

SOUTHERN BONSAIST

A publication of the Azalea City Bonsai Society Mobile, Alabama

HOW TO BEND LARGE BRANCHES BY JOE DAY, THE OCTOBER PROGRAM

ACBS
FALL AUCTION
AT
ST LUKES CHURCH AND
SCHOOL
OCTOBER 17 SATURDAY
Set up 5 P.M.
Viewing 6 P.M.
Auction Starts 7 P.M.
Refreshments available
We need donation of
Bonsai, books, soil, fer-
tilizer, bonsai pots, bon-
sai tools, bonsai stands,
bonsai chemicals,
cakes, booze, candy,
nursery plants, aprons,
or any item you want to
donate. It is all appreci-
ated.
St Lukes is located on
Azalea Road between
Hwy 90 and Cottage Hill
road. You turn at the red
light and go down Ja-
ponica to the large park-
ing lot at the rear under
the large oak trees.

All bonsai are built. Style is the blueprint . Development is the construction. Every bonsai has something that needs to be bent. The larger the bonsai the more difficult the bending process becomes. You use force to overcome the resistance the branch has to bending. With a small branch the control you have on the bending process is very good. When you bend a large branch the amount of force you need to use makes control difficult. This program show processes that are used to try and control the force to bend the branch without breaking the branch. Bending is the real magical act in bonsai. We will explore all the techniques time will allow in a monthly meeting time span. As in any time limited event your question are very important. If we cover all your questions with good answers we will have used out time in an effective manner.
Joe Day

ACBS October 6th
Regular Meeting
At the Garden Center
Forest Hill and Ziegler Blvd.
7 P.M.
Program: Bending large branches by Joe Day

Host: Craig Kuntz

Tokanoma: Margaret

ACBS
November 3, 2009
Regular meeting
Garden Center
Program
Thread Grafting
Host: Joe Day
Tokanoma: Craig Kuntz

ACBS
December 1, 2009
Christmas Dinner Meeting
Garden Center
Members bring covered
dish of a salad, vegetable
or sweet. ACBS will furnish
everything else.

REVIEW OF THE FALL ACBS SHOW

The tables were full of nice bonsai constantly viewed by the public. The West Library show is outside but under the overhang so it puts everyone in the elements somewhat. This year the most noticeable element was the humidity. Everyone spent the day talk-

ing bonsai and sweating. The show was a excellent mix of sizes, styles and species. That was the most common comment all day " I didn't know you could do bonsai with so many different species." John Lee brought some small bonsai for sale , T Morris and

Rose Marie from Pensacola came over for a visit, thanks. It was as always for this location a fun show with lots of viewers who ask lots of good question and some folk who said they would see us at our next meeting. Joe Day

OCTOBER BONSAI EVENTS

The ACBS Fall Auction **October 17** at St Lukes School and Church on Azalea Road is a big event for ACBS. This is our primary fund raising event and a wonderful, fun event that celebrates the end of our growing season and the onset of cool weather. After a hectic Spring and Summer of intense bonsai work we get together, bid on lots of great bonsai material, tools, books, pots, and all sorts of useful items. Mark your calendar now!

October 14 th our sister bonsai society the Pensacola Gulf Coast Bonsai Society will hold their fall auction at the Gulf

Breeze Library, 1060 Shoreline Drive, rear entrance. Always a fun event and apt to have some unique bonsai items among the larger selection of useful bonsai items.

At the Garden Center, **October 22** our friend and excellent bonsai teacher Jim Vanlandingham will hold a workshop starting at 6:30 P.M. \$20. to work with Jim or \$3. to attend an view. Jim always get great reviews from those who attend his workshops. He works on all species and styles of bonsai.

If you need more information about any of these events you can e-mail me Joe Day at

acbsbonsai@aol.com or Joe Kuhn at Masterdon@yahoo .

Ben Oki Schedule

We can now tell you when the coldest day of 2010 will be. We always have our coldest weather when Ben Oki comes to Mobile. Last year was a great example. The schedule I just received Ben Oki will be here on **January 21 or 22 of 2010**. This could change before year and usually does. If you want to work with Ben Oki in January you can e-mail Joe Kuhn and sign up on the list.

Ben is truly a world class bonsai master who does workshops all over the world.

Joe Day

THE FINAL ACT

This is the most difficult part of bonsai to accomplish either in an article or with an actual bonsai. I can tell you about "it" but I can't actually tell you what it is or how to do it . It's that individual "visual" part of a bonsai that makes you go , Wow! It's always a quiet Wow! I've seen it at shows when people view the bonsai.

How do you design and place that "wow" in you bonsai? You must put your bonsai in front of you and look at them a long time up close and from a distance. When other people look at your bonsai ask them what they think and listen carefully. When you show a tree watch the viewers. If they stand and look for a long time

you have captured their attention. If they stroll past ask yourself if something is missing. Every bonsai tells a story. What is the story your bonsai tells the viewer, interesting or dull or confusing. Too many bonsai tell a confusing story. No viewer want to be confused. Pleased, entertained, excited... yes.

