included intensive visits to the Nippon Bonsai Association's annual Koku-fu Exhibition in Tokyo, a bonsai farm, private collections and professional bonsai nurseries. This is the first in a series of articles that I have prepared so that others may share in my experience. I hope that I have accurately interpreted the techniques, comments and observations I made.

On the first day, Mr. Nakamura spoke of the importance of training our eyes to develop an appreciation and understanding of art. He encourages his students to spend time in art galleries and museums, and to study trees in nature, and to look at quality bonsai at shows and in books. Many of us have heard this wise suggestion before but how many of us have taken the time to do it? Hopefully this exercise will move beyond observation to a closer study to see what makes the trees so appealing. One of my tasks was to draw the trees at Koku-fu. This assignment, every day for eight days, all day long, forced me to not only look at the

trees but to reproduce them on paper. There is a difference between looking at a tree and having to draw it. You see the tree in more detail. Most of these learning techniques can be used without going to Japan.

Mr. Nakamura said there is an expression that an artist should read 10,000 books, and that it is the same for bonsai enthusiasts. People can and should study, experiment, and learn as Mr. Nakamura did in his thirties on his way to becoming a bonsai master.

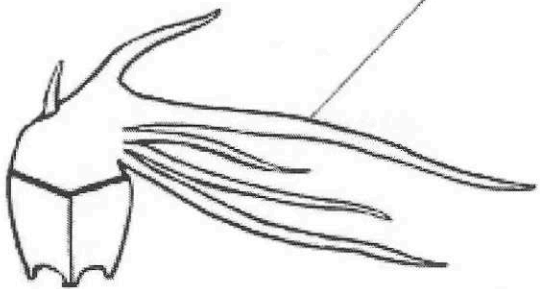
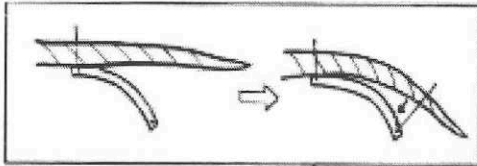
One aspect I noticed of bonsai in Japan was their long-term approach to producing bonsai through seeds and cuttings. Unlike Canada with its wealth of collectable wild trees, in Japan, collecting areas and trees are protected, compelling the reproduction of new material from seedlings in the millions. Mr. Nakamura's younger brother, Mr. Harou Nakamura, proudly showed me some beautiful well-shaped and tapered maples he had collected as seedlings ten years ago. Seedlings are symbolic of the baton a runner in a relay race passes on to another. They suggest a sense of history which is in keeping with a Japanese civilization hundreds of years old.

In a world where bigger is supposedly better, a trip to Koku-fu reminds one that medium and small bonsai are every bit as beautiful. As Mr. Nakamura remarked, a heavy trunk does not automatically mean a good bonsai.

Wiring and Design

One of the most important jobs I had was the privilege of wiring some beautiful trees that had been well taken care of for many years. The first was a 27-inch long *pinus parviflora* windswept cascade. Before I began, Mr. Nakamura and his son Makoto worked on the tree, bending the main branch which was about 1½ inches thick--not with wire but a curved steel bar I had never seen before. It was a Masakuni tool, one of a set of six with differing angles. The dimensions of the bar were ½ by ¾ by 9½ inches with a hole at each end.

Prior to bending the branch, Mr. Nakamura wrapped strips of towel

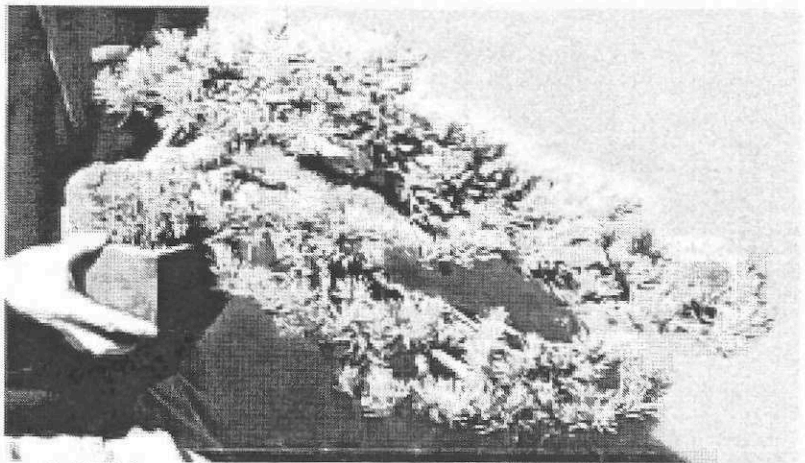


around it and then bent the branch back and forth with a branch bender about ten times. Then he wired down one end of the curved bar where he wanted to bend the branch.

