

Columbus Bonsai Society

February , 2023 Newsletter
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Columbus Bonsai Society
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Meetings start at 2pm unless otherwise noted

COLUMBUS
BONSAI
SOCIETY

Table of Contents

Article	Page
What's Up	1
Down the Rabbit Hole	2
Random Thotz	2
In Memorial	2
Articles	3
Seasonal Care	4
Pot Examples	5
Found on the Web	6
Coming Attractions	6
Bonsai Here and Beyond the Outerbelt.	6
Membership Information	7

What's up for Sunday, February 19 at 2:pm

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 about 2 pounds of clay, other 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/>

With two pounds of clay you can make several small pots, a couple of medium size, or one large pot. These can be free hand built, pressed into a form such as a plastic bowl or basin, or rolled out into a sheet and draped over a form. See the examples later in the newsletter.

Down the Rabbit Hole by Mark Passerello, President

"Unusual weather we're havin, isn't it?" Seems I have begun more than one spring time president's message with that quote by the Cowardly Lion from the Wizard of Oz. But Ohio weather just keeps making it an appropriate quip. But even so, to experience 60+, nearly 70 degree days in FEBRUARY seems beyond unusual, its downright extraordinary.

I'm hearing from some sources that trees are beginning to bud out and repotting may be happening soon.



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That's extraordinary for sure. Winter is certainly not over, so caution is needed. A repotted tree is at a vulnerable stage, and usual practice is to avoid letting them freeze. Easier said than done with big trees, or trees that number more than a few! Those with cold frames or cold greenhouse are fortunate in that respect.

Cross your fingers and be careful, and hope for few loses. This is the kind of spring that may have heavy casualties.

On a more upbeat note, I'm looking forward to our February meeting at The Kiln Room. There are still spaces available in the make a pot workshop, and if you are not going to sign up, observers will still be welcome.

Random Thotz by Zack Clayton, Editor

As I'm writing this the news is calling for next weeks temperatures up to 20 degrees above normal for this time of year. The lows are still going below freezing tho, so don't be suckered into repotting too soon. I expect the old "safe planting date" of Mother's Day has gone out the window, but with the irregularities in temperature swings, which way has it gone? With jet streams and polar vortexes fighting it out for supremacy, it could go either way. Expect freezing and balmy weather mixed up for the next three months.

Most trees will tolerate repotting after bud break, you just need to protect them and watch water needs. One notable exception to that is larch. They do not like to have their roots messed with after bud break. Sigh. I was hoping to repot one of mine this spring.

I will say the wind the past two weeks has been a challenge. Our trees on the ground have been reasonable safe. But in display season they would have been in danger of being blown off the bench. But any that could see the sky from their shady nooks were in danger from falling limbs. I had one that came down on a bench that protected the bonsai under it. I also lost a door off of a plastic storage shed with pots in it. Nothing in there was damaged.

In Memorial

As some of you may know, our bonsai family got a bit smaller recently. Amy Marout, club member who served terms as both treasurer and secretary passed away recently after a short illness. CBS is assisting her family in finding new homes for her trees as well as her collection of supplies and tools.

At our March meeting we will arrange a sale or auction or other suitable method to pass these items on and generate some funds to help with expenses. The trees that will be available include two very nice Ponderosa pines that came from Andy Smith's place. They have good trunks and are ready for some serious training, and are valued at least \$150 each. There is also a small, three trunk quince that is not much to speak of yet but should develop quickly as well as a Chinese elm that can use a bit of TLC. This tree is in a very good pot and has a great trunk, but has suffered a bit from neglect and will likely need some new

branches grown, which on a Elm isn't really unusual or difficult.

Amy had put together a really nice collection of supplies and tools, including five Kaneshin tools that still have their green boxes. The other tools are in a great nylon tool satchel, which is pretty full of items in good condition. It is hoped to keep the tools together as one lot.

Articles

Grow Pots for Free By Zack Clayton

At the Sheppard Branch Library meeting Ryan was showing some pictures of trees in training and showed some recycled plastic pots he was using. Not nursery pots, but more Ken Huth style pots. (No beer cans tho.) These are easy to make but some wondered how to do it. There are a couple of tips for these.

Tools: You can use a 3/16 or 7/32 inch drill to make round holes that will work. That size will hold the standard particle size most of us use. But - I prefer a hot wire for a couple of reasons. In the thinner plastic of these pots, a drill can leave small cracks that will propagate out and cause structural failure. A hot wire, actually a thin rod like is used for political signs, is heated to cherry red at one end and pushed through the plastic, sealing any small cracks that might form. This produces some odor, so work under your range hood fan. The wire also lets you elongate the hole to an oval so that a piece of aggregate can't plug a round hole. This is difficult to do with a drill as the spiral edges will catch and cause more cracking. This hot wire method works with either an electric or gas stove. I am not sure about induction type glass top stoves. I use a rod about 14" long with one end bent in three places to form a 1" square as a handle and reminder of which end to pick up. This gives about 10" of straight wire which is about all you can control, and keeps your hand from getting burnt. You only heat about 3" of wire to red and then start melting. Reheat as needed.

Containers: I use anything of an appropriate size: cottage cheese cartons, large yogurt cartons, the hard plastic carryout containers - both round and rectangle, old plastic screw top containers work well. For one year use you can even use strawberry or other produce clear clamshells - They are already perforated so you only need to cut the top off. Any of these will last for a couple of years except the thin PET clamshells. At left is a PET mushroom carton with holes melted in it. You want a large enough flat bottom to keep the filled container stable.



Making Holes: Place the container open side down on a paper towel to protect your work surface.



