

November 2007 Newsletter

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*In spring, they
were two.*

*In winter, they
became one.*

*Again, they are
two.*

“A Pinch of this....”

Our “Matriarch” is gone



Unfortunately, I get to start another month with sad tidings. As many of you have heard by now, we lost Carolyn Jean Puderbaugh on November 3rd. She was the wife of Max Puderbaugh, who preceded her to the land of immortal trees. She was an enthusiast in her own right, as this photo from the September workshop shows. She died at home in her sleep, at the age of 80.

Carolyn graduated from The Ohio State University in 1949 with a degree in Education. In 1986, along with her husband Max (One of the founders of CBS), she created an endowed scholarship in horticulture at The Ohio State University. Originally known as the **Puderbaugh Scholarship**; renamed the **Puderbaugh Bonsai Scholarship** in 1991. This awards students who have a special interest in Bonsai \$200-\$300 annually.

In lieu of flowers, contributions can be made in her name to Maple Grove UM Church (www.maplegroveumc.org) or charity of your choice (Perhaps to the Columbus Bonsai Society, or the Puderbaugh Bonsai Scholarship). Gifts in her memory should be made payable to the Max V. and Carolyn Martin Puderbaugh Bonsai Scholarship Fund (605947) in care of The Ohio State University Foundation, 1480 West Lane Avenue, Columbus, Ohio 43221, or on-line via www.giveto.osu.edu. Please include the fund name and/or number as well as next of kin to whom notification of memorial gifts should be sent.

“I met Carolyn Puderbaugh when I joined the Columbus Bonsai Society back in 1991, shortly after I met Max. They both enjoyed the art of bonsai and especially sharing it with others. I had the pleasure of serving with both of them on the Executive Board for several years. Although their personalities were different, they definitely were a couple who enjoyed being together. After Max died, Carolyn remained active in the club and I looked forward to seeing her at our meetings. I was glad that I got to see her at our picnic at Dawes in September. She still enjoyed learning more about bonsai and shared her enthusiasm with the rest of us. Even though I'll miss seeing her, I won't soon forget her. She was a special lady and a good friend. ”

 John Young

This Months Program

November 18 – Randy Clark and Shohin styling of three trees.



Randy has owned and operated the Bonsai Learning Center in Charlotte North Carolina since 1995. Prior to that, he owned White Dragon Bonsai in Minnesota for nine years. He is not only an active bonsai artist and nurseryman, but he is also an active bonsai club member. He currently serves as Vice President and Webmaster of the Bonsai Society of the Carolinas. He has served as the managing editor of Bonsai International magazine and as the Vice President of the National Bonsai Foundation. He is the author of Outstanding American Bonsai. I have been lucky enough to attend a demo that Randy did using Hinoki Cypress at the North Carolina Arboretum. He is a talented and entertaining instructor. Randy Clark's workshop will run 3 hours 1PM-4PM. Students should bring the proper tools and wire. Eleven members have signed up. However, all members are encouraged to attend to watch this talented artist work with the students. Please remember, observers are asked not to interrupt the artist and the students. Mr. Clark is known to be entertaining as well as informative.

The workshop will feature Shohin, which is the Japanese term for bonsai that are 3 to 6 inches in height. For apartment dwellers or those with limited yard space, this is often an appealing size of bonsai, because large numbers can be kept in a small space. Because of their small size, certain styling and maintenance techniques are used which are somewhat different from regular bonsai cultivation.

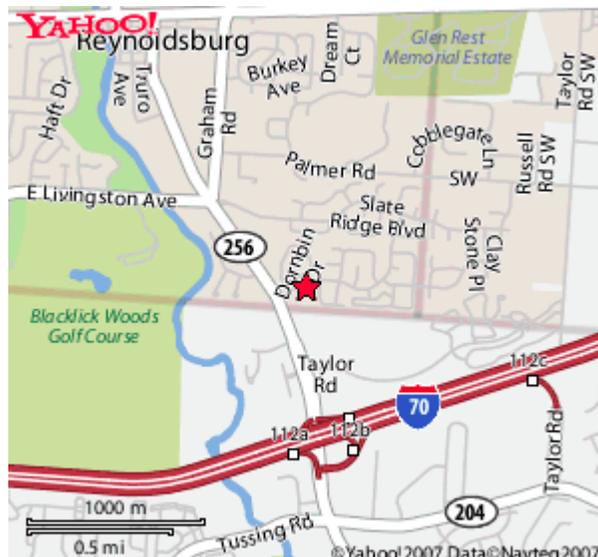
Each workshop participant will be working with three trees, a shimpaku juniper; a dwarf cotoneaster; and a dwarf mugo pine.