Next, Mr. Nakamura pulled the branch toward the other end of the curved bar, placed the threaded wire over the branch, tightened it and brought it gradually closer to the bar. After positioning it correctly, Mr. Nakamura said he would leave the curved bar on for one-and-a-half years.

Now the tree was ready for me to wire. It took me three afternoons to finish wiring the tree. Mr. Nakamura wanted me to align the branches so that none would cross but be tiered and all moving in a similar direction. I learned that the branches should be differentiated by space. To bend the wire, the pliers can be used to grasp the wire and bend the branch. The tips of *pinus parviflora* should be wired up; but it wasn't necessary to do this for the more vigorous *pinus thunbergii*. When ending the wire at the end of a branch, the tip of the wire can be used to push buds up. Rounded apexes make a tree look older. Mr. Nakamura said a 45° angle is ideal but 30° is okay. My own observation when wiring was to try to place the wire well between branches to allow for alternative wire paths for secondary and tertiary wiring. This may avoid cross wiring, but planning was still key.

On a formal upright *pinus parviflora* I had wired, Mr. Nakamura instructed me to bend the back branches down slightly so they could be seen. Since the trunk was straight, the branches should be straight as well. A tree with curves in its trunk had to have curves in its branches. This rule was repeatedly seen in the Koku-fu trees. The secondary branches shouldn't fan too widely on a formal upright although they could on an informal upright tree.



A 27"-long *Pinus parviflora* windswept cascade with the main branch bent using the steel bar (seen below the main branch in photo).

After I had wired a pinus densiflora 12-tree group, Mr. Nakamura said that while long branches could be bent to reduce their length, one had to be careful so as not to harm the branch. When styling this group Mr. Nakamura thought my design was too windswept with all the trees moving in an identical direction. In group plantings, Mr. Nakamura pointed out that a similar direction of trunk and apex is fine but not too much. The good health of the trees had to be kept in mind. The branches in this group that were too long could be cut back later with new growth. Mr. Nakamura also rounded the top of the main tree.

After I had wired and styled another 3-tree pinus parviflora group, we discussed its shape. Mr. Nakamura lowered the back and front branches further than I did and rounded the apex. Makoto felt that if the main tree was straight, then the other trees can lean away from it but if the main tree has movement, then the other

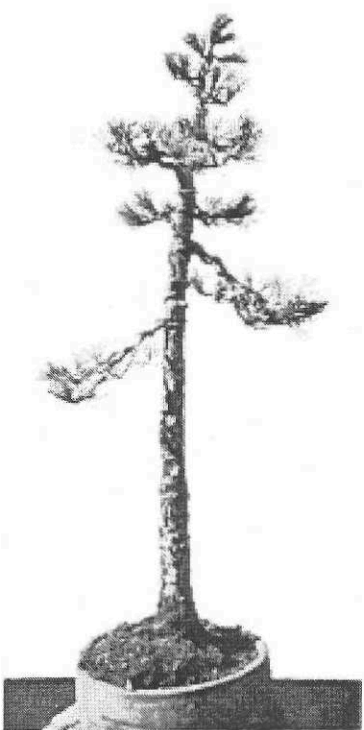
trees should move in a similar but not identical direction. His observation helped to explain the differing movements in the two group plantings I had wired and styled.

Wiring After-care: The cascade pinus parviflora (which was wired after the heavy bar was applied to a large 1½" branch) was misted and kept inside the unheated classroom (at night) and gradually brought out to partial, and then full, sun over a period of 4 weeks. The other two pinus parviflora were treated in a similar fashion.]

[After wiring the pinus densiflora group, I had expected similar treatment; but I was surprised when Mr. Nakamura said it could go back into the sun. I don't know if it was because of the species of tree or the less severe wiring involved, or both.]

