

SOUTHERN BONAIST

LAST CHANCE WORK NIGHT THE MAY 3RD ACBS MEETING

The period from the first freezing night in the Fall until the day time temps are about 90 degrees in May are the prime days to do heavy work on most non-tropical bonsai. Our May 3rd ACBS regular meeting will be a great chance to get help with a bonsai that you want to improve over the long, long summer. Every species has it's own schedule of the best time to do heavy work without harming the material. We will talk about this as we work with the material each member bring to this meeting. We are past our schedule of shows for Spring and Summer of 2010. We have on our schedule the Fall Library Show that will happen some time in either October or November. You can work on your bonsai without the worry that a show is just around the corner. Now is the time to set up your bonsai for next years show schedule that will include our show plus the regional show in Pensacola.

Joe Day

ACBS May 4th 7 P.M. at The Garden Center Last Chance Workshop

Bring your bonsai or bonsai material for advice

Or

Hands on work.

Host: ACBS

Tokanoma: Members bring something that looks nice.

The Host List

June: Craig Kuntz

July: Peter Dias

August: Tommy Skelton

September: Becky Guthrie

October: Marguivite Dukiss

BACK TO WHAT EVER "NORMAL" IS

This newsletter was created using Microsoft Publisher 7. I have not had time to look for all the new features. Programs don't come with instructions any more so I guess I will go to the Microsoft web-site and see if this updated program has any fea-

tures that would make it better or more usable. Creating a newsletter is time consuming so a familiar layout certainly makes it go smoother. The bottom line stays the same, a newsletter is only worth creating if the members are actually reading it and gaining

some useful information. I get almost no feedback from ACBS members to tell me if any member actually read this but I do get feedback from people who read it on our web-site.

Joe Day

A COLD WINTER-LOOKING BACK

I followed all the advice that I always give in the newsletter. I put all bonsai down on the ground out of the wind. I put sheets over the best bonsai during the coldest nights, I put my tropical bonsai in the back of my poly house and put a plastic sheet to minimize the space. Two ceramic heaters ran during the cold nights. The only bonsai that didn't survive was a lantana that was outside. It was much too large to easily be put in to the tropical space without having to make the tropical space much larger and more difficult to heat. The trade of was difficult to make but it's the situation demanded a

decision be made. I a sheet over the Lantana, a sheet of poly over the sheer and crossed my fingers. A normal winter and it would have survived but 7 days of continuous freeze was just too much.

Every experience is a learning experience. This was the coldest winter I have ever experienced as a person with a large collection of old bonsai in bonsai containers. I remember some very cold days when I first started building my collection but those days I was able to put everything in one large poly house.

I can sum up what I know as of now.

1. Healthy trees can handle a lot of stress, hot or cold.
2. The wind must be avoided as much as possible.
3. Low to the ground, on the ground and under any protection helps a lot.
4. You must continue to water with care not to over wet but to maintain moisture in the container.

I lost "no" non-tropical bonsai either in bonsai containers or in nursery pots.

Joe Day

DON CORLEY'S JUNIPER CARE WORKS

I have always had Juniper bonsai in my bonsai collection but they never looked much more than pretty good. I researched and read any and all articles on Juniper as a bonsai. The advice from all the sources was just one large mass of conflicting information. Many times it was easy to find two articles on

Juniper in the same issue of a bonsai magazine giving completely different information about any and all juniper care.

I have soaked my juniper with the acid type liquid fertilizer and poured some on my Juniper in the ground. They are growing very strong and have the best green color

ever.

Every thing that makes a good bonsai a "good bonsai" must be grown by the bonsai artist. Only healthy bonsai survive the stress of living life as a tree in a container. Don Corley's Juniper bonsai care routine gives me healthy Juniper bonsai. Thanks Don.

Joe Day

HOT TIMES ARE JUST AROUND THE CORNER

The winter was cold, the Spring was cool and windy that's normal and Summer will be hot. Hot when you wake up, hotter by lunch time and even hotter in the evening. Most bonsai don't mind a bit as long as they don't dry out before they get the next watering.

Look at the soil level in you pots now and add soil if needed. This is very important.

Start shifting your bonsai around. Bonsai that need a lot of sun need to be in a location that gets a lot of sun. Bonsai species that tolerate more shade will also dry a bit slower if you move them into a more shade prone area.

You will get 90 percent of your growth with most non-tropical bonsai during the first 60 days after first leaf. It's very important to give each species the correct amount of

sunlight, water and fertilizer. Strong healthy bonsai tolerate stress much better than weak bonsai.

