

# December 2009 Newsletter

**President**  
Mark Passerrello

**Past President**  
Dan Binder

**Director Emeritus**  
José Cueto

**1<sup>st</sup> Vice President**  
Ken Schultz

**2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President**  
Zack Clayton

**1 year Director**  
Denny Sackett

**2 year Director**  
Tom Holcomb

**3 year Directors**  
Jack Smith

**Treasurer**  
Richard Gurevitz

**Secretary**  
Sandy Schoenfeld

**Librarian**  
John Young

**Web Master**  
Ed McCracken

**Newsletter Editor**  
Richard Uhrick

**Education**  
Tom Holcomb

*Noble fir stands tall  
Strong in the forest shadows  
Wildlife's Christmas tree*

“A Pinch of this....”

... HO-HO-HÔKIDACHI (BROOM STYLE)...

**Term of the month: HARD PRUNING**

**Hard pruning:** Involves cutting all stems to only a few inches above the ground. This is done to renovate an overgrown shrub. Not all shrubs respond well to this treatment- it should be used only on vigorous growing shrubs.

**HAPPY HOLIDAYS!**

Boy! Cold weather sure is a long time coming. Even for central Ohio. Guess, we had better get our trees bedded down for a “long winter’s nap”. Soon it will be time to start decorating our Cascade style rosemary and tucking presents under it’s low hanging branches. What you say you use full size trees? Or worse yet, an artificial tree? Well, I guess to each his own. Either way I am sure we are all waiting for the Christmas mud man to arrive and bring us lots of bonsai related goodies....Well at any rate I hope I see everyone at the Society’s holiday dinner on the 13th. Be sure to check out page 8 for further information and directions to WING;s on E. Main Street.

Bonsai=Perseverance



Rich Uhrick



**Inside this issue:**

Program Info	<b>2</b>
Presidents Message	<b>3</b>
Tree of the Month	<b>4</b>
Book of the Month	<b>6</b>
Holiday Dinner	<b>8</b>
Soil/ New Products	<b>9</b>
Calendar	<b>13</b>

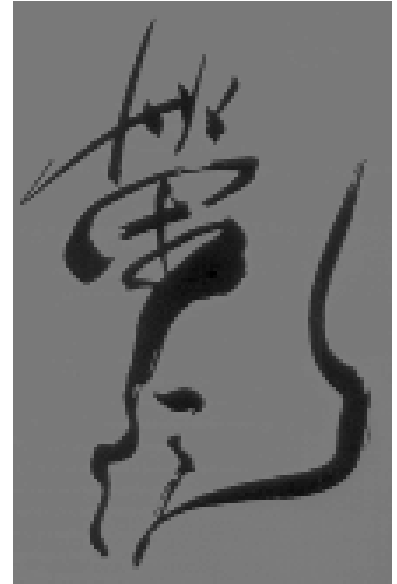
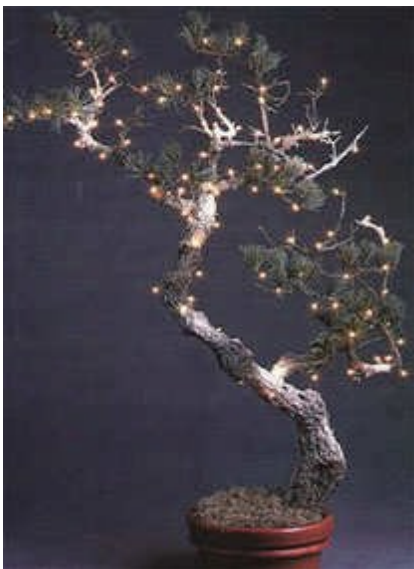
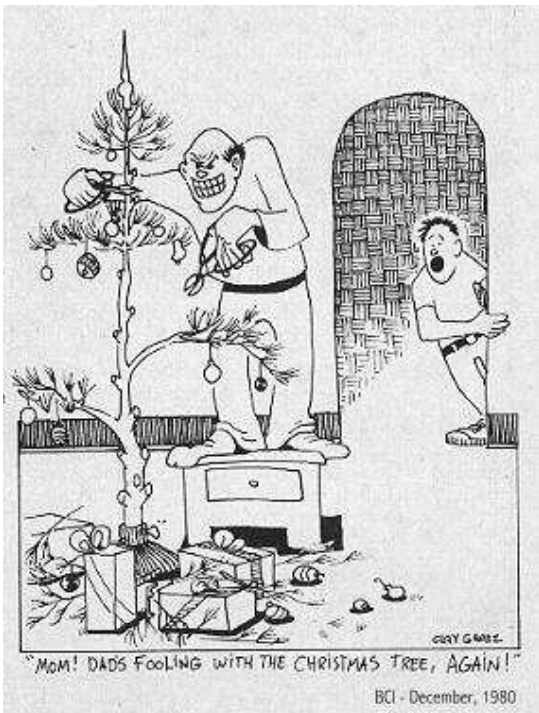
**Columbus Bonsai Society PO Box 1981 Columbus OH 43216-1981**