While Mr. Nakamura preferred the trees

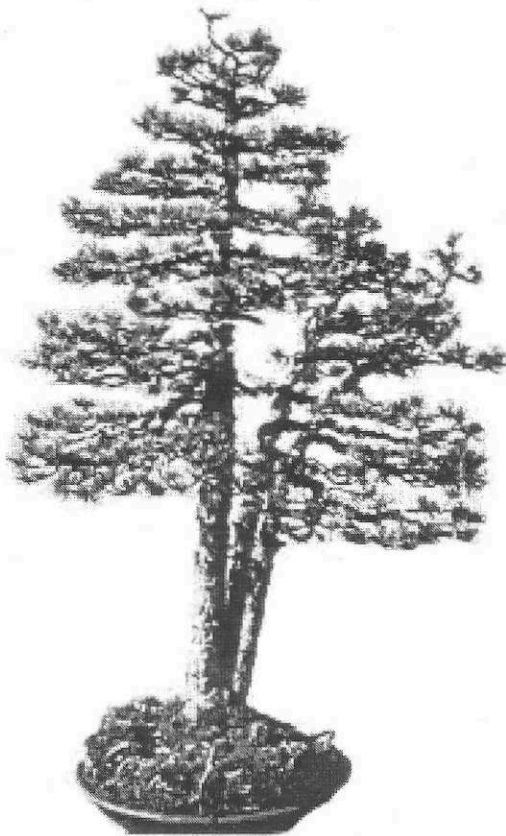
Formal upright - Pinus parviflora, 26"



to have rounded apexes that resembled ancient trees, he did not care for overly rounded, full-foliage tops that may look nice superficially, but are not good artistically and are boring and artificial. Additionally, if the weather conditions produced a curving trunk, then it should not have many large foliage pads, but smaller pads and fewer of them, possibly protected by the trunk. The tree should tell you about the natural environment in which it grew. Bonsai which become popular for superficial reasons and not artistic ones illustrate a trend that should not be encouraged. ~ David Johnson

(To be continued)

Triple Trunk - Pinus parviflora group,



Visit to Phoenix Bonsai Society by *Chris Yeapanis (NVBS) and the Supportive Spouse*

Betty and I had the opportunity to visit one of the three (yes, 3) monthly meetings of the Phoenix, AZ, Bonsai Society last month. The club has a nice meeting location at a private garden center, Valley Garden Center, which is available for area horticultural club meetings. The bonsai club, existing since at least 1962, meets on the first three Tuesdays of the month at 7:30 pm.

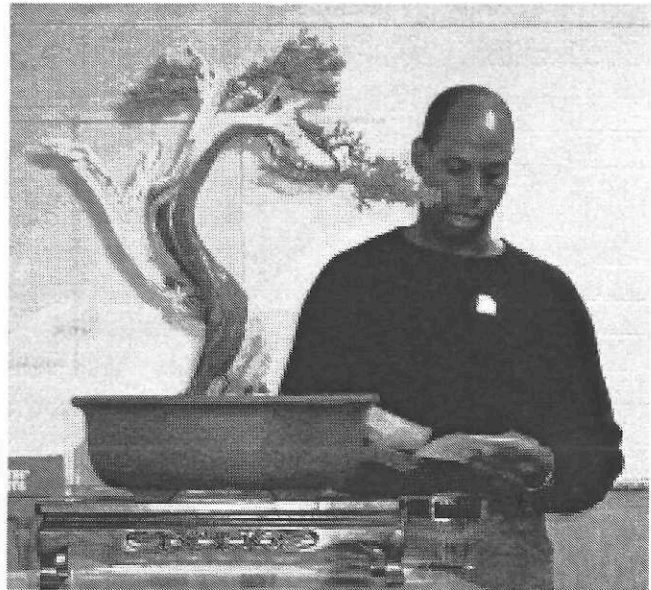
The November schedule called for the 1st Tuesday to be cancelled so members would be free to go to the Golden State Bonsai Federation (GSBF) Convention in California; the 2nd Tuesday was a show of trees, club business, and general workshop; and the 3rd was demonstration of Root-Over-Rock.

We attended the 2nd meeting which started as most meetings do, with members gathering and talking, as coffee and donuts became available. We were warmly welcomed and soon began to feel at home. Robert Baran, whom we had met a few years ago while docenting at the Bonsai Museum, has written a book on bonsai, Designing Dwarfs in the Desert, and he is creating a new bonsai coloring book to be available soon. When we first met Robert, he made a gift of his book to me. Because we expected to see him, I had planned ahead and presented him with a copy of Dr Creech's The Bonsai Saga, How the Bicentennial Collection Came to America. Betty made a friendship gift to the club's library on behalf of PBA, a baker's dozen of the most recent *PBA Clippings* which were passed around during the meeting and complimented by several members during the coffee break. We also met a past president of the American Bonsai Society, Elsie Andrade; and Mike and Ardie Apostolos who filled us in on the local Greek community.

