



PSBA News Clippings



From the President's Desk by Matt Fogata...

March is upon us and we all have been busy getting our trees into shape! With so much to remember and so much to do, belonging to a study group is really helpful. If you are not sure who to contact for a study group in your area, check our website and/or send me an email and I will find you an answer. (Matt Fogata: mateofogata@msn.com or 253.858.2701)

I want to remind everyone, while you are getting your bonsai into shape, that our spring show is in May and our annual auction is the first Saturday in June. Mark your calendars because you don't want to miss either activity.

The Seattle Flower and Garden show has come and maybe gone! As you might know, the folks who put on the show are in the process of selling the show; hopefully they will find a buyer and the show will go on!

PSBA recently received a nice donation of \$612.00 from Microsoft. Thanks to Grant Rauzi, who works for Microsoft; he found out his employer has a Matching Gifts Program for Non-Profit Organizations, such as ourselves. Grant put in the request for the time he spends on behalf of PSBA, which resulted in the nice donation...Thanks again Grant...Maybe there are others in our club whose employers have a similar program?

You don't want to miss our March Meeting...Dan Robinson is our Guest Artist (hopefully he didn't over indulge at last month's birthday celebration (the cake really was delicious) and, as always, his demonstration will be exciting. The demo will be at our regular March 23rd, 7-10 pm meeting at the UW Botanic Gardens (used to be CUH).

We will have an azalea demonstration by David DeGroot in April and this promises to be a "don't miss" meeting!

"Volunteer to Help"; there is no better way to enjoy the art of bonsai and the fun of working with other members of the club....and no better way to insure the continuing success of your club! Don't hesitate to contact me at any time—the club needs your help.

Thought for the Month: "It is and always will be the people."

- Remember you can check the club out on the Web at www.psba.us. Current and past newsletters are available on that site. If you missed seeing the February ***PSBA Newsclippings***, look it up by going to the website and clicking on newsletters.
- Look for the handout on the Boon soil mix. Linda Breeden presented the information at the February meeting and members of the Boon study group used it in their repotting demo at that same meeting.
- Also look for the reprint of the article on fertilizer cakes. This article's information was intended to supplement the information on feeding bonsai when using the Boon soil mix.
- With spring in the air make plans to attend some of the bonsai shows and conventions—see page six for a list.
- Remember PSBA will meet Monday, March 23rd. The demo will feature Dan Robinson. We look forward to seeing him in action.
- Memberships should have been renewed by now—if you wish you can check on your membership status at the March 23rd meeting.

Boon Study Group Potting Guidelines for the Seattle Area

As Presented by Linda Breeden at PSBA Meeting in February 2009

Working with a tree begins with repotting it into an appropriate potting mix. Transfer from bad soil is usually done in stages. Once a tree is in this mix and has **no** remaining organic material, repotting is fast, and root growth is so vigorous that a regular repotting schedule is required to maintain good water and air flow.

Potting mix:

1 part pumice

1 part lava

1 part akadama

+ 1 cup of charcoal per 5 gallons of mix

Pumice, lava and akadama need to be close to the same size and fines have to be sieved out. Two sizes are needed. For most trees use a small particle size (1/16-1/4"). This includes all small trees, all deciduous and broad leaf evergreens (except azaleas). For large conifers and especially high mountain conifers (e.g. white pines, ponderosas), use medium (5/16-3/8") size. The larger size allows better drainage for trees that are used to drier conditions. Use the small size for a top dressing. For azaleas use 2 parts kanuma and one part pumice (pumice helps drainage in our wet climate) plus 1 cup of charcoal per 5 gallons of mix.

This mix works incredibly well in our climate as long as your subsequent care is tailored to it, i.e., watering schedule, fertilizing, and regular repotting. The following are guidelines, there are exceptions to everything.

Repotting after care: Don't let repotted trees freeze after they have been repotted. Don't wire a newly repotted tree; the roots need time to grow and stabilize the tree. They need sun to start to grow. Wait about three weeks after repotting to start fertilizing.

Timing: February is an ideal time to repot in our area. There's much less trauma to the tree if it is done when they are dormant. Pot your deciduous trees first; they must be done before the leaves start expanding. The conifers can be repotted as long as the blossoms are still are on the cherry trees in the landscape. Most trees are repotted every two years. Repot vigorous deciduous trees and very small things every year. Old established trees are repotted less often, every 3 or 4 years.

