



# YAMA KI NEWSLETTER

“Learning from each other . . . . . Sharing with the community”

October

2005

**The New York Botanical Garden Exhibit**  
**Friday, October 14 through Sunday, October 23**  
*Gail Therrien*

As many of you already know, the best bonsai show in the region is about to be held once again.....the famous, spectacular, Yama Ki Bonsai Society's annual exhibit!!!! Now is the time to block out a day on your calendar for sheer enjoyment, inspiration, and a terrific learning opportunity for ways to improve your own bonsai.

This year's exhibit will include many trees not seen there before, as well as many of our "old favorites" brought back by popular demand. Come and judge them for yourself. You might come away with an idea for a new technique to try on one of your own bonsai. Maybe you'll decide that the quality of your own tree(s) is equal to those in the exhibit, and that next year *you* will be ready to exhibit. And maybe you'll decide that it's just rewarding to be a supporting member of the society! The exhibit runs for 10 days (the NYBG is closed Mondays), so we hope to see *every YAMA KI member* attend at some point.

Also, *we need members* to sign up as *docents*. Although the Garden provides security for our exhibit, our own members provide not only additional eyes, but also a bountiful source of information to the uninformed. Even if you feel you are not experienced enough to answer visitors' questions, we guarantee you will sound like an expert to 99% of those who attend. Complete instructions will be left for you, so you needn't fear having to 'wing it' on your own – we also try to have 2 docents working at all times. As an added bonus, docents do not have to pay any Garden or conservatory fees. Maybe before or after your shift, you can plan to.... take a little stroll .....enjoy a beautiful autumn day.... Shifts are from 10:00 – 2:00, or from 2:00 – 6:00. If you're available, please contact Gail @ [galtbon@aol.com](mailto:galtbon@aol.com). *Remember, this is your club's show, & we need you!!!!*

## NO OCTOBER MEETING

The planned presenter for the October meeting became unavailable and rather than rush, at the last minute, to create an interesting program, we are encouraging members to take advantage of this opportunity to spend the time studying and critiquing the bonsai at the NYBG exhibit, as well as helping the Society and yourself as a docent.

## SEPTEMBER MEETING – A GREAT DAY WITH ROY NAGATOSHI

Since we did not have a suitable demonstration tree for *Mr. Nagatoshi*, *John Cotaggio* suggested we use a meeting procedure we used annually in the past when *Yuji Yoshimura* was with us, i.e., have a master review members' trees, one at a time, for the benefit of all members, including suggestions for consideration by all members attending. *John* said (too late for the newsletter), “The opportunity to have a master bonsai artist critique and direct you on what's next and where to go with your trees is a great way for all the club members to learn. . . this is a departure from the regular get a tree and have the artist prune and wire meetings,

but to learn bonsai we have to go much further than watching a demo and then most likely never seeing that tree again. Learn pruning , learn styling and learn maintenance of your trees. Learn the horticultural aspects of your trees. That's what this and future (2006) meeting should be like."

The program opened with a seasoned bonsai artist greeting a small group of YAMA KI members. *Roy Nagatoshi* spent the morning critiquing at least one tree from each member—including Japanese maple, Zelkova, Kingsville boxwood, Shimpaku, California juniper, Chinese elm, Ficus, and mame of Chinese elm, serissa, and white pine. As a group, we discussed the various aspects of the problems each tree presented along with some of the possible solutions.



After a brief lunch break the workshop members went to work on the trees with *Roy* serving as a guiding light if we ran into trouble.





*Lucille Miller* summed up the day. When she took home the tree which she had, untouched, for several years. She commented, “I never saw a bonsai in the material and now I have an elegant bunjin to add to my collection.”



Among the ideas which *Roy* passed along was one which brought out embarrassed blushes, hasty scrambling for cleansers, and groans of “So that’s why my XXX probably died.” As he reached for someone’s tool to clip a branch on the first tree, he asked the owner if the tool had been cleaned after its last use. If you anticipated that the answer was “No,” you would be correct.



*Roy* cleans his tools **after every cut** with ordinary Lysol® Household Disinfectant (lemon scented for nasal aesthetics)! He dilutes the Lysol® by half with tap water. Not only does he dip tools before every cut, slice, saw, or scrape, he also swabs cuts with a q-tip or cloth dipped in the solution and spreads it on the new scar. Think about the logic of this: you frequently cut off a diseased limb and if you use the same tool without its “dip,” you may be spreading a disease. Before you apply sealer (he uses Japanese cut paste), let the cut dry. His rate of loss of dead trees is very low. At the lunch break

two members took off to a local grocery store and brought back a bottle of Lysol so everyone had some near their work stations.

Remove corrosion from your tools with a Japanese rust eraser. Apply 3-in-1 oil to your tools as you put them away.

As for styling, *Roy’s* first comment is that you must style a tree from all sides. If you sit with it in front of you and do not rotate as you plan and cut, you will have a two-dimensional tree that may resemble a bonsai from the front. Do not begin to plan until you have identified the tree’s flaws as well as its good points. Such scanning permits you to work around, eliminate, or incorporate the flaws into the new bonsai. It may also suggest a different style from your original idea.

Among the gleanings which he shared through the day are:

- ✿ The guidelines for shohin pot selection differ from those for larger bonsai.
- ✿ Deep wire scars on pines will cause needles to yellow.

Gleanings from *Colin Lewis*:

- ✿ Use moss in landscaping in the same manner as trees for depth perception. Large moss with detail (e.g., Lidon flowers) in front and smaller moss in back.
- ✿ Moss has no roots and no wax cover. Therefore moss edges must be folded under itself so that the moss will stay dry.

