

SOUTHERN BONSAIST

A publication of the Azalea City Bonsai Society Mobile, Alabama

HOW TO WIRE YOUR BONSAI BY RUSSELL COKER-THE NOV. PROGRAM

Clip and grow produces one type of bonsai style, the use of wire to position the elements creates another type of bonsai. Do you have to wire? The answer is yes, if you expect to produce a style that only the use of wire can produce. Wire is used to produce a very defined look to the trunk, branches and foliage.

Aluminum and copper wire are both excellent but each has its own personality. They can be used to wire the same bonsai but not in the same way. You will find aluminum a better wire for some species, copper a better wire for other species.

Placing wire on a tree takes time and experience. The experience tells you how to wire close but not tight and how to much you can bend a branch before you hear "crack". Russell will cover this and more plus answer your questions.

Joe Day

ACBS
Regular Meeting
November 7th
Mobile Botanical Gardens
7:P.M.
How to wire your bonsai
Russell Coker
Host: Don Corley
Tokanoma: Leo Fortner

The Christmas Dinner
ACBS Meeting
Dec 5th
Mobile Botanical Gardens
Doors open 6:30
Members Covered Dish
Dinner

Ben Oki Workshop
Jan 2nd
Mobile Botanical
Gardens
6:30 Doors Open

THE ACBS FALL AUCTION REVIEW

The weather was wonderful, the building full of bonsai artist, the tables full of bonsai, bonsai pots, stands, and lots and lots of items related to bonsai, plenty of food and drink, it was a great sight. Randy Haga did a great job. Jeff and Robin did a great job of keeping up with the bids

and money. As I have said auctions are like mushrooms after a spring rain. We know the location and time but who and what to auction just shows up out of the kindness of all the area bonsai artist. Our thanks go out to all those who donated, bid and helped ACBS raise operating funds or

the next years activities. President Joe Kuhn thanked everyone by name in his e-mail to the bonsai artist in our gulf coast area. It was a wonderful auction/party. Hope everyone enjoyed it as much as I did.

Joe Day

THE WINTER WEATHER FACTOR

We don't actually have winter in Mobile. We do have a couple of winter days and winter nights but they come after a period of warm or hot days. This presents an interesting problem. How do you keep your bonsai in a dormant condition until the danger of a hard freeze in past? You can expect your bonsai to be dormant by January 01 a bit sooner or later. The last chance of a hard freeze is about April 1. It's actually easier to protect your trees from a hard frost than it is to protect them from the warm or hot days and nights. The cold usually last only one night. The warm day between

the cold nights are 3, 5 or 7 days long. If your bonsai pushes new growth and then gets hit with a hard freeze it will probably be very weak or dead.

The best way to keep your bonsai dormant is to keep them out of the direct sunlight and on benches . Shade will keep the soil in the pots cool to cold. Bonsai on benches will allow wind to blow around the pots also keeping the soil cool or cold. Deep shade isn't necessary just partial shade. The Winter sun is low and the days short. Morning sun falling on your bonsai is best. The morning sun, if you turn your bonsai on the benches,

will help activate the inner buds and give you a much better chance of pushing new growth the next Spring.

You have to protect from the very cold but you also have to protect from the heat. With a small collection it's just another small job but with a big collection it's a big job. The type job you start moving plants before you need to move plants.

Tropical bonsai should already be placed near each other so you can move them to protection in a hurry when our sudden cold comes sweeping in from the west or the north. Joe.

Vegetable
Sweet
Salad
Pick one and bring
A covered dish
To the
ACBS
Christ Dinner Meeting

THE CHRISTMAS DINNER MEETING DECEMBER 5TH.

December 5th will be the night of our Christmas dinner meeting. Each member will be ask to bring a covered dish of either a sweet, vegetable or salad. We need a good spread of these dishes so e-mail Joe Kuhn what you intend to bring. ACBS will furnish the drinks and main meat. We will open the doors

of the Botanical Gardens at 6:30 to allow time to set up everything and try to start the meal by 7:30 P.M. This is family and or a friend night. If you would like to bring the family just fine. If you want to bring a friend because the family can't make it that ok also. We have in the past ask members to bring a spe-

cial raffle item. It makes the dinner a bit more Christmas like plus the sale of tickets offsets the cost of ACBS furnished meats, drinks and set up's.

This is the ACBS end of season party. Make sure you are among the members that attends to celebrate the year. Joe Day

THE LOOK BACK

Boxes, bags of memories that span the entire existence of ACBS. Almost every event held by ACBS is in one or more of the photographs but the thing that is missing is the date of the events. A small problem that grows larger with time. We all probably think we will be able to, with a glance, remember the who's, when's and where's of each photo. You can't and over time you can't even when you

try very hard. The only thing to do is to make a time line of events, mostly using the old newsletters, and try and match up the two. The pics of children of members knowing how old they are now and a good educated guess of how old they were in the picture also helps a lot.

