

SOUTHERN BONSAIST

A publication of the Azalea City Bonsai Society Mobile, Alabama

MEMBERS WORKSHOP THE ACBS MARCH 4TH PROGRAM

The program for the March 4th ACBS regular meeting will be a members workshop. ACBS members should bring a bonsai or bonsai material to the meeting. Your tools and your wire should come with you.

At a members workshop you can help others, do your own work, ask for advice and either take it or leave it. Members workshops are a great place to bring material that needs a great start but you just can't seem to find a design that does justice to the material.

If you have a bonsai that just doesn't look right for some reason bring it to the meeting. Having a bunch of people look it over, you will get a lot of suggestion about ways to proceed. Not all great bonsai material looks great to start. Sometimes it just takes someone who can see past the clutter and visualize the promise of the future growth and potential. Joe Day

ACBS

March 4th Regular Meeting
Mobile Botanical Gardens
7 P.M.

Program: Members Workshop

Host: Mr. Mrs. Kunz

Tokenoma: Joe Day

April 1st
ACBS Regular Meeting
Juniper Bonsai
By Don Corley
Host: Bob, Yvonne Schwartz
Tokenoma: The Kunz

May 6th
ACBS Regular Meeting
Bonsai Trimming
Workshop
Host: ACBS
Tokenoma: Bob, Yvonne Schwartz

STUFF

Pensacola is having a raffle of two 100 year old big Boxwood that were the main event of the Ben Oki workshop. The tickets are \$5.00 each. We will collect at the March Meeting and send the money to Pensacola. The Raffle will be pulled at the Tri-Cities show,

April 26th.

We still need a location for the Summer Social. It is normally held at a members house. We set the date that the host member finds agreeable. ACBS pays for this event. It cost the host nothing. If you would like to host

please let President Joe Kuhn know.

Our next Event is Day of Bonsai March 15th.

The next event is The West Mobile Library show April 19.

Joe Day

MAPLE BONSAI

Japanese Maple bonsai are easily some of the most beautiful bonsai on any bench or in any bonsai show. Climate makes a difference when it comes to care. Cold winters pose not big problems, cool spring and a mild summer would be great. We don't have any of that. Leo Fortner's collection of excellent Maple Bonsai is proof that you can have beautiful Maple bonsai in our area. The Maple root system must be very healthy. Good soil that drains and a container that has ample room are a must. I only use organic fertilizer with my Maple bonsai. I apply it about 6 weeks before first leaf so it

will be available when it's needed. That's early in February. If Maples are weak in the spring they will be sick by summer so attention must be paid to good potting and fertilizing early in the spring. Maple bonsai do not like to be dry or wet. Watering so the soil is moist all day is best. I like to water deeply early in the morning so the soil can take all day to dry out. I keep my Maple where they get all the cool morning sun they can get. The after 1P.M. sun is partial shade and the later sun is behind the trees. Maples grow fast in the Spring. You must pinch and trim daily to get a great tree. If you must

trim branches of any size you must seal the cut with a good bonsai sealer. Young, anything under 20 years, Maples are very top dominant. That means the top part of the Maple will grow very quickly. It's very tricky to get a good apex that has delicate branches. You must manage the growth of the lower branches if you want them to be larger than the branches in the upper part of the Maple bonsai. It takes years of good bonsai practice to create a great Maple bonsai. The branching, bark, roots and ramification can't be gained quickly or easily. Joe Day

AZALEA BONSAI

An Azalea bonsai in bloom is a certain crowd pleaser at any bonsai show. The critical thing about Azalea bonsai is the root system. The roots of an Azalea are almost hair like. It has some big roots but the container quickly fills up with very dense very thin roots that make watering the root ball very tricky. Like Maple keep-

ing the root system healthy is a must. Azalea like the pine bark in the soil mix but hate it when it breaks down and stays too wet. They like a good acid type organic fertilizer early in Spring and a bit as the rain begins in July time frame. Insects love the tops and fungus love the root system if the soil does not drain

quickly. Cuts must be sealed as soon as they are made. They love the sun and tolerate dry more than most species. Lucky for the grower the leaves will wilt when the dry point is reached. It's a signal that they need to be watered and placed in the shade for a while to recover. Difficult, no but they are hard work. Joe Day

BOXWOOD BONSAI

Tricky, nothing like the hardy nothing seems to bother it bush that grows in most yards. The roots are a combination of thick roots and thin dense roots. Boxwood does not react to good soil or fertilizer. It responds to good soil and fertilizer. It's a critical difference. If you place a Boxwood in good draining bonsai soil and fertilize correctly over many months it will start to green up and push new

growth. Do the same thing to an Elm and you will see the difference in a couple of days or a week. This slow to show makes people keep adding fertilizer, watering too much or moving the Boxwood to different locations..loving it to death, trying to see a reaction. Just do the correct things and leave it in a place where it gets good morning sun and some shade late. Don't let the pot sit where the sun heats

the soil too much. Fertilizing a bit along all summer helps keep it strong. Boxwood grow usually about 4 times from early spring to late fall. They love the rain season in summer and tolerate cold easily. It's a good choice for our area but you must find stock that looks great as a beginning point. It makes foliage quickly, branches very slowly. Lots of choices so choose good and be consistent with the care.