 Ken Schultz

Coming attractions

December 9th

We will be holding our annual holiday dinner at Dynasty Grill Buffet located at 7661 Farmsbury Dr, Reynoldsburg, OH 43068,(614) 861-8899.



President's Message- Mark Passerello

A new year will bring a new form for club meetings. One of the topics that seem to come up on a regular basis at board meetings is how to attract and retain members-what are ways to make the club not only useful but also interesting over the long haul? Most ideas seem to focus on making sure that newer members, folks beginning in the hobby or those who want to increase their knowledge about the art and craft of bonsai always feel welcome and have an easy to access source for information and answers to their questions. There was a time a few years ago when before each meeting there was a "Question Corner" to give members a chance to discuss problems, air concerns and as the name implies ask questions. The Question Corner seemed to peter out from disinterest. Looking back most of the board thought it was passive, and did not connect with people. That is why the change that you will notice at the January meeting and into the future if it works well. Beginning in 2008, meetings will start at 1:45, and after a moment or two for opening remarks and general organization, one or two experienced members will lead a discussion/question and answer roundtable. ANYONE is welcome to participate in the roundtable who would like to ask questions or find out more about a problem either general or specific. It would be easy to call this the beginners discussion group, but beginner sometimes sounds a little pejorative, and the idea is that anyone who is seeking some more information or wants to share some experience is welcome. These discussions times will be in a different physical location from the meeting room, maybe the next classroom over or another open space in the Conservatory so that no one feels that someone is looking over his or her shoulder or is listening in-feel free to ask about or bring up any subject that is of interest to you. The Roundtable will last about 15 minutes or so, and about 2:05 everybody would be back in the main meeting room, and we will get started with the general meeting, with a more organized formal welcome, announcements and notices and other Club business, and then the program or workshop for that meeting will begin by 2:15.

Planning for next year has already begun, and we are looking forward to another great year with interesting meeting topics and the chance for everyone who is interested in bonsai to participate at many levels. One of the ways that a club does well, yet also improves, is to have a strong, active group of members. Suggestions from the members are always welcomed and encouraged.

Tree of the Month

Three Favorites

Cotoneaster (Co-toe-nee-as-ter) [ed. note: Jan. 2007]: Boon used Cotoneaster as the understory planting in the Saikei he created in May. Cotoneaster are usually trained as little "apple trees"; their white flowers and red fruit and size proportionate, and their natural branching is arched toward the ground make them an ideal scale model. Unfortunately, they also get fire blight just like apples, except that a shohin or mame' bonsai is likely to die before the fire blight can be removed.

In the landscape Cotoneaster are used as ground cover or low filler shrubbery. Usually the trick is finding one that is single-trunked so that it makes a believable tree. The next issue is that they frequently have large branches near the top of your bonsai; keep that in mind when you cut off the big branches to keep the smaller twigs as your future tree. Colin Lewis says that the regular branching pattern make them a good subject for beginners.

Since they are a landscape plant, they will tolerate a good deal of sunlight. You will find that you cannot let them dry out, and you cannot rush them into a reduced root ball size. While they do not like wet feet, you may want to keep some of their original soil in your mix to help with moisture. I am certain that in the

Each month I try to write about one tree that we may be working on. At our November meeting, we will be working on three: Cotoneaster, Shimpaku and Mugo Pine. These are all hardy to our area. Randy Clark will be helping the workshop participants to develop the material into "shohin" sized bonsai. Shohin is the next size up from "mame". Shohin size can be held in one hand, and are about 6-8" tall. The pictures here are from the shipment that Randy sent me for the workshop participants. They are Potensai, not bonsai.

winter you will need to provide the roots with protection from freezing. If you have a cold frame, use it. I am tempted to try keeping one inside to see what that would do. Tomlinson says that “sp. microphyllis” is good for indoor bonsai. The literature notes that in cold climates they are deciduous, and in warm climates they are evergreen.

