

January 2010 Newsletter

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*And we begin
to dance
anew
filled with
starry hope*

*-New Year's
Haiku 2007
from Watermark*

“A Pinch of this....”

... WHEN AULD KENGAI...

Term of the month: HARD PRUNING

Tufa rock : Pronounced "toofa" is a type of soft limestone rock, easily carved and ideal for rock plantings. Tufa is formed when water evaporates from lime-rich waters, leaving calcite (calcium carbonate) to crystallize, often with impurities of iron oxides (rust), which give tufa its yellow and red coloration.

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Well, here we are in 2010. Does anybody else remember when that movie came out and we were supposed to be going back to Jupiter? Well, we may not have put men on Mars yet, but closer to home we have a year filled with lots of exciting programming ahead. So, fasten your seat belts and begin the journey with us as we take our first step at this month's meeting when we explore some of the "near death" and "fatal" experiences of Bonsai.

Bonsai=Perseverance



Rich Uhrick



Actually, it is just a reminder that the meeting is at Oakland Nurseries this month.



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Columbus Bonsai is a proud member of the American Bonsai Society and Bonsai Clubs International.

This Month's Program—Mistakes I have made and how to Avoid them

JANUARY: JOIN KEN, SANDY, ZACK, AND JOHN AS THEY DISCUSS SOME OF THE LEARNING EXPERIENCES THEY HAVE HAD ON THEIR PATH TO MASTERY (NOT THAT THEY ARE THERE YET.).

LEARN ABOUT SUCH TOPICS AS:

IF IT'S DEAD IT IS NOT BONSAI!

YOU TOO CAN KILL A SERISSA!

"UP IN THE AIR, JUNIOR BIRDMEN."

WHAT ARE THOSE FUNNY LOOKING WORMS?

AND "MY EATEN BY ANTS" TAXUS STORY.

"There is Dead, and then there is the beginning of a Phoenix Graft." —Rich Uhrick



UPCOMING PROGRAMS:

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, including Extreme Bending with Jeff Carr.

JUNE: Initial Styling

JULY: Root over Rock with tropicals

AUGUST: Bonsai Styles

SEPTEMBER: New Annual Show date.



The Columbus Bonsai Society receives meeting space and other support and assistance from Franklin Park Conservatory and Oakland Nurseries

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Rich Uhrick, Editor
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AND NOW A WORD FROM OUR PRESIDENT....

Happy New Year!

The new year of 2010 starts with some very good news for the Columbus Bonsai Society, and indeed for all the plant societies that meet at Franklin Park Conservatory. FPC had instituted a policy last year that required payment, either monetary or in kind, for the use of meeting space in the Conservatory building. Faced with the uncertain economic outlook and shrinking budgets, it was becoming quite difficult for the Conservatory to cover all their responsibilities and it was a painful but ultimately necessary step.



Going forward from this point, the Conservatory management has changed their collective mind about how FPC will work with plant societies. As of now the fee system will disappear and a working partnership more beneficial to each side will be in place. Speaking for the entire board, we see this as a win/win for the Conservatory and us. Franklin Park really has been a home for this club and we are all glad to be able to stay put here.

The club started a great friendship last year with the folks at Oakland Park Nursery and that will continue. So in effect, CBS will have two homes, two great places for bonsai learning and growth. We look forward to some fun and educational meetings at both venues this year and in the years to come!

Mark Passervello

On Attitudes about Mosses....

I once met two young Japanese ladies, visiting England as part of their training to become qualified tourist guides in their own country. They were eager to further their training by administering and explaining a Japanese Tea Ceremony to their uncomprehending English acquaintances. More rewarding, for me anyway, than the strange green liquid we tasted together, was a glance in a Book of Useful Phrases they had brought with them from Japan. Among other things, it contained this quaint dialogue;

TOURIST. *“Why is there so much moss on the stones in a Japanese Garden?”*

GUIDE. *“Because it is the object of a Japanese gardener to encourage the things of nature as much as possible.”*

—From the Moss Grower’s Handbook by Michael Fletcher

Tree of the Month: Firs; or Abies spp.

I saw an article in the Sunday paper about Christmas trees, pines, spruce and fir. The article went into detail about how to tell each by the pattern of their needle growth. I was familiar with most of the pines and spruce varieties mentioned for Christmas usage and as a favorite bonsai. However, although I recognized the varieties of fir listed for Christmas usage, I thought, "But what about as bonsai?" Fir is Abies, Pines are Pinus and Spruce is Picea.

Over the past 12 years, I have planted a Frasier Fir, a Balsam "Concolor" Fir and a Canaan Fir in my yard. So with that in mind I wondered which species was favored for bonsai. Unlike spruce and pine Fir have a "soft" needle. They like deep moist well drained soil. They prefer dry soil, windswept locations or air pollution. They have an upright growth habit and grow 80 to 200 feet tall. Depending on the variety, they are hardy to zone 3.

