

# Columbus Bonsai Society Newsletter - August 2007

“A Pinch of this....”

Be on the lookout

There are many things to watch for at this time of year. Watch the maples for changing color; once they start changing, fall repotting may happen. (ODNR predicts for this to happen by late Sept. to Mid-Oct.) Watch your local, Lowe's, Home Depot or Nursery for seriously marked down stock. Watch out for early frosts. And Watch your watering schedule; they may need less and less. It is also the time to start thinking about winter storage. Lastly, please do join us for the picnic at Dawes and get ready for elections and Constitution/Bylaws approval in October. (See below)

This month's program

For those of you who have never been to Dawes arboretum

([www.dawesarb.org](http://www.dawesarb.org)), you are in for a treat. The owner of the Pure Oil Refinery started the arboretum in the 1900's. It has several featured botanical collections, such as the dwarf conifer collection, the holly collection and a crab apple tree collection. It also has one of the few public bonsai collections. The majority of the Dawes bonsai collection was donated to them. The Arboretum consists of several hundred acres complete with walking trails, an observation tower, the family home (tours are available) and a small cemetery.

Directions: To get there simply drive east from Columbus for about 35 miles on I-70, exit on SR 13 and go north toward Newark. The Arboretum will be on your left before you get to Newark. The Arboretum is marked on my ODOT Ohio highway map. (See map on Page 2)

Jack Wikle – Jack is a member of the Ann Arbor Bonsai Society. He is the author of the chapter on training bonsai indoors under artificial light found in the Indoor Bonsai book by the Brooklyn Botanical Society. Jack has practiced the art of Bonsai for about 40 years. He has been our guest before and we are definitely lucky to have him on our calendar.

AM or PM and the Kingsville Boxwoods - The response to the workshop was sufficient to warrant an 11 AM session and a 2 PM session. I want to thank those of you who volunteered to take the AM slot. Regardless, please feel free to show up early if you are PM or to stay and watch the PM workshop if you are A.M. The PICNIC part should begin to be set up around noon. We will be in the LEARNING CENTER; this is to the north – or behind the VISITOR CENTER, where the Bonsai Collection is located.

We only purchased 20 Kingsville's so there are no extras. If you find that you signed up and cannot make it- we have a couple people on a waiting list - SO PLEASE let me know if you will release your tree to another club member. The workshop is \$45, if you have not paid, you must pay to be a participant on September 16.

AM Registered: 1) Jack Smith, 2) Rich Uhrick (pd), 3) Zack Clayton (pd), 4) Ken Schoenfeld (pd), 5)

Lisa Dembski (pd) 6) Mike Dembski (pd).

PM Registered: 1) Mike Holbrook (pd), 2) Tom Holcomb, 3) Mary Howell, 4) Mike Thornhill (pd), 5)

Doc Gurevitz (Pd) 6)

To ensure fairness in selection for both the AM and PM participants each paid person will draw a number when they arrive. Each tree will have a number on it. That is your tree. If you want to arrange a trade

with another participant; that is between the two of you, however, to be fair, I do not plan to let anyone put his

or her number back and draw again. They are all quality trees. Ken Huth had 37 and I picked the top 20, I had

a hard time limiting it to just 20. While I am not sure about repotting (up to Jack), if you want to be prepared

bring something 9"X6"X2.5" or a little larger.

The Picnic: Bring a dish to share. There are no grills at Dawes – but there is a fridge and plugs for

crock pots. The Picnic also affords the opportunity for some club members to sell off excess trees and pots.

The club asks for a 10% donation from your sales.

October is the new August (Elections Month) [ed note: held over from August]

It is time again to vote. But remember, you must be a member to run or vote. So please fill out your

membership forms (see attached) and bring them to the meeting along with your dues. We must have the

forms in order to maintain an accurate membership list. Zack may be an impressive Bonsai artisan, but he is

not psychic. So let's help him out and turn in your form with your money. The slate of officers is on the last

page with the membership form.

Updated program information

The October program on the 21st from 1pm – 5pm will feature Keith Scott, an Ohio bonsai artist of many

years. He will be doing a session on wiring. Keith will provide the wire. He will bring 8 of his older trees- Pines,

a Shimpaku, and a Procumbens Nana. One person will work on each tree. Each person must have their own

tools: wire cutter, concave cutter, pliers, and scissors (sharp). This will require you to stand the whole time;

which is why he needs help. He very much hopes his old friends will be there; especially Dan Binder, Ken

Schoenfeld, Tom Holcomb, and Wendy Fissel. There will be a club photographer there to document this

session. Keith will feature all of this in an article in a future newsletter. He plans to attend the November

meeting as well since he has known Randy Clark for over 30 years. Should be very interesting to watch.