While repotting is suggested annually, the caution is that they do not like to be bare rooted. The literature also says do not remove more than 1/3 of the roots. During the growing period, keep your eye on the new growth, which seem to be irresistible to aphids. Inside you may have trouble with mealy bug. Use ½ strength liquid fertilizers (with a higher P) during the growing period. Because they are a shrub, pinch out all unwanted suckers, and shorten new growth to one or two sets of leaves after they lengthen to 3”. Outdoors, wiring should be done before bud break. After they leaf out, wiring without damage to the new growth is very tricky. The bark is a dark grayish color, but be careful wire can easily damage it.

Shimpaku [ed. note: Feb. 2005]: This juniper species is extremely popular as a bonsai plant. Sold at nurseries as Sargents Juniper or *Juniperis chinensis* it is more widely used in the landscape in slightly warmer zones. However, I have found Shimpaku to be one of the most flexible of all material used as bonsai. Its foliage is soft to the touch; there is none of the pricking that many others give you. I have seen Shimpaku referred to as the Queen of Bonsai if Black Pine is the King.

Shimpaku come in any size and in any style of bonsai. Its foliage pads are maintained by constant pinching, actually more like tearing as the scale-like foliage extends. More sun means denser foliage. It back buds easily. In addition, Shimpaku often involve the use of Jin and Shari.

To maintain good color, foliage and growth, feed it regularly. Since it is an evergreen, use an organic fertilizer in late fall to feed it at a low rate over the winter. When you cut off small branches in the spring, put them in your rooting box. In a few months, you should notice that they have started growing again because the cutting has developed roots.

Occasionally they will frustrate you because a branch you are working on may die for no apparent reason. In the winter I place their pots on the ground in an area that I protect from direct sun and shield from drying winter wind. In the summer I have them on benches where they get direct sun for a number of hours each day.

Mugo [Mugho] Pine: Frequently sold in a variety of sizes and a number of cultivars for landscape use, these cultivars have needles of varying lengths. The ones that start with shorter needles further reduce and make really nice medium sized bonsai. If you shop on your own, finding one with a single trunk may be a challenge.

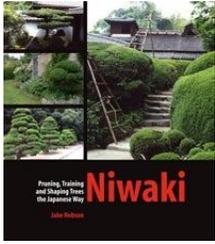
Apparently, in Europe, Mugo pines grow in the Alps. I have seen a number of articles where some specimen was collected that is very old and has interesting dead wood. The Mugo pine plants that I have in my bonsai collection are all informal upright. I have seen a few examples of multiple-trunked trees. I have seen windswept, but I have never seen cascade.

Because it is a pine, you will get to practice your candling skills. If you are diligent, you will develop excellent foliage pads and with good fertilizing, they will back bud more easily than many other types of pine species. The only pest I’ve seen on them is pine scale which can be controlled with Orchard spay. [Ed. note: several kinds of fly larvae/caterpillars love Mugo pine candles and developing buds. Watch for them in the spring as they start to elongate.]

 Ken Schultz



Book of the Month



Niwaki: Pruning, training, and shaping trees the Japanese way

By Jake Hobson

On a recent trip through the main library, a particular book seemed to jump right off the shelf at me. Amongst a display of newly available books, this one stood out because of the large size and the vibrant images of lush, verdant trees in typical Japanese garden settings. Titled Niwaki; Pruning, Training and Shaping Trees the Japanese Way, the book is a gorgeous piece of work that will introduce a branch of Asian horticulture that is very similar to the practice of bonsai, but which may not be familiar even to those who know miniature trees backwards and forwards.

The author is an Englishman, Jake Hobson who went to Japan after graduating from the Slade School of Art in London. His original purpose was to study the cultural phenomenon of hanami, the cherry blossom season. In pursuit of his original subject, he experienced many Japanese gardens, which fascinated him. As he admits, he had no interest in gardens or gardening-to me an unusual attitude for a Briton, since they appear to be a nation of gardeners-but he vowed to learn more. He returned to Japan in a teaching job and spent all his free time exploring gardens, and during his exploration deduced what so attracted him to these places: the trees. That deduction probably will not surprise any member of this society, since we already know trees are fascinating. However, in his time in Japan (he was so entranced with niwaki that he became an apprentice at a nursery, learning by doing) he was focused on full sized trees grown in the ground. There are a few pictures of bonsai in the book, and Hobson makes very clear the difference between the two is where they are grown.