Abies koreana which I found on one internet site has small dark green needles which are silvery underneath and bears purple cones which mature earlier than most other firs. Normally, cultivation of firs is for their timber value. From the 3 varieties that I have planted, the Canaan appears to have the smallest needles. All descriptions of the needles of the various varieties of fir mention a silvery or whitish underside to the needles. My Concolor Fir has the softest needles and the new growth is much lighter in color. It seems to also be a slow grower and has the largest needles. The Frasier Fir has grown the fastest and has an open structure with the darkest green foliage.

When I look at Spruce, Pines and Fir, (SPF in the lumber industry) Fir seems more spruce like than pine. In fact, there are even Spruce that have Abies as a part of their name. To me Fir seem to be in a place between Larch and Spruce. I say that because Fir cones grow upward from the branch, bigger than larch, but upward like larch. Spruce and pine cones hang down from the branch. The buds and new growth of Fir is also spruce-like and the few Fir photos on the internet and in my bonsai book collection remind me of Norway spruce in appearance.

Simon and Schuster reports, that Fir belong to a group of plants that remained trapped in a restricted zone during the last ice age. While Gordon Owen says, they need sun protection during the height of summer and frequent misting. He also says that Fir are best suited to larger bonsai in upright styles. Typical to other conflicting bonsai care advice, Tomlinson says they like it dry, maybe that's because England is so wet??. Also, while full sun the most common advice. I am guessing that shade is necessary for plants in pots in this zone, as they dry more quickly.

Recommendations on repotting are every 2-3 years in early spring. A mixture that is 60% soil, 10% peat and 30% coarse sand is advisable. New shoots should be pinched by 2/3s their length. Some say that they like their soil slightly acid. So for their fertilizing regime use a little Miracid once and awhile. Wiring in spring is the recommendation. On the internet, I saw an ad that would send you 300 seeds at a time. Anyway, if you decide to buy a fir at the nursery, remember that all the references say to go slow with root reduction as they adapt to pot culture slowly.

The only pest problem I have had was an attack of bagworms. They are controllable by picking them off as soon as you see them. The books also say to watch for scale, though scale seems to prefer pines. Root rot and cankers caused by fungi attacking injured bark areas was also mentioned.



Ken Schultz

A Bit of Club History Name Dropping....

Many of us drop the names of people who have influenced our bonsai experiences. I hope to do a few short bios to provide a bit of history for newer members as well as shore up my fading memory.

Max and Carolyn Puderbaugh joined CBS in 1975. Max held board director and president positions many times. Although Carolyn had only a few personal trees, she assisted with Max's collection and was an incredible asset to our club.

In addition to his board duties, Max presented countless club programs, taught many classes, and promoted bonsai when and wherever possible. [Ed. Max often shopped at the Something Special Shoppe, in Westerville for his rocks. The owner still remembers him.]

In October of 1978, Max and other members (no list available) met with FPC director Jim Mance and representatives to plan a permanent bonsai display. Max is given credit for organizing, directing and working on the construction of the stands and designing and contributing trees to the exhibit which opened in November 1979.

The Board of Trustees of The Ohio State University established a bonsai scholarship in September 1986 with a gift from Max and Carolyn.

Max headed a volunteer force that maintained the FPC collection for many years. CBS purchased and donated many of Max's trees to FPC following his death in 1999.



Tom Holcomb

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> .

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Book of the month: 100 Tree Myths by Dr. Alex L. Shigo

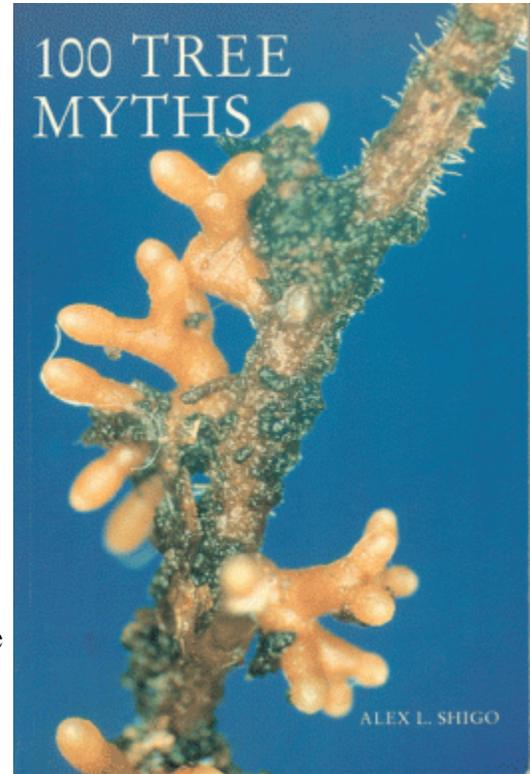
I first became aware of Dr. Shigo's research through conversations with Keith Scott & Tom Holcomb during the late 1980s. Dr Shigo spent decades studying tree biology / physiology. Most of his research focused on how trees respond to injury. This research involved injuring trees, followed by observing the effects of said injury after several years. This was accomplished by cutting down trees and 'dissecting' them.