I see lots bonsai and lots of people who are not around now. The wonderful thing is to see a lot of people who are

still around from way back and bonsai that were just so-so nursery or collected plants, these are both much older and with the bonsai much more beautiful. I see my children grow up and I see me grow old. I also see where the years went, what I was doing and how much fun it was doing it all. Please take lots of pictures but take the time to put some notes on the back. The image will last much longer than the Memory. Joe Day

BONSAI SOIL: THE ART OF CONSTANT CHANGE

All bonsai soil is a combination of materials that hold moisture and allow air to move through the soil. The ingredients that make up bonsai soil differ in each area of the country and around the world. It also changes in each location over time. The change is usually because an ingredient is no longer available or becomes too expensive. Our ACBS mix for many years was Pine bark and lava rock. Lava rock is difficult to find at retail so the switch to high fired clay over the past few years made sense. The clay is a bit cheaper. I have seen either no change using the clay instead of lava rock

or in some cases with moisture loving species a positive change. I have not been using the clay long enough to see how the roots will look like at repotting.

You can find in books, magazines and on line bonsai mixers that use Fir bark, small gravel, Japanese natural clay materials that are imported, and expensive, perlite, and sphagnum moss. Will these mixes work in Mobile. The answer is yes. Yes....if you can give constant attention to each of your bonsai. That's constant attention to the amount of moisture in the soil. Our mix of about 50/50 Pine bark and clay or lava

rock works to drain away water quickly but retain moisture over a long period of time. It's a mix that allows the bonsai artist to both have a life and a bonsai collection. The ratio of Pine bark can be changed to suit the requirements of different species. The increase of clay or lava rock will make the mix drain and dry quicker. Lava rock will dry quicker than clay, another factor you can consider. Bonsai care depends more on your life style than it does a soil mix but the soil mix that works best with your life style is the mix your bonsai should be living in.

Joe Day

SIGN UP TO WORK WITH BEN OKI

Ben Oki our first teaching master for 2007. ACBS will hold a workshop on our regular January first Tuesday meeting night at our usual location, The Botanical Gardens. The fee to work with Ben will be \$20. The fee to be an observer will be \$3.00. If you want to work with Ben you will be asked to sign up at

the ACBS November regular meeting.

Ben is considered by many people the top Japanese teaching master in the USA. His ability to find a great design in raw material or to refine the design of an existing bonsai is amazing. Ben travels all over the world each year teaching bonsai. We

have probably by now had 20 Ben Oki workshops at ACBS. We have never had a bad Ben Oki workshop. Most of the bonsai you will see at our shows and the shows of Pensacola and Ft Walton at one time or another were Ben Oki workshop trees. This is your chance to place a bonsai into this part of bonsai history.

Joe Day

THE ACBS 2007 PROGRAMS & EVENTS

The life blood of any bonsai society is the programs presented at each meeting. The next few months we will have,
December 5th Christmas Dinner
Members covered dish dinner.

January 2nd: Ben Oki workshop

Sign up to work with Ben

February 6th Joe Kuhn– Multiple trunk workshop with

March: 6th Beau Strickland– Multiple Trunk Styles

April: 3rd Brenda Castle– Upright Styles

May: 1st Derald Eastman– Rules of Bonsai

June: 5th Art Kersten– Cascade Style

What programs will be presented after June? That's entirely up to the membership. Tell President Joe Kuhn what you would like to see as

a program. Once we find what you want as a program we will find someone who is willing to present the program.

The Tri-Cities show will be held at the West Regional Library on Grelott Road April 28th

The Day of Bonsai for 2007 will be held on the weekend of March 24th at ST Lukes

“If you find some great pine bark soil conditioner at a retail outlet please let all our ACBS members know the location”

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Dedicated to the art of bonsai



Attitude

Creating bonsai is much like walking up a steep sand dune. It's always difficult, some progress is usually made only with much hard work, slipping back down is to be expected, the weather can be a real problem, it will always take longer than you expect, when you reach what you expect to be the top or end you just see more dune. Death ends the climb. How do you keep a great attitude while" climbing the dune" ? The main thing to remember is " the art of bonsai is the art of creating bonsai". Bonsai are never finished so the work is never done. You must enjoy the work . Always set small goals and give yourself a pat on the back when you achieve the goal. Be proud of your trees. Define what you want and don't let what anyone else says bother you. That doesn't mean you don't take good advice it just means that you decide what is good advice. Don't let setbacks get you down. We all have setbacks. We have them every year. Stuff happens, and it happens often to everyone. All artist use different ways to stay motivated. Looking at other artist work is one good way. I enjoy spending a bit of time each night on the internet looking at other artist work. Staying happy helps a lot. Almost every time I go to a bonsai artist back yard I find a radio and music. Good food and drink certainly helps keep a mood moving in a positive direction. Fun takes a bit of working out. It you expect it to just pop up and serve you, it probably won't happen very often.

Joe Day