President's Message- Mark Passerello

The torrential rain and thunderstorms that have been whipping around as I write this may signal the real

beginning of fall and the ending of summer, at least the dry summer heat that has been plaguing us lately. If the

trees in my backyard are any indication, there are plenty of Central Ohio residents who are ready for the cool

weather of fall.

The hot weather has made keeping trees moist enough a tough challenge, and now seems to be the time

every year when northerners like Larch let me know they feel just a bit too Southern here in

Central Ohio by pouting

and acting stressed. Long gone are the fresh green shaving brushes of spring buds that these trees arrogantly

showed off in the Spring. Now they seem as if they are very impatient to drop their leaf/needles and take a long

winter's nap.

Dealing with what nature throws at us can be an interesting challenge or a painful frustration, depending on

your mental state. Growing a tree just out of it's comfort zone can be one such frustration, but one that is slightly

logical and basically expected. Great frustrations can come from much less obvious sources.

This will be the second summer that I have tried to get some Scotch moss (*sagina subulata*) to take hold in

the cracks of my brick patio, but no luck once again. The Scotch moss I don't try to cultivate-the stuff that came

home from a show one year and has managed to spread to many of my bonsai -seems to grow with no limit or

thought of stopping. But I've taken to yanking out handfuls of the stuff from bonsai pots and plugging it into the patio

only to see it shrivel and brown and blow away. I also had the bright idea that some Scotch moss in a small pot or

tray would make a great accent plant, but here again that's almost too much like real work for a plant that seems to

prefer freeloading off an honest bonsai, and the accent plants just sort of sat there languishing, not really dying but

certainly not growing with the gusto one would expect from a weed. Sometimes Mother Nature is a fickle mistress.

The important piece of club business to remind all of you about is the revisions to the constitution and bylaws

that will be voted on by the general membership at the October meeting. A compare document showing before

and after will be posted on the club website and hard copies provided to those who prefer their information on paper.

Take a moment or two to look over both versions of the document so you are an informed and

confident voter come

October-and in November too, but that has nothing to do with miniature trees!

Tree of the Month

Kingsville Boxwood—*buxus microphylla* “compacta”

Kingsville

Boxwood takes its

name from the

nursery where it

originated in

Maryland in 1912.

However,

Kingsville

Boxwood plants were not released to the public until 1937. At the suggestion of Dr. Wyman of Arnold

Arboretum, Boston, Henry Hohman named this plant *Buxus microphylla* var. *compacta*. But William Appleby of

Baltimore selected the seedlings in 1912. I found this interesting since most bonsai websites call them

Japanese Kingsville Boxwood and it originated here in the USA. It seems that sellers think that we need to

think that all our bonsai originate in Japan. Boxwood was introduced from the Far East to the United States in

1652 and is a garden favorite from Maryland to North Carolina. There are about 115 cultivars available today.

Linda and I also have “Korean” and “Wintergreen” boxwood in our collection.

All my Kingsville Boxwood spend the winter outside, though some may recall that Jack Wickle had a

Mame’ Kingsville in his indoor collection. I did kill a Mame’ Kingsville that I left outside in 1995. It may have

been the small pot, but I suspect that it was most likely that at that time I kept my trees on the west side of the

house and the winter sun and wind probably freeze dried it.

One of the articles I referenced written by Persiano, from Shanti Bithi nursery in Connecticut, provided

three rules when working on styling a Kingsville Boxwood, these were:

Minimize foliage removal as Kingsville grows only ¼” to 1” per year.

Use copper wire – it will allow you to “feel” the movement of the branches and avoid breaking them.

Kingsville form naturally interesting shapes – use them before you cut.

Care:

Light: Boxwood will grow in either full sun or shade; indoors they need at least 800 Lux. I grow mine outdoors

in semi-shade.

Temperature: Protect from cold winds and winter sun. In the summer, they need a breeze to prevent inside leaves from mildewing. They are hardy to zone 5. Winter injury can be caused by summer drought, prolonged rainy periods, and forced late growth; new growth may be burned back. Avoid sunny winter exposures.

