

Columbus Bonsai Society

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Columbus Bonsai Society
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Meetings start at 2pm unless otherwise noted



COLUMBUS
BONSAI
SOCIETY

What's up for Sunday, January 15

Our meeting will be held in the Education Building back in the Community Garden area. This is a good space for the January meeting as we will be having our first sale of the library collection. Also, Kevin Farris has been in Japan for the last month and intends to have a slide show of Bonsai related places he was able to visit.

So – The meeting has two topics-a Book Sale and A Slide Show.

The club has made a difficult but necessary decision: we will be reducing our library inventory. As bonsai books have become more widely available, and the club struggles with access to the physical library, it becomes harder to justify retaining our collection.

CBS members will have first access to all the materials we will be parting with. Part of the agenda for the January meeting will be a book sale. Some items will be prices for sale directly, most will be auctioned. The collection is fairly large and contains material of many vintages, some common items, others fairly rare. There are a great number of signed items. Bid early, bid often and don't be afraid to crack open that piggy bank.

The other agenda item for January is a Slide Show/travelogue from CBS board member Kevin Faris. Kevin has recently returned from a trip to Japan to visit his in-laws, and managed to work in some bonsai related destinations while there. Expect some heart warming pix of grandparents meeting their grandchild for the first time, as well as some lovely tree related photos.

Check CBS Facebook group for last minute changes or updates.

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Down the Rabbit Hole by Mark Passerello, President

I had a most unusual online experience last week. I responded to a post in an online forum, and did not immediately get overwhelmed with contrary responses!

The venue was a Facebook beginners forum. Some one posted a picture of their first bonsai-some kind relative had bought them an everything included from one of the mail-order vendors to be found on the web. They had just potted up their juniper and wanted to know if it needed to be dormant!

You can imagine how this looked to shape up. A few folks chimed in with that knee jerk reaction "It must be outside" ! I offered the suggestion that it would be easier to raise a juniper outside year round, BUT this tree hasn't had the time and preparations to go dormant. Simply exiling it to the backyard would likely be as deadly as parking it on top of a radiator!

The lead up to dormancy for a deciduous tree is fairly obvious, but evergreens are making similar, though less obvious changes. And I believe that junipers die indoor due to faulty watering (too wet/too dry, or cycles between both) that kills their roots and dooms them to perish in a few weeks. Lack of dormancy, low light, low humidity are often cited by the "experts" as to why a juniper cant live indoors. But those causes of death are a slow lingering end, they could take months. If your tree dies in a few weeks there are far more immediate causes!

As we begin the new year, the calendar reminds us that club dues are due. We are encouraging both new members and renewing members to use the club web site to pay quickly and easily. We want to stop touching paper-membership forms and checks-that can be lost or delayed. Remember too that we have partnered with the Central Ohio Cactus & Succulent Society to offer a dual membership-two great organizations, one modest price.

Here is the address for the club website/membership options:

[Memberships – columbusbonsai.org](https://columbusbonsai.org/memberships)

Select the option you want, add it to your cart, and follow the steps. A few folks have reported difficulty paying for the membership online. You must add it to your cart and then complete the purchase. <https://columbusbonsai.org/product/memberships/>

Random Thotz by Zack Clayton, Editor

How much attention do you pay to found on the web? I learn a lot as I curate the blogs and videos that show up there. In the Root Over Rock article that Ken submitted this month I looked at some of the other material on those websites. There was a lot of good information there. In particular there was an article on the infolific.com site about winter maintenance on a larch forest. I have been busy most springs when I should have been working on my specimen larch so it gets neglected. Hmm. If you can work on a forest of them you should be able to work on a singleton, right? Not repotting, but pruning for shape and display. I will try that this winter. Who knows when the time for Spring work will arrive with the crazy temperatures posting in central Ohio. Getting that styling

done early may be what saves my larch from another season of neglect.

On a different front, I got some acorns planted in this warm spell. Hopefully the squirrels won't find them all. I was inspired by Ryan's talk on growing from seed to try planting some different seeds than my normal maple spinners. I get volunteers in pots of other trees, in the flowerbeds, and in grow boxes that I just fill with soil and put under the trees I want. The Japanese maples are the only ones that need to stratify and letting them sit out for the winter seems to work for germination, but some vermin (squirrels) seems to find the seedlings particularly tasty. I know they go after acorns but some survive in the yard that they don't eat. I need to figure that out. They will uproot a seedling and eat the acorn off the stem and leave it to die. Have I mentioned that I hate squirrels?

