

Happy Seventh Anniversary



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www.msgcbs.com

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(Post on any friendly Fridge Door)

March 11 - MSGCBS meeting, at the MGCCC, Long Beach, Multi-Purpose Bldg.
March 14 - Day of Bonsai, St Lukes Church Hall, Mobile, AL
March 19-23 - BSF Convention, Orlando, FL www.bsf-bonsai.com
April 18 - ACBS bonsai exhibit. W. Regional Library, Mobile, AL.
April 25 - Edgewater Mall Horticultural Societies Show, Biloxi, MS. 10-6 (one day)
May 2 - Gulf Coast Regional Bonsai Exhibit, Westwood, Ft. Walton, FL.
June 19-21 - BCI Convention, City Park, New Orleans, LA. www.bci2009.com

Unless noted, all photos and articles are the credit or blame of the newsletter editor, Patrick LaNasa. Send daises or daggers to msgcbs@bellsouth.net.

In the Beginning....

This club held its first official meeting on March 12, 2002 at the Bay St. Louis Train Depot.

All members present, Master Gardeners- Bob Stalnaker, Roy Schutzman, Celeste Neuffer, Andy Hill, Janet Signor, Andy Williams and Patrick LaNasa.

Officers elected included Celeste Neuffer, the Recording Secretary, who kept meticulous notes.

The first newsletters and communications were notes and notices by email and phone calls. Dues that first year being \$5. Somehow we bought a large coffee pot and condiments. Members took turns bringing a few pastries to each meeting. We named the club Mississippi Gulf Coast Bonsai Society so as not to be confused with the much senior Gulf Coast Bonsai Society in Pensacola (not the members necessarily but the club). Communities in the first year represented included Diamondhead, Gautier, Pass Christian and Gulfport.

The Master Gardeners were excited about bonsai and looked forward to mastering yet another horticultural exercise.

As with the experience of other bonsai clubs some members learned early that this art form requires patience and persistence and years to accomplish that "finished look" for their attempts. Half of the membership departed after the first year.

New members in the second year came from Ocean Springs., Pass Christian, Biloxi, Long Beach and Covington, La. By '05 membership had swollen from an average of a dozen to 25 members.

Then there was *Katrina*.

As of today we're back to an average of a dozen live souls. Barely a survivable membership for any club regardless of theme or purpose.

Monthly programs of a quality standard- programs that bring members back to monthly

meetings depend on not only the initiative of the elected officers but funds to pay visiting bonsai masters and advanced artists.

Until we can handle the routine expense of inviting visiting masters we can push ourselves to develop programs that benefit our needs.

What needs? Basic problems in the yard, in the pot and on it. Problems that "come with the territory".

Some suggested areas-

1. Water quality, quantity and management. As any good bonsai tree knows (that's right, tree) this is the stuff of life, life and death. A program depicting experiences, successes and failures, recent technologies, evaluation of the latest schemes and gadgets of the craft and science of water. This could be, should be the bonsai subject most revered.
2. Bonsai soil. These are the pants, shoes and socks of bonsai trees. If they don't fit right, feel right and are quick to deteriorate, everything above the soil surface will reflect this.
3. Transplanting and timing. Too late for temperate trees and too early for tropical trees had been a big pill for me to swallow. Here is a connection to that problem- (*lack of*) ...the capacity to accept or tolerate delay, trouble or suffering. You guessed it, patience. Not a lot of verbiage is spent on this lesson in bonsai reference books.
4. Pots - pots, containers, slabs and rocks. This broad subject could easily be broken up into three or more programs. Consider the sub-subjects. mica, plastic, ceramic, marble, natural and man made units, limestone, lava, flat, round, hexagonal, octagonal, square, rectangular, shallow, deep, and then there are the colors and textures. Not terribly important until you learn, at display time, your tree is wearing the wrong container.

5. Design. The scalene triangle. Frank Smith, a past member, is the last person to approach this one seriously as a program ('04).

There are other worthy programs-pruning, wiring, diseases and injurious insects, field collecting, stable, dependable species vs. really, really exotic species.

One valuable aid for the club member is, or will be a digital projector to produce and present these programs, or others.

And, once the program is on a CD with visuals, text and accompanying hardcopy references members new to bonsai this year and on can benefit from it in the club library .

There is some science, some art involved in preparing and presenting these programs but much is instead technique learned from personal experience, valuable instructions from visiting masters, the internet and our reference books. There only remains your genuine effort and application.

In preparing and presenting one of these, or other programs, one self service immediately realized is the reaffirmation of our proven practices that literally save our bonsai, our time and our efforts. That's a benefit.

Here is a thought that must occur to bonsai club members around the globe ***If belonging to this bonsai club will benefit me, I'll send in my dues next year. If not.....***

New Member –

For most of you who haven't met him yet let me introduce you to Rick Berrigan from Poplarville. Shake his hand and welcome him to our gatherings. If he grows, collects or kills bonsai we have a common interest.

Patio and Garden Show

Seventy-five percent of our members participated in the '09 event.

That's a task for a three day event. My hat's off to all who participated.

Josh Richey, the new show chairman, went about his varied duties quietly and efficiently for four days, including set up. He'd be asset in any organization. Josh also agreed to be our show chairman for the upcoming bonsai exhibit at the Edgewater Mall as well as the coordinator for the other horticultural societies participating. There's much to talk about regarding this exhibit and plant sale, but, for today let's get our trees ready, our containers and stands prepared or purchased. Forty-five days and counting.

Has Spring Sprung?

A week ago it was a definite maybe. The predicted and actual temperatures experienced placed our bonsai on a roller coaster ride. This week it's mildness and moderation for trees and humans. Birds are back in the backyard again. House wrens are chirping, hopping and scratching from bonsai to bonsai. Blooming azaleas, clover, both true and false dandelion, oak buds and pollen emerging, even the no-see'ums were out to greet me as I weeded this morning. And, I just bought my annual obligatory tomato plant. All signs of a south Mississippi spring. I'm convinced.

Book Review-

Not sure why I hardly ever read book reviews in other monthly newsletters or even bonsai magazines. Advertisements for the books indeed. But not an unsolicited honest evaluation.

The last commented on was Lew Buller's "Saikei and Art". The club has a copy. If you're inclined to put a landscape together you might read this one first.

Our club has some excellent reference books that Lou Leger dutifully lugs back and forth each meeting day. When funds are available I recommend this next one by Peter Chan be added to our collection.

The title "Bonsai Secrets" is one word longer than his publication "Bonsai". Although the USA publisher is Readers Digest both books come from Great Britain. "Bonsai" is more of a coffee table book.

This work is patient with those who are new to bonsai and generous with the visuals. Concepts are easier to grasp with numerous watercolors. Detailed information that doesn't insult the intelligence on the history, approaches to tree selection, design concepts, maintenance and techniques seem, at least to me, well worth reading again. I think most us appreciate

when an instructor informs or reminds us of something for the first time or learned earlier and tells us *why*. It's in my library top ten.

Patrick LaNasa



Suburban Yamadori- A pair of wisteria collected in Diamondhead

*The 2009 annual dues are payable now. Please send check to the
Treasurer, MSGCBS, Lou Leger, 102 Big Pine Drive, Covington, La. 70433*

Name (s) _____
Street Address _____
City, State, Zip Code _____
Home Phone _____ Cell Phone _____
Email Address _____

Dues are due by April 1, 2009. Single person \$25 Family \$30