



YAMA KI NEWSLETTER

Learning from each other Sharing with the community

December

2004

HOLIDAY FESTIVITIES & SEMI-ANNUAL AUCTION DECEMBER 11, 2004 @ 12:30 PM BARTLETT ARBORETUM

At 12:30 pm on Saturday, December 11th our YAMA KI Annual Holiday Party will begin. Party Elf *Phyllis Wishnick* and crew will be available at 11:30 am to start setting up. Lunch begins at 12:30pm. Then sometime about 1:30 pm the gala mood won't change, but we will suddenly become a little competitive as we bid on the distinctive auction material.

The entire day is a result of the participation of the COMMITTEE of the WHOLE. In keeping with our tradition, members bring hors d'oeuvres, salads, main courses, and desserts. The elves set a festive holiday table and everyone who comes not only lunch-munches but shares a gala social afternoon with bonsai companions (different from boon companions?). Please call either *Phyllis Wishnick* (914 -723-5369) or *Rhoda Kleiman* (212-724-7840) to let us know what food you plan to bring (this will prevent only chips/dips from filling the table).

You, as THE COMMITTEE of the WHOLE, have a triple task on December 11, in that in addition to a munch, everyone should bring some bonsai items for the auction.

You may:

- be ready to recycle some trees that need a fresh eye or species you no longer collect;
- have found duplicate tools, or some you never used;
- need room on a bookshelf or magazine stand;
- no longer have space for new acquisitions in your pot cemetery;
- no longer have wall space for that lovely scroll or photo;
- be ready to bid on/buy trees designed by recent artists –
 - Colin Lewis' Kingsville boxwood*
 - 2 Yama Ki Committees trees: *Juniper procumbens nana*
 - David Easterbook's* collected Rocky Mountain juniper
 - Walter Pall's* collected Red pine
 - Michael Persiano's* Black pine



Mike Ivany & Pete Halm hustling the bidders last summer

Bring cash/check to pay for your auction purchases.

Remember, DECEMBER 11, 12:30 pm, for YAMA KI's HOLIDAY PARTY, with a dish and some auction items, and some cash to buy what others bring.

NOVEMBER 13TH MEETING WITH MICHAEL PERSIANO

Mike Pollack

Michael Persiano returned to YAMA KI to talk pines. Working with a Black pine purchased for the occasion from Bonsai West, *Michael* taught while he worked.

As you may know from his many articles in “Bonsai Today” and other publications, *Michael* believes in frequent fertilization. He contends that fertilization doesn’t lead to longer needles or longer internodes. Those occur due to watering and other cultivation factors. When grown in fast draining soil (as all bonsai should be), regular fertilization helps keep a plant “running like a well-tuned Ferrari.” As opposed to a car just adequately tuned, a well-fertilized tree can develop faster, withstand stressful conditions and look better.



Proper fertilization also includes micro-nutrients and other soil chemistry components like mycorrhiza. Intentionally inoculating *all* your trees with a blend of mycorrhiza ensures that they have the ones they need when they need them. As far as fertilizers go, *Michael* uses both chemical and organic fertilizers for his trees. He calls his regimen “superfeeding”, but that doesn’t mean overfeeding. Weekly feeding of half strength fertilizers allows the trees to take up nutrients whenever they need them. Without it, trees slow down their growth when the necessary food is absent.



Michael brought samples of some products he uses from the Roots Company. Developed in New England and tested at Yale, these products have been difficult for the bonsai enthusiast to get in the past. *Michael* doesn’t sell these directly, but he brought some of his surplus for us to buy and try. Micronutrients are an integral part of his philosophy of plant culture, and after ten years of testing the Roots products on his own trees, *Michael* is recommending them to others. These products are finally being sold at retail for the bonsai

community. Youkou Bonsai in Vanceboro, NC (call (252) 916-1946 or visit www.youkoubonsai.com) now carries all of the products recommended.

After discussing the tree and making the first cuts, *Michael* began wiring and eventually invited people up close to watch his wiring and branch shaping. The rest of the meeting was an up close, interactive session. It was interesting to watch him wire by slinging the coil of copper on his arm and spooling out what he needed as he wired a branch (see photo above). A bit of carving on an old wound was the only other work (since he had pre-applied a guy wire lowering the top closer to the trunk).

The afternoon just whetted our appetites for his forthcoming book “Master Techniques for Japanese White and Black Pines” (Stone Lantern Publishing). A compilation of advice from *Michael* and many others

(including Japanese masters and European artists); the book is scheduled for publication in early 2005.



The New York Botanical Garden's LuEsther Mertz Library provides plant help. Check their website, www.nybg.org, and click on "Plant Information". For E-Mail plant specialists at plinfo@nybf.org or call (718) 817-8681.

MABS ALERT

Sometime early this month your mail will bring a bright TEAL-colored MABS Registration form. It is for the 2005 MidAtlantic Spring Festival. To avoid its becoming buried in the holiday crush, make your selections and mail it with your check as soon as possible. That will also ensure your reservations for the workshops and critiques you wish to attend.

BACK TO BASICS WITH BERNI

Berni Gastrich

SOIL CONTINUED

Last month we discussed the relationship of soil with water. Now we turn to nutrients. Clay particles, for example Akadama, Kanuma, Turface and Central, have the ability to exchange cations (electrically charged ions) with nutrient ions in a fertilizer solution. Thus, they can hold the nutrients for future plant use instead of draining away with the water. Humus and bark are much poorer at holding, and granite grit holds almost nothing.

Humus and bark, being organic, help mycorrhizza and are the home of the bacteria, etc. so vital to a "live organic soil."

Decomposed or crushed stone causes roots to ramify into a fibrous mass instead of becoming long with out-branching. Since only the tips (root hairs) absorb nutrients and water, this branching is vital in a bonsai pot. It is also believed that multi-branched roots create short internodes in the branches above. This results in finely branched twiggery rather than long, leggy branches.

(To be continued)

Oops!! Last month we neglected to include *Selma Bernstein, Lucille Miller, and Mike Pollock*, for their able assistance setting up, watering, and docenting, during the ten days of our bonsai exhibit at the New York Botanical Garden. Thanks also for contributing trees to the exhibit!

5TH WORLD BONSAI CONVENTION

MAY 28 - 31, 2005 WASHINGTON, D.C.

Now is the time to make your reservations for the World Bonsai Convention at the Washington Hilton. It's nice to attend the Convention while vacationing at a foreign exotic location - but you must take advantage of the proximity of 2005's location, even if you can only commute for a day! Imagine, twenty-three speakers and workshop leaders from six continents; international bonsai vendors; exhibitions; etc.

Contact them at www.bonsai-wbff.org or (703) 589-2720

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COMING EVENTS

Dec 11 Annual Holiday Party & Semi-Annual Auction
Jan 8 Walter Pall's Slide Shows
Feb 12 Design Theory Workshop
Mar 19 Berni Gastrich Pine Lecture preceded by Black Pine
1 Hour Maintenance Workshop

YAMA KI BONSAI SOCIETY, INC.

165 West End Avenue - 12D

New York, NY 10023-5509