

Columbus Bonsai Society

July, 2023 Newsletter
Vol. 53, No. 7

Columbus Bonsai Society
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Meetings start at 2pm unless otherwise noted



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Table of Contents

Article	Page
What's Up	1
Down the Rabbit Hole	1
Random Thotz	2
Articles	2
Seasonal Care	6
Found on the Web	7
Coming Atractions	7
Bonsai Here and Beyond the Outerbelt.	8
Membership Information	9

What's up for Sunday, July 16,, at 2:00 pm

Whatever you have on your agenda. There is no club meeting as we are busy getting ready for the club show at Dawes Arboretum July 26 and 30. The show opens at 10:00 am and runs to 5:00 pm Saturday and Sunday. There will be workshops and vendors, and of course a display of member's Bonsai.

So, see you on the 28th for set up and tree drop off, and the 29th and 30th for the show and pickup/teardown Sunday at 5:00.

If you have not signed up for a volunter position, please see coming atractions for the list of what is needed.

Down the Rabbit Hole by Mark Passerello, President

Can you hear the clock ticking?

As I write this, we are just about two weeks and change away from our 51st annual show. I hope your trees are ready and that you are ready! Ive chosen trees and now need to decide display set ups, which might involve building new stands. The biggest part of that is getting tools in hand and not just thinking about it but doing it.

Hopefully, your planning is going well and you and the trees are on track for the 28th (that's Friday set up day). Always better to drop off trees on set-up day, and then spend a few hours helping whip the show into shape.

I've spent a busy summer vending around the state, and just wrapped up a 14 day, three weekend stretch that included three different events. One plant based, the others artsy or vintage themed. It's lots of working packing the car and getting there (my wife and partner in business says she feels like Sanford& Son when we pull out of the driveway) but always

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worth it getting to talk trees and pots with interested folks. It has primed the pump-as it were-for the up coming show. Looking forward to the great social component of club membership and the club show.

Hope to see all of you there. And there will be a few members who would like to be at the show but can't make it. Keep them in your thoughts.

Random Thotz by Zack Clayton, Editor

Hydrate, hydrate,hydrate! Not just you, but your trees as well. I don't know how the artists in places like Phoenix or southern Texas keep their trees alive. Obviously they do, but at 120 F it must be a challenge even for the trees acclimated to the heat. I just hope that the Washington nurseries are okay. The temperature in Wallawalla was scheduled to reach 100 and those trees are not acclimated to either the heat or drought conditions. We can water, but even shade cloth won't reduce the temperature that much – the forecast temperature is taken in the shade. Maybe they have constant mist to cool them?

Aside from the heat, I have been waging battle with bamboo again this year. Not the 1" stems I dealt with last year, but I seem to have gotten a 2 for 1 trade off of thinner stems. At least the yard proper is clearer than last year. I got to that with the mower in time to keep ahead of it. But many benches are overgrown and heavily shaded where it's coming up behind the fence and through the bench tops.

On the bright side, my Portulacaria and Ficus are loving it all. Stuff that I thought was dead I used the 4th of July rule and a lot of them leafed out. On the downside, none of my Japanese maples or Tridents survived winter. I'm really glad I got a bunch of Tridents from Huth, they seem to like the heat as long as they are wet. I also got a good crop of volunteer Red and Sugar maples and some Oaks from the front yard.

Articles

Books – reviews by Ken Schultz

Zhao Qingquan has three books published in English. I reported on the **Literati Style Penjing** book 4 or 5 years ago. It was copyrighted in 2015. **Penjing: the Chinese Art of Bonsai** is copyrighted in 2012. **Forest Penjing** is copyrighted in 2022. Zhao Quingquan was born in 1949 in Yangzhou, Jiangsu province and is a certified BCI Penjing instructor. Linda and I saw him at the 2004 Bonsai Expo in Asheville. His interpreter introduced him as Brooke. Her husband assisted Brooke in creating an elm windswept forest out of 14 year old material provided by Arthur Joura at the NC Arboretum. Only the Forest book is soft covered, the other two are hard covered books and larger.

The books have many good photos and show pots, stands and styling techniques. The Penjing style uses white marble suibans for large plantings. If you haven't seen the use of 4 wooden risers as stands, there are several photos using them. I thought it was interesting that the forest book has several clump style plantings, which in my mind are

not forests. It also had raft style plantings. The forests on the white marble suibans uses rocks to create islands or mountains. The material in both books includes a wide variety of plant material. Many of us don't think of how large China is, so there are subtropical plants and plants hardy to Zone 4.

