

## Columbus Bonsai Society Newsletter - August 2003

Psst! Wanna buy a shirt? Ben William has done it again. the same person who produced the name tags for us also has embroidery machinery that produces the club logo in color on shirts. This is not a printed decal that will come off in the wash, but nice detailed color needle art work.

Denim (short or long sleeve) - \$21 Cotton Tees - \$15 Polo/golf - \$27 Add \$1 for XXL

Thanks to VP John Hill for volunteering to be a host for the Picnic this year. Since only a few of us made it to last year's shindig due to the rain this is a second chance to see a really amazing private garden. Now just remember that the two most important things for a party are having a place to sit and a place to put your food, this is a chance to only worry about one of them. Since we all tend to be in the back yard and no one has enough lawn chairs, we have been trained over the years to bring our own chairs. Its also a great chance to participate in our member sale. Bring in that tree with a lot of potential that you just never seem to get to work on and let someone else fall in love with it. They deserve a chance on it if you won't and it gives you a little more space on your benches for that really great tree that will (fill in the blank) your collection Who knows, you may even find that perfect pot for the Gymnodium spasroxis that you've been looking for. So bring in your extras and stuff you've given up on people. Hope will spring eternal for someone else and who are we to deny them? The club receives 10% of all sales.

Who has the DOG? Another annual event of the club is the presentation of the Jing Gow Jiang, or Golden Dog award for the most completely hopeless tree style. The rules are 1. It must be alive. and 2. It must be in a bonsai pot. Now I must say that over the last several years entirely to much emphasis has been placed on rule 1. The object here is not to provide the most nearly dead tree possible. This is really for a hopeless styling challenge. So bring in your Healthy - cascade maple, your literati sheflera, and your broom style pine. The idea is that members bring their "doggiest bonsai tree". Each entrant is explained, and after all are introduced the "winner" is selected by applause. The trophy is a small ceramic Jing Gow with a branch that has the names of the winners from the past on it. If we have at least three entrants the contest will be on. One year I remember we had about nine. We do want to point and laugh, and commemorate you with our other winners from the past.

Join the Team!

The Columbus Bonsai Society is a volunteer owned and operated hobby club, nothing more and certainly nothing less. Volunteer organizations go through peaks and valleys of smooth operation and the CBS is no different. Over the last several years we probably have had both. In order to maintain that smooth, steady operation members have to move into leadership positions to bring their talent, energy and ideas to the fore. The position of Secretary is an executive position that can be thought of as an entry level Board of Director position. Recently, several Club members have stepped forward to fill other open positions on the Board but the Secretary's spot is as yet unfilled. Now is the time for a Club member to seriously consider helping the CBS continue to bring programs and workshops to our members and other Central Ohio bonsai enthusiasts. We meet for about an hour, 11 times a year, on the first Tuesday of the month at the Conservatory. We try to start on time at 7 PM. Give it some thought and consider a rewarding career as an

executive officer for a worthy organization, it will look great on your resume. Contact Mark at SHO2n@aol.com, Marida at Weinstein.46@osu.edu or Dan at dannybinder@hotmail.com.

### Growing Like Crazy

Well this certainly has been an unusually wet year. I'll bet that I've only had to water about 10 times so far. I put on the fertilizer and the trees took off. To keep your trees in shape you should be pinching, pruning and wiring. Also you might see if mealy bug, aphids, or scale have found your plants to be tasty. If you had not repotted in early spring you may find that if the plant was in a heavy clay or a water holding mix, it has developed root rot. Make sure you pot holes have not gotten plugged or your tree may drown.

Long growth needs to be cut back to develop branch structure. When selecting the place to cut keep in mind that the bud is pointing in the direction of growth. Junipers, such as Shimpaku and Nana Percumbens need to be pinched to control growth. One annoying thing I noticed was that our Black Hills Spruce is springing back as if it had not been wired. Regardless, I think this beats watering and heat stress. But watch out for windy sunny days after this much rain, you'll be surprised at how fast a bonsai pit can dry out and the leaves will droop to show you. ~Ken S.

### Election of Officers

August marks the election of Club Officers. This also signals the new Club year and membership fees will be due for all, except new members who have joined at or after the show.

### Affair of the Hort

September 27 and 28 marks our annual commitment to staff the Columbus Bonsai Society Booth at the Affair of the Hort at Inniswood. If you have never been to Inniswood you should mark your calendar now and plan to attend. Literally thousands of gardening enthusiasts will come to Inniswood Gardens on this last month in September to buy nursery stock, talk to a wide variety of gardening organizations and watch demonstrations on gardening. So far eight Club members have signed up to staff our booth.

### Coming Attractions

The August Meeting will be Hands – On

August 17 – Jose' Cueto, will be conducting a "Clump Style" Workshop. Jose has conducted this workshop in Michigan, Akron and Pittsburgh, and we're lucky that he's a Club member and will be conducting this workshop for us! "Clump styling is where several mediocre trees are used to create a single tree of better size and branch arrangement. This advanced technique can be used on several types of tree material, but because it's August, we will be using a small leafed variety of Ficus. Being tropical we will be able to repot this material now. Also ficus is fast growing so this will show us quicker results of using this technique. (And the material will be relatively inexpensive. (Cost is \$12 ) We have 11 of 12 spots filled for the ficus material, but Jose has graciously invited people to bring in their own stock to work on as he technique is viable for many kinds of trees. So plan to sign up to ensure your spot. (Or if you have several ficus – bring three and a pot to put them in! (Oakland Park has a boatload of Ficus Too Littles). Jose says that

this technique can be used on almost any species, however in August tropicals work best. I read in the Martin Treasure Book, *Bonsai Life Histories*, that he used this technique to develop a large trunked Trident Maple in a root over rock style by “Clumping” seven trees together. However, being a seasonal grower (and slower) the example in his book has taken five years for the trunks to fuse together.