Water: Boxwood do not like wet soil, so allow it to dry somewhat between watering – but not DRY! Another source reports that they like water, and may even need water twice a day in hot weather; though mine never have.

Feeding: Use a liquid or organic fertilizer every two weeks. Much to my surprise, they do not recommend an acid fertilizer; in fact, the claim is they like slightly alkaline soil. So add an occasional dose of lime. Feeding May to October.

Repotting: The recommendation is to repot every two years. Avoid shallow pots. The claim is that repotting may occur in summer or autumn – I would not – these recommendations are for the south and the west! You may choose either matte or glazed pots. I would not use a rectangular or square pot.

Propagation: Start new plants may be from cuttings. The Commercial Boxwood Production article says to take these cuttings in late summer to fall for best results. (Remember this is for nurserymen in North Carolina and Oregon). Place the cuttings in equal parts- sharp builder's sand peat and perlite in a shaded area.

Because of the lateness of taking these cuttings, watering even in winter, is vital as is some bottom heating. In

another place it says to use, 8 parts pine bark, 1 part builders sand and a little dolomite limestone.

Pests: Listed were red spider mites, fungus and rust. Watch for curled or pock marked leaves.

Also of note is

root rot as a problem; usually one branch at a time dies. This can be associated with nematodes.

Use

“Subdue”. Leaf miners can also cause blisters on the leaves, spider mites cause scratch like marks. Eggs laid

in September and October and hatch after winter incubation. Violets, chickweed and mustard may serve as

host plants, so weed them out.

In closing, I have seen small accent sized Kingsville for as little as \$2 and a specimen plant for \$300.

So if you know anyone who wants to take one out of his or her landscape – give me a call!

Ken Schultz

Book of the Month

Ken is taking a break since he has written so many other pieces this month. Come on folks, is

Ken the only one in the society who owns and reads books about Bonsai? I know this is kind of like writing a book report when you were in school. But, most of these books do not have a plot line with rising action and a specific conflict to discern. All you need to do is tell us a little about the book itself and what you like or don't like about it. If you do not think you are a writer, send what you can anyways to the editor; ruhrick@otterbein.edu. I will help you put it into a legible format.

#### WIKLE-ISM AND WHY IT WORKS [Reprinted from CBS Newsletter April, 2004]

Have you converted to Wikle-ism yet? After the fascinating-and well attended program given by Jack Wikle at our October [2004] meeting, I know I am not the only one fascinated

by the little trees he grows and equally interested in the method he uses to keep them growing and healthy.

In a nut shell, Wikle's method consists of:

- Trees are small-in bonsai terms shohin or mame.
- Trees grow under ordinary "shop light" florescent fixtures with cool white type bulbs.
- Watering is done by immersion, followed by a dose of very light fertilizer at every watering
- Trees are kept indoors year round

Using this method, Wikle has had great success, both with types of plants we expect to see indoors, but also

those that seem better suited to outdoor growth. One of the big hits of Wikle's presentation is when he pulls

adorably tiny trees out of a well worn metal ice chest. He produced a dandy looking juniper that astonished

many "experienced" bonsai growers when he revealed it had been growing indoors for about two decades.

Seeing and hearing what Wikle was up to was a real inspiration to me. Like many Central Ohio Bonsai

growers, I have some tropical/warm weather plants that are very happy outside in spring, summer and early

fall. They would come inside and the countdown would begin-it was always a race between them and me to

see if I could coax them into living until spring when they would be free from an artificially lighted prison and go

outside again to enjoy all the sunshine they could soak up. I started out with fluorescent lights, and had decent success for a couple years, but seeing a need to up-grade the equipment, I invested in a 400 watt metal halide

grow light.

Ten years later, I am glad to not be using it. It made the growing area hot-about 10 degrees, and would singe

leaves that got to close. It certainly added to a hefty electric bill, and I never saw good steady even growth in the plants, they seemed to be very etiolated, though that may have had as much to do with

watering and fertilizing as it did with light. I watered with a traditional watering can and fertilized on a very hit or miss basis.

Every year I would lose a plant or two because I missed a watering and it dried out, or it got over watered

and the roots got sick. I did not invest in any of the expensive gear that moves or adjusts the lights position to

cover a wide area, so I had a smallish circle of usable light and beyond that a no-mans land (no plant land)

where things did not grow well. It was worse for the taller plants, since their tops got light but the bottom part of

the foliage mass faded away.

