

Columbus Bonsai Society Newsletter - July 2006

Some of you may have wondered why I included the membership form in the June newsletter and again this month. I decided it would be easier in a couple of ways. Elections are coming up and the club members vote on the officers. That is problematic when membership forms are sent out after the membership period ends and once in a while membership information is lost. If you don't get a September or October newsletter you can investigate immediately. The way it was done in the past you might not notice that you were not getting a newsletter until after the January meeting or even February. I will occasionally get an inquiry in April or May. That is a lot of catch up reading to do and those people have missed almost half of the year's meetings. So, I am sending out renewals now, and hopefully the rough edges of the catchup process will be done before we all go on the December break. There were a lot of us who renewed at the June show, Thank You. For the rest of you - its time to renew.

The Board noticed that the trees shown this year had a new level of grooming and all looked very neat and had a quality of being "presented" this year. I wasn't sure what to expect as I have never participated in an evaluated show, nor been faced with evaluating others trees on any kind of formal basis. I'll tell you, it is daunting, and educational. I thought I had done a good job getting my trees ready for the show. Heck, I'm the one who put the judging points article in the newsletter last month and made up the judging sheets. When it came time to actually start evaluating and making constructive comments on trees, I found out that the scales came off my eyes and I realized that the warm glow I had about my trees was just that, a warm glow. Yep, they're mine, I love them, but I could have done so much more to make them presentable. We had to put aside our personal preferences about what we liked and go with the criteria on the sheet. Not hard, but a constant conversation about, "No, that refers to this down the list." or "We did that part of it two items ago, the form is talking about branch placement now, not location in the pot." I think the form needs to be annotated for one thing. We needed to remind ourselves that if the tree in question didn't have flowers, or moss, or wire, it wasn't a deduction. The form will be changed to indicate that issue so full points are awarded if the intent of the judging point is met.

Trees submitted for evaluation this year ran a points total from 45 to 84 points. Some were obviously submitted as a way to get guidance on where to go next in the development. This is good, it is why we tried this out. I know I got several comments that will improve not only that particular tree, but all future show entries. So, the judges learned, and hopefully the members who owned the evaluated trees learned from our comments. I urge you to consider having your tree(s) evaluated for next year.

Oh, and congratulations Ross. That is a beautiful tree.

And last, but not least! Call for nominations. If you want to be a board member or think someone would be an outstanding CBS Board member. Let Mark Passerella know. He will be putting together a slate of officers for your consideration at the August meeting.

Coming Attractions

Well the July meeting is fast approaching and we have a BYOT workshop lined up for your summer enjoyment. Bring in something you got at the show, something you aren't sure what to do with, or just a weekend nursery find. We probably won't be repotting unless it's a tropical, but pruning and top work can still be done on most trees.

August will be a tropical workshop. Ken is looking for a supply of Fuschias, or something else may pop up as suitable material. Price to be determined

September Picnic/Roadtrip - Mark Passerrella has reserved a club tour of the house and gardens at Adena, which is Thomas Worthington's estate in Chillicothe. He has let the tour people there know our interest is primarily in the garden areas. Both the house and grounds were recently restored as part of the State's bicentennial festivities. Big Names from Jefferson's Monticello were involved in the garden work. We are still debating what to do for members who can't make the road trip. If you have ideas, let us know.

A Show of Thanks

This year it was once again my honor to serve as your Show Chairman. Some members wonder why I would want to take it on. Sometimes I wonder myself, but this year demonstrated how it can be rewarding. First I want to thank all those members who prepared their trees and showed them. Indeed this is not to be taken lightly. Several of our more well know bonsai artists found themselves otherwise occupied and told the committee that they would be unable to enter trees into the 32nd Columbus Bonsai Society Show. However there were 97 tree-mendous entries. Again we all thank you!

Then there is tree registration, a truly behind the scenes thankless job. But Merida Weinstein did it again. As a result trees had nametags, were checked in and checked out.