Elsie demonstrated the same wiring trick (to wire 3 branches at once with one wire) which Chris learned at a previous Golden State convention and wrote up for you in *Clippings* a couple of years ago. It was fun to see someone else so excited about a technique that had also knocked our socks off.

Elsie also broke a friend's heart. Ernie Hasan had shared his experience at Golden State, the great fun

of having JYN, Dennis Makashima, and Mel Ikeda all work on his newest chokkan-style California juniper with its own interesting acquisition story. In JYN's workshop, Ernie had mentioned to John a styling solution and saw his idea put a spark in John's eye. Before Ernie knew it, all three sensei were going to town on stage fulfilling Ernie's vision. He *thought* he'd had the swellest time imaginable. BUT, he had to miss the big banquet. If you've never been to a GSBF convention, you *cannot imagine* the fabulous raffles that go on at their banquets. Ernie had left many of his raffle tickets with Elsie to claim any prizes he might win. To his great chagrin, she told him at club meeting he had forgotten to leave ticket stubs for the general raffles. His ticket was not only drawn first, *but also second* for a great chrysanthemum stone. The Golden State announcer, John Thompson, kept stalling, knowing Elsie was holding Phoenix club stubs, but she couldn't just couldn't come up with those winners.



Ernie and his new prize

This PBS meeting started with club business, announcements (including their upcoming demonstration at a local retirement home), and reports on the GSBF Convention by attendees. The business meeting was followed by a "show 'n tell" of member trees. Each member had brought a tree, and in some cases, were asking for advice. Following show and tell, there was a workshop to put suggestions into action while they could still be remembered, and seek more advice from members.

And like most fun clubs, there was plenty of free advice in the air. New members, as well as more experienced members, took advantage of this time. It was also a time for the members to socialize and get to know each other. There were at least two new people in attendance. One had just moved to Phoenix and had been doing bonsai on his own for 5 years. He had found the club through one of their shows. If I remember right, the second new person came by finding the website

The meeting format was fun, interesting, educational, and allowed the members to become friends, which seemed to make them a strong active club. We could learn a lot from this format even if it is used only occasionally.

We had a good time and learned of desert trees and care in the desert climate. (PBAers, Don't take your azaleas for granted.)

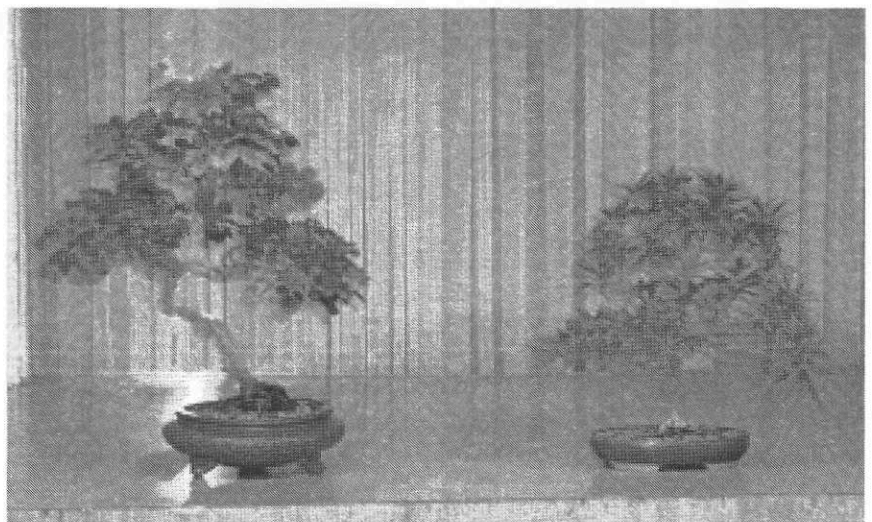
Chris mentioned the fun aspect in the club. In addition to seeing each other 3 Tuesday evenings a month, they also plan activities such as a *Breakfast and Nursery Crawl*. [Now, don't get me wrong. I love a lot of bonsaiists, but I don't want to see them before brunch.] But these Phoenicians gather and break bread, plan their attack, and then converge on a nursery of choice en masse. I'm imagining that this method allows new babies to have mentors look over their choices before any precious hobby \$allotment is depleted for ill-chosen items. There also might be a lot of mini-lessons going on all over the acreage.