Sandy & I were fortunate enough to attend a lecture / Q&A session with Dr. Shigo at ABS 1994 in Pittsburgh. He told us that the biggest myth is that fertilizer = food! Plants make their own food from sunlight via photosynthesis. Dr Shigo said that we should think of fertilizer as a vitamin which helps our plants become more efficient at making their own food. He also says that Phosphorous does not in fact stimulate root growth, though it is essential to the growth of roots and other parts of plants.

Dr Shigo also noted that, even though trees growing in pots are much different from trees in the ground, most of the same horticultural principles apply. I think he misnamed the book. It should be called 100 tree truths!

Here are a few of the tree truths that we bonsaiists should know:

1. Trees do not heal, they compartmentalize! Trees form and strengthen
2. Chemical boundaries that resist the spread of infections present in wood at the time of wounding. Trees then form another new anatomical and chemical boundary which separates the infected wood from the new healthy wood which continues to form. Tropical trees are generally very strong compartmentalizes. (perhaps this is due to their faster growth rate -KDS)
3. Wound dressings do not stop rot! (Products such as lime sulfur may slow the process considerably, though wound dressings may seal in moisture which might accelerate decay. (However some of the new 'antibiotic' products may be useful - KDS) Microorganisms cause rot, and too much or too little moisture will not support decay. This suggests that decay only occurs when an optimal amount of moisture is present. Dr. Shigo also concluded that a tree's ability to compartmentalize infections is moderately to strongly based on individual genetics - some individuals of a given species resist decay much more efficiently than other individuals of the same species..
4. sap flow is a defense mechanism - little injury results when 'bleeders' are correctly pruned in spring. If you find the sap unsightly, wait until leaves have fully formed, then cut the branch.
5. Roots, trunk, and crown (foliage) are equally important, and dynamic equilibrium between the three is vital! Roots are experts at compartmentalization. Dr Shigo suggests that when cutting roots, we should not remove living branches to balance root loss. He suggests that we should remove branches correctly (see truth #5) as they die. (Of course, we constantly violate this rule in bonsai, which may result in a lot of dead trees. But, selection of branches is very important to creating beauty, since we seek to mimic nature and improve on nature simultaneously. -KDS)
6. (Here's another truth most of us bonsaiists ignore) When removing branches, leave a collar (see fig. 1) this helps the tree to compartmentalize more efficiently. Flush cuts injure the trunk both above and below the cut. This may cause ram's horns (image 0085 - 0089), which deplete the tree's energy quite rapidly.
7. Most trees form 90% of their year's wood in 6-8 weeks after new leaves
8. Are formed, and trees are rarely forming wood year-round (remember this if you are trying to



(Continued on page 7)

(Continued from page 6)

- increase trunk size)
9. Photosynthesis decreases rapidly when ambient air temperatures
 10. Exceed 100° F. (conversely, I have heard that many evergreens do photosynthesize and transport nutrients in winter if temperatures are above 32° F, Though dr Shigo gives no indication that he has researched this area)
 11. 8)The most important thing Dr. Shigo said in this entire book was his introduction:
 12. "IT IS NOT HOW MUCH YOU KNOW, BUT HOW MUCH YOU KNOW THAT IS CORRECT THAT MAKES YOU WISE"



Ken Schoenfeld

Treatise on Treating Wood Rot....

This is in answer to Zack asking me about treating a tree that has wood rot in its trunk. He was working with the Conservatory - and the Ponderosa pine had rot that was affecting its stability.

So, I looked at Techniques II [Ed. by John Naka], and it was a bit vague, so I did some online research and there was a bit more - one was from a Colin Lewis book and then one from Brussels. Piecing together the tidbits - a complete plan could evolve....

As we know, gin and shari on a bonsai are dead wood and as such we typically treat them with lime sulphur to prevent or slow rot. Eventually though the wood may get "punky or spongy with mold. As I read the info, there are three steps you need to take:

- 1) Remove the punky/spongy wood. Naka says to use a brass brush (Like the one I use to clean my golf clubs, or take old finish off of carved wood.) If there's lots of soft wood, one article said to use a baby spoon, they are soft and won't damage the live wood.
- 2) Kill the fungus. Two products were mentioned for treating the wood; our old familiar lime sulphur and Armillatox. The Amillatox is specifically designed to paint on rotting wood to kill fungus. Worth checking out.
- 3) Seal the wood and stabilize the damage. This is where you get to decide, do I need to fill or just harden what I have left. Three products were mentioned. Platinum Body Plastic is mentioned in Naka's Techniques II. Its for auto body work so I'm guessing he wasn't planning for the area to be visually pleasing, it doesn't say. Liquid wood and MinWax Wood Hardener are the other two products. They do fill some of the lost wood areas. One article talks about sanding afterwards to take the shine off so that it looked more natural.