Articles

MABA Convention in 2024

Can you feel the excitement building? CBS will be hosting the Mid-America Bonsai Alliance biennial convention in 2024, and even though it may seem a long way off, plans are shaping up. Venue selection is almost finalized, and several prominent artists are committed to be our guest artists. Expect updates on those topics very soon.

If you have never been to a regional convention, its is an incredible experience: the comradery of committed bonsai artists& hobbyists is inspiring, the opportunities for engagement, for learning, for retailing are amazing! Its just downright fun!

A website is up and running mabaohio2024.com

The site will be continually updated as details come into place. But consider these highlights:

- * Top level tree exhibition with trophies and cash prizes.
- * A bonsai ceramics contest, featuring recent work by American potters.
- * 20+ vendors of bonsai related items-trees, plants stock, pottery,etc.
- * 20 workshops-learn with highly regarded experts, at a range of skill levels and price points.
- * Demonstrations by guest artists, plus multiple learning seminars on bonsai and bonsai complimentary topics.
- * Meet & Greet reception Friday night ,Gala awards banquet Saturday

Save the dates: August 30&31and September 1, 2024. Plan on attending! Better yet, plan on volunteering!

Root Over Rock Extravaganza

Root-Over-Rock by Ken Schultz

I am by no means an expert on this style. I can recall Zack and I being asked by the Marion County Garden Club to have a Root-Over-Rock session for a group of beginners. I recall that it was a winter month as it was snowing on our way home. We had secured a dozen or so Ficus as the plant for their workshop and we'd secured a carton of Lotus pots to plant them in. We asked that the students find a rock that they'd like to use, providing some size guidance. If I had known then how good Root- Over Rock are created, we'd have planned differently. (This was 20 years ago.) I wonder if any of those workshop trees are still in existence?

Since then I have attempted a few Root-Over Rock Trees. So far the two under current development have not had their roots fully exposed on the rock. One is a Trident Maple and the other is a Milantia (false Wisteria). As with Tanuki (Phoenix Graft) style bonsai, good adherence of the tree to its rock or trunk is difficult to achieve. Both require serious preparation and planning to achieve the desired look. Gaps between the roots and the rock are consid-

ered bad. However, over time a root may develop thickness that will close the cape between it and the rock. With Tanuki, sometimes the Nebari pushes the trunk away from the deadwood. I suspect this may also happen with some Root over Rock. Herein after referred to as ROR.

All the articles I found on the subject say that finding a good rock is important. Remember that your tree will grow but that it will take significant time. Your rock needs to be one that is non-crumbling (sandstone or chalk) and doesn't give off minerals harmful to your tree's health. IF you have no geology classes in your background, a good aquarium store may have interesting rocks that will suit your needs. I once found a cage full of rocks at Mr. Mulch for creating pond features. You are looking for a rock that has or can have root channels chiseled into them and still look natural. In some of the articles I found it mentions Seiryu rocks. I Googled them and it claims that Lowes has them, though I've never seen them there. Fuku Bonsai uses Lava Rock to create Schefflera ROR specimens. In Japan a volcanic rock called Ibigawa is used. Lava rock lends itself to carving with a Masonry bit. It helps tremendously if your Rock's bottom can be flattened to help it remain upright in its pot. It may need to be wired into its pot or cemented. The problem with cement is that it is permanent, don't do this



Trident Maple after 1 year. The shrink wrap over the roots is not best practice.



Geanangel's Award winning Shimpaku in a rock

with a pot you want to reuse. The bottom line is that the rock should have an attractive shape, color and texture. Do not use rocks with shiny or glittering textures, as they will detract attention from the tree. Freeze thaw may split certain sedimentary rocks such as shale or thinly bedded limestone.

Round smooth rocks will suggest a watery scene, where sharper rocks should give the illusion of a mountain like setting. Your rock will ideally have a saddle like depression where you can plant your tree so that it looks natural in its decision to grow on the rock. It doesn't have to be at the apex of the rock. The rock may be as large as you are able to carry. What you don't want is a rock that after a dozen years looks like a small boulder being swallowed by the tree. Make sure to thoroughly clean your rock before use.

The second element to your creation is plant material. I have seen a wide variety of material used. Some

take more patience as they are slower growing. Or it takes a long time for their roots to develop. Trident Maples are frequently used, as they are fairly rapid to develop. Some Tropicals like the Schefflera already mentioned and the Ficus also provide faster results. However, don't overlook Elms, Pyracantha,



Large Vietnamese Rock planting. These can be 8' long or more.



Trident Maple at Wildwood Gardens

roots to the rock. Fuku accordion folds aluminum foil with a layer of sphagnum moss next to the roots, to create channels of media for root development. The pleats are 1/2" and holes are poked in the foil every 1/2'. Another reference also used heavy aluminum foil to compress the roots and soil media tightly to the rock. The moss should be soaked for several hours before using.

