

SOUTHERN BONSAIST

A publication of the Azalea City Bonsai Society Mobile, Alabama

MERRY CHRISTMAS ACBS *THE CHRISTMAS DINNER MEETING*

Merry Christmas ACBS. Tuesday the 4th of December at the Mobile Botanical Gardens we will open the doors at 6:30 P.M. ACBS will furnish the drinks, ice, main meats and table wares. ACBS members will bring one covered dish per family. The dish can be a salad, dessert, or vegetable. This is a family event and a bit of a homecoming where anyone, former members, members of other bonsai societies are invited to join in and enjoy great food and a special time to sit and talk. ACBS members should also bring a "special" auction item to go on the Christmas table. We will start serving at 7:30.

We will have a sign up sheet for the Ben Oki workshop.

ACBS
Christmas Dinner
December 4th
Mobile Botanical Gardens
Doors open at 6:30 P.M.
This is special time to enjoy
Great food, great people,
Relax and enjoy

January 2008
ACBS
The Ben Oki Workshop
The date is not set so location cannot be determined.

February ACBS
Regular Meeting
Mobile Botanical Gardens
7 P.M.
About bonsai soil -by
Joe Kuhn
Host: Derald Eastman
Tokenoma: Joe Kuhn

2008 ANOTHER YEAR OF BONSAI EVENTS

Ben Oki will be our first 2008 event and has been our first event of every year for about 20 years. The Day of Bonsai event, March 15 will be next. Our Spring members show of bonsai at the West Regional Library on April 19th. This is the year when The Pensacola

Gulf Coast Bonsai Society host the Tri Cities Regional Show. It is usually held in the month of May. June will be our Summer Social members get together. We will need a ACBS member to host this event so "think about it". We expect Jim Vanlandingshams

Workshop in the month of August. We will have the regular monthly meetings of ACBS every month except January and probably June when we have the summer social. I think that's 16 events for 2008 we now have scheduled. Joe Day

EARLY COLD SNAP?

As I write this the news tells me we might have our first freeze tonight, November 11th. Is this early...no..it's actually about the exact average time when we should dip below freezing for the first time in the Fall season. Is this good or bad? If we have a stay cool at night Fall and winter this is very good. The just below freezing temps will put your trees into at least the beginning of dormancy, stopping most new growth above and below ground. This will help prevent damage to your bonsai when the temps dip into the 20's later this year. It will also start leaf drop and give you a early opportunity to

look at the structure of your bonsai and allow winter wiring of your bonsai.

When is an early freeze bad? When it comes just ahead of a very warm period that could make your bonsai start some new growth. New growth on top indicates active root growth that could be hurt when the next cold snap rolls over us. Shorter days help prevent the temps from climbing too fast but don't prevent it. If you have a bonsai that starts to push a bit of new growth, moving it into shade where the sun cannot heat the soil in the container. This will help slow or stop the growth. Your Juniper, Pine or

other plants that hold their foliage all winter need the sunlight. Your trees that drop their leaves do not need any sunlight. This fact get a bit tricky for us in the deep south. Those "no leaf" bonsai benefit from sunlight that hits every place on the tree when the buds begin to swell. The sunlight encourages the tree to push new growth evenly all over the tree. When you see the buds begin to swell on any species it's time , no matter what month it is or what the books or magazines say, to move your into the sunlight. It's best to place then in half day, early morning to noon , sunlight. Joe Day

SUPPLY CHAIN BLUES

If you know anything about the military you have probably seen the statement" for every fighting soldier 10 or 15 or 25 are in the supply chain. As you bonsai collection grows so does the amount of "stuff" it takes to maintain your collection. For every bonsai you have, you have support stuff. The "stuff" takes space and shelter. Pine bark, Lava rock,

Turface, Moss, chemicals, fertilizer, Gravel, Charcoal, lime and on and on. Every year I make an effort to get all my stuff in order so it can be found and used quickly. I make progress every year but never seem to pull it all together before the spring "must do" work starts taking all the time I have. Never seen anyone who had it "all" together so I know it's a

shared problem. This, a bit too early for most winter work, November to middle December, is a good time to work on getting your bonsai area in better shape. When January rolls in you might have a few weeks or a couple of months to do repotting and all the winter work so better to start "getting ready work" done ASAP. Joe Day

ART KERSTEN, WE WILL MISS YOU

The truth is we have already been missing Art. Art decided to not take an active part in ACBS activities about a year ago. Changes with the job, personal life put a squeeze on the time Art had could spend as he wished. Art called today to say he was getting out of bonsai. Art was for close to 20 years a key person for ACBS. Art was the go to person as treasurer and on the ACBS board. His smiling face

could be found at every meeting, every show or event. Only a few members of any bonsai society are key people who can be counted on to help plan, set up, be a part of the event, and help take down and give a honest answer about any problems and suggestion about how to solve these problems. The loss of Art is the loss of a key person. Bonsai is a bit unique in structure. It consist of bonsai

artist and almost "only" bonsai artist. Every event is a event that happens only because the artist do all the work. We have "No" support from other sources. Other "arts" have sponsors that invite artist to attend. Most sponsors are vendors of the art or suppliers to the arts.