If possible water early each morning. This will give each bonsai the maximum amount of moisture in the soil. If the tree is too dry when you check it in the afternoon it can need more soil in the pot or a location with more shade or both. You are the caretaker. That that job seriously. Joe Day

REVIEW OF THE REGIONAL SHOW

All bonsai shows start with bumps and this one was no different. Our contact person wasn't at the library when we arrived so the lady with the key wasn't too sure about our "what's and where's" but that became a non-issue and we started set up work. Thanks to almost our total membership showing up and getting busy we were set up with bonsai on the tables by 9 A.M.

The display of bonsai inside the show room was impressive. Lots of species and styles. We hope to have photo's of all show trees on the web site soon. It was nice to see some species in the show that have "never" been

shown. Bonsai is a ever expanding art.

We also set up outside the entrance of the library with a few tables of bonsai to work on and with. That always proves a point of interest to the public. We had a steady stream of people viewing the show or watching us work and asking questions. The weather was fantastic. 70's a bit of a breeze and total sunshine.

The bonsai artist from Pensacola and Ft Walton were the hard core bonsai artist we find supporting our every event. We appreciate them in so many ways. The library did a good job of publicity so we

had a lot of people who came out just for the show. Some were very interested and voiced an interest in attend our meetings. We always welcome new faces.

With the clock showing break down time everyone pitched in and make very quick work of packing and cleaning. We certainly appreciate the help at that point of the show day. It's a lot of fun but the early up, packing , unpacking, putting up, working on bonsai, can certainly eat up all the daily energy you started out with. Home to hot coffee, hot shower and we start to plan the next one.

Joe Day

THE STRANGE "MICA" POT SAGA

As the story goes, the supplier of MICA pots, and they all come from Korea, announced they would raise the price the price by more than 50 percent so all the American importers decided to stop importing the pots. The supply as just about dried up. A quick look on all the internet sites will prove that. You will find

some Mica pots still for sale but the prices are higher and not all sizes are available.

How will this all shake out? Who knows. The good thing is now that the Chinese are sending in lots and lots of clay pots you can now buy clay pots as cheap or cheaper than Mica. The trick is to find someone on the net with chap

pots and find one close enough that the shipping will now kill the cheap price. I like Mica better for growing out plants because the heat or cold or freezing isn't a problem with Mica but when you have a big price and availability problem you go with the best thing you can get at the best price. Joe Day

THE MIDDLE YEARS

If I look back over the past 32 years in bonsai it unfolds this way. The first 10 years were mostly spent trying to keep things alive as the stress of styling, repotting and weather and the lack of actual experience tool its toll on the trees. Trying to use growing information from far away places that had no, absolutely no, similar climate elements to the gulf coast proved to be in most cases a disaster. Trying to use

soil mixes that were too dense for our area but worked in a much dryer climate also proved a disaster. The first 10 years we found our own bonsai way. Our soil, our schedule of care came about.

The second ten years were a shake out period as we discovered what species actually can live a happy, healthy life in a bonsai container in our area. The other side of that is

we discovered what kills species when you try to grow them in containers. The top two killers were root problems and wood rot caused by badly treated cuts or un-treated cuts. Keep roots healthy and cuts healing properly is often more than half the way to keep bonsai growing.

The last 10 years was discovering how sensitive plants become as they grow older as a container plant. Joe Day

How to Maintain a Bonsai Collection

When the grass in the yard gets too high you just step a bit higher as you go out to your bonsai area. When the wife asks you to do something you answer "as soon as I finish what I have to do in the bonsai area" knowing you never finish what you need to do in the bonsai area. When your children come over for a nice visit you do it in the bonsai area talking as you and everyone else walks around and pull weed from the bonsai pots. When friends come over before you walk into the house or offer them something to drink you say "help me move a few things in the bonsai area before we settle down". Yes, much like an insurance salesman you never forget what's important and never let being thoughtful and civil get in your way.

A bit heavy—yea but it's so close to the truth. You are the life provider for your collection. You didn't give the plants life but you are the one that keeps it going. Work, yes hard work. When you get home at 10 P.M. or later and you still have to water the collection it takes a lot of "want and need to". When the family gets away for a few days and you stay home because you have to take care of the collection you know you have established a "value" to the collection. Long term care of anything is difficult, be it family member, pet, home or a bonsai collection.

Our Regional Show is the perfect example of why long term care of bonsai is worth all the effort. Almost all or all the bonsai were products of many years of care. If your personal pride wasn't enough just watching the public looking at the bonsai and listening to what they have to say is worth the time and effort. I don't know why anyone else stays involved in the art of bonsai long term. I never ask and it never comes up in conversation. I just know I have never had a bad moment in my bonsai area, some "oh crap" moments but no bad moments.

Joe Day