I find their clubhouse situation very interesting, and had asked about how it came to pass that a city, instead of controlling the "who and how and when" of garden clubs meeting in their very nice facility, has actually treated the garden clubbers as adults. They have a consortium of garden club representatives who manage the clubhouse's availability. I believe the building maintenance is furnished by the city. To learn more of this friendly group, visit their quite comprehensive site - www.phoenixbonsai.com/VGC.html.

The PBS Show is held annually in a huge, securable lathe house which is on the property of a restored Victorian Italianate mansion in the heavily visited "old town" area. On the property is an historic rose garden, and in the same block, a modern art museum. I am a little green with envy. The bonsai display is one part of an "Asian Arts" festival. From Robert Baran: "For Matsuri, the festival at the weekend of Japan Week here, crowd estimates are in the line of 100,000. We usually have 14 eight-foot tables with over 50 compositions displayed, plus some selling space."

Even if 66% of that attendance is children under age 10, that's a lot of folks being exposed to the art. Just imagine if they had Molly and Jo at the entrance table soliciting "mandatory donations."

~ Chris and Betty Yeapanis
(with a good deal of memory help from Robert Baran, PBS)



Cape honeysuckle (*Tecomaria capensis*); Narrow-leaf fig

Jinned Juniper

Visit <http://www.phoenixbonsai.com/PhxBSWing.html>

Integrated Pest Management Tips

by Scott Aker, IPM Specialist, USNArboretum

The following have been taken from the web-site (www.ars.grin.gov/ars/Beltsville/na/) for January 2002. As usual, the February tips did not come on the web until after Clippings went to press. They have been condensed and edited to reflect what might be applicable to bonsai.

In case you have not done this, now is a great time to inspect your trees and shrubs for scale insects. Many plants have dropped their leaves so inspecting the stems and bark crevices is easier. Go slowly and look carefully, since many types of scale look like a part of the branch or a fungal growth. If you do find a heavily infested plant, plan to treat it with horticultural oil in early spring to suffocate the scale insects and their eggs. For your evergreens in winter storage outside, remove snow and ice as soon as possible after a storm. Use a broom to brush the snow and ice off with an upward, sweeping motion. Removing the heavy weight of the snow and ice will help reduce the chance of injury to your trees and shrubs from a broken limb or branch. Check your conifers for leaves and debris that may have accumulated in the interior branches of your trees. Removing the debris will help restore air circulation and allow more light to reach the innermost needles. Cold winds this winter could cause winter burn injury to your broadleaf evergreens. Needles or leaves may be discolored or develop a burned appearance, especially on windy sites. Winter burn injury is caused by wind blowing across the leaf or needle surface and drawing moisture out into the air. When the ground is frozen, roots cannot absorb water to replace the lost water and the leaf tissue is burned. This problem is especially noticeable in winters following a dry fall where plants were not watered adequately. To help prevent winter burn injury, water your plants this winter whenever there is a thaw. If your plants are in a particularly windy or vulnerable site, you may want to consider protecting them by wrapping them with burlap.

Anti-desiccants are another possible way to protect your broadleaf evergreens such as hollies, azaleas, and magnolias. Anti-desiccant sprays create an invisible, watertight film on the leaf surface that reduces the amount of water lost to the wind and the sun. Anti-desiccants should only be applied when temperatures will be above freezing for 12 to 24 hours. More than one application over the winter may be required. Be sure to follow all label instructions for the brand you purchase.

Winter is a good time to look over your bookshelves and see what you need to add to your library. Look for

books on how to diagnose disease and pest problems. Books with color photos can be especially helpful in identifying problems.

Watch out for products that tout ultrasonic and subsonic devices as safe ways to rid your home of unwanted pests such as mice and rats. In most cases, sounds that don't bother humans will not bother them, either. While they may be startled by the sounds at first, they quickly adapt and ignore them if food and habitat are available. The best way to drive rodents from your home is to deprive them of food and shelter. Most ultrasonic and subsonic sounds also do not carry much beyond 15 feet and are easily blocked by objects in their path such as furniture. Seal kitchen staples, bird food, and pet food to eliminate food sources and seal cracks and voids in walls and foundations to block rodent entry.