[ColumbusBonsai@hotmail.com](mailto:ColumbusBonsai@hotmail.com) [www.ColumbusBonsai.org](http://www.ColumbusBonsai.org)

## This Month's Program—Celebrating the seasons at the Holiday Party

In the spirit of the holidays we will gather together to enjoy each others fellowship for a holiday dinner at WING's RESTAURANT on E. Main Street..There will probably be raffle items or silent auction items available as part of the festivities.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS!



### UPCOMING PROGRAMS:

**JANUARY:** MISTAKES I HAVE MADE AND HOW TO AVOID THEM —A PANEL DISCUSSION WITH KEN, SANDY, ZACK AND JOHN YOUNG

**FEBRUARY:** Adventures in Hypertufa—This will be a Demonstration only;  
by Jerry Freeland

**MARCH:** Larch “Madness”— With Ken Huth working on the trees you purchase from him

**APRIL:** “Maples in April”

**MAY:** Extreme Makeovers

**JUNE:** Initial Styling

**JULY:** Root over Rock with tropicals

**AUGUST:** Bonsai Styles

## AND NOW A WORD FROM OUR PRESIDENT....

To look at the thermometer, it finally seems like December. This has been a most odd fall season, it seems like winter approaches then retreats, a situation that is confusing for both plants and people! The seasonal indicators for both are out of sync. A recent article in the Columbus Dispatch featured plants that were reacting to the long mild fall most unseasonably-the photo illustration was a peony that was in full bloom in November!



Later today, I will start tucking trees into winter positions and getting them ready to spend a few months hibernating. This is always a tricky time for me, knowing just when to do this task and the weather this year has not helped. Any trouble that I manage to avert is usually not due to my skill or experience but the resilience of the trees themselves. Even in a fancy ceramic pot, trees can display a remarkable will to live, and toughness about dealing with less than ideal conditions.

I had this demonstrated to me this fall, some of my crabapple trees, that could have been part of that newspaper article in the Dispatch. Crabapples, almost universally considered hardy and adaptable, and mine have been showing it in a big way. Thanks to a new job and different work schedule, I am not as home as often as I would like, which has meant less time with the trees on some days. I have come home far too many times over the summer to find my deciduous trees gasping for a drink and sometimes profoundly wilted. Amazingly, they always bounced back after being given some water, but after a few rounds of this sort of thing, the crabapples got fed up with this sort of treatment and went into early dormancy at the middle of October. Though they might have seemed asleep, they were not.

As November days ticked by and the climate was mild and moist, the crabapple tree started to put out buds, and one even popped open a spare flower or two that it somehow had not “used” in the spring.. Now that sustained freezing cold has arrived the few little apple leaves have shriveled, and I am sure the trees are going into a deep sleep. I am just as sure that come spring they will wake up and get busy with real leaves and flowers they way the do every year.

On behalf of myself and all the officers and board members of the Columbus Bonsai Society, let me extend a wish that all your trees sleep well through the winter and awaken in spring full of vigor. Here’s hoping that all our members, friends and family have the best of Holiday Seasons and a safe and prosperous New Year!

*Mark Passerello*

## Tree of the Month: Geranium spp.

### Geranium as Bonsai?

I'm not sure that they qualify since they don't really get woody, but I've seen them at a number of shows, often as accent plants and on occasion as mame'. Over the years, I have kept a number of different species of geranium (Pelargonium) as house plants, and perhaps the ones in bonsai pots qualify. The one in this picture is a variety that I have kept and see more often than others. I did have a scented variety which does have a crinkly leaf, and in one of the articles I found on Geranium as bonsai, they identified several of the scented varieties as good choices, though they do not flower. According to one of my Garden books, geraniums (Pelargonium) originally came to Europe from South Africa in 1700. There are now thousands of cultivars. In general, you can start a cutting from almost any of the plants you may buy by rooting them in sand or even a glass of water. In the fall before the frost wipes them out is a good time to think- rescue. So if you have one that has not frozen yet, go take a cutting! For Bonsai select varieties with brownish stems, some are green. Select small leaved, short petiole varieties for your "bonsai". Many of the garden varieties have large leaves and flowers. According to my reference, there are Cascade geraniums, outdoor, bush, and indoor varieties. While their care demands seem forgiving, they do best with a strong light source indoors. Cooler is better too, as it is with most plants we think of as garden rather than house plants. We currently have 4 geraniums in small bonsai pots under 4" in diameter. The small pot size helps keep the plant to a manageable size and being pot bound seems to promote flowering.

