

SOUTHERN BONSAIST

A publication of the Azalea City Bonsai Society Mobile, Alabama

BONSAI FROM THE CAROLINA EXPO A PHOTO SHOW THE NOVEMBER ACBS PROGRAM

The bonsai in the display at the Expo were from 14 bonsai societies in Southeast. 82 bonsai were displayed. The bonsai were all species and styles. A lot can be learned from viewing the bonsai that were on display. The way species are styled. The types of pots used, stands used and accent plants used. The way the individual clubs displayed was very interesting. The use of lighting in one display should be studied. The art of bonsai is evolving. To grow bonsai as an art you must attract people to the art. To attract people to the art the art must be displayed in a way that makes the bonsai look their best but brings more interest to the display. This will be our last meeting with a ACBS program until Feb of 2010. December meeting will be our Christmas Dinner meeting, January will be the Ben Oki workshop. This program should inspire you as you begin your winter work on your bonsai.

Joe Day

ACBS November 3rd
Regular meeting
Bonsai Photographs from
The Carolina Expo.
7 P.M. at the Garden Center

Host: ACBS

Tokanoma: Craig Kuntz

December 01, ACBS

Christmas Dinner Meeting

We meet at the Garden center. Each member brings a covered dish of either a salad, vegetable or sweet. Joe Kuhn will ask all members to select a dish to bring so we will have a good selection.

January ACBS

Ben Oki Workshop

The exact date will be sent out to ACBS members when we receive conformation. We will try to announce this at the November ACBS meeting and have member sigh up to work with Ben.

REVIEW JIM VANLANDINGHAM

The desire so see a ACBS auction tree actually worked on or become a bonsai was wonderfully done during Jim's workshop. Four nursery trees became bonsai in training. The Blvd. Cypress can be a show tree in a couple of years with the normal seasonal

Work a bit of wire and a good bonsai container. Seldom do you see a piece of material move so far so fast. Lots of teaching and back and forth conservation between audience and teacher made this a great learning experience. Jim's easy going style put eve-

ryone at ease making the questions flow. Thanks to those who attended and brought material worthy of any bonsai workshop. I enjoyed my time spent with Jim I think everyone else did also. Joe Day

AMAZING FALL ACBS AUCTION

You can't make an auction. You can find a location, set a date, a time, but all else has to happen because people care enough to donate items for the auction. Every year the week before the auction the items to auction that we know about are few, very few. We arrive at the auction, set up tables, make coffee, take a deep breath and wait for items. A single item, a few items, box of items, a trunk load of items, a pick up truck load of items and suddenly we are all rushing to number the items and set up additional table to allow for good viewing. We go from the worry that we have too few items to

the worry that we have enough table to display it all. With tables and the floor full of items we wonder if we will get a good crowd of bidders. The last half hour before bidding starts the crowd builds and we start to smile. The auction now has all the ingredients for a successful event, bid items of all types, people of all types, food of all types and drink of all types. The gavel falls and the bidding process starts. Items hit the table, bids top out, repeat this about 200 times as fast as you can and the night starts to become a fun blur of voices, waving bid cards and hands, shifting eyes, hard

looks, laughter and smiles. If you select bid items in the best order the crowd hangs in until almost the last item is moved from the viewing tables and over the bid table. A great check out team makes this very critical part of any auction a smooth flow of happy bonsai artist saying a final good bye and loading treasure for the trip home. The auction team grabs a final drink of choice, cookies, a broom, mop, garbage bag so we leave a clean room and a good impression with the great people who allow us to use their facility. Tired, yes...happy with the results... Oh yes, Thanks all. Joe Day

NOVEMBER, FLIP, FLOP WEATHER DAYS

September and October our normal dry months were wet, very wet. Middle October it suddenly gets dry, windy and cold. Not freezing but going from 90's to 60's is a 30 degree drop. When it's been 90's and 100 percent humidity the cool, dry is a welcome change. Winter will come so again I give this advice, get

ready..... Place all your tropical plants near their winter shelter not spread all over the yard. Clean out our winter protection structure. Tropical and very small bonsai need the most protection, Larger bonsai are usually ok placed out of the wind on the ground. Large bonsai can take temps to the mid 20's as long as

they are not in a lot of wind. A light freeze is good from all your non-tropical bonsai. It stops new growth, hardens the buds and slows any root growth. This starts the process to harden them up for the colder winter days. With a bit of luck the first light freeze will give you some fall color on your bonsai. Joe Day

ROAD TRIPS

Russell Coker and I, Joe Day attended the Pensacola Bonsai Society Fall Auction. Pots, pots and more bonsai pots were on hand. Russell went for best quality, I went for price, need and quality. We both came home happy. Good food, good people and good results, thanks Pensacola.