Zhao explains that bonsai in China is PENZAI and Penjing means Tray/pot scenery. Penjing therefore is a rendition of natural landscapes. He goes on to explain that there are three types of Penjing; Tree Penjing, Landscape Penjing and Water and Land Penjing. The later two may or may not have trees, but rocks and small plants are used. And if necessary miniature figures or other items, like boats, huts, bridges and animals.

Both books have how to projects. He tells you to attach rocks with waterproof cement, but there is no further clue as to what that might be. I have no idea where to get rocks/stones like those shown, and would guess the figures and suibans will need to be sourced from outside the USA. I think the oaks he uses are cut flat on their bottoms. His tool list includes chisels, hammers, and a rock cutter.

His soil includes a proper pH value between 6.0 and 7.5. Photos are Peat, fine Pine bark and Silica sand. He mentions screening out the large and the dust. He includes lists of suitable plants, both deciduous and coniferous. He further divides them into shape effective, flower effective, fruit effective and foliage plants. The Penjing book includes wiring, pruning and care and maintenance. There is even a chapter on displaying techniques.

The Forest Penjing book is not a duplicate of the Penjing book, though there are a few photos common to both. The soil section goes beyond the three basic and lists Akadama and Kanuma pumice. He again provides list of tree material suitable for forests. Some not so commonly available. One of my favorite sections, shows the step by step process in creating an 11 tree forest on a white marble oval using a red leafed maple. Chapter 3 covers the artistic principles of Forest Penjing, such as density variation and leaving blank space. Chapter 4 covers Care and Maintenance of Forest Penjing. Chapter 5 is Works of Forest Penjing. This chapter covers the case histories of some forests from planting to maintenance and shows seasonal photos. He lists sizes up to 120cm tall and 120cm wide.

The World of Ficus Bonsai by Jerry Meislik

By now any bonsai Ficus lover has heard the Jerry Meislik has written a second book on Ficus, the first is Ficus the Exotic Bonsai was copyrighted in 2004. This new book was copyrighted in 2019. While covering the same species and having the same 10"x8" format; the first book is 144 pages. The new version is 308 pages. How can that be, You ask! Both books have a similar number of chapters. While the photographs are mostly unique to each book, Jerry expands each chapter with interesting insight he's gained in his world travels. He also provided greater insight into the indoor care of Ficus.

CBS was lucky enough to have Jerry Meislik for a workshop in June 2011. I still have my workshop tree. I have share photos of my Ficus collection with Jerry and asked hi. Once to assist in the proper identification of a mislabeled Ficus that I'd acquired. Its label said "Fiddle Leafed Ficus", but I knew that it was wrong, as Fiddle Leafed Ficus leaves are too big for bonsai. From a photo, Jerry identified it as Mistletoe Ficus. Chapter 20 is where this book expands, it is 135 pages long. Chapter 20 devotes several pages to each of the wide variety of Ficus used for bonsai. My Mistletoe Fig is described with photos on pages 202-204. Ficus Benjamina has 14 varieties listed and Ficus microcarpa lists seven. I was guilty of thinking some of the cultivars were microcarpa when they are, actually varieties of Benjamina, such as Kiki and Too Little. Gensing Figs are a microcarpa variety.

Another expanded area covers horticultural measures that you can use to improve a Ficus bonsai. Chapter 15 shows a variety of grafting and fusion techniques. Frankly, I'd never

thought about grafting until Jerry suggested one of my Tiger Bark Ficus needed branches where none existed. The book shows several grafting techniques. The book also shows approach grafting to add roots to improve Nebari.

He also includes illustrations on developing arial roots. One I've tried is wrapping the trunk in wet sphagnum, covered by aluminum foil for the summer. When you finally remove the foil, leave the sphagnum, it will gradually disappear, leaving your new roots. Make sure the new roots extend into the soil before you uncover the trunk.

Under propagation, he shows air-layering. Because cutting are easy to root, I hadn't thought about air-layering, but the technique allows for a much larger tree to be created from a perhaps too tall Ficus in your collection. He also warns that the media used for rooting needs to be well drained and not standing in water, as this will cause root rot.