Based on your will over the plant's desire to grow upright, you can cause them to grow in a direction by either caging them in a wire spiral or by using a tilt the pot or side/moveable light source. Branching seems to be more dependent on "enough light" with too little you will end up with a single stalk; fertilizing also effects branching and flowering. "Clip and grow" tends to leave stumps that are hard to incorporate into a good style. The styles I have seen are usually windswept, octopus, cascade, literati and informal upright. The flowers as with all geraniums are on a stalk. Typically, the ones you may have used in the garden have larger flower heads by design. These seem to reduce when grown in a bonsai pot. Glazed pots seem to be used quite a bit more than matte finishes. And shape seems to depend on the style you select. A bit deeper than the Japanese rules would call for also helps to keep them from drying out.

Water them as you would a typical indoor bonsai, they seem to be slightly tolerant to drying out, though this does cause them to lose lower leaves. I have used standard "bonsai mix" to pot-them-up, I have also used a mix with a bit of regular potting soil. I did not see a real difference. Another bonus is that even in the spring, they are cheap. Look for a smaller interesting leaf, over the flower color.



### Pelargonium

Confusingly, "geranium" is also the common name of members of the genus Pelargonium, which were formerly classified in the cranesbill genus. In the United States, true Geraniums are frequently distinguished from the less hardy Pelargonium as (rather redundantly) "hardy geraniums" by gardeners and in the horticultural trade. One can make the distinction between the two by looking at the flowers: Geranium have symmetrical flowers, while Pelargonium have irregular or maculate petals. Other former members of the genus are now classified in genus Erodium, including the plants known as Filaree or Pin Clover; in North America.

—Editor



### 3 Top Reasons To Have A Merry Bonsai Christmas

#### 1) Beauty Year Round

One of the main objections to cut Christmas trees is that they are thrown away after the first use. Some people who want a real tree choose to buy a living one and plant it later. However, this will not work for everyone. So, another option is to buy a Christmas Bonsai tree. The tree will not have to be replanted because it is self-contained in its own pot. You will be able to enjoy its beauty year round.



#### 2) An Elegant Centerpiece

If you plan to do your own decorating and need something to decorate your Christmas table, is a major concern -- how to decorate your holiday table with a beautiful centerpiece making a table centerpiece might just seem like too much work during the Christmas season. To solve one part of that problem use a Christmas Bonsai tree for a simple, yet elegant, centerpiece and table arrangement.

#### 3) The Daunting Task of Storing Christmas Decorations

Getting out the holiday decorations and deciding where to put them might seem like an easy task. But when it comes time to put everything away, I always felt daunted. How should they be organized? Should some things be thrown away? How will you keep the decorations from breaking? With proper care your Christmas Bonsai tree will be ready for next year's Christmas decorating.

Taken from Hubpages.com

#### ATTENTION NOVICES AND EXPERTS AND ALL IN BETWEEN

Here are some great contests run by ABS for you to enter.

For a number of years Joshua Roth and the American Bonsai Society have sponsored a New Talent Contest for those who have ten years or less experience.

In 2009 the contest will take place at the Golden State Bonsai Federation Convention in Riverside California.

In 2010 the contest will take place at the MidAtlantic Bonsai Societies Festival in the Catskills of New York.

Students must go through a qualification round to enter the contest.

Details for the 2009 contest can be found at <http://www.gsbconvention.com/contest.htm>

. We urge you to look at the contest and to pass the information on to your clubs and bonsai friends.

And for you and your more experienced friends, enter the ABS John Naka Design Contest. Details for this contest are found at <http://www.absbonsai.org/NakaAward.html> .