Book of the month  
Bonsai for Beginners  
By: Craig Coussins

Linda and I were lucky enough to see Craig Coussins at Wildwood Gardens two years ago. He is from Scotland. So when I first saw this book, I had to have it; recently I saw it at the Half Price Book store and bought a copy for the Club. I read this book over a year ago and always meant to do a book report. I began to re-read the book and rediscovered what a valuable resource it is.

Mr. Coussins has organized his book into two parts. The first part, pages 6 through 77 provides guidance on keeping your trees alive, health and in shape. Then pages 78 – 120 is called the Bonsai School, showing a series of photos with instruction on various workshop projects that Mr. Coussins has conducted.

The first entry that caught my eye is a section called “Which species to start with”; I always find these lists interesting because bonsai authors never agree with each other. For “complete beginners” Coussins recommends cotoneasters and chamaecyparis, elms, zelkova, sagaretia, serrisa and Chinese elms. He says maples, conifers, pines, larches and cedars are fine too but grow slower. Well I think I’ve killed at least one of each, so don’t be discouraged if you do too. Of particular interest is the fact that this author spends time discussing the placement of trees indoors and out as it relates to light, watering and feeding. He recommends avoiding mid afternoon sun (I agree), or southern window exposures. He discusses the differences in watering indoor and outdoor trees, and even training your friends to water when you take a vacation. Coussins even discusses the effects of temperature.

Under a section titled “Keeping Your Bonsai Healthy” there is a fertilization chart that shows the different feeding schedules for very young trees, trees in training and established trees. In his section on “Troubleshooting” he deals with “Dehydration” and “Overwatering”. Next he deals with “Keeping you Bonsai in Shape”. This section includes Pruning and tells that the top of the tree needs to be pruned to the first set of buds and the second set on the sided on trees like elms, zelkova, privets and hemlock. Pinching is described for junipers and cryptomeria and plucking out for maples. He even discusses removing all but 10% of the leaves on an indoor tree.

Coussins then deals with pruning and the use of cut paste, jin and shari, and then wiring. He has an unorthodox method of wiring. He uses several wires together and drops then off at each branch as he wraps up the length of the trunk or branch. In his chapter on “Potting and Repotting a Bonsai” he gives different soil-formula mixes for young conifers, established conifers, lime hating species, deciduous, and indoor species. This chapter also has two other charts, Key Points to Remember, and Potting – Quick Reference Guide. Several repottings are shown in

photographic case studies. Grafting and airlayering, then styles are covered before you get to the Bonsai School.

The Bonsai School section of this book is a must see. There are numerous photographs showing quick styling to projects that took over five years. Study 9 covers bud development in pines. Study 15 shows styling very large maples that had to be cut back to stumps just to get them into their pots, then over a period of 9 years the branches are developed. A number of the studies are of group and forest plantings, some material is small while others are planted in very large pots. One defied the imagination at 12 feet long. There is a special section on styling larches.

In the back of the book after the 33 case studies there are a series of 3 “Bonsai quick-reference Tables. These purport to be a brief guide to some of the main species – repotting, pruning, wiring, and special issues to watch out for.

### Tree of the Month

I'm sorry, no Tree of the Month article was submitted this time. Do you have a favorite tree that you would like to see highlighted? Do some research on it and write a couple of paragraphs. You will learn an incredible amount of new things about your tree, and someone else may really be wondering about how to grow one. It is a real public service for our club members, and also the other clubs we email to. I have been amazed at the number of clubs who have little or no information in their letters and they really appreciate the chance to see the book reviews and Tree of the Month articles. So you want to make a name for yourself in Bonsai? Be an author! Write a book report, tell how you mix your soil, tell about your favorite tree, style, pot shape, what ever, Just Write! If you think you can't do that consider this. Vincent van Gogh said: “If you hear a voice in your head that says ‘You are not a painter’ by all means paint! And that voice will be silenced.” I can help with editing (That is what I do after all.)

### Bonsai Here and Beyond the Outerbelt

Unless otherwise noted \*, The Columbus Bonsai Society meets the third Sunday of every month at 2:00 pm. at the Franklin Park Conservatory. Board meetings are held the first Tuesday of the month at 7:00 in the Franklin Park Conservatory library. The meetings are open to members.

August 15-17 - Chicago Botanical Garden---- MIDWEST BONSAI SHOW & SALE.

August 17 - New Club Trees - Clump styling, lead by Jose

August 23-24 - Ann Arbor Bonsai Society Show, Matthaei Botanical Gardens, 1800 N. Dixboro Rd., Ann Arbor, MI 48105; 10:00 AM-4: 30 PM

September 21- Picnic

September 26-28 - Affair of the Hort at Inniswood Gardens, 10-6 PM Saturday and 11-5 on Sunday. There will be sign ups for Volunteers in July and August

October 19 - Fall Show - Bring in your trees in their fall colors.

November 16 -4 stations - Pots/Trees/Tool sharpening/Winterization

December - Holiday dinner

February 28 - Dawes Work Day, 9:00 at Dawes Arboretum

April 18 - Getting a tree show ready, what the professionals do - Also help and advice on trees

you are considering for the June show.

June 19 and 20 - The Columbus Bonsai Society Annual Show. Yes its on Fathers day again.

President - Ken Schultz

1st Vice President - Dan Binder

2nd Vice President - John Hill

Secretary - Mark Passerello

Treasurer - Dick Guervitz

1 year Board - Jesse Welton

2 year Board - Linda Fields

3 year Board - Ben William

Librarian - Merida Weinstein

Newsletter Editor - Zack Clayton

Refreshment Coord - Leanne Parnell