A new chapter is Small Sized Bonsai. Of course he recommends using cultivars with smaller leaves, such as Too Little and burt-davii. There are also root-over-rock and exposed root development techniques.

If you've gone to Matthaei Gardens in Ann Arbor, Jerry is their bonsai consulting artist. Jerry shows his Ficus growing room in Whitefish Montana where he used 7 - 1000 watt metal halide lights. Both books cover defoliation with its benefits and problems. I started doing an occasional Ficus defoliation after I read Jerry's first book. The leaves do eventually grow larger again.

If you are a serious Bonsai Ficus lover and enjoy a variety of species and styles, then you should add this book to your bonsai library.

Boxwood Development Series – by Ken Schultz

This is a time series of photographs of a workshop Boxwood Ken got several years ago. It shows the steps over time that go into the styling and redirection that may be needed from initial vision to something more final.

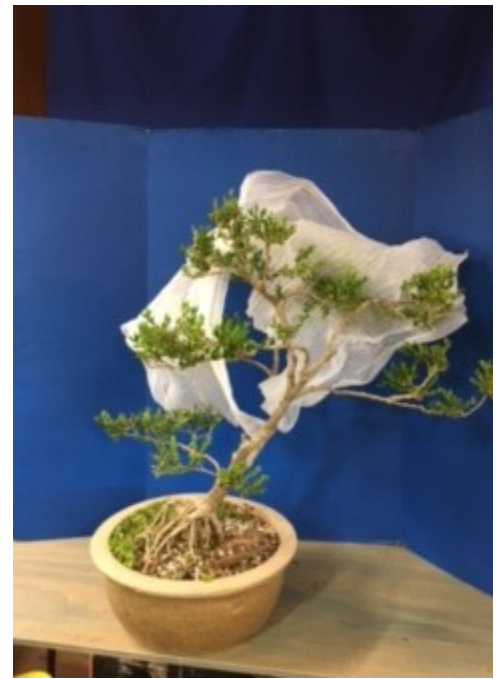
Boxwood as received at a 2018 workshop by random draw.

This looks like it was field grown or collected from a hedge. Note that it is leggy, not particularly bushy, and will require cutback to get a more compact form. Fortunately, as a bush, most boxwoods will backbud after cutback given light and fertilizer.



Deciding that I should take off the smaller trunk with less branches.

As you can see in this 2020 picture Ken has already done some basic styling on this. There are some semi-defined foliage pads and wiring that has been performed. Getting a tree like this that is “leggy” is a blessing in disguise as the branches are still flexible enough to bend without breaking. Older boxwood and thick branches will resist movement until they fail catastrophically. The wood is dense and brittle after it sets. Interestingly, older boxwood is one of the wood species that will not float.



Guy wired out branches, fed it heavily and moved it to a sunnier location to try to get back budding.

This will normally create a surge of new branches on a tree in an oversized pot. This may be the cautionary tale about trees in a properly sized bonsai pot don't grow as fast. The pot has rotated 180 degrees.



Wired up thicker lower branch as future Shohin sized tree. As you see, still no back budding in 2022, despite good growth on the branch ends. I pruned them for 2 years trying to force budding on the older wood.



Air layered the branches I would remove. Nothing lost, nothing gained regardless of success.

This also shows the branches that Ken will keep in the final tree. The rest are behind the curtain. BTW. The blue background in these shots is a 2 fold presentation display that is available at office stores.



After removing air layers, I jinned what was left. Next year I will begin work on pot size reduction.

So here is the 2023 progress from the original material. I expect that with the severe loss of greenery, there will be back budding on the remaining tree. When Boxwoods are collected the best results are when the tree is cut back to the bare minimum - like a severe hedge pruning. And let go for a year or two. With fertilizer and sun, this box should show amazing growth compared to what it has been doing. Should, YMMV, with this year's heat all "Normal" expectations are a best guess.



Seasonal Care

The recent weather reports are saying to hydrate before you get thirsty. That goes for your trees as well. If you still have last month's newsletter (you do save them for reference, right?) the Blue Ridge June Care tips are still valid for Central Ohio. We are about a month behind in Spring-Summer seasons and about a month ahead in Fall-Winter. The shift between the Summer and Fall schedule happens around September depending on the weather.