A bit of soil/moss needs to be placed under the base of your tree where it is perched on its rock. Remember to try to match the front of the rock and the front of your tree. A tree on the front side of the rock will appear larger than one growing on the back. It is possible that a large rock will have more than one tree growing on it or it may have some accent plants and moss. For these it may be necessary to add anchorage wires. I saw wires adhered to rocks using baking soda then drops of super glue were added. The wire was coiled a few times around the end of a chop-stick and held tightly to the rock. Epoxy resin may also be used. As you place the roots on the rock, don't forget to keep them moist by misting.

I tried the nursery pot filled with organic potting soil that can be cut down an inch or so every year until the rock has reached its fully envisioned exposure.



Shimpaku on assembled rock slabs

Azaleas, junipers, pines and spruce. Because the roots need to be flexible, young material is best to start with. The roots need to be long enough to reach the soil level you want to achieve, unless you are planting your tree in a pocket of soil on the rock.

You need to identify your root trails down the rock to where your eventual soil line will be. Then your bare rooted plant material can have its roots guided down these trails. Some use sphagnum moss in the root trails and other use muck. Regardless, you need a way to encourage the roots to grow on the rock. In addition to the organic material, twine, which will decompose over time, can be used to bind the



Azalea over rock

The roots are still covered with muck as they develop. The tridents roots and muck were wrapped with plastic wrap to hold them to the rock. I've read that I should have filled the pot with sand, which is more easily washed from the muck wrapped roots to fill the pot. (I personally think a better tree that was younger would have helped. Maybe next time?) I've got my eye on some Mugo seedlings to try next. When first planted, deciduous material should be pruned back to direct strength to the roots. During the first few years of development topside pruning should be rigorous. Feed every two weeks. Water each day during the growing season.

As the roots are exposed, smaller fuzzy roots above the soil line need to be pruned so that the tree's energy is directed to those clasping the rock. Rewrap roots that are not clinging to the

rock when checking on ROR development to achieve the best results.

Don't wait to style your tree. It needs to be wired as it grows so that your final vision is achieved. This includes adding movement to the trunk. Your tree on its rock can be wind-swept, semi cascade, slanting. When you think its ready to move your ROR from a nursery pot to a bonsai pot, treat the rock as an extension of the trunk, selecting the best front.

One of the most spectacular ROR that I've seen was developed by Jack Wikle over 32 years. It appeared to be a tree whose roots were exposed as it grew along a stream bank. I believe it was a *Pyracantha*.

? *Pyracantha*



References

<https://www.growingbonsai.net/starting-a-root-over-rock-bonsai/>

Pictures Text

<http://www.fukubonsai.com/4a11.html>

Pictures Text

<https://balconygardenweb.com/how-to-grow-a-bonsai-on-rocks-pictures/>

Pictures only

<https://infolific.com/leisure/bonsai/planting-bonsai-on-rock/>

Detailed Text

Seasonal Care

Water your indoor plants frequently. Daily may not be too often. If you are growing in boot trays or styrene storage containers, I have found that when the bottom of the tray is dry, you can top water the plants, and then add enough extra water to ¼ inch depth. That holds the moisture for about a day and a half in my house. Succulents need a bit less, and thirsty plants need a lot more. I have a Parrots Beak that I have in a large saucer that holds ½” of water and it gets sucked dry daily.

The see-saw that is our current weather has everything “Normal” out the window. Unseasonable warmth in early to mid December followed by subzero lows in the last part of the month may mean some of our trees are going to be crispy come spring. And now we are back to above average temperatures this month. I will say watch your pots for drying soil and water if needed. Fortunately, there seems to be rain with most of the weather fronts in the forecast. With the cooler temperatures associated with this weather pattern there is not a lot of need for water for transpiration, but the night that do go below freezing can induce freeze drying in the soil. Each soil mix will react a little differently so watch for drying signs in the pots.

Speaking of “Average” temperatures, it is not a static number. It is an average of the last 30 years adjusted by decade as needed. The adjustment happened last year and all average temperatures are now about a degree warmer than they would have been last year for our region.

I could give the regular list of things to do for our trees in January, but those instructions apply to a normal winter season, and that is not what we have. The point I tried to make in the above paragraphs is this – use your experience of what works for you and adapt to the weather as needed.

Of course, it is not too early to start thinking of what needs to be done with your tree to get it ready for the show in July. I know our serious artists will be thinking of what needs to be prepared for the MABA show in 2024. Anyone who wants to have a tree in that show is planning for it now.