We had both a Setup and a Tear Down committee. Since a number of the folks were the same on either end I will thank them collectively. However, I want to take a moment to thank one of the Club's newer members, Jack Smith. Without Jack the Dawes dividers wouldn't have made the trip. Zack's Mom was scheduled for surgery on the day we were to pick them up but it got delayed. Jack, whom I ran in to at the Dawes Show, said, don't worry, I can pick them up, when do you want them there. Got to love a volunteer who wants to work on our schedule! The other Volunteer who made it go up, and then tore it down were: The Beardleys, Damian Desh, Steve Bechtel, the Sipple's, Sonny Meister, Doc Guervitz, Ben William, Mark Passerrella, Dan Binder, Zack Clayton, and me.

Then we had Demos. The demo on Saturday was Jose' Cueto and me. On Sunday it was Mark Passerrella. The Club table was worked by Doc, Zack, Ben William, Pootsie, and Linda Schultz. I'm sure there were others who pitched in, and I want to thank them too.

One of the committees that was "new" this year was vendor unloading and loading. The vendors told me that this was a wonderful consideration. The helpers were Ben William, John Hill and Pootsie. Also assisting Ken Huth with the Saturday and Sunday workshops were Ben William, John Hill, Pootsie, Mark Passerrella and I.

John young ran the Security Committee and I know he thanks you. But I want to thank John for taking over and scheduling the volunteers who made sure that the trees were only touched “once”. Thank you all for your help during the show. The deputy sheriffs who signed up and/or helped out with show security were: Greg Ackers, Zack Clayton, Tobe Conn, Chris Conomy, Dick Gurevitz, Marcia Herrold, Mike Holbrook, Tom and Pat Holcomb, Sonny Meister, Denny Sackett, Jack Smith, Rick Uhrick Jim Wiggin, John Wolff, and of course, John Young.

Then what team doesn’t work on its stomach? Food for the Show Volunteers was provided by Ben William, Sonny Meister, Laura and Damian Beardley, Deena Harris, Michael Baird, Merida Weinstein, Marsh Herrold, John young, Tobe’ Conn and Linda Schultz. Linda kept us not only in food, and utensils but also ice and drinks.

So you can see that it takes TEAM work and a lot of folks to put on a successful Show. Thank you again and again!

The Judging Committee was also new this year. It was Zack, Dan Binder and I. And we each signed up, but so did a bunch of other folks. I hope that everyone who tried it out was pleased with the constructive comments that we tried to provide. Overall, we noted that this year’s trees were better prepared. And hoped that the May article on Judging was also helpful to all our members. ~ Ken Shultz, Show Chair

Tree of the Month

Fuchsia Fuchsia sp. by Ken Schultz

In the past I thought of Fuchsia as a non- hardy plant that we usually bought in late spring in a hanging basket and hung in the shade. Then I saw a Fuchsia used in Su Chin Ee’s book, *Creating Bonsai Landscapes*. In her book she calls them Deng Hua, or Lantern Flowers; I had always called them Fuchsia. I was aware that they could be trained like Rosemary since they develop a woody stem in a similar fashion. About ten years ago I had purchased one to try to bonsai, but did not have any luck keeping it going under lights over the winter. But now, inspired by Su Chin Ee’s book I became “possessed in securing suitable stock to try again. I soon discovered that Fuchsia are popular in England, there are a few west coast growers, but here in Ohio, I would have to wait until outdoor gardening season arrived. Su Ee dropped a few names of species to try, Fuchsia percumbens “Rose of Castile”, “Tom Thumb” and “Lady Thumb”, reportedly small flowered varieties belonging to the Fuchsia magellanica species. These are reportedly (Bonsai Gardener) the hardiest and most suitable for our bonsai efforts. She also mentions Fuchsia microphylla. Microphylla of course means “small leaves”. The only care tips she gave were: use a moist well-drained soil in sun or partial shade. Do not over water or allow to them dry out. Protect from frost in winter. She indicated that they could be started from cuttings taken May to July. Cuttings of what? I needed stock.