Ken Schultz

Root-Over-Rock and Root-On-Rock styling

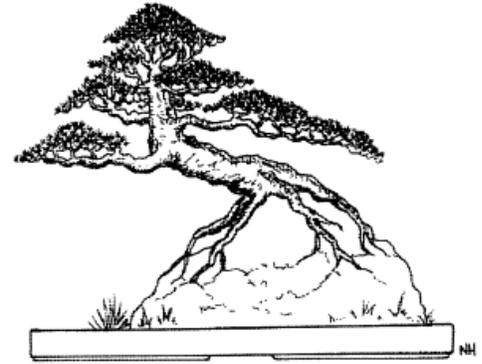
The sight of a tree's root clasp- ing a rocky surface fasci- nates many people. There are many different scenarios related to a tree with roots extending over the surface of a rock, or finding nutrition in a pocket of soil on a larger rock. A credible root-over-rock planting takes time to de- velop. Roots that do not clasp the rock give the wrong impres- sion. You need to select a rock that provides the tree a natural looking rest- ing place, a place where a seed could have fallen and sprouted. If you are not creating a tree in a pocket or on a cliff then the rock need only be about one third the size of your tree's silhouette. Ideally, the rock you select will have crevices and depressions that you can use to guide the roots over.

The trick is to make sure that you secure the roots to the rock without damaging them until they develop and clasp the rock on their way to the soil. Over time, the roots will thicken and clasp the rock more tightly. The two most popular tree specimen choices for root-over-rock are Trident Maple and Ficus. The roots flatten as they grow and fill any depressions in the rock. To aid this process you will need to tie the roots to the rock using pet wrap, cellophane, string or strips of cloth. The advantage of the last two is that they will rot away over time. It may take a couple of growing seasons to see the results that you want.

Your growing box will need to be deep initially. It also needs to help hold the roots snugly to your rock. Construct your box like a fruit box so that slats are removable from the top, slowly exposing the roots from the top to a shallow depth. Keeping it in a deep box will help the roots extend down into the box. Roots covered with soil as they develop will thicken more quickly. To keep your developing roots healthy you should cover them with muck and moss as long as possible. Without the moisture of the muck, it could take two to four more years to thicken the roots. If you are not up to building a suit- able wooden box, you can use a deep plastic pot, or cardboard milk container, that you can cut strips off from the top, slowly exposing the roots from the top down to where you feel comfortable with the amount of soil. This is probably about 2"-2 1/2".

If you are trying to achieve a different look, such as a tree on a cliff or near a ravine, then your tree will need to be small in relation to the size of your rock. Trident and ficus leaves will be too large to pull off a credible look of a tree on a cliff. A cascading tree or mame' tree would be a good choice. Their small root systems can exist in a small pocket of soil. I have seen wire glued to rocks using the Super Glue, Arm and Hammer trick. There is a chemical reaction, which turns the baking soda into ce- ment. Then you can use your fixed wire to attach roots to the rocks where you need them. The rocks you select for this style will need to have more crevices. You may need to create pockets with a ce- ramic bit or use auto body epoxy to create a pocket. The epoxy surface should have texture so that you can get moss to cover it.

Remember a rock's top looks better if it is higher than the tree. Avoid the temptation of placing your tree on the top of the rock.. In general, you should plant a cascade on the top half of the rock and the trunk and branches should slant away from the rock. Remember they need to harmonize. The clinging to rock style may require special watering techniques, including setting your rock in a tray (suiban) holding water.



We are planning to feature "Root-Over-Rock Using Tropicals" at our July meeting.



Ken Schultz

SOIL ORDERS BEING ACCEPTED

Everyone 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.



Ken Schultz



“You buy, we Fly”

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

THE LIBRARY WILL BE OPEN AT THIS MONTH'S MEETING!

The New BONSAI & STONE APPRECIATION Magazine is in. Please feel free to peruse it at the meeting. It includes an article with more info on how not to kill trees. Similar to our discussion this month. (Photo Unavailable)

John Young, Librarian



Columbus Bonsai Society Membership Registration

Name: _____

Address: _____

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

Email: _____

Membership: Individual \$25.00 ____ Family \$35.00 ____

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 \$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.

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

FPC= FRANKLIN PARK CONSERVATORY
OAKLAND= OAKLAND NURSERY, COLUMBUS

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

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

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

CBS Board meets
1st Tuesday of the month
at 7:00 pm

***Meeting is at
Oakland Nursery***

