



Fujii Notes

Newsletter of the Phoenix Bonsai Society

Vol. 11, No. 3 – April 2006

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE by Marcia Colliat

Nowadays the hobby of bonsai is fairly well known and practiced in many countries throughout the world. It is a hobby that has been introduced to the Western World through Japan and it is for this reason that many people consider it to be originally a Japanese Art. This is not so. Bonsai is a relatively recent art in Japan and did, in fact, originate in China.

There is no single date existing where we can say conclusively – “this is when bonsai began”. Like most art forms and most things generally, it evolved slowly but steadily into its present form. The beginnings are hazy but nevertheless it is interesting to look back at what we do know about the thoughts and practices of mankind in times past.

Man found long ago that he could more easily transport container-grown plants as well as obtain more perfect control over the production of flowers and fruit. In China these purely functional reasons for growing container plants were highly important as different plants were associated with various ceremonies and customs throughout the Chinese year. At the Lunar New Year, for example, it was proper to display a flowering apricot in your home. Having the plants easily transportable and making sure that the flowers coincided with the desired date was thus of extreme importance. In India container-grown trees were associated with medicine and food rather than any appreciation of form and beauty.

This is also the case in ancient China, but one day, in the distant past, a naturally stunted and aged tree was spotted growing in a narrow crevice high up on the side of a cliff. The tree that had been designed by nature had so much character and beauty, that the person wished to have it close by so that he could view it whenever he desired. Using the techniques already learned for keeping trees healthy in containers, the tree was uprooted and replanted in an attractive ceramic pot and placed in his garden courtyard. At this point the small tree in the pot was being appreciated for something other than its ceremonial or functional value. It was now appreciated for its form and aesthetic quality.

(from “Historical Background of Bonsai” in *Bonsai, Its Art, Science, History and Philosophy* by Deborah R. Koreshoff, Brisbane, Australia: Boolarong Publications; 1984

CURRENT CALENDAR - 2006

- APR 01 CHILDREN'S DAY at the Japanese Friendship Garden offering Japanese food, toys, games, storytelling, art and kite making. This begins at 10:00 a.m. and goes until 2:00 p.m. It is located at 1125 N. Third Avenue – just to the west of Central Ave. on the Deck Park Tunnel.
- APR 04 SHOW OF TREES; Club Business
- APR 11 Demonstration – Informal upright style & forming pads.

APR 18 Annual "Junk Sale"; General Workshop after Sale (as time allows)
 APR 29-30 Ray Nagatoshi workshop. Please contact Mike Apolstolos at mpalapostolos@cox.net or (602) 494-0630 for more information. You must hurry as there are only a few spots left.

MAY 02 SHOW OF TREES; Club Business
 MAY 09 Demonstration/Lecture – Caring for trees in summer heat & caring for tools.
 MAY 16 TBA

JUN ?? End Of Year Party

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT DRIVE FUND

During April and May, the Valley Garden Center is conducting a Capital Improvement Fund Drive for \$50,000. This location has been used by garden clubs for 50 years. Ninety percent of their operating funds come from the rental of the center for weddings, receptions and business meetings. The building is in dire need of renovation, hence the campaign for funds. They are requesting funds from each of the clubs as well as individual members. All donations are tax deductible since this is a non-profit corporation. The board is also seeking funds from allied industries such as plant nurseries.

The following list indicates those things that will be renovated with the money. These figures are based on quotes or estimates.

1. Women's restroom - \$1,000
2. New kitchen countertop - \$1,750
3. Men's restroom - \$5,000
4. Front entrance security gates - \$2,500
5. East meeting room cabinets need resurfacing - \$2,000
6. Fresh paint on exterior of entire building - \$2,000
7. Garage roof - \$5,000
8. New carpet/coating in entry and front porch area - \$3,500
9. New gutters - \$600
10. Electrical outlet in north garden - \$900
11. Glass in arcadia door - \$3,000
12. New concrete ramps at three entries - \$7,475
13. Floor replacement in east and west rooms - \$5,000

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Two limericks from Candace Wilkinson which will help us with the proper pronunciation of the word **bonsai**.

Banzai is a word you won't see
 In Milano, Berlin or Paris.
 In Japan the word's "cheers,"
 Meaning "ten thousand years,"
 While a **bonsai**'s a miniature tree.

I'd been trimming these trees every day
 Tiny bonsai that fit in a tray
 Yelling "Ten thousand years!"
 I'd attack with my shears,
 Till I'd trimmed them completely away.

- » **Bonsai of Scottsdale** (2000) meets at 1:30 p.m. on the First and Third Saturdays of the month at the Via Linda Senior Center, Rm. 2, 10440 East Via Linda in Scottsdale, half a mile south of Shea Blvd. Contact Scottsdale President Tom Ballen, TBallen@aol.com / (480) 502-8639 , or Lyn Searfoss, lynsearfoss@cox.net / (480) 905-9238 , for details.
- » **Tucson Bonsai Society** (1972) meets at 12:45 p.m. on the Third Sunday of every month at the Tucson Botanical Gardens' Porter Gardens facility, 2150 North Alvernon Way (near Grant). Contact David Meyer @ (520) 749-4155 or (520) 722-2000.
- » **Southern Arizona Bonsai Enthusiasts** (2001) meet the FIRST SUNDAY of each month at 12:30 p.m. For information contact: Doris Cavanaugh, doris.c@qwest.net / (520) 290-0522 or Pat & Thelma Patterson, dezertrats@aol.com / (520) 825-9685.

This newsletter is named in recognition of Hideo "Leroy" Fujii (1925-1998), student of bonsai for nearly fifty years, a founding member of our club, and our *sensei* / teacher for more than twenty-five years. Our club logo, courtesy of grandmaster John Y. Naka, is based on one of Leroy's trees. Two pages of some of Leroy's other fine creations can be found on our web site.

"Learn from your trees: they are a reflection of you."

-- Leroy Fujii

PHOENIX BONSAI SOCIETY

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**ADDRESS CORRECTION AND
FORWARDING REQUESTED**