Pauline Muth  
ABS President  
7 Western Avenue  
West Charlton NY 12010 USA  
ABS@pfmbonsai.com  
www.absbonsai.org

## Book of the month: *Indoor Bonsai* by Paul Lesniewicz

**P**aul Lesniewicz was the President of the German Bonsai Society when *Indoor Bonsai* first came out in 1985. A popular book, that is in its 22<sup>nd</sup> printing. I usually warn people to note where the author is from because their climate may be different from ours, but this book focuses on indoor bonsai. It is a small sized book, 7" X 4", 208 pages. (List \$14.95, but available as used for as low as \$3.)

Paul Lesniewicz notes that Europeans, despite their love of plants, including tropical and subtropical species, developed miniature forms, not bonsai, as the Asiatic people had. He attributes bonsai to Zen Buddhist principals to create natural, simple asymmetrical bonsai trees, which help in meditation. Lesniewicz' goal in writing this book was to describe how to create and care for bonsai that you can bring indoors. He notes that a lack of seasons in tropical climates due to constant temperatures is similar to our Western homes.

The book also deals with Mediterranean plants, which can be grown indoors or out. He defines tropicals as plants that do best at 64-75 degrees but not below 60. Sub-tropicals do best with a cooler winter, temperatures ranging between 41-54 degrees; azaleas, camellias and citrus fall into this group.

Indoor Bonsai has sections on light and humidity requirements. Light, he states, comes from intensity, not direct sun. HE recommends 10-16 hours of broad spectrum light a day to make sure your indoor bonsai stay healthy. Plants do not benefit if they are further than 30" from the light source, which includes windows.

Humidity is also critical to keeping your indoor bonsai healthy. Larger leafed plants, like Lantana, lose more water through their leaves than smaller leafed plants. Lesniewicz encourages us to use humidity trays filled with gravel, water filled dishes, or decorative fountains near you trees to raise the humidity. He suggests giving your bonsai a shower every four weeks to rid them of dust that blocks the stomata on their leaves.

*Indoor Bonsai* includes detailed analysis of watering and feeding as well. Indoors, water slowly and until water flows from the holes in the bottom of the pot. He notes that thorough dunking will do a better job but is not always possible. He warns, do not over water...or underwater. The water should be "soft" and slightly acidic (pH of 5.5-6.5). If rainwater is not available, he says to use an ion exchange softener or at least boil your water first.

Fertilize only after you have watered your trees. Fertilize regularly. Too much will damage the roots. Do not fertilize during flowering/fruitletting. It is best to use fertilizers specifically made for bonsai, he says you will not go wrong using them.

Pages 32 though 88 are a combination color photo and care guide for a variety of plants commonly used as indoor bonsai. The facts presented include re-potting as well as soil preferences, light requirements, etc. Pages 93-188 cover more bonsai basics, styles, wiring, re-potting, grove planting and saikei. It is not possible to list all the plants, but I thought it might be interesting to you if I listed some plants that I thought of as outdoor that he indicates will also do well indoors:

Chamaecyparis psifera ("Plumosa", "Nana" and "Squarosa"), Cotoneaster microphyllis, Hedera helix (Ivy), Ilex crenata (marisii holly), Ligustrum japonicum (Japanese privet), Lonicera nitida (Box leaf Honeysuckle), Pyracantha (Firethorn), Ulmus chinensis (Chinese elm), and Taxodium distichum (bald cypress).



Ken Schultz



1985 cover



2005 cover

## Carving A Collected Taxus

Collected from an urban landscape during the early 2000s, the tree was allowed to grow freely for a few years, and then it was gradually pruned to encourage back budding and reduce the tree's height. Repotted twice during this same period, into successively smaller training pots a smaller root base came about. During a Columbus Bonsai Society meeting in January 2008, the club decided that the tree's multiple trunks should ultimately be reduced to only one trunk. (See photo on Page 10) We retained the two trunks with the best movement, and removed all of the others, leaving the stubs for possible future use as deadwood. In October 2009, Frank Mihalic from Wildwood Gardens in Chardon, Ohio conducted a workshop focusing on carving and the use of deadwood. He showed us a possible trunk line which we had not seen before, and the trunk he chose was healthiest of the two trunks remaining. Frank also made suggestions as to which of the stubs to remove or keep for Jin. Due to the fact that I had the grinding tools that the job required, I took the tree to my home to finish the carving.