A bonsai (in Japanese, literally potted tree) is primarily different from a niwaki (literally, garden tree) because the bonsai is grown in a pot or other container and the niwaki is grown in the ground. Hobson makes some very lucid statements about the two art forms and how they differ (and are similar) when he writes:

"The distinction between bonsai and niwaki could not be more clear cut...it is actually the similarities that are more interesting to us, for the two have much in common. They share the basic premise of representing the spirit and essence of the wild tree, and use similar techniques (and similar terminology to describe them). Clearly the scale is different, and bonsai demands greater attention to detail."

The idea of scale is important, because it is obvious that there is an overlap, with the smallest niwaki dwarfed by the largest bonsai. Something Hobson says makes crystal clear what we strive for in good bonsai:

"Whereas niwaki are a part of the garden, bonsai are isolated-they ARE the garden, and in the case of styles like saikei are the entire landscape... In Japan, bonsai are rarely found in the garden as such, but near the house. In the garden itself, niwaki are planted directly in the ground."

Hobson makes the point more than once through out the book that he came to this discipline as an outsider-a European with no horticultural experience, but trained as a sculptor. He brings that art background into play often, and I found it very useful to read over how he "constructs" niwaki, since it is a very applicable to a smaller tree in a pot, and while I feel confident about my bonsai horticulture, my bonsai design is a bit shaky. This book goes on in precise but easy to grasp detail about how to form and shape trees using traditional techniques, some of which are amazing in their scale. We are so used to trees that can sit atop a table or even in our laps while we work on them, to see a bamboo scaffolding erected under a cherry tree to help anchor all its limbs as they are bent down into the most ideal weeping posture is an astonishing sight.

Timber Press, a company well known for large format, photograph heavy books on botanical and natural history subjects, publishes this book. In addition to a capable writer, Hobson proves himself a fine photographer and illustrator to judge by the images throughout this volume. This book is beautiful to look at as well as informative to read.

To see more, check out <http://www.timberpress.com/books/isbn.cfm/9780881928358>

November Tree Care Thoughts

By now you have brought in the plants that just don't like cold weather. I could do a list here, but I don't want to forget one and have you tell me, oh, you didn't say that Myrtle or something was not hardy, so I left it outside. Unfortunately, it is not that simple. Some plants may have a tag that says they are "outdoor", but not in which zone? Pomegranates grow outdoors in southern California. Trident maples grow outdoors from Lexington to Atlanta, but some winters here may cause them to die. Their roots need protecting. Hopefully, you know enough about the trees that you have in your collection to decide. Just keep in mind that some evening you may read in the paper that the temperatures for the next few days will be below 20 degrees. That may mean you will need to put a Japanese maple, Japanese white pine or a Trident maple in the garage for a few days (hopefully yours is not as warm as my garage is – because they would break dormancy).

OK, you've moved them in or out. If you moved them in, you may have a number of choices. These choices are dictated by light and temperature needs. It is possible to put things like Crepe Myrtle in an attached unheated porch because it never quite freezes on your porch. Or you may need to put a plant in a window or directly under a fluorescent light because it needs a lot of light. Did you spray them, or at least inspect them for spiders, wood lice, and other passengers before you brought them in? I know that wood lice are in the pots if the screen is damaged and I have brought them in. But don't worry they only feed on decaying vegetable matter, like pine bark or orchid bark in your soil mix.

If you have plants with strong light requirements and you don't have enough windows, read up on keeping them under lights. The Brooklyn Botanical Society's INDOOR BONSAI book has a chapter written by Jack Wikle. Put them as close to the light without touching it. You should run a fan in the area to help reduce the possibility of mildew. And you should put a humidity tray with gravel or sand in it to keep the humidity higher than the normal central Ohio house in the winter.

Your outdoor plants, or "hardy to Zone 5" plants, should be down off their display shelves. When you place them on the ground (not on concrete or a raised wood deck) make sure they are on mulch or something that will allow the pot to drain when it rains. Make sure the place you've selected is protected from direct sun or wind or you may experience freeze-drying. Mulch your bonsai with leaves or whatever mulch you would use in your flower beds, around your trees up to the base of the trunk. This helps protect some tender roots from freezing and may prevent a pot or two from spalling or bursting when it gets cold.

If it gets warm for 4 or 5 days or fails to rain or snow, check your trees and decide if they need to be watered. Periodically check to make sure nothing has fallen on them, or that the neighbor's cat or some rabbits aren't nesting with them. Check whenever there is a heavy snowfall or high winds. I recently read that you can keep rodents out by putting mothballs between the pots (not in them). I plan to try that this year.