Clean up trees and shrubs this year with a good pruning. Remove suckers and dying lower branches. If you're dealing with a Bradford pear or another densely branched tree, thin the tree's canopy. Look for and remove any crossing or rubbing branches. By opening up space in the tree, air circulation is increased and sunlight can penetrate further into the tree's interior. Use sharp, clean tools and prune close to the raised area around the base of the branch known as the branch collar. Do not leave stubs as they provide a ready entry point for disease. Pruning improves overall tree health by reducing the energy needed to support limbs that lack vigor or compromise the tree's structural integrity. When you're done pruning you might note that the tree's aesthetics are improved, too.

Inspect the twigs, branches, and trunks of your trees for insect egg masses. Gypsy moths, eastern tent caterpillars, and fall cankerworms all lay egg masses that overwinter on trees. Gypsy moth egg masses are fuzzy and buff-colored and can be located on any part of the tree. Eastern tent caterpillar egg masses can be found on cherries and crabapples encircling small twigs and have a black, varnished appearance. Fall cankerworm egg masses are located in neat rows on small twigs. Hand-pick individual masses off branches and trunks. Any small twigs with masses.



BONSAI BOOK HOOK

Even Monkeys Fall Out of Trees ~ John Naka's Collection of Japanese Proverbs

by Nina Shire Ragle

I read this book some 15 years ago and go back to it from time to time for inspiration. The book contains 287 proverbs which are said to be insights into the Japanese culture. Many of them are John's versions of the Japanese proverbs, and some have been called *Nakaisms*. These proverbs are short, easy to read, and have a meaning to the bonsaiist as well as to life. They are broken up into categories such as: Caution, Tolerance, Discipline, Patience, and Perseverance. John also provided 9 drawings to be used as illustrations in the book.

JYN was interviewed and helped compile these proverbs remembered from his culture and family, as well as a short biography which is included.

Among my favorites are the three I will share with you here:

First is proverb number 10 in the category of Awareness of Difficulty – “To graft a bamboo to a tree.” This refers to the impatient student whom I have been and have seen quite often in bonsai lectures and workshops. This can also refer to a student who does something foolish.

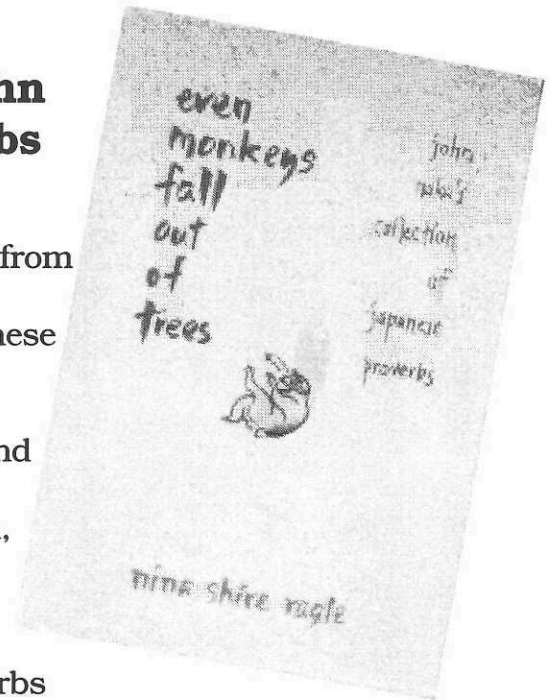
The second proverb I like is number 173 listed under Optimism. “Well begun is half done.” This is hard for us Americans to do, me included. It simply means learn and understand the basics of bonsai. Mastering the basics leads to self-confidence and good bonsai.

Lastly, my favorite in the category of tolerance is the book's title, “Even monkeys fall out of trees.” The meaning is clear: even the masters can, and do, make mistakes. It should be obvious that these proverbs can be applied both to bonsai and to life. So get this book and read it and re-read it. It is easy to understand, enjoy, and put to use.

I believe **Even Monkeys** is available from the author. If you order it from Nina, I am sure she will autograph it for you. It is published by Nippon Art Forms, Laguna Beach, CA, which is in and Larry Ragle's business. You may order the book on the Internet at www.niart.com or by mail from the address below. I believe the current price of the book (a bargain) is \$13.95 with \$2.50 shipping.

Nippon Art Forms
PO Box 4975
Laguna Beach, CA 92652
Make checks payable to: Nina Ragle

Nina has promised to accompany Larry to the International Scholarly Symposium on Bonsai and Viewing Stones. So you can even meet the author and ask for “first hand” interpretations. (Larry will be speaking on the development of viewing stone appreciation in California.)