Fertilizing: Organic pellets made at home or biogold should be gradually added to the potting surface. For a 10 inch pot, start with 4 pellets per tree and continue to add a couple more every two weeks through the summer. This can be supplemented with liquid fertilizer or compost tea every other week. Don't fertilize deciduous trees until the leaves harden off. After decandling black pines remove the fertilizer for about 2 weeks and then start anew. For white pines and hemlocks, hold off on adding fertilizer until the new spring growth slows down (so they maintain a compact growth habit.)

Watering: Water when the top of the potting surface looks dry; check the trees morning and evening during the summer. You may need to put mame and shohin trees onto a tray of wet gravel through the hottest part of the summer. Move deciduous out of continuous direct sun in the hottest part of the summer.

Home Made Fertilizer Cakes

--The author is a PSBA member who wishes to remain anonymous--

At the recent PSBA meeting on repotting, the subject of fertilizer cakes came up. My home made cakes seemed to be the desired product, and I was asked to share the recipe.

Before I get to that, I also want to recommend reading *Teaming with Microbes: A Gardener's Guide to the Soil Food Web* by Jeff Lowenfels & Wayne Lewis. I will pull information from there as well as from Boon's Intensives.

Organic fertilizer cakes are used to feed the microbes present in the soil mix. As you will rediscover in the book, it is the microbes that make the nutrients available to the plant. Soil structure plays an important roll in the health and number of microbes. Also, all plants except for annuals thrive in fungally dominated soils. There must be sufficient drainage and oxygen for roots and microbes to be healthy. The bonsai mix used here is Akadama, pumice, and lava.

In shallow bonsai pot culture, the fine organics have the potential of clogging the soil structure and drainage needed for health. That is why the cakes are placed on top of the soil to act like natural leaf litter to the microbes. The cakes can also can be removed to control the timing of nutrient availability -- a tool that can be used to develop smaller leaves.

Boon's recipe is 5 parts cottonseed meal, 3 parts fish meal, 1 part bone meal, and 1 part blood meal; add fish emulsion & water; mix to the consistency of ice cream and scoop onto the tree. Use a sorbet scoop, or spoon it on. The secret to this is the fish meal needs to be pelletized to get the ingredients to stick together; it also cuts down on the odor.

From the book or your nursery supplier you will find other organic substitutions. The Japanese cakes are based on rape seed, but I haven't found it available here. Ingredients to help feed the fungus might be included, such as 1 part kelp meal, soybean meal, or the book suggests the best is powdered baby oatmeal. (Article is continued on page 4...)

Home Made Fertilizer Cakes — continued from page 3

Then we get into actively aerated compost teas (AACT). These modern brewed compost teas are available at some nursery outlets. Used as a drench, it supplies a high concentration of microbes to the soil, which helps if it has been stressed by using chemical fertilizers (like putting salt on a slug) or fungicides, or sitting on that hot bench all summer. Or perhaps you might use it, in early spring after repotting.

So my recipe: Cotton Seed Meal -5 parts, Alaska Fish Pellets - 3 parts(does have some other ingredients in it), bone meal - 1 part, blood meal - 1 part, kelp meal - 1 part, DR Earth Compost Starter - 1 part. Add fish emulsion and water, 1 tablespoon non-sulfured molasses, a few tablespoons of screened sphagnum moss (the Adobe brick effect). This I let sit over night in a warm dark space, then I add fresh brewed AACT to the right consistency to scoop onto the trees. I then water all the bonsai with the AACT.

For those who don't have access to the compost tea, I have found the DR. Earth products contain some beneficial soil microbes. The amount to put on depends on size, season, health, etc, but in general you are not going to burn your trees with this. Begin fertilizing a few weeks after repotting, a few scoops at first, adding more as the weeks go on.

In spring I dry unused fertilizer rolled in logs of wax paper, then break off as needed. Keep adding fertilizer to the surface through the season, clustering older cakes together, so at some point they can be recognized as the oldest and removed. If cakes are removed for cultural reasons, clean the surface and add more soil mix if needed. By the end of summer, the surface should be mostly covered with little cakes of fertilizer. The microbes will feed on this and supply nutrients to the plant down to temperatures around 50F (although life doesn't stop at 40). So when winter comes, remove the cakes and clean the surface of your bonsai.

NEW MEMBER WORKSHOP — April 19th

In this hands-on session new members will learn bonsai by doing bonsai. This free workshop comes with your new membership in PSBA. Sign up early to reserve your space by contacting New Member Educator, Greg Hill, at go2ghill@aol.com. The session is held at Bonsai Northwest in Tukwila from 10:30 am to 1:30 pm. Everything is provided—a tree, a pot and soil, wire and your use of bonsai tools. Take advantage of this opportunity to be introduced to PSBA and bonsai.

