



Brandywine Bonsai Society

(EMAIL: BrandywineBonsai@comcast.net)

Meeting: April 14, 2007 10:00

Where: Brandywine Town Center

Subject: Dorie Froning on shohin

Cookie Person: Ginny Levy

Pre-meeting bonsai help: Henri Vermeulen

The April meeting is a week early!

Please note that the April meeting is the 14th. The Mid-Atlantic Bonsai Societies Spring Festival takes place on the 20th-22nd.

April and May promise to be stellar months, and at a time of year when questions about styling are very much to the fore. In April, we have our Dorie Froning, who is an internationally recognized mame bonsai and shohin artist. In May, we will be welcoming Ted Matson, also an acclaimed shohin artist.

In April, bring your mame and shohin bonsai for Dorie's critique. As we have done in the past, all members will present their trees (one at a time) for general viewing and comment, and then Dorie's review. Please be prompt; we will want to get as much from our two hour meeting as possible.

Trees larger than shohin size won't be neglected. Before the meeting begins, the very experienced Henri Vermeulen will be on hand for counseling, and in May, before the Matson meeting, our Pat Morris will be available. Take advantage of this unparalleled array of expert advice.

Mystery Lovers Take Notice

Grotesque, a novel by celebrated Japanese mystery writer Netzuo Kurino, was reviewed on the National Public Radio program "Fresh Air" on March 20 by Maureen Corrigan. Ms. Corrigan, a professor of literature at Georgetown University, compared the dark ambience of this novel to that found in the 1930s novels of premier American mystery writer James M. Cain (e.g., Double Indemnity, 1936), especially the "greasy smog of despair over Tokyo."

In this "emotionally harrowing" work, two middle-aged Japanese prostitutes are murdered, and an illegal Chinese immigrant is convicted. The build-up to that happening apparently is a consuming story, and that story involves incest, betrayal, **bonsai**, and the grotesquerie of extreme beauty, and money. (Dear BBS member, you must have realized that bonsai had some place in this small article!)

Maureen says that is novel is "wildly over the top" and "a long drive into the night without seatbelts." I'm definitely going to get this book. I'll let you know my verdict at a future date. (NGK)

(Have you noticed that the BBS "library" contains a mystery, Bloody Bonsai? There may yet be some cool to cold evenings to curl up with it.) Some people have discovered that there is more to bonsai than pruning, repotting, and styling, so beware!

Lots Happening at Nature's Way

Jim Doyle at Nature's Way is offering 20% off on a variety of bonsai soils during March and April. He says, "After over 5 years of experimentation, we conclude that the use of Kanuma on azaleas and Akadama on pretty much everything else has demonstrated good moisture and nutrition retention and has improve the overall health of our bonsai. We now carry three sizes each of Kanuma and Akadama soils from Japan. We continue to carry good quality bonsai soils which we use in a 50:50 mix with the akadama and kanuma." Fertilizers and hormones are also 20% off.

Guest artists this spring include Marco Invernizzi who will lead an advanced study group on April 26. May 11-12, the 34th Open House, will feature Suthin Sukosolvisit who will lead workshops on Friday from 9 AM to Noon, and 1 – 4PM. If you want to be part of any of these workshops, contact Jim at natureswaybonsai.com.

Honoring Jack Billet at the National Bonsai Foundation

Friday, May 4 is the day when specially built viewing benches will be dedicated in honor of our friend and mentor, Jack Billet. Please confirm with Dennis and Nancy by the April meeting if you plan to attend or not. Dennis will then make sure that all attendees from BBS will be included in the pre-dedication luncheon at the NBF. As has been said before, this also is an opportunity to see not only the standing NBF bonsai exhibit, but a show by the Potomac Bonsai Society, and a chance to browse through lots of vendor offerings.

Because the cost of a regular bus is quite prohibitive, once we know how many of our number plan to attend, we will start forming car pools.

Final Call for Dues. For those who have not rejoined, mailing lists will be purged this month.

Program on Air Layering

For the March meeting, Ski Dombrovski presented a valuable meeting on air layering with lots of valuable information and insight. The initial part of the meeting focused on the advantages of layering and what could be air-layered. Air-layering might seem like a good way to kill material, but Ski explained how the tree transports nutrients and energy allowing the air-layering process to work. For unusual materials, Ski refers to his bible, "The Japanese Art of Miniature Trees and Landscapes," by Yuji Yoshimura and Giovanna Halford.

The middle portion of the meeting focused on a demonstration of air-layering a substantial Japanese maple that divided into a twin trunk. First, a heavy copper wire was placed around the trunk and tightened until the bark was crushed.



An area just above the wire was then treated with rooting hormone before the application of a thin layer of clay to hold the hormone in place. This is shown in the next picture, but also note that a small branch was removed to make room for a bag.



A piece of plastic was then wrapped around the trunk just below the wire and then tied to the trunk to form a cup-like structure. The bag was then filled with sphagnum moss, to which Ski sometimes adds some potting mix to provide texture and promote root growth.



The top of the bag was then tied off, sealing the bag top and bottom to the tree.



This will hold the contents in place while roots develop, but one must cut slits in the bag at the top to be able to water it and slits at the bottom to allow the water to drain. Finally, Ski punched small pinholes throughout the bag to allow air circulation during root growth.



Watering every other week is generally sufficient except during the very hottest weeks of the summer. The roots in the bag ought to be sufficient to support the new tree when the branch is removed and trimmed back in September. The new tree must be wired firmly into a new pot to assure that there is no movement so that the new roots have an opportunity to grow and harden.