



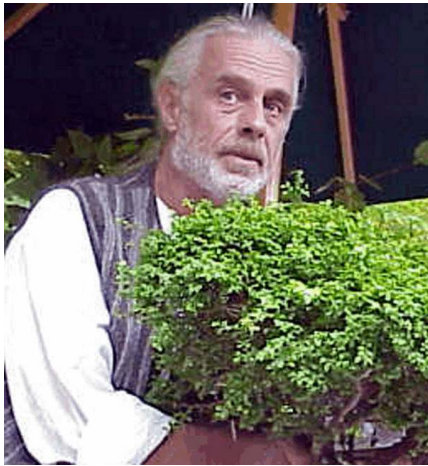
YAMA KI NEWSLETTER

“Learning from each other Sharing with the community”

September

2006

JUDGED MEMBER SHOW & CRITIQUE WORKSHOP
WITH COLIN LEWIS @ BARTLETT ARBORETUM
SEPTEMBER 16, 2006 AT 10:00 AM



Colin Lewis will join us at our next meeting on Saturday, September 16th to judge a member show in the morning and conduct a critique workshop in the afternoon. Certificates of merit will be awarded to the winners and photographs of their bonsai will be included in the October issue of the Newsletter. Every member should bring at least two plants for the show and workshop. If time permits, *Colin* will critique beyond the two plant limit. The day should be a great learning experience because *Colin* will critique each plant before the entire membership and will encourage member participation. *Colin* is the ideal person for this program because of his inherent teaching skills, his artistic talent, and his horticultural knowledge and experience. Don't miss this meeting and don't miss the opportunity to get *Colin's* advice and guidance to improve your bonsai.

Colin was born in southern England and relocated in 2001 to the United States to work full-time as a bonsai teacher, artist and consultant. He resides in Salem, Massachusetts. Hô Yoku-en, his working bonsai garden, is located at Bonsai West, Littleton, MA.

AUGUST 12TH HOME VISIT WITH BERNI & ANN GASTRICH *Gail Therrien*

A beautiful afternoon, a gorgeous setting, extremely gracious hosts and, of course, the best bonsai collection among YAMA KI's membership (some available for sale), all combined to create a delightful summer afternoon for bonsai enthusiasts. Though attendance was small, it was good to see some of our newest YK members taking advantage of the opportunity to view great bonsai and discuss their care with a master.

Berni was able to demonstrate in detail, tree by tree, the methods he used in design decisions, maintenance and growth control, insect prevention and treatment, as well as sun and water requirements. Any and all questions were answered with clear explanations, backed up with visual proof of their effectiveness. What a great way to learn! Thank you, *Berni* and *Ann*, for an always enjoyable learning experience.

The following open letter from *Matt Wheaton* expresses it very well:

Berni & Ann,

I would like to thank you again for having us to your beautiful home. The way it is integrated into the woodland surroundings, the spectacular view, and the pure peace and quiet, left me with a sense of envy for the first time since Carla and I bought our home a year and a half ago.

The privacy you enjoy today is rare indeed. You are quite gracious to allow us to intrude upon it for even a few hours.

Your bonsai are equally magnificent. I would find your collection extremely discouraging when compared to my own pitiful 'starter' trees if it were not for the hope that, over time, my trees might one day begin to resemble yours.

Thank you for your hospitality and, as always, for your continued efforts to share your experience.

Matt

BARTLETT ARBORETUM FALL PLANT SALE*
SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 2006

Display gardens with ideas for your property, seminars on the correct way to plant and ensure a healthy start for trees and woody shrubs, the opportunity to quiz Bartlett staff and their Master Gardener volunteers with your plant questions, and, a diverse selection of plant material will be awaiting you at the Bartlett's annual Fall Plant Sale on Sat, Sept. 30th from 10:00 am to 3:00 pm (members preview at 8:30 am).

Fall is the best time for planting! A great way to maximize a healthy start for many varieties of trees, shrubs, perennials and grasses is to plant them in fall. Plants will quickly establish a healthy root system, making use of the still warm soil and moderate temperatures. Come spring, fall plantings can put all of their energy into new growth rather than having to establish a root system first.

The plant sale will include unusual, or hard to find specimens, and the expertise to insure that you are selecting the right plant for the right spot from a shady nook to an area requiring more deer resistance. They will have several display gardens that will not only highlight plants based on those individual qualities, but give you ideas on how to use them within your own landscape as well.

* from the Summer 2006 issue of Bartlett News

BACK TO BASICS WITH BERNI
Berni Gastrich

DO IT NOW DON'T WAIT

During the month of September it is a seriously good idea to fertilize all of your bonsai with a balanced, or high nitrogen fertilizer. If you do this at this time of year you will be stimulating "back budding" for next spring. Nitrogen stimulates foliage growth. At this time of year it will stimulate new buds for next year. If at the same time, you removed the tips from all branches, you will get back budding instead of extended tip growth.

It is important to stop the use of higher nitrogen fertilizers by early October, since this might cause these new buds to sprout this fall rather than next spring. Such new sprouts would be very fragile and tender in winter temperatures. Also, they would inhibit back budding.

During October, you do not need to stop fertilizing entirely, but use only, 0-10-10. This is available at plant nurseries, usually called fruit and bloom, or something similar. The phosphorus and potassium in these fertilizers benefits the general health of the plant and its roots, but does not stimulate top growth. Stop all fertilizers shortly before you put your trees away for the winter.