As you burn through the plastic you will often plunge down and tap the surface. The wire is hot enough to leave a burn mark on wood and leave melted plastic on the cooler surface. The contact is not long enough to ignite the paper towel unless you just leave the wire there. When you have the hole melted press against a side to melt about 1/8 " or a little more to form a slot. As I mentioned this keeps the hole from plugging. I make a hole in the center of the bottom and then symmetrical holes out from there. For small bottoms 3" or less I will put four holes in around the center. And three that run up the side about 1/4 inch. These side hole allow drainage if the bottom is air locked against the bench so that water can't get out. Larger containers like cottage cheese will get the center hole and 6 around the bottom with

three up the sides. Anything above 5" may get a double ring or an octagon of holes. You just want plenty of area for water to drain. These larger pots will get 4 or more side slots. See the pictures of containers and hole patterns. If you have some shallow containers make extra



6" Whipped topping Carryout box 5" x 8" Cottage cheese 4" frozen soup bowl 5"

holes in them as shallow pots tend to drain more slowly.

After you are done making pots, reheat the wire one last time to burn off any plastic residue and then quench it under some running water. It will hiss and then go quiet. It is now cool enough to put into storage for next time.

After you get some practice this goes pretty fast. I've made 20 in less than 30 minutes. Most of the time is waiting for the wire to reheat.

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 - <https://www.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 evening.

Seasonal Care for Central Ohio

Watch the weather! Don't let your trees dry out from sunny freeze thaw days or from sun and wind. Now is the time for dormant oil if you use that pest control. We had some really cold

days but probably not enough to kill the bugs.

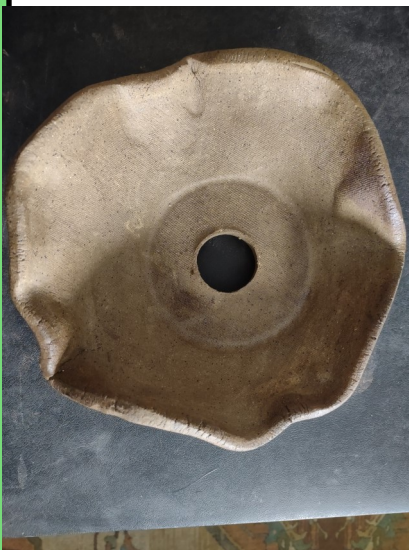
Watch for premature budding and make plans for what to do if you find it. Tender new growth is susceptible to frost and many personal and even public collections have been hit hard by false spring weather. Find a place that stays above freezing if you have early bud break and make sure they get enough light to avoid leggy growth. Node length won't shorten, that will require some severe pruning later on.

For deciduous trees consider low nitrogen fertilizer. For pines they can get the full range of major and micro nutrients as during bud growth and candle extension, this is it for this year. Anything you supply later is going to second flush growth in 2 needle pines or is used for energy production (sugars) for next year.

You can prune now to direct growth where you want it. Use your newly sharpened tools to good effect with smooth clean cuts. – You did sharpen and clean your tools this winter, right? Right? It's not too late if you didn't. Do it now.

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 is needed to prepare for the MABA show in 2024. Anyone who wants to have a tree in that show is planning for it now. Eg. Which tree, what pot, do I need a pot, what styling this spring, what grows on for next springs work, etc.

Some Easy Pot Ideas



Draped over a topping tub ~8" top and bottom view

Draped over a wash basin 10 x 16"
The pattern is a pressed Arbor vitae frond

Draped over a small ball ~10"

Pressed into a round basin ~14" 2 clay bodies



Found on the Web

A Shohin School Winter Session - Events in the real world. Does this look interesting for us? <https://bonsaitonight.com/2023/02/12/shohin-school-winter-seminar-recap/> And the dates for next year are in our calendar See also <https://www.shohinschool.com/> for a monthly calendar of events. Even If you can't go, this gives an interesting calendar for work.

Field-grown black pine progression – part 2. From 2017 to the present. <https://bonsaitonight.com/2023/01/13/field-grown-black-pine-progression-part-2/> Pay attention to the asymmetry of the side and overhead shots in the last three photos. This shows the way the forward lean and back branch fill contribute to the fullness of the tree. And how the lack of branches low on the very front help accentuate the trunk and main branches. You don't see those branches in the side view because of the foliage pads that contribute to the front view. This shows the impact of a viewing angle from one main point.

Adam Ask Why: A Client;s Amazing *Portulacaria afra*. A big old tree. <https://adamaskwhy.com/2022/06/22/a-clients-amazing-portulacaria-afra/> Repotting, a new pot, and a new front can make a big difference.

Coming Attractions

March will be Ken Huth presenting saplings, potensai, and styled trees. He always has good stock and entertaining Demos. Kevin will report on his trip to denver and working with Todd Schlafer. And there will be a quick auction of Amy Mourot's estate including trees, tools, supplies, and five Kaneshin tools in their original boxes.

In April, a discussion and demonstration of repotting. Preparation, tools needed, techniques, wiring in, adjusting soil, and finishing the surface in preparation for show.

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!

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/> There is still room .
The Kiln Room. 2000 S High Street, Columbus, OH 43207. In The Fort Building

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| March 19 | Huth-A-Palooza Ken will have his amazing variety of saplings, potensai and styled trees - And his demonstrations. Kevin will present his trip to Denver and working with Todd Schlafer. And the auction of Amy Mourot's estate. This will be a busy meeting. |
| April 16 | ? Repotting – preparation, tools, techniques, wiring in, and finishing. This is rescheduled from March. Unless there is another topic suggested by members. |
| 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 22-23 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

January 26-28 Shohin School Winter Seminar. <https://www.shohinschool.com/winter-seminar>

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.

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

[Memberships – columbusbonsai.org](https://columbusbonsai.org/product/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/>