Normally I do not move my outdoor plants until the deciduous ones have gone into dormancy. (leaves are gone). Some years this meant that they stayed in place until mid December, in other's they have been stored by now, because it snowed.

When you move your trees try to do these things:

-  Tag any that need to be repotted. These trees have roots growing out of their weep holes, or have begun to rise up out of the pot. When you do this make a list of pots that you need. We've got some to sell here at the Club, you'll need them in March and April when repotting season starts.
-  Take wire off, or put it on. If you put it on back at the beginning of summer it may be cutting in, if not now, it may be by spring. Put it on if you need to trim and position branches that you allowed to develop unchecked over the summer.
-  Weed. Weeds like erantaria or oxalis quickly take up all the root space in a pot if left unchecked.
-  Take a photo. Annual photos will help you document the tree's development. Also, pictures somehow show you things that your eye and brain won't let you see by just "looking" at your trees. Over the winter you can use these to create or update your bonsai care database.

Next month, I will try to remember to write more about Indoor care.

 Ken Schultz

Is the American Bonsai Society in trouble?

A response from George Buehler (ABS Bookstore & Greater Louisville)

"I knew the rumors would be rampant, when people started getting a "fall newsletter" rather than a journal. [This is a] rather long story and I will try to make it as short as possible.

The ABS puts out a great magazine 4 times a year. However, like everything else, the costs are rising to a point where the small ABS membership fee (\$40/year) just barely covers that cost. Any "blips" in the cash flow are a major problem. Also, the post office increase in rates haven't helped much. At the 2006 ABS Learning seminar, a decision was made to take pictures of the exhibit trees (done by a professional photographer at no cost to ABS), have each artist write a history of the tree and to put all this into a North American Exhibition book. This was all put together throughout 2006 and a publisher was found in early 2007. We gathered together the needed funds by donations and some loans from the board of directors and pre-sales of the book. The plan was to start selling them at the 2007 ABS Learning seminar in Virginia Beach. A professional graphics artist (once again at no cost to ABS) was enlisted and a long contract with printing details was put together spelling out the exact layout, color specs, etc. This was signed by the printer. The books arrived at the last minute at the Virginia Beach seminar. When we examined them, the quality of the color was terrible and not up to the specs agreed to by the printer. We decided to not sell the books, so the ABS was out this money. An ABS member who was a lawyer stepped up and contacted the printer. It was soon discovered that the printer was filing for bankruptcy, so we had no legal stand except to get in line to try to get what ever we could. We found out this line was very long, so we probably won't get anything out of this. The VA Beach seminar was a real bust. It was held at a resort area, the local people didn't do as they said they would - stay at the hotel, so we didn't meet our minimum hotel contract which resulted in hotel penalties. So, rather than make money, we lost money. So due to the book problems and the VA beach problems, we are in financial straights. Thus the decision to eliminate the Fall Journal (cost about \$10,000) and put out a Newsletter (Cost about \$1,000).

The man responsible for putting together the book was so committed to the North American book, that he went out on his own, found a reputable printer, pleaded with him to print the book at cost, then found some people to donate money (several non ABS members), pleaded with his employer to loan us money (using his pay check as collateral) and have the book printed. It is currently being printed and we expect to have it in hand toward the end of November. This book (as was the first poorly printed book) is a limited production of 1000 copies. We sort of had an uprising in the board of directors because of all this and now have an executive committee, which oversees all expenditures while we "recover" the financial losses. We are trying to find a better priced printer for the journal and a cheaper method of mailing it to our members.

So is the ABS in trouble? At this point, yes. With the second printing of the NA book, the oversight of the executive committee, we expect to solve some of our problems. As I said, the executive committee is overseeing all expenditures. Will we survive? I have to say yes we will. The outlook was originally glum but is improving every day. What can you do? Talk up the ABS bookstore (go [to http://absbonsai.org/books/bookservice.html](http://absbonsai.org/books/bookservice.html) to see what is offered) to help sales - we have a great 2008 calendar which has some of the trees that will be in the NA exhibit book (I can offer clubs a discount on volume purchases if interested). Try to get people to join the ABS - the more we have the better the base of finance. Try to use the above info to explain to people what is going on and quell the rumors. Sorry Dave[Bogan of Evansville] for being so verbose. But this is the information that needs to get out to people when the rumors are started."