Thanks to Kim Naquin's offer of a ride with him to the Carolina Bonsai Expo I, Joe Day, got to attend a great

bonsai get together, view a good permanent collection and see a lot of very good bonsai from a lot of southeastern bonsai artist. The arboretum in Ashville is a beautiful place with excellent facilities. I had a wonderful opportunity to meet and talk with lots of bonsai artist that I have meet over the years as I go around the south on teaching tours. The expo was well attended. The lectures and

demo's were held in large rooms with more than 100 people attending every event. The public was invited at no cost to most events. The display was full of people all the time it was open. Nice to see so many people enjoying the art of bonsai. The vendor area was very busy. The trip back was 10 hours of riding in a blinding rain storm. I was very happy to walk into my house. Wonderful trip. Thank you Kim. Joe Day

WINTER WORK

The more bonsai you have the longer the work period has to be. If your collection is large you start winter work as soon as growth slows down. That is now. We will get warm again, and then cool then warm but the more frequent cool days will prevent strong growth. My Pines get needle plucked, my Juniper get wired and pinched. You can create jin, shari and carve any time. I do not work on Azalea and Camellia in the fall. I wire most plants now but do not hard trim until after leaf fall. The fertilizing question is hard to explain. We use a artificial soil mix that by itself does not have stored nutrients. We

must supply them. Pine bark stores fertilizer when you place it in the mix but it's not enough to supply nutrients for a long time. When we have a lot of rain and we have had a lot of rain, the fertilizer in the soil is mostly flushed out. Organic fertilizer needs weeks to become available so the best option is to use a low strength chemical fertilizer for any bonsai that stay green all winter or go dormant very late in the fall or winter. Do not let the soil level drop below any roots. Soil insulates those small roots near the surface of the soil. Those small roots are the feeder system and your future root display as

they grow so take care of them. Frozen feeder roots can lead to dead twigs next spring. You can loose ramification on your best bonsai if you don't stay on top of your care routine.

Fertilizing is minimal, watering is minimal, one spray for fungus will probably be adequate, so care beyond a safe location from wind and cold is easy.

The next article says a lot about how simple can go bad quickly and deadly. Read it with care. It could save your bonsai.

Joe Day

WHY HOT HOUSES ARE KILLERS

A closed hot house on a clear day with temps in the 60' and 70's can quickly reach 100 plus degrees.

When plants are placed 3 or 4 or more deep on a bench, under a bench it becomes difficult to impossible to water all the plants to the same level of soil moisture.

Light levels in any hot house

are less than outside light levels.

Air circulation in a hot house is hampered by lack of movements in corners, below benches and between plants.

The humidity level will stay higher than the humidity level outside and will be uneven in

different places in the hot house.

These conditions are excellent for the growth of insects, fungus and disease.

More bonsai die from too hot, too wet, too dry conditions in a hot house than die from cold. Hot houses are very important care systems....when they are properly used. Joe Day

SKETCH BOOK BONSAI

Working on a thousand dollar bonsai when you are a ten dollar max guy could and should bring stress in your life. At what level does an "oops" become a mistake. A ten dollar guy making the wrong cut on a thousand dollar bonsai probably made a mistake. So how do you become proficient at styling bonsai? A great way is to do lots and lots of trimming on material that is cheap and

plentiful. It's a lot like making quick sketches on paper except the sketches can change on their own. Not only can you learn how to style stock material if you watch with care and detail how the material responds to trimming you will know how to prune for shape the next time you prune.

Remember those Boxwoods that you could have taken home from the auction for one dollar each? They are

perfect sketch book bonsai material. For a dollar you can only make "oops" not mistakes.

You can also learn a whole lot about styling and how Boxwoods grow.

Seldom does opportunity go for a dollar a chance. The cost of learning can be cheap or very expensive. Confidence comes from knowing. Knowing comes from experience. Experience comes from experiencing. Joe Day

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Dedicated to the art of bonsai

When The Flame Burns Low

The rush of Spring work, bonsai events, very hot, very humid long summer days suddenly end with a cold damp windy spell of short sunlight days. The bonsai sit on the benches looking tired. Many leaves are turning brown either all over or in spots or along the edges. It's a time when it's too late to encourage growth, hard trim, graft or do almost any horticultural procedures. For most plants it's too early to wire as applying wire is much easier after the leaves have fallen and the bonsai have been trimmed to shape. Repotting is very iffy for most species as they are in a declining horticultural state somewhere between growing and dormant. It's difficult to get too excited about bonsai at this moment. It's very important not to lose interest, that's a bonsai killer. Bonsai do their best when you work "with" their growing schedule not your free time schedule. It's a great time to just take time to visit with your bonsai. Look at them individually and make mental improvements. You don't have to ever push the issue with your bonsai. Only when you know a bonsai has a health problem do you make hasty but informed decisions and take hasty actions to save the bonsai. Bonsai should be enjoyed. Use this time to enjoy the results of your month of hard work. Take photographs so you can look back and see the progress each bonsai has made.

Joe Day