## OCTOBER BONSAI TIPS\*

*by Alan Walker*

.....we must make adjustments in the care of our bonsai to compensate and prepare them for winter dormancy. Although the temperatures may be slow to moderate themselves, the daylight is gradually decreasing. Morning temperatures are getting lower. All this signals the tree to slow growth and move toward dormancy.

This is the last month to apply fertilizer, and it should be low in nitrogen, so that you don't delay dormancy or encourage any soft, new growth which would be easily damaged by early frosts. Do not fertilize any deciduous trees that have already begun to drop their leaves.

Start reducing your watering. Keep the soil just moist. October tends to be our driest month (although Hurricane Lili certainly changed all that this year!), so it should be easier to control how much water your bonsai receive. It will help to remove most of the moss which is still on your bonsai. This will also permit better aeration of the soil, thus aiding root growth.

You may repot in October, but don't reduce the rootage significantly. Although cooler autumn temperatures encourage faster root growth compared to when soil temperatures are kept high due to the summer heat, you must allow the root system to recover adequately before freezing weather arrives or the tree can be damaged or killed. We've had some very mild winters lately, but don't be lulled into a sense of complacency. As with most matters, it's better to err on the side of caution.

Check all wired branches for girdling especially as fall is a time of year when branches grow rapidly. Some branches don't leaf out to their tips in the spring if imbedded wire has been allowed to remain during dormancy. New wire may be applied during October, however. As leaves drop from the deciduous trees, it becomes easier to wire them. However, you will need to be more careful due to the brittleness which occurs as sap goes down.

As the afternoon highs drop below the 85° F mark it will be safe again to use oil sprays for scale and other insects which might otherwise spend the winter on your tasty bonsai and proliferate in early spring. Use a good fungicide such as Benomyl, Ortho Funginex, Fertilome liquid fungicide, or Consan to stop mold growth.

Start making plans for wintering your bonsai. Don't wait until the weatherman starts talking about "the three P's" to think about how to protect your bonsai. Your tropicals will soon need to start making the transitional moves to a greenhouse or indoors in a sunny window. They will absolutely need to be protected from any frost which means no exposure to temperatures less than 40° F. They will thrive if you can maintain temperatures in the sixties or above. The rest of your bonsai need protection from wind and temperatures in the "hard freeze" range (below 25° or 26°). Usually puffing them on the ground with a clean, sterile mulch on the south side of a heated building will be adequate. Personally, I usually move most of my trees in and out several times each winter depending on the forecast. However, this necessitates being alert and available to do this. An unheated garage or storage building will usually suffice, since the trees don't need much light during winter dormancy.

\*from Lake Charles Bonsai Society's **BONSAI NEWS**, October 2002

## BACK TO BASICS WITH BERNI

*Berni Gastrich*

### CHANGE OF LIGHT

Recently I had two trees in the show at Washington DC. This meant the trees were indoors for five consecutive days, receiving only incandescent light. In addition they spent three days in the car, coming and going. They were both Hinoki Cypress.

When I got home I put the trees in their usual positions on my benches. Two days later many of the leaf tips became sun scorched. The days were not unusually hot or bright, just normal sunny days.

Recently I trimmed several junipers. Nothing radical, just a good solid trimming. The next few days were quite sunny and hot. Any twig that I had not trimmed staged a nice lush green. However, some of the foliage which had previously been shaded by the parts that I removed, now turned brown.

After-the-fact, the answer is always obvious. The sudden change of light caused the problem. A few days off at least semi-shade, and then full exposure when the weather promised to be cloudy for a day or two would have avoided the above problem.

### 2005 GOLDEN STATE BONSAI FEDERATION CONVENTION NOVEMBER 2 - 6 @ ANAHEIM, CALIFORNIA

Experience the Magic of Bonsai on November 2-6 at the 2005 Golden State Bonsai Federation Convention in Anaheim, California near Disneyland. Rooms for \$69/day at the Crowne Plaza Anaheim Resort if you call 714-867-5555 and mention "GSBF Bonsai Convention." An international lineup of headliners including Marco Invernizzi (Italy), Cheng Kung Cheng and Min-Henan Lo (Taiwan), Kenji Miyata (Japan), Suthin Sukosolvisit (Thailand), and American bonsai masters Harry Hirao, Ben Oki, Ed Nakanishi, Mary Madison, Ted Matson and John Thompson, among others. Special events include a grape collecting trip for 100-year-old grapevines, special auction of old Japanese pots and other items, and a John Naka Tribute with special raffle. Complete convention schedule and registration forms online at [www.gsbf-bonsai.org](http://www.gsbf-bonsai.org) or contact the convention registrar at 714-637-4592.

### NEW MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FLYER



YAMA KI has upgraded to color! Pick up the new flyer at the NYBG exhibit, and if you know friends interested in bonsai, take extra copies for them. The new flyer was designed by past-president *Adam Hume*. *Arlene Trebach's* daughter-in-law, *Unjoo Noh* (a top notch designer), steered us to an excellent (and reasonable) printer, *Minuteman Press*, located in Stamford, CT.

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COMING EVENTS

- Oct. 14-23 NY Botanical Garden/Yama Ki Bonsai Society bonsai exhibit
- Oct ? No October meeting
- Nov 9 *Kevin Goveia: The Art of Pot Making* (including a Screen Presentation)
- Dec. 10 Annual Holiday Party & Auction

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