Photo A,B, C: (at right) the initial work: bark and outer layers of wood are removed, and shaping of Jin begins. The two Jin on the right bothered me, as one is too eye-poking (pointing directly toward the viewer), and the other reveals an obvious reverse taper in the trunk. Also, the lowest Jin on the left seemed out of proportion of the larger Jin above it. So, all three were removed

Photo D: (Page 10 top left) The trunk's reverse taper will be corrected by gradual reduction of the right side of the Shari over the next 1 – 3 years. This work could be done now, but much of the tree's live cambium path (lifeline) has been removed. If too much is removed, the tree is unable to transport a sufficient amount of nutrients back and forth between the leaves and roots, and the tree will die. Trees do have the ability to compartmentalize and redirect the live vein, but this happens slowly, so it is better to reduce the live vein in small steps rather than all at once. The upward – pointing stub on the Jin at the front of the tree seems to compete with the Jin on the back of the live trunk. I decided to remove the Jin on the

*(Continued on page 11)*



From Top:  
A-Top  
B- Middle  
C- Bottom

# Holiday Dinner Info

This year's holiday dinner will take place at WING'S restaurant. Here is the basic information:

- ◆ **WHEN:** 13 December, 2009 5pm—
- ◆ **WHERE:** WING'S restaurant (see below and left)
- ◆ **HOW MUCH:** \$15 /per person paid to the Club and Cash Bar upstairs. Gratuity on food will be paid by the Club.

## WING'S RESTAURANT



**2801 E. Main St.  
Columbus, OH  
43209**

[www.wingsofbexley.com](http://www.wingsofbexley.com)

### Location Details

2801 E. Main Street  
between Gould and  
Kenwick.

You should enter off of  
Gould to access Parking. (If  
you Google this it shows it  
down in the residential area  
so watch out.)

Unfortunately the only  
access to the banquet area is  
by stairs. There is not an  
elevator or ramp.



## SOIL ORDERS BEING ACCEPTED

**E**veryone will need soil to re-pot their trees, perhaps you will want to take this opportunity to order soil through the Club at our January meeting for delivery at our February meeting? That way you will be ready for re-potting. We are offering to pick up and deliver Ken Huth's regular mix soil. This is an unscreened mixture of equal parts haydite, coarse sand, turface and peat/decomposed bark mix. It has a light start up fertilizer in it and a wetting agent since peat does not wet easily at first.



*Photo from Ken's World website*

Zack, Jose' and I have used Ken's mix for deciduous, smaller trees and for transplanting cuttings. You may find it a little too fine for pines, but you can blend it with coarser additives. The color is good as it does not have white chicken grit. You will find that since it is unscreened that it will hold moisture longer, so you may need to adjust your watering accordingly. In my reading, the mix sounds like the older style mixes such as ones listed in Peter Adams, or John Naka's books. If you insist on screening as you normally do, the sand will run right through – But its quartz and does not break down.

The soil will be - pay in advance since we no longer are able to store items. Pick up at the February meeting is a must. (If you cannot be there arrange for a friend to pick it up.) The cost is \$18/bag which is about 3 gallons in volume or just over 20#s dry weight. This price is the same as last June's Show price. Because of weight limits that one vehicle can handle I will stop taking orders at 50 bags. If you are not able to attend January's meeting send your order to our PO Box by the end of December to assure that I have your order and the space to bring it back.—Ken Schultz

## NEW PRODUCT SUGGESTION—”OLIVIA’S CLONING GEL”

**A**s mentioned at the CBS club meeting, it might be nice to highlight info in the newsletter. I wanted to share info on the cloning gel we have found to start cuttings.

Ken and I first came across the Olivia's Cloning Gel in a gardening catalog and decided to try it for rooting new cuttings. It is a small 2 oz bottle of a very dark gel-like substance. You simply dip your cuttings right into this gel (no mixing) to coat the entire stem that would be in the soil/medium; then plant as you would normally plant your cuttings. We have only used this product for a couple of months so far but are already seeing major success in establishing cuttings, probably an 80% success rate (we've had minimal luck in the past). Since ordering this product, we have actually found it locally at the Indoor Gardening/Hydroponics Store on Indianola at Morse Rd. We have also found their website

[www.OliviasSolutions.com](http://www.OliviasSolutions.com)

It features a few additional products as well as general info on propagation.

check it out! Sandy Schoenfeld





Photo C: Upper Left  
Photo D: Above  
Photo E: Left  
Tree as it was in 2008: Below



*(Continued from page 7)*

live trunk, as it seemed to hide the trunk's taper at that point. Also, the Jin on the left was still too thick, and was further reduced.