Water, watch for pest symptoms, shade trees that need protection, weed and apply something like Preen that prevents germination for weed control. For existing weeds, pull them by hand.

Continue a balanced fertilizer of your choice but use less of it as trees start to go into summer dormancy. You can continue with a liquid application every other week of a balanced formula. In the heat stay away from anything with a high nitrogen content.

You can still leaf prune tropicals like ficus and most will respond well to complete defoliation. This varies by species so try a couple of your development projects to see how they respond to defoliation. There is confusion about many ficus species identification so try out a couple of trees before you defoliate all of one type. If you have a mist system or a humid location you can re-pot at the same time. Most tropicals I've seen by club members thrive in hot weather but like humidity to go with it.

Found on the Web

Wiring at Decandling Time – Bonsai Tonight. JBP work in summer.

<https://bonsaitonight.com/2023/07/07/wiring-at-decandling-time/> Two trees - guy wire, regular wiring, and rebar.

Cutback at Decandling Time – Bonsai Tonight. JBP work in summer.

<https://bonsaitonight.com/2023/06/30/cutback-at-decandling-time/> Two trees, 19 years old. One is cut back for silhouette with long branches removed. The other is amputated at the neck to shorten it.

Black Pondo Podcast - Interviews with bonsai practitioners across the US and beyond.

<https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/the-black-pondo-podcast/id1682730658>

Coming Attractions

Hello all.

For those of you I haven't met yet, my name is Dwight Maxwell. As you are aware, the annual CBS club show is coming up July 29th & 30th. We have appreciated your help in the past and hope you can help again. The success of our show is dependent on the support of our members. Please consider volunteering to help ensure another successful show.

We will need some volunteers Friday afternoon, July 28th for set-up, but primarily we are looking for individuals on the 29th & 30th for the duration of the show, including tear down. If you are willing to help, please contact me @ dwightmaxwell@gmail.com with your full name, phone number and availability (preferred option). I can also be reached at (614) 634-6423. If you have friends or family interested in volunteering, this could be a good opportunity to learn about our club.

Below are some of the areas & tasks volunteers will be needed, but we will not know where everyone will be working until the actual show. Also, we will likely rotate volunteers through the different areas as needed throughout the show.

Set up (Friday afternoon)

Raffle table/ club table

Exhibition hall - docents and security (Please don't touch the bonsai)

Bonsai Courtyard – docents and security

Educational display

Demonstration area

Vendor support (setup/teardown and relief during event)

Tree watering (after hours Saturday)

Show teardown (after close Sunday)

It may look like a lot, but broken down into small pieces and the opportunity to circulate between tasks the time goes fast and you get a closeup look at the show.

And the future:

In August the club will focus on tropical trees. What can be done, aftercare, styling and possibly a guest artist. Bring your tree for assistance and show and tell.

Bonsai Here and Beyond the Outerbelt

Our normal schedule is meetings at Franklin Park on the third Sunday of the month 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!

July 28 Show set up - time TBD

July 29-30 Show venue at Dawes Arboretum, see www.ColumbusBonsai.org for details.
7770 Jacksontown Rd, Newark, OH 43056 <https://dawesarb.org/>

July 30 Show teardown 5:00

August 18-20 Mid-America Bonsai Exhibition at the Chicago Botanical Garden This is a regional show. 1000 Lake Cook Rd, Glencoe, IL 60022
<https://www.chicagobotanic.org/>

August 19 COCSS 12-3 pm

August 20 Tropicals – Guest Artist TBA

September 16 COCSS 12-3 pm

September 17 TBD

September 25-26 Open House at Wildwood Gardens 10-5 both days. \$20 BYOT with styling help/per tree. 20% off all indoor bonsai. 14488 Rock Creek Rd, Chardon, OH 44024

October 15 Picnic, pot luck, member sale

October 21 COCSS 12-3 pm

November 18 COCSS 12-3 pm

November 19 Election and ?

December 16 COCSS 12-3 pm

December ? Holiday Gathering

2024

January 20 COCSS 12-3 pm

January 21 CBS TBD

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

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Membership Information

Our dues/membership policy has changed to the website online, with a credit card or paypal. There will be no further paper forms. The website is <https://columbusbonsai.org/product/memberships/>

The new system has a structure that should solve historic problems. To go with this new procedure, all memberships will expire with the January issue of the following year. 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.

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.