WALTER PALL AT SHANTI BITHI NURSERY
OCTOBER 27 - 28, 2006

On Saturday, October 28th, Shanti Bithi Nursery is sponsoring two free presentations by *Walter Pall*, one of Europe's leading bonsai artists:

9:30 am – 12:30 pm "Tree Critiques & How to Choose a Tree with a Future" Using trees brought in by the audience members, then (time permitting) using Shanti Bithi's trees, *Walter Pall* will discuss each tree's good and bad points, and make suggestions for how the tree might be improved. He will direct his audience in what to look for when buying bonsai or pre-bonsai.

1:00 pm – 4:30 pm Styling Demonstration: Using garden-grown or collected material, *Walter Pall* will demonstrate how to approach old and complicated material.

On Friday, October 27th. *Walter* will conduct a "Master Class" limited to 8 participants. The cost for the full day session (9:00 am - 5:40 pm) is \$200, plus tax. Bring your own bonsai or pre-bonsai to work on, particularly trees that are exceptionally challenging, or even "impossible." You may bring more than one tree. Bring your own tools. Shanti Bithi will supply wire, raffia, stones and any other materials you may need. "Come with the desire to style or refine your tree; repotting should be done at another time." This class is for students with intermediate to advanced bonsai skills. Beginners may observe.

"IMPROVING DRAINAGE - AN EXPERIMENT" *
by Jim Sullivan, Bowie Bonsai Club

I think most bonsai practitioners and horticulturists alike would agree that saturated soil (poor drainage) is the foremost slayer of potted plants. We attempt to improve drainage by amending soils in nursery containers or using various ratios of soilless products in bonsai containers. Under "average" conditions (no excessive rainfall, not too hot or chilly, good air circulation) the bonsai survive and sometimes thrive. But we usually can't control all the potentially damaging factors, especially the excessively damp conditions.

I have never had a bonsai potted in a tall (cascade) container decline or die. The reason being (I think) the excellent drainage characteristics of such a pot. The ratio of height to width is such that the water column is heavy enough per unit area to assure that surface tension within the pot will be overcome by the weight of the water. In other styles, particularly very shallow containers, the water column is very light per unit area, and a perched water table is often the result. This phenomena has been addressed in CLIPPINGS and other publications, but is often forgotten or ignored. If the tree is otherwise healthy and the environmental factors are moderate, moisture uptake and evaporation usually take care of the moisture problem. Again, it is the excessive rain, or perhaps it was the over-watering by a novice while you were in Bermuda for two weeks that proved lethal. - - -

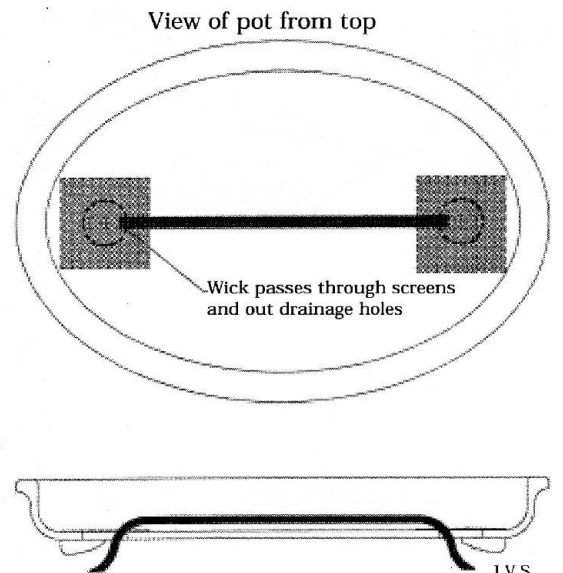
I did an experiment to test the practicality and effectiveness of a wicking system. I chose two identical containers of "average" bonsai proportions. I used two different types of woven electrical insulation, about 3/16" diameter and long enough to lay across the bottom of the pot and extending through plastic screen and out the drainage holes far enough to touch whatever surface the pot would be sitting on. One "wick" appeared to be Nylon, and the other fiberglass. I chose those materials because they wouldn't deteriorate and because they were on hand. I filled the pots with a typical bonsai planting mix, weighed and then saturated it by immersion for an hour. I elevated the pots so that the wicks did not touch the bench surface and allowed the pots to drain until draining ceased. I again weighed the pots and their saturated contents. The pots were then placed on the bench and their surfaces covered to prevent evaporation. Almost immediately drainage resumed through the wicks. The pots were weighed after 2, 5, and 24 hours. At 24 hours, there was a 21% decrease in moisture content in one pot and a 22.5% decrease in the other. This was after all drainage had apparently ended.

Conclusion: Wicks Work! - - -

Wick must be long enough to touch surface on which bonsai rests (bench, earth). To prevent continual draining while on display stand tape wick to bottom of pot.

Wick should be rot-resistant material and hydrophilic. Nylon (about 3/16" dia. "rope" sold in camping stores such as REI) or fiberglass seem okay. If visibility is a problem, use black or dark green."

* Reprinted from CLIPPINGS, the newsletter of the Potomac Bonsai Association, Vol 32, Number 4, April 2002



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COMING EVENTS

Sept 16 Juried Members' Bonsai Exhibit & Critique
Workshop
Oct 14 *Guy Guidry* all day workshop
Nov 11 David Easterbrook lecture/demo & workshop
Dec 9 Holiday party and auction

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