PSBA BOARD OF DIRECTORS-MINUTES OF January 11, 2009, AT BONSAI NORTHWEST

Officers and directors present: Matt Fogata, Grant Rauzi, Joel Schwarz, Don Williams, Jaime Wright, Kathy Blanchard, Scarlet Gore, Wayne Brewer. Absent: Annette Clark, Ed Kuehn and Mary Elizabeth Davis. Others present: Sharon Muth, Pat Negrón and Morgia Belcher.

The meeting was called to order and minutes of the November meeting were read and approved. Matt Fogata read an annual treasurer's report submitted by Clark showing that the club had a balance of \$18,750.21 including a CD valued at \$10,396.74 in the bank on December 31, 2008. That is an increase of \$3,457.11 from the end of 2007. Sharon Muth reported she completed an audit of the books and found everything in order. She did suggest the treasurer keep more complete records, particularly receipts. She also suggested keeping separate expenses records for raffles at the general meeting.

Matt Fogata said the club still needs an assistant editor to assist Morgia Belcher with *News Clippings*. (Note: Morgia is in contact with someone who may be willing to help out.) Don Williams suggested we put together a questionnaire for members that will gather information about their occupation, special interests and skills to help the club find people with specialized talents. The secretary will prepare a survey that will be passed out to members at the February general meeting.

Pat Negrón suggested the secretary send out electronic reminders to the membership prior to future meetings to help boost attendance. Negrón also reported that the club still has some pots and a number of trees that can be raffled.

There was a discussion about PSBA buying a better, adjustable turntable for use at meetings. However, the cost, ranging from \$800-\$1000 was deemed too expensive. Sharon Muth volunteered the use of Bonsai Northwest's turntable.

Grant Rauzi updated the 2009 winter and spring list of programs. The Boon Workshop group lead by Ken Wassum, Linda Breeden, Tom Knoblauch and Doug Bradley will lead a demonstration on repotting. In March Dan Robinson will be our guest artist; David DeGroot will do a presentation on satsuki azaleas in April.

Wayne Brewer reported PSBA will again have a display at the 2009 Sakura-Con show April 10-12 in Seattle. He also expects us to participate in the Puyallup and Kitsap gem shows in late 2009 with displays of bonsai and suiseki.

Don Williams reported things are going smoothly with the upcoming Flower and Garden Show. He also said the annual auction is scheduled June 6 at the Pacific Rim Collection and he hopes to have even more trees to sell than the 50 that were auctioned last year.

Joel Schwarz said he is still in the process of pulling together the committee that will plan and run the 2011 PNWBC convention. Don Williams, who will be finding the host hotel said the Marriot in Redmond Town Center and the Bellevue Hilton (formerly the Doubletree) appear to be the top early choices.

Matt Fogata reported that member Joseph Leibfried has declined being named PSBA nominee in the ABS New Talent Contest for 2009.

A membership report submitted by Carol Sangster was presented by Fogata showing we presently have a 50 percent member retention rate. A number of suggestions were proposed including having the president contact new members (2008) who have not renewed; giving away raffle tickets for members renewing; changing the billing date to January; and using credit cards for renewals.

Fogata said Ken Wassum made a proposal to him to improve the club's Web site that would include having a moderated discussion forum. Ken volunteered to be the moderator. It was agreed that Fogata, Wassum and webmaster Peter Chapman should meet to know what resources would be needed to run such a forum. Further action on the idea was tabled until the next board meeting.

After a brief discussion of reactivating our new member-mentor program, Brewer was assigned the job of developing a handout that we can give to mentors explaining how they can nurture the bonsai skills of new members.

Submitted by Joel Schwarz, Secretary

Upcoming Bonsai Events

Thursday thru Sunday, March 26-29, 2009

The International Conference on Japanese Gardens Outside Japan

There are public Japanese gardens in 43 countries and more than 250 Japanese gardens in North America. However, there have been few forums for direct exchange of ideas about them, until now. In March 2009, leaders in the field of Japanese gardens outside Japan are coming to Long Beach, California. California State University at Long Beach will bring together top garden designers, historians, maintenance specialists, educators, and administrators for two days of lectures and discussions. Aimed at professional and enthusiasts alike, this is a unique chance to learn about critical issues in garden sustainability while being introduced to some of the most successful gardens outside Japan. Tours highlight the first and last day of the conference, with guided visits to Southern California's premier public and private gardens.