Other ACBS key people will still keep on keeping on and new people will step up.. But without Art a bit of fun and history will be gone. Joe Day

RECOVERY TIME

Every time you expose the roots of any bonsai, trim the roots either just a bit or severely the bonsai will need extra care. Bonsai in stress from any reason will need to be placed into semi-shade, away from any wind, and kept moist, not wet. Never fertilize any bonsai that has had its roots trimmed or shows signs of stress for any reason. Any fertilizer is a type of salt solution and will have a drying effect when it touches any new root growth that is very soft. Some bonsai artist like to use a root stimulator. They help reduce transplant shock. The cost when it's mixed correctly is small. Mixing cor-

rectly is very important. Root stimulator also contains some fertilizer so it must be diluted enough to not harm the new roots.

Keeping roots moist isn't easy when the plant is growing in a good bonsai soil that is made up to drain fast and have good air circulation. At our November meeting Russell talked about using long fibered Spaghnum moss cut into small pieces and soaked in water to cover the surface of the soil to retard the drying process. The moss will not hamper watering. As the bonsai puts out new roots some will stay in the upper layer of the soil creating a spreading

root mass. The moss will give green moss a receptive environment to grow.

Our normal spring weather is a mixture of warm days with almost no wind and high humidity, rain days, and days when the wind blows from the north and the humidity drops down to 15 or 20 percent. Those low humidity, windy days are a plant killer if the plant does not have a great root system that can constantly draw moisture up to the buds or new growth. Once you lose all your new growth and buds the tree has no recovery left. It becomes a finished bonsai for the wood pile. Joe Day

THE 2008 VISITING TEACHER TOUR

The teachers on the 2008 tour are Ben Oki, Ted Matson and Micheal Hagedorn. All are excellent artist. We have signed up for Ben Oki. Ben always comes to Mobile about January 3 to 6th. We don't have a date yet but our BSF contact says he will be here early in January. At the November meeting ACBS mem-

bers in attendance said they wanted our second teacher to be Jim Vanlandingham. The last time he was in Mobile he said he would be back late summer of 08.

We will have a sign up sheet at the December ACBS meeting. If you want to work with Ben you will need to either e-mail Joe Kuhn or sign up at

the December meeting. The cost to work with Ben is \$30. the cost to come to the workshop and watch is \$5.00. Ben is recognized as a "World Class Bonsai Teacher." He teaches all over the world each year. Ben also provides each student with a drawn picture of the future look of the bonsai. Joe Day

THANKS, NO- THANKS A LOT

Well it's that time of the year. The stores all turn into gaily decorated visions of retail hell, the streets into pushy automobiles driven by demonic human forms, bell ringers with frozen fingers and smiles and stores with everything except any item on your list. The joy of spending money you don't have for people who need nothing, and appreciate nothing. But what the Hey, it's Christmas. In the

midst of all of this joy it's easy to reflect on the year. As the person who writes the newsletter I can use a bit of space to thank all those bonsai artist who where a part of my bonsai experience. I won't name names or say who was the most help but my bonsai collection and my life are a bit richer for the chance to have these people come around and donate time, idea's, material, and a strong back.

Friends are the salt of life. Without them life isn't exactly tasteless but with them to share your experiences the flavor of life in increased a lot. I certainly add to that list of friends my wife.

Christmas will come and go, New Years will be just around the corner then suddenly it's Spring in Mobile. For a bonsai person watching nature spring forth again that's my personal season of Joy. Joe Day

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Dedicated to the art of bonsai


Organization

Who Are "They"

It's been going on forever but I noticed it a lot when I started creating bonsai. Other bonsai artist would say "they said to do so and so." When you would ask who "they" were you would always get a vague answer. The more you tried to find out who "they" were the more elusive the answers became. Possibly it was an organization and the letters T-H-E-Y have a meaning. I never got past **T**-is possibly "**The**", **H**-is possibly "**huge**", **E**-could mean "**everything**", but the **Y**- stumped me totally. From testimony in front of congress over many years I knew the CIA, the largest spy system in the world with a yearly budget larger than 90% of any country in the world didn't know {this was their own testimony} the Russians would orbit the first satellite, that Russia was about to collapse, Sept 11 was about to happen, Saddam had no weapons of mass destruction, or about any other large event in the world so I had to believe they were too dumb to be "**THEY**". I became more worried when the respected evening news and the newspapers began to refer to most of the stories this way "today **they** said". So this group or organization giving out mostly bad bonsai information was big enough to influence the world news. If "they" are so certain their information is correct and I never noticed congress asking them to come in and testify on any situation as the "**THEY**" organization. Over the past 40 years I can't get anyone to tell me who "**They**" are, I must be very, very far out of the information loop. If you are new to bonsai and have a question, ask someone in you club who you know to be doing good bonsai work with the species you work with. I wouldn't totally trust information from the "**They Said**" Organization Joe Day