Through attrition or choice, I have gotten rid of any indoor tree that is not shohin or mame. A Green Island

Ficus that I have had for 15 years, that I wanted to develop into one of those barrel trunked trees that impress

on first sight-and which was never happy all winter- is now cropped and trimmed to a height of 7 inches. All my

indoor plants are in two lines under a pair of shop light fixtures. I immerse in water and use a dilute fertilizer

every time.

So far things look very good, plants are growing, I'm enjoying being around them, and I'm shelling out less

money to American Electric Power, so I'm sold on the virtues of "Wikle-ism".

Observing even for this short space of time here is why I believe Wikle is successful with his set up-and how

the rest of us can emulate that success. First the size of the trees is ideal for indoors where light is at a

premium. Small trees are much easier to provide more than adequate illumination. Watering by immersion is

the most thorough way insures the trees have proper moisture, and makes sure that every part of the soil mass

than can absorb and hold water will do so. Pots watered by immersion also drain better; the large volume of

water affected by gravity insures that all excess water leaves the pot. Fertilizing at every watering makes

nutrition available on a continual and regular basis-no guess work or complicated record keeping. Being

indoors gives the trees a very consistent and even environment, so growth is regular and predictable, and

there are no extremes of temperature or rain to make life hectic. Tiny trees that would need extensive

pampering and special care if kept outdoors are much easier when grown indoors in this manner.

I think it is an

ideal way to grow small bonsai.

## 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 the first Tuesday of the month at 7:00 pm in

the Franklin Park Conservatory library. The meetings are open to members.

September 16 Picnic at Dawes-Jack Wikle on Boxwoods

September 23 Field trip and BBQ at Ken Huth's

October 13-14 Greater Cincinnati Bonsai Society Fall Show- Krohn Conservatory

October 21 Wiring workshop with Keith Scott

November 18 Randy Clark on Shohin

December Holiday Dinner

### Ken Huth's 3rd Annual BBQ – September 23, 2007

While some of you have made the trek to Ken's World of Bonsai in North Canton every year, others may be planning their first bonsai nursery visit. We all know Ken and Patty Huth as one of our vendors from the annual show. Ken's booth is packed with items from a few dollars to over a thousand, literally something in every one's price range and for every level of bonsai experience. Well, Ken's Bonsai World is where it comes from.

A few years ago, Ken thought he ought to have a fall sale – to help create room in his greenhouses before the first frost. To make the trip please let me know by e-mailing the Club e-mail address. We already have 15 signed up for the trip. Some offer a ride, some ride with others. To make your connection, we will meet at the Target parking lot just west of the I-71 – Polaris exit – away from the store at 10 AM that Sunday morning. About 10:30, we plan to pull out and head to Ken's. If you have reserved a spot and an emergency occurs, please call me on my cell (614-323-8815) to cancel so that we are not waiting.

If you plan to drive there and meet us, please let me know so that Ken and Patty have a good nose count. To get there from the Target only takes 1 hour and 40 minutes its 120 miles. While it is OK this date only to show up "unannounced", if you plan to make this trip on your own, please call or e-mail Ken as he is normally by appointment only. Take I – 71 north to I –76 East toward Akron, as you get close take I-277 to I –77 southbound. The second exit will be SR 241 (Massillon Rd.) Drive SE (turn right) on SR 241 – Massillon Rd. – south about 5 lights, there are now a number of shopping plazas – when the road goes up the hill and turns back to 2 lanes – watch for

Wise Road on your left.....TURN RIGHT. Ken's World of Bonsai is at the end of the private lane across from

Wise, just past the small red house.

By the way – hit the restroom at Target before the trip, and you may want to stop at one of the

Gas

stations or restaurants before getting to Ken's – they only have one bathroom.

In the past, the BBQ part happens late in the afternoon. Plan to be there until about 5 PM, that is unless you drive alone. Ken says he plans to have items on sale, and maybe a silent auction and or raffle. He

plans to have laser pointers too so that you will not have to crawl over the stock to point at an item and ask its

price. Unfortunately, some anxious shoppers have damaged an expensive tree in the past. So remember you

are a guest. I went there to pick up the Kingsville Boxwoods – And am looking forward to the return trip...So,

bring money, your check book or your credit cards and your wish list. Remember Ken received his pot order

after our show and there will be many from which to choose.