MONTHLY CARE TIPS for FEBRUARY *compiled by Jules*

The following tips have been compiled in part from 4 Japanese bonsai magazines and Yuji Yoshimura's book. The time table for various task agrees with the Japanese books' instructions for a climate similar to the Washington, DC, locale. The watering schedules are those cited under specific plant species in the Japanese books. However, where no schedule was given the words "Water as needed" appear to remind the reader that watering is a very essential part of keeping the bonsai healthy and alive.

Watering: The following timely advice is from "Back to Basics with Berni" by Berni Gastrich which appeared in the December 2000 issue of the Yama Ki Newsletter (NY, NY).

"On a morning when the soil in the pot is frozen, the sun is strong, and there is a wind, an evergreen tree can be desiccated in hours. This is deadly. Even deciduous trees lose water to the sun and wind on such days. The primary objective of winter bonsai protection is to prevent desiccation. Your wind-protective shelter should not act as a greenhouse. However, if it does, the long periods of warm temperatures will not allow for full dormancy, and your tree will die within the next year.

"Don't forget watering ! Most of the trees your writer has lost during winter have died of desiccation, not from wind or sun, but from insufficient watering. Evergreen trees are not totally dormant at temperatures above about 25 degrees. They use quite a bit of water.

"Even dormant deciduous trees use some water. A soil moisture gauge is very helpful in telling which trees need water in winter. If you are using a modern bonsai mix (no humus, peat moss, or topsoil), over-watering is not really a danger, even in winter. **Just don't water when the soil is frozen.** The water cannot penetrate and could do harm."

I'm a firm advocate for using a soil moisture gauge to check the way your bonsai are accepting water. Gauges can be found priced below \$10. When the meter reads one-half of full scale, it's time to water the plant. The following tips have been compiled from 4 Japanese bonsai magazines and Yuji Yoshimura's book.

CONIFERS

Black Pine: Water once per day. The following activities can commence sometime after mid-February. Remove any wire digging into the bark and wire/rewire where needed. Remove any unwanted branches and branchlets. pH 4.5 - 6.0

Cryptomeria: Water once per day including the leaves. Keep in a polyhouse or coldframe for as long as temperatures will go below 32°F. During the last week in the month one can begin removing unwanted branches and needles. pH 5.5 - 7.0

Hemlock: Water as needed. pH 5.0 - 6.0

Hinoki: Water as needed. At the end of the month thin out the foliage. pH 5.0 - 6.0

Larch: Water as needed. pH 5.0 - 6.5

Needle Juniper: Water once per day including the leaves. pH 6.0 - 7.0

Sawara Cypress: Water as needed. pH 5.0 - 6.0

Shimpaku (Sargent juniper): Water once per day. Weather permitting or if the plant is in a coldframe one can consider rewiring and repotting any time after 20 January. Remove the old wire before rewiring. Repotting can be done during this month, but it need only be done every 3 years unless plant is rootbound. pH 5.0 - 6.0

Spruce: Water once per day. Wiring can be done, but

once the tree has been wired it should be placed in a coldframe or polyhouse. Repotting can be done when plant is out of winter protection during this month. pH 5.0 - 6.0

White Pine: Water once per day. Unwanted branches can be pruned. Repotting need only be done every 3 years unless plant is rootbound. pH 4.5 - 6.0

Yew: Water as needed. Apply fertilizer balls at end of month.

WARNING: From the USDA Integrated Pest Management: 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. pH 5.0 - 6.0

DECIDUOUS (Non-fruiting/non-flowering)

Keep all of the following bonsai in a polyhouse or coldframe until temperatures stabilize above 32°F.

Beech: Water once per day. It is natural for beech trees to keep the old, brown leaves through the fall and winter and one can remove them during this month. pH 5.0 - 7.0

Chinese Elm: Water as needed. pH 6.0 - 7.5

Ginkgo: Water as needed. During mid-February you can remove unwanted branches. pH 6.0 - 7.0

Hornbeam: Water as needed. Wiring can be done in early part of the month. Unnecessary branches and sprouts can be removed. pH 6.0 - 8.0

Japanese Maple: Water once per day. Unnecessary branches and sprouts can be removed. pH 6.0 - 8.0

Trident Maple: Water once per day. Unnecessary branches and sprouts can be removed. Repotting can be done after 20th of month. New leaf buds may appear so keep the maple where frost won't hit it. pH 6.0 - 8.0

Weeping Willow: Water once per day. When the temperature remains above 40°F one can apply insecticide such as dormant oil. Prune branches that survived the winter. pH 6.0- 8.0

Winged Euonymus: Water as needed. Wiring can be done. When the temperature remains above 40°F, one can apply insecticide such as dormant oil. pH 5.5 - 7.0

Flowering/Fruiting Plants

Keep all of the following bonsai in a polyhouse or coldframe until temperatures stabilize above 32°F.