George

Bonsai Shears Sharpening & Adjustment

by David DeGroot



Mr. Mitsuya maintains his shears with water stones that he keeps in a small water-filled urn. If the edges of the blades are in pretty good condition, he uses a 1,000 grit stone for sharpening and a natural cut stone (like one of our "Washita" stones) for polishing. Before sharpening, he "dresses" or grinds flat each side of the sharpening stone by rubbing it firmly against a concrete block.

Sharpening begins by grinding the flat side of each blade on the 1,000 grit stone to ensure that it is flat and free of burrs. He then checks alignment to see whether the blades pass each other properly. Blade tips reveal whether there is too much or too little bypass. He supports the wide part of the blade (near the joint) and uses a small steel hammer to tap the handles closer together or drive them further apart. After this adjustment, the tips of the blades are ground on the edges of the stone to remove burrs, and make them equal in length.

The beveled side of the blade is then sharpened, preserving the original factory angle. When sharpening is complete, both sides of the blade are polished on the natural stone. This will make the blades almost surgically sharp, as is needed for cutting twigs cleanly (especially on needle junipers and cryptomeria). Cutting tissue with a sharp blade rather than crushing tissue with a dull blade promotes fast wound closure and less browning of adjacent tissue.

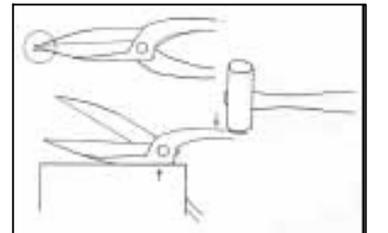
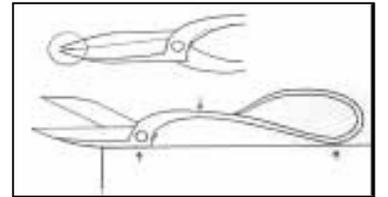
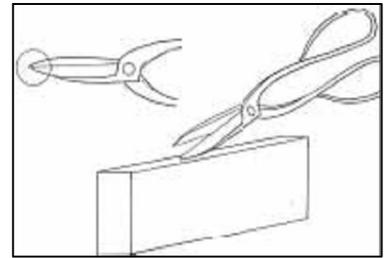
The flat side of the blade is ground until the entire surface is touched by the stone. There should be no skips or high spots.

If the blade tips cross each other too much, the handles should be tapped to add a bit more inward curve. If the tips do not cross at all, the handles should be tapped to straighten them a bit.

Sometimes the point of one of the blades has been worn or broken. If so, the back of each blade is ground until the length of the two blades exactly match.

The edge of the blade should face you when honing the beveled side, so you can see whether the edge is in contact with the stone.

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Bonsai Here and Beyond the Outerbelt

Unless otherwise noted, The Columbus Bonsai Society meets the third Sunday of every month at 1:45 pm at the Franklin Park Conservatory. Board Meetings are the first Tuesday of the month at 7:00 pm in the Franklin Park Conservatory. The meetings are open to members.

November 18	Randy Clark three tree Shohin
December 9	Holiday Dinner at Dynasty Grill Buffet (See map above)
January 20, 2008	Erodium Workshop
February 17, 2008	Soil
March 16, 2008	TBA
April 2008	Slippery Elm workshop--Pending
May 18, 2008	Azaleas
June 22, 2008	Shimpaku or BYOT workshop-- New
June 12-15, 2008	Dawes Arboretum Annual Bonsai Show www.dawesarb.org
June 12-18, 2008	MABA Conference, Indianapolis, IN www.MABA2008.org
June 19-22, 2008	American Bonsai Society Learning Seminar 2008—San Antonio, TX http://absbonsai.org/seminars/ABS2008/main2008.html
July 20, 2008	TBA
August 17, 2008	Meehan's Miniatures—Pending
September, 2008	Possible BYOT—Picnic?
October 25-6, 2008	Annual CBS bonsai show at Franklin Park Conservatory— New Date
November 16, 2008	TBA
December, 2008	Holiday Dinner



Columbus Bonsai Society Membership Registration

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: (____) _____ -- _____ Date: ____/____/____

Email: _____

Membership: Individual (\$15.00) ___ Family (\$22.50) ___

Check # _____

P. O. Box 1981

Columbus, Ohio May your phone number be included in our members list? Y N

43216-1981 Would you like to get your newsletter by email? Y N
(email saves the club about \$.74 to \$.90 an issue in printing and mailing.)

IF family membership, please list other members: _____