To register contact: EBM Japanese Garden Club, CSULB, 6300 State University Drive, Suite 306, Long Beach, CA 90815 USA, phone 562.985.5930

Friday thru Saturday, May 1-2, 2009 – Sequim, Washington

The Dungeness Bonsai Society's 33rd Annual Exhibition of Trees

The show will be held at St Luke's Episcopal Church at 525 North 5th Street in Sequim. This is a Friday and Saturday show that is open from 10 am to 5 pm with nearly 90 beautiful trees. There will be live demonstrations each day as well as video presentations, sales tables, and helpful club members. Admission is free, parking is free, and the Sequim Irrigation Festival runs at the same time, providing plenty of things to do and see.

Thursday thru Sunday, June 11-14, 2009 – Boise, Idaho

The American Bonsai Society (ABS) Convention

The ABS presents "American Bonsai Spirit" – a bonsai learning experience for all at the Doubletree hotel in Boise, Idaho. Come and learn from bonsai teaching masters in a great new classroom format designed to instruct and inspire you. In all 32 classes will be offered and each registrant will attend 4 classes, featuring these exceptional instructors: Peter Adams, David DeGroot, Larry Jackel, Rob Kempinski, Jerry Meislik, John Muth, Pauline Muth, Kathy Shaner, and Arthur Skolnik. Also featured will be the Joshua Roth "New Talent Contest" and several demonstrations. On Wednesday there is a June 10th special collecting trip with Larry Jackel into the Owyhee Mountains.

Friday thru Sunday, June 19-21, 2009

Bonsai Clubs International (BCI) presents "Survivors of the Storm"

In the botanical garden at City Park in New Orleans, Louisiana the BCI will have its annual meeting and present several world bonsai masters from around the world and the USA. Demonstrations and workshops will feature pomegranate, bottle brush, boxwood, crape myrtle, and more. There are some great hotel rates and a beautiful venue in the famous city of New Orleans.

OREGON FUN

Greetings to you all from the Christmas tree capital of the world, Estacada, Oregon. My name is Dave Dewire and I'm the proprietor at Wabi Sabi Bonsai Wholesale Nursery. I had to stop propagating tree stock for bonsai a few years ago because of the thousands of trees I already have in production. I'm pretty fast at making styling decisions and carrying them out but my annual training workload is on the verge of overwhelm this year as my usual is to inspect, trim, perhaps wire, stake or repot and feed every tree in production at least once. I'm asking for your assistance here in helping to reduce my inventory to a more realistic size for me. I'm offering all my prebonsai stock for the entire month of March to Club Members Only at substantial savings of up to 50% off with most items in the 30% range of discount. Payments in cash will further the savings. There's twenty varieties of white and black pine along with larch, kishu shinpaku, maple, azalea, nothofagus and carpinus prebonsai to browse through in two to twenty-five gallon containers. My niwaki black pine are available also up to ten feet in height for the garden or landscape project.

I'll be working at the nursery seven days a week in March but as you know things do and will happen so I'm asking for appointments to be scheduled for either individuals or clubs to avoid disappointments altogether. Gretchen and I can be reached at (503)630-2003 for details and directions to the nursery. Happy Repotting to you all!

More Conventions...

Sunday, September 26, 2009 – San Jose, California

Midori Bonsai

The Midori Bonsai Club is hosting their 48th annual bonsai show at 488 North 6th Street in San Jose from 10 am to 4:30 pm. The show includes 18 separate 2 and 3 point displays of fine bonsai. At 1:30 pm Boon Manakitivipart will style a bunjin Japanese black pine. Trees, tools, and bonsai accessories will be offered by Jim Gremel and Shibui Bonsai as well as other vendors. Free styling help and advice for the public will be available from "Dr. Bonsai."

Thursday thru Sunday, October 1-4, 2009 – Victoria, British Columbia

PNBCA Convention Twenty

The Pacific Northwest Bonsai Clubs Association Convention XX "Bonsai Without Borders" will be held at the Harbour Towers Hotel in Victoria, B.C., Canada. Featured artists will be: David Easterbrook, David Rowe, Tak Yamaura, and Qingquan Zhao. There is a link on the PSBA web site.

Puget Sound Bonsai Association

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News Clippings
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Return Service Requested

Calendar of Events:

Monday, March 23rd —7 pm Dan Robinson Demo at CUH

Sunday, April 19 — New Members Workshop held at Bonsai NW

Monday, April 27 —PSBA meeting at CUH—program is David DeGroot working on an azalea, which will then be raffled off

Sunday, May 17—Spring PSBA Show at the Seattle Japanese Gardens

Saturday, June 6— Annual Auction to be held at Weyerhaeuser's Pacific Rim

Monday, June 22—PSBA meeting at CUH—Chinese Penjing Artist Mr Tien

Sunday, July 26—Annual PSBA potluck held at CUH

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