CHERRY: Water once every 2 to 3 days. pH 6.0 - 8.0

CRAB APPLE: Water every other day. pH 5.0 - 6.5

GARDENIA: Water as needed. Spray with Malathion. A one-time winter feeding of fertilizer can be done. pH 5.0 - 6.0

HOLLY: Water once every 2 days. A one-time winter feeding of fertilizer can be done. pH 5.0 - 6.0

PYRACANTHA: Water once every 2 days. A one-time reduced winter feeding of fertilizer can be done. pH 5.0 - 6.0

QUINCE: Water once every 2 days. pH 6.0 - 7.5

SATSUKI (azalea): Water once every 2 days. pH 4.5 - 5.0

UME (Japanese flowering plum or apricot): Water once every 2 days. Enjoy the blossoms. pH 6.0 - 7.5

WISTERIA: Water as needed. pH 6.0 - 8.0



Do you know a business that would like to reach 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.)

Call for Mentors!

The PBA mentoring program matches up less experienced club members with the more experienced members. Advice about horticultural practices, design issues, propagation techniques, and use of pesticides, are typical bonsai-related topics that may be discussed. The mentor can choose to communicate by phone, exchange a series of e-mails, or even arrange face-to-face meetings. Time constraints, geography, and other factors, will dictate the best way. Each month *Clippings* will print the current PBA mentors and their phone numbers and/or e-mail addresses. Less experienced PBA members, especially new members, are encouraged to contact these mentors when they have bonsai-related questions.

Anyone interested in being listed as a mentor should send their name, club affiliation, city of residence, phone number, and e-mail (if possible) to Jim Hughes at 301.779.2891, jjhughes@erols.com. Please note if you prefer to be contacted by phone or e-mail. If you want to be contacted by phone, suggest the best time to call. If there are any other restrictions, please specify. Informally, PBA club members have always shared their personal experiences and knowledge of bonsai. The mentoring program intends to provide a structure to foster that continued tradition. There are many qualified members who could be added to this list. Don't wait to be called. Contact Jim before the next *Clippings* is created.

Arschel Morell	BBS	410.744.6478	ajmorellsr@hotmail.com
Chuck Croft	NVBS	703.978.6841	ccroft@mindspring.com
Jules Koetsch	NVBS	703.569.9378	jkoetsch@earthlink.net
Carole Roelofs	NVBS	703.257.7142	croelofs@erols.com
Jim Sullivan	Bowie	301.262.9633	sullivja@ors.od.nih.gov
Jim Hughes	Brookside	301.779.2891	jjhughes@erols.com

Jim Hughes, Educational Vice President

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

- Baltimore Bonsai Club Kiyomizu Bonsai Society Chesapeake Bonsai Society
- Bowie Bonsai Club Lancaster Bonsai Society Northern Virginia Bonsai Society
- Brookside Bonsai Club Washington Bonsai Club Rappahanock Bonsai Society
- Potomac Viewing Stone Group

Name _____

Address _____

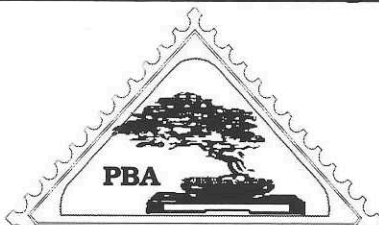
City _____ State _____ Zip _____ +4 _____ Nation _____

Telephone: Home: (____) _____ or Office: (____) _____

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.**

- 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 - sullivanja@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 - JJHughes@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 - wilson@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 times per year
Glenn Reusch, Ghreusch@aol.com - 540.672.5699

Potomac Bonsai Association, Inc.
c/o U.S. National Arboretum
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Washington, DC 20002



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Sayonara ~ This is your last issue if you have not paid your dues for 2002.

Renew by 1/1/02

Jules & Jane Koetsch
6709 Caneel Court
SPRINGFIELD, VA 22152