

SOUTHERN BONSAIST

A publication of the Azalea City Bonsai Society Mobile, Alabama

SHOW TIME-MISSISSIPPI COAST AND THE REGIONAL SHOW PHOTOGRAPHS

Bonsai show are a great place to see bonsai, learn about bonsai, meet the public and spend time with other bonsai artist. Every bonsai artist should attend the bonsai shows but life is a busy place and we are each allowed only so my time to do so many things. This ACBS meeting we will use our computer/projector to show you all the bonsai at both the Mississippi Gulf Coast Bonsai Show and The Tri Cities Bonsai Show held in Ft Walton Beach, Many good bonsai were on display. Every photograph is an example of how an artist can use that species to create a good bonsai. Show photographs are also a good way too examine the use of bosnai containers. Lots of excellent bonsai tree, bonsai container examples are show. All this learning and a good dose of just great fun. We will be at the Garden Center our new but from now on meeting place. Joe Day

ACBS June 2nd Regular Meeting
At the Garden Center 7 P.M.

Program: Photographic Review of the
Mississippi Coast Show
The Tri-Cities Show

Host: Margarete

Tokanoma: Craig Kuntz

July 7th ACBS Meeting

How to Bend Large
Branches
By Joe Day

Tokanoma: Margarete

Host: We will request a host
for the next few months at
the June Meeting.

ACBS August 4th
How to Fine Tune
A Bonsai Design

This program will be the
Tuesday after the 4th week-
end so everyone can get
back in the grove.

JEAN SMITH 1925-2009 A FRIEND OF BONSAI

Founding member of the Fort Walton Beach Bonsai Society, Bonsai Societies of Florida, President of BCI, And BSF liaison to the Florida Prison System at Stark. Jean also was in charge of the BSF visiting teaching

Tour. Bonsai in America is growing, slowly. It grows because it grows with the help of bonsai organizations that give the structure to the art. Jean Smith was an organization person. The first generation

Of people who created bonsai in America after WWII are fading away. Whatever becomes of bonsai in America they were the people who planted the seed. Joe Day

BUGS, SWEAT, FUNGUS PLUS A BIT OF STORM.....IT'S SUMMER

You know when the tropical species of you bonsai are growing strong, your not tropical bonsai are about to slow down and settle into slow growth. Don't try and force your non tropical bonsai to grow too strong by applying fertilizer too often or too strong.

A strong spray of water directed from below and up into the foliage will rid many a plant of insects. Healthy plants defend against many problems but this is a climate that can and does stress any container plant. You will need something like a insecticidal soap, some fungicide to com-

bat the bad problems. Not many bonsai like all day strong sunlight but be aware that too much shade makes a tree weak and insect prone. It also creates a situation that favors fungus problems.

As you walk around your bonsai notice the level of the soil. It is natural for some soil to be washed off when watering or in a strong rain. Soil will settle as the Pine bark starts to decay. You need to top off your soil, never allowing more than 1/3 of any root to show above the soil level. Soil too low in a pot dries too quick. It also allows the water to flow through the soil too quick to soak into the particles and

promote a good drying time. Certain planting styles create a difficult watering situation. Bonsai that sit on a mound of soil that holds the soil in place with a covering of moss are the most difficult bonsai to water. The water run off not into the soil. With a small mounded bonsai it can be soaked. When you have a large mounded bonsai you must open up the moss and create small mounds that slow the water enough to allow water to soak into the soil. It helps to water the mound multiple times.

Joe Day

OUR SECOND CHANCE PERIOD

What is a second chance period? It's a time when you can do winter thing during the warm months. When we start the daily afternoon showers of Summer a couple of thing happen. The air stays wet, the hot afternoons moderate and the nights are humid but a bit cooler. This unique time allow most plants to be defoliated

and wired or pruned back hard. We are past our Spring work allowing for more styling work on bonsai. This is a good time to improve a good bonsai or a great time to make a strong move on a piece of material that you are comfortable trying something new or creating something exciting. Late Summer is a

bad time to do hard pruning on Azalea or Trident Maple. If you don't use your second chance early Summer time period it's best to do your major work during our Winter dormant time. Always research each species, ask questions to learn what you can do safely.

Joe Day

REGIONAL SHOW REVIEW GREAT JOB FORT WALTON

Beautiful, classy, flowing, impressive. Not a bad bonsai anywhere. It looked much like a show that consisted on bonsai selected from collections by someone who was a excellent bonsai artist. It was actually bonsai selected by local artist who wanted to show them to each other and the world at large. The quality is a testament to the current ability of our area artist. I know quite a few of the bonsai from

many past years. The bonsai and the artist are getting much better.

Xuan and I had a great time at the show. Lots of , known you for many years, artist were on hand. Nice to see the faces. Good coffee and treats with a very comfortable place to rest and enjoy the people and show. Traffic of bonsai viewers was steady and around mid-day rather brisk. Xuan and I had to leave about 2

P.M. We made a quick late lunch stop at the Crab Shack on the beach, Good food, prices , and a relaxed quiet place..at 2 in the afternoon.