Start making lists of work for Spring, supplies needed, tools desired, and styling ideas.
Sharpen your tools.

Found on the Web

Field-grown black pine progression – part 1 Jonas Dupuich

<https://bonsaitonight.com/2023/01/07/field-grown-black-pine-progression-part-1/>

A short history of development of a black pine grown from seed in 1993 to early 2017. The rest of the story will be in his next installment. Yes, this hobby is not for instant gratification.

Brief Bio of an artist and curator, Jack Sustic.

https://record.umich.edu/articles/bonsai-specialist-embraces-nature-at-a-smaller-scale/?fbclid=IwAR2F4794vEH08EN6vgfwUtnhneeRiTwsHz5aaAg-EO_iVPLSecAOZL_5CSw

Although the links in ROR point to root over Rock plantings, the home pages that list text have a lot of good bonsai information

Coming Attractions

Our first meeting of 2023. 60 years of growing small and thinking big!

Over the years CBS has amassed a sizable library. As the availability of bonsai books has increased over time, our ability to store and distribute this valuable resource has become limited.

We will begin to liquidate our holdings, starting at the January 2023 meeting. There will be a variety of bonsai books available - the common and rare, the inexpensive to the highly valued. CBS members will have first crack at this impressive treasure trove, which will be offered by straight sale, live auction and silent auction for the first few meetings of the year. Sales beyond that point will depend on the success of the member response through the March meeting.

The **February 19th** meeting will be a build your own pot workshop at The Kiln Room. 2000 S High Street, in The Fort, Columbus, OH 43207. They are closed Sundays so we will have exclusive use of the facility. Staff will offer building assistance, glazing, and will fire our pieces after they are dry. See the website for details and registration. There is a \$60 cost associated with this workshop for materials and service. This has been a popular workshop in the past and some very nice work has come out of them. Sign up is at the club store,

<https://columbusbonsai.org/product/make-your-own-pot-workshop/>

Bonsai Here and Beyond the Outerbelt

Our normal schedule is meetings at Franklin Park on the third Sunday at 2:00 for general meetings, and 10:00 for scheduled workshops. Please stay tuned for new developments as we often get short notice from FPC of location changes. Thanks for your understanding and patience!

January 15 Concurrently the first phase of the Library liquidation will be ongoing in several formats – direct purchase of duplicates and common books, silent auction of uncommon books and possibly a live auction of rare books. Kevin Farris will also be showing slides of his recent trip to Japan.

February 19 Sunday Workshop session at Kiln Room Columbus. This is scheduled for 3 hours starting at 2:00 PM. Cost is \$60 including clay, building assistance, under glaze, firing and finished work delivered at the next meetings. For registration:

<https://columbusbonsai.org/product/make-your-own-pot-workshop/>

March 19 Repotting – preparation, tools, techniques, wiring in, and finishing.

April 16 ? Huth-A-Palooza? Pending confirmation.

May 21 BYOT and Show Prep. We Upped our game in 2022, Lets keep it going.

May 27-29 Brussel's Bonsai Rendezvous, Brussel's Bonsai, Olive Branch, MS

June 8-11 MILE HIGH BONSAI! American Bonsai Society Learning Seminars,. Denver Botanic Gardens, Denver, Colorado. Guest artists: Kathy Shaner, Jennifer Price, Todd Schlafer.

June 18 BYOT and Show Prep.

July 21 Show set up - time TBD

July 2 2-23 Show venue at Dawes Arboretum, see Columbus Bonsai.org for details.

July 23 Show teardown 5:00

August 20 Tropicals – Guest Artist TBA

September 17 TBD

October 15 Picnic, pot luck, member sale

November 19 Election and ?

December ? Holiday Gathering

2024

August 29, 30, and September 1 MABA in Columbus. Information is on our Facebook Group <https://www.facebook.com/groups/248412035864133/> Columbus Bonsai Society – Group, and <https://www.mabaohio2024.com/>

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Membership Information

Due to a streamlined work flow for handling memberships our dues policy has changed to the website online, credit card, or paypal. There will be no further paper forms. Website is <https://columbusbonsai.org/product/memberships/>

This change was prompted by historical failure to correctly connect membership payments to an email and newsletter delivery. The new system has a structure that should solve these problems. To go with this new procedure, all 2022 memberships will expire with the January 2023 newsletter. After that you can still renew, but you will not get the newsletter to remind you about it. You can go to the website, or the facebook group to link to the website.

Going forward, the newsletter delivery will run January to January with the exception of class participation membership and early joining members at the show or after. These exceptions will include the current year and the next. So the FPC class of 2022 membership is good for 2023 as well. New members who joined at the Dawes Show are also extended thru 2023.