Joe Day

HOW MANY TIME DO YOU STYLE A BONSAI

Every time you look at your bonsai you should look for a way to change it a bit. You shouldn't try and change the main structure unless you just totally got it wrong the first time. You should always be the critical viewer. It 's your bonsai and reflects your ability. It is a part of who you are so try and make it the best reflection it can be on your ability. Don't make changes unless you have a high de-

gree of certainty that the changes are an improvement. Be quick to question be show to react.

I find a photograph is a great tool for asking yourself question. Photographs are not an accurate visual as they are not three dimensional but they show up a bonsai in a way that teaches.

If you have a bonsai that is already a good bonsai be slow

to make big changes. It is very difficult to see how to improve a good bonsai and make it a better bonsai but that's the role of a good artist.

Now...is an excellent time to do this, long critical look process. The bonsai are still in full leaf. Look, be critical, take notes, ask question. When you sit down this winter with your bonsai, do the right thing, not just some thing. Joe Day

THE OTHER SIDE

All good things have a bad side. A sad fact but that's the way the world works and probably the most important thing you can learn in life. Understanding what make things work leads to a great deal of good creative work. Not understanding that what makes it good, or what makes it work does and can have a bad side leads to disasters or the death of something.

At this very moment we are in the mist of almost a month of daily rain. My bonsai look like bonsai should look in Spring, green and lush. That's a good thing. I'm getting a longer growing season, not

having to use water that I have to pay for and if we get a early cold spell we could get beautiful Fall color. The bad side is a double. The roots in your soil are very soft now. If we suddenly get a cold front that lowers the humidity you will need to be certain not to allow the soil to dry out. The results will be lots of dead roots and the chance of dead twigs. If we were to suddenly get a early freeze after a long rain period those soft roots freeze and turn to dead mush.

Understand the good and bad of the following things.

Fertilizing is good but too much chemical fertilizer can

dry out your roots and kill a plant. Too much organic can make soil toxic as it rapidly expands the growth of micro-organisms, fungus .

Organics in the soil we are often told are the elements that feed the plant, good but - When you planting in a container the heat and moisture can rapidly break down the organics into mush. This mush is push to the bottom of the container each time you water creating a moisture holding, hot mess that is the perfect breeding ground for all types of fungus that are capable of killing a plant. That's why we repot often.

Joe Day

SOOOOOOOO NICE

Ok....about 80 percent of all television, movies and much else is based on stupid people acting and saying stupid things. I always did a short article after our bonsai shows recording all the stupid comments but now that we showing at the library I don't hear those things. 99.5% of the people I talked with only ask

very good questions and after the answer would follow up with more good questions and comments. After the years of work to create good bonsai to hear nice comments and intelligent questions about your art makes you think you have finally found an audience that appreciates what they are looking and somewhat under-

stands the work involved. The library location does limit our ability to set up attractive backdrops and the glass in back of the bonsai makes taking photographs a very tricky affair. We will next Spring hold the Regional Bonsai Show inside the library in the big room with back drops, air conditioning and refreshments.

Joe Day

THE IMPOSSIBLE BONSAI QUESTION

"How hard is it to do bonsai?" If you love raw oysters how hard is it to eat a plate full. If raw oysters turn your stomach how hard is it to eat a plate full ? Bonsai development, care and styling is very complex, time consuming and in the spring of each year, a whole lot of dirty work. I enjoy every bit of it so for me the answer is, it's not hard. About half the people I talk with don't seem to be the type of

people who love hot, sweaty, bug infested, dirty work and being totally responsible for the health of a lot of could be expensive things. Certainly you can't talk to people who think they want to do bonsai in a way that would make them think it's all work and no fun or satisfaction and to be fair you can't emphasize the hard and some times dirty work. They might just turn out to be people who love that

part of the art of bonsai. I try to get people to ask questions. I can answer the questions honestly and see what type of follow up questions I get. People who are truly interested in bonsai don't shy away when you start describing the process of creating a bonsai. When they say "sound like a lot of work to me" you don't usually see them again.

Joe Day

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Dedicated to the art of bonsai

How High and Wide is Bonsai

It is certainly more wide than it is high. If you measure the top of bonsai with the ability to create a great bonsai it's not actually that impossible to reach. The material is free for the digging if you make the effort. The talent to help you create the bonsai is cheap or free and the time comes and go if you are working on your bonsai or doing nothing. If I look back over the past 30 years in bonsai, most people I have known in bonsai had the ability to create a great bonsai. Almost none of those people created a great bonsai but it had nothing to do with talent. Most took a path that made it difficult or impossible to do what they had wanted to do at one time. That's what makes bonsai so wide, the people. If you think the range of species of plant used in bonsai is wide check out the range of people in bonsai. It's as important to style yourself and constantly improve your own person as you do the same thing to your bonsai. Bonsai is certainly one of the lesser known arts. If it ever becomes one of the better known arts it will be because some artist or group of artist makes it happen. This "art" in the form of great bonsai trees exist now and has existed for hundreds of years but art is know best for the artist who create the art. The last thing we need is a bonsai personality with no talent but we certainly could use some bonsai artist with a great crowd and media pleasing personality who would and could promote the art.

Joe Day