Photo E (Page 10 bottom): carving is now complete! Any remaining tool marks were removed using a Dremel® tool with a 120 grit flap wheel. First lime sulphur was applied, and then color was applied via acrylic paint. Note that part of the Shari is painted black – this area will be removed eventually, and the black paint helps the viewer visualize the future result.

Photo F: (below) tools:

- ◆ Left to right: draw knife – purchased from Jim Doyle [www.naturesbonsai.com](http://www.naturesbonsai.com)
- ◆ Dremel® tm tool w/ flap wheel available at any home center
- ◆ Carbide burrs [www.katools.com](http://www.katools.com)
- ◆ Die grinder with Percival® (Ed.--no longer available, but the Merlin® should do the same thing.) [www.katools.com](http://www.katools.com)
- ◆ Angle grinder w/ 14 tooth and 22 tooth Lancelot® [www.katools.com](http://www.katools.com)



Ken Schoenfeld



From the Circulation Desk of the C.B.S. Library



The latest issues of both the  
American Bonsai Society  
Journal  
and  
Bonsai Focus are now in!

John Young, Librarian

**Don't Forget to Renew before 12/31/09**



### Columbus Bonsai Society Membership Registration

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ -- \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Membership: Individual \$25.00  Family \$35.00

Check # \_\_\_\_\_

P. O. Box 1981

Columbus, Ohio

43216-1981

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

Would you like to get your newsletter by email? Y N

(email saves the club about \$3.00 - \$4.00 an issue in printing and mailing.)

IF family membership, please list other members: \_\_\_\_\_

*Renewal Memberships may be paid for more than one year at a time.*

### 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. The board meetings are open to members.

<b>13 DEC 2009</b>	<b>HOLIDAY DINNER– WING’S RESTAURANT</b>
<b>17 JAN 2010</b>	<b>MISTAKES I’VE MADE AND HOW TO AVOID THEM—OAKLAND</b>
<b>21 FEB 2010</b>	<b>ADVENTURES IN HYPERTUFA ; DEMO ONLY—FPC</b>
<b>21 MAR 2010</b>	<b>LARCH “MADNESS”—FPC</b>
<b>18 APR 2010</b>	<b>“MAPLES IN APRIL” —FPC</b>
<b>16 MAY 2010</b>	<b>EXTREME MAKEOVERS/ SHOW PREP/ BYOT/ PROPAGATION —FPC</b>
12-13 JUN 2010	DAWES SHOW
12-13 JUN 2010	NATIONAL BONSAI EXPOSITION—ROCHESTER, NY
<b>20 JUN 2010</b>	<b>INITIAL STYLING OF TREES—OAKLAND</b>
<b>25-27 JUN 2010</b>	<b>MABA SHOW—GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN <u>THIS IS A CHANGE</u></b>
<b>18 JUL 2010</b>	<b>ROOT OVER ROCK / USING TROPICALS—FPC</b>
<b>15 AUG 2010</b>	<b>STYLES OF BONSAI/ SHOW PREP/MEMBER SALES—OAKLAND</b>
<b>18-19 SEP 2010</b>	<b>CBS SHOW —FPC</b>
29 SEPT-OCT 2010	BCI IN CHINA
OCT 2010	SHOW OF THE CAROLINA’S —ASHEVILLE ARBORETUM
OCT 2010	OAKLAND NURSERY FALL FESTIVAL
<b>17 OCT 2010</b>	<b>PHOENIX GRAFTS —FPC</b>
<b>21 NOV 2010</b>	<b>ELECTIONS/ SAIKEI/ STYLES—OAKLAND</b>
<b>DEC 2010</b>	<b>HOLIDAY DINNER —TBD</b>
JUN 2011	ABS LEARNING SEMINAR—LOUISVILLE, KY

**PLEASE REMEMBER THE DECEMBER 13TH DATE  
FOR THE HOLIDAY DINNER– WING’S Restaurant**

**FPC= FRANKLIN PARK CONSERVATORY  
OAKLAND= OAKLAND NURSERY, COLUMBUS**

Columbus Bonsai Society  
PO Box 1981  
Columbus, OH 43216-1981

Questions to:  
[Columbusbonsai@hotmail.com](mailto:Columbusbonsai@hotmail.com)  
[HTTP://Columbusbonsai.org](http://Columbusbonsai.org)

Regular Club meetings on  
3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of the month  
Meetings Start at 1:45 pm  
All are welcome to attend

CBS Board meets  
1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday of the month  
at 7:00 pm

***Holiday Dinner @  
WING's***