I gave up my search in February, figuring I needed to wait until Mother’s Day. Sure enough I now have purchased three plants to try my hand at; two “Papoose” which has pinkish red petals and the bell part that hangs down is purple with pink anthers, the other one is “Angle Earrings” it has red petals with white. Sofar I’ve done a little light trimming to try to select the stem that I

will use to develop a trunk line. I've also purchased a book (big surprise if you know that I have over 40 bonsai books and another shelf of gardening books) called Fuchsia: a care manual. In this book I learned that Fuchsia were discovered in the South and Central America in 1703. And the first plants were offered for sale in 1793. There are 21 genera of Fuchsia with 100 species. They range in size from a few centimeters to 29 feet tall. There are now over 800 cultivars. Just remember, select plants with small leaves and flowers, we're trying to grow bonsai.

Most Fuchsia need temperatures of 50 F to survive the winter and prefer 60 – 75 degrees. I read that Magellancia can tolerate temperatures as low as 27 and their roots will survive down to 14 degrees. But lets not tempt fate. Another source advises that the plant will remain dormant until temperatures are above 50. One of the authors reports that she removes the flowers and foliage and about a quarter to one third of the growth when she brings them in for the winter.

One of their nemesis is red spider mites. They may also get aphids and mildew. They need good light with SOME direct sunlight to do their best. High temperatures however will burn their leaves. Watering can be tricky. They like high humidity. This is often mistaken resulting in keeping their roots too wet. They also react poorly to sudden changes in humidity by dropping their leaves, similar to Ficus when moved in and out of your home with the seasons. So be careful – and patient. Commercial nurseries water with capillary tubes. I water in the morning, which is recommended, as it helps prevent mildew.

Fertilizing is necessary. A 10-5-10 NPK is recommended every fifth watering. Another author uses 20-20-20 at ¼ strength every watering. Overfeeding can harm the roots. For soil, a mixture of organic matter/peat based (50%), grit or sharp sand (10%) and turface (40%) is suggested by both sources that offered this information. They also suggest adding a small amount of charcoal to keep the soil “sweet”.

As bonsai, Fuchsia should be repotted every two years until they are 10 years old, then repotting can be extended to every 4 or five years. You will notice that they have a tendency to sprout suckers from the base, much like Serrissa. Pinch off the extra stems to focus the growing energy to your trunk. (You can use these cuttings to start new plants) Patience is needed since it may take up to five years before your fuchsia are ready to pot as bonsai. In preparation the root mass can be reduced by the same ¼ to 1/3. About 6 months out you can start reducing the root mass/pot size. Leave as many of the fine white roots as possible. Repotting should be done in the SPRING.

Styling will be mostly clip and grow. The stems become VERY brittle once they become woody. If you wire, break the rules and do it loosely, and work on the younger tender stems while they are still “green” and pliable. I use the term “green” meaning immature (some stems are reddish – purple depending on the flower color). I found a photo gallery on the Internet of Fuchsia bonsai. They were mostly informal upright, and one had exposed roots.

<http://www.bonsaigarden.net/galleryindex.asp?id=2>

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.

July 16: BYOT workshop – maybe that tree you got at the show.

August 20: Tropical workshop – NOT FICUS - and elections.

September 17: Field Trip to Adena and garden tour.

October 15: Chamaecyparis and Off Beat Junipers – Perhaps a guest master.

November 19: Ramification and Fall wiring.

December : Holiday Dinner

President - Daniel Binder

Past President - Ken Schultz

1st Vice President - Mark Passerello

2nd Vice President - Ben William

1 year Board - Denny Sackett

2 year Board - Ross Lebold

3 year Board - Wendy Fissel

Treasurer - Richard Gurevitz Secretary - Chris “Pootsie” Conomy

Librarian - Merida Weinstein

Newsletter Editor - Zack Clayton

Resident Advisor - Jose Cueto

Refreshment Coordinator - Vacant