Wish everyone could have been at the show. I'll call it a one day vacation from my reality. I certainly enjoyed my time at the show, the trip and the food. Our turn will come around to host the Regional Show. The quality bar has been set high.

Joe Day

BUILDING ENERGY FOR SUCCESS

Creating bonsai is a never ending cycle of cutting, trimming followed by a bit more cutting. It is difficult for people to understand that the only thing that creates bonsai is the cutting and trimming. All that cutting and trimming creates stress with any species. If you are hard trimming, cutting most of the green off, or defoliating you must have a very healthy tree for these procedures to actually improve the bonsai.

Does bonsai have a rhythm? Yes it does. First you create a healthy tree then you work on the tree. With some species this process takes all growing

season to bring the tree to strong health. Boxwood, Pine and Japanese Maple respond to good health management. They don't react. Trident maple and Elm react to good health. You can fertilize Elm and Trident Maple look a couple days later and see the difference. You can take an Azalea that has light green leaves, spray it with a micro-nutrient solution and within hours it will turn a darker green. That is what I mean when I say plants react to good health practices.

Plants that require constant pruning and defoliating require a lot of fertilizer and good watering practices.

Podocarpus is a sturdy plant but to create a good bonsai with a podocarpus you need to do in almost all cases Jin, Shari, large root reduction, grafting and defoliating to get back budding on the branches. That's a lot of stress on any species. Podocarpus are not a picky species but they grow all summer so they need to feed all summer. They have dense root systems so they need good soil. A constant feeding with a good organic should keep it growing strong. When you see a Podocarpus deep green and pushing lots of new growth you can pat yourself on the back.

Joe Day

SHRINKING BENCHES

If you never increased your collection of bonsai you have to increase your bench area. Bonsai grow. Some faster than others but they all grow. Summer is hot, humid, not so good for intense outdoor work but it's a great time to make some serious plans for Fall and Winter. Look over your current situation and start

making a plan. When you plan early you also can tell someone about your plan and just perhaps as the word gets around and you get most of what you need to build given to you. Just perhaps. Bonsai that grow quickly do very well on individual stands. You can walk around them and prune quickly. You can also build in

a turn table so your fast growing bonsai get sun on all the branches developing evenly.

When you expand your bonsai area it a great idea to expand your faucets so watering doesn't get to be a tug of war with a 100 foot garden hose. Grow with a plan.

Joe Day

THE POSITIVES AND NEGATIVES OF MOSS

Moss is beautiful giving a bonsai a finished look. With our summer heat and dry spells that moss could actually "finish" your bonsai. Bonsai that are planted high on a hill in the container, Planted on a rock, in a rock or on a slab are always difficult to water. If the surface of the soil is completely covered with moss almost all the water from your watering will be shed off not into the soil.

Even if your bonsai is in a flat container if the surface is covered with moss the water will move to the edge of the container and down leaving most of the interior of the soil dryer than the edges. Some moss, mostly the velvet type, does not block as much water as the moss type that tends to have runners and grown up the side of pots and on the roots and trunks of the bonsai. When you put moss on a

bonsai you should remove most of the original soil. Moss loves dense soil that holds moisture. This dense soil blocks water flow. Now is the time to check all your bonsai. No bonsai need moss covering all the soil. Remove moss to the bonsai soil level in places all over the container surface to allow water to soak in. It wouldn't hurt to take a chop stick and probe the soil a bit to encourage water flow.

Joe Day

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Dedicated to the art of bonsai

To Finish, Finishing, or Finished

30 plus years of bonsai and you look at things differently. Life consist of cycles, changes and nothing that is actually finished. I cleaned my bonsai area completely last week, today I cleaned my studio. The studio is clean. The bonsai area is now-not clean. A week of weed growth and falling leaves combined with a week of new growth on the bonsai and it looks a bit unkept. After cleaning my brush pile I pruned my ground stock. The ground stock is where it should be, the bush pile is now larger than last week. With bonsai the cycles of repeated actions seem to offset the negatives because cycles of pruning improve the bonsai. Cycles of repotting keep the bonsai healthy and growing larger. Without the ability to actually finish a bonsai you, with hard work, actually get to experience a very long cycle of constant improvement. Can time actually be saved or invested? In a way it can. The time you spend on a bonsai can cause improvement. Those improvements exist and can be improved upon later. Layers and layers of time. If you view a very old bonsai you can actually see and feel that layering of time. Not only is it time but a layering of positive actions, upon positive actions. All good art consist of this layering. Other things in life do also but it more rare than one might think. Most of life consist of cycles much like my bonsai area very short, very temporary with negatives offsetting the positives very quickly . One thing I leave you with is a question. The positives we seem to generate. The negatives seem to generate themselves...or is it just how we see the situation ?

Joe Day