Joe Day

THE DAY OF BONSAI MARCH 15TH

Interest in the day has been excellent. The programs are timely and presented by excellent artist. The workshop filled very quickly. The display will be filled with bonsai that not only beautiful but selected to be examples to learn with. The day will follow an open format. We will try to finish by 5 P.M. but we will allow the artist to teach as much as time will allow.

The coffee and sweets will start the day. Lunch will be provided. Vendors will have bonsai items for all artist.

We will need as many of our members to be at the event as possible. Everyone pays

even the presenters but everyone gains. All money ACBS earns goes to showing and education except for the Christmas dinner and summer social when the club uses funds to provide some of the food.

The day will start early for ACBS members. We will open the doors by 6:30 A.M to make coffee and do the final set ups. A Friday night set up crew will be needed to get it ready to roll. We will need ACBS members on hand to assist with lunch prep and serving. As always we are responsible for cleaning up after the event. ACBS members have been wonderful at

all our previous events. They usually have it all cleaned up before the last visitor get out of the parking lot.

We need the treasurer on site by 7A.M.

We need to know any member that wants to show a natural style bonsai

We need lunch serving and prep help

We need a Friday night set up crew.

We need a good turnout of ACBS members to meet, greet and be great host for his import ACBS event.

Joe Day

PINE BONSAI

The rules are simple. A good draining soil, Lots of sunlight, leave it alone except for organic fertilizer early in the spring and a bit more as that runs out by later in the summer. Every bonsai has it's weak point. Pine get needle cast. A fungus disease of the needles that only shows up when the infection is bad. It's

a fungus that's everywhere all the time so you treat for it all he time with a fungicide product. I have seen Pine in almost every bonsai collection I visited. I have see almost no excellent Pine bonsai in any collection. That says a lot. The advice is to start with a very healthy Pine. Sick Pine recover slowly or not at all.

Pine do not like to move about. If it's happy leave it alone. Work to keep Pine healthy, work it make it beautiful only if it's healthy. Wire, transplant at the correct times only. They information for Pine care is mostly accurate so learn it and follow it adapted for your area.

Joe Day

OUR ACBS SPRING LIBRARY SHOW APRIL 19TH

The West Mobile Regional Library on Grelot road has proven to be an excellent place for ACBS to show bonsai to the public. Both the interior room and the deep overhang that is the front entrance get good traffic from the public. The outside overhang from the second story is excellent as everyone who enters the library can see the exhibit. The negative is the wind can be very bad in that

area. We can plan our location and cross our fingers. The best way for a less than good weather day is to set up big bonsai in the overhang. They don't mind the wind, set up all the others inside. The outside display will gather interest and allow members to tell the public how to get to the inside display. This year we plan to have a vendor on hand to provide some bonsai items for the general public. This is a

first for a ACBS public show. Past shows have always had people asking for both bonsai and bonsai supplies.

April 19th is a good time frame. The weather is normally warm, the bonsai are usually showing the best of their Spring foliage and with luck some flowers.

Please plan now and start getting your show bonsai ready for this important show.

Joe DAy

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Dedicated to the art of bonsai



Organization

My World

The cats don't even seem to notice any more as one of the three turtles walks around the yard. They just step over what must look much like a moving rock. The Mocking birds were singing at 2 A.M in the morning some where just outside my bedroom window. They have been here each Spring building nest and giving the cats much grief. The red birds, dull and bright red arrive at this time each year to nest near the bonsai area. All summer when I turn the sprinklers on they spend the time flying through the streams of water. The cats find my stone slabs a perfect place to sleep. The slabs warm up by 11 A.M. providing a nice heat pad. The Catlin Elm is pushing new leaves, the Maples and Bald Cypress are showing a bit of green. The Japanese Cherry trees are in full bloom, Dogwoods are not far behind. A couple of weeks and every blooming thing will be showing it's colors. The fear of a late very cold period keeps most bonsai off the benches and on the ground. The bonsai that needs a very close inspection and trimming are on the benches where a spare few minutes can be turned into a few minutes of trimming. Almost.....every ground stock tree that had to be dug and potted is now resting in a bonsai pot. The repotting of my regular bonsai will proceed as time allows. Heavy repotting the past two springs has lighten the load this year. The difficult decisions concern developed bonsai. If they are repotted every year the new growth will not be delicate. If they are not repotted the roots fill the container by late Summer causing watering difficulties. When this happens those bonsai will need to be placed in a shaded area and watched daily for any sign of stress. The more developed a bonsai becomes, the more delicate it becomes. The more delicate it becomes the more difficult it is to keep it healthy. The years in bonsai are rewarding but it never makes any part of bonsai work any easier.

Joe Day