



Welcome to the ABS Newsletter for March 2017. What a weird winter. Last year was the coldest February on record here in Rochester. This year was the warmest on record. Flowering Quince were pushing buds in cold storage early in February. Deciduous trees are starting to leaf out in cold storage. Pine buds swelling, getting ready for their first push of the season. Azaleas waking up early, ready for repotting. All in cold, dark storage, not a nice, bright greenhouse. Completely crazy stuff. Shows are right around the corner, with Mid-Atlantic being barely a month away. Speaking of shows, the Combined 50th Anniversary ABS + BSF convention is coming up soon!

A huge thanks to those who have submitted articles and feedback! Please keep the articles, ideas and feedback coming to me at: dave.paris@w3works.com The more content we have, the more in-depth and cohesive we can make each issue of the newsletter.

My apologies for the delay in getting this issue down the interweb tubes to you. It's been, well, crazy!

How to Make a Wire Caddy

by Phil Krieg - Bonsai Society of SW Florida

List of Materials:

- 1/4" diameter threaded rod approximately 20" long or as long as you require
- Eight (8) 1/2" plywood disks 7" diameter. The first or bottom disk can be larger – your choice.
- PVC spacers 2 3/8" diameter cut into lengths of approximately 2 1/2". If your wire is thicker than cut to longer lengths but make sure your treaded rod is also longer.
- One (1) 6" diameter lazy Susan from a

home improvement center like Lowes or Home Depot.

- Two (2) threaded T nuts.
- Handle can be fabricated from wood or you can buy one from the hardware department of the home improvement center.

Fabrication and Assembly:

- Fabricate the 1/2" plywood disks with a routed channel in which to fit the PVC spacers.
- Cut your PVC into desired lengths and glue them into the channels of the spacers.
- Screw on the nail clip to one end of the threaded rod and hammer into the first plywood disk. This is the base of the caddy.
- Screw on the Lazy Susan to the bottom of the base disk.
- Slide on the Plywood disks with PVC spacers onto the rod.
- Screw on the top disk with your handle.

Total cost for material is approximately \$30 depending upon your selection of the wood disks and Lazy Susan. Our plywood disks are "cabinet grade" plywood with a pre-finished surface. Luckily, we have a cabinet maker as a member of our club and he set up jigs for producing them in batches of 12. Many thanks to Craig Brown and his skills as a real carpenter...!

Let's get on with some how-to, step-by-step images!



...and now, the finished product!



May 25 – 29, 2017
Moving American
Bonsai Forward
The Florida Hotel,
Orlando Florida

Presented by the American Bonsai Society
And the Bonsai Societies of Florida

Thursday – All Day Joshua Roth New Talent Competition and BSF Scholarship Competition

Friday – A Day of Demo's, in fact 14 Demo's: Morning afternoon and evening

Saturday & Sunday – 41 Learning Seminars & workshops accommodate all instructional levels!

ABS 50th Anniversary Celebrations
throughout the weekend

Go to absbonsai.org and click on 2017 Convention for registration and more information. If you have any questions, email ABS@pfmbonsai.com or call Pauline (518) 882-1039
Register sooner rather than later!

Join us in this very special event - the joint 2017 ABS/BSF Convention. Help us celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the American Bonsai Society. This sort of National Bonsai Event happens in the State of Florida only once every 12-15 years. Don't let this opportunity pass you by!

List of Outstanding Seminar Teachers

Juan Andrade, Jim and Linda Brant, Randy Clark, Yamil Collazo, Jim Doyle, David Hodgetts, David Knittle, Mike Knowlton, Boon Manaktivipart, Frank Mihalic, Pauline Muth, Jason Osborne, Budi Sulisty, Ed Trout

Talented Florida Artists

Randy Clark Retired - Bonsai Learning Center, North Carolina

Mike Lebanik 2016 BSF Scholarship winner
Hiram Macias OliCata Bonsai StudiMary Madison Internationally known as the 'Buttonwood Queen'

Stacy Muse 2014 BSF Scholarship winner
Jason Osborne BSF Scholarship winner
Mike Rogers Mike Rogers Bonsai Studio

Donated Trees to be auctioned at the Convention – Don't Miss it!!



Exhibit Submissions no later than 2/28.
Email Contact – luluquilter@gmail.com

Snow Fleas And Tiny Trees
By Andrew Smith – South Dakota

It's the troubling time of the winter. It isn't over yet, and it's too early for spring to come, but the snow in town is tired and gray and I'm beginning to wish it were over. Either that, or just come back with cold, white snow and act like

winter should act.

I love winter. I love spring. But the no-mans land between the two of them is sometimes hard to take. It's the fifth season of the year –the one no one ever mentions. It's like a visit from my old Uncle Votch –everyone tells him how great he looks, but no one ever mentions how he smells.

Anyway, the Black Hills spruce that I'm trying to domesticate as an indoor bonsai is still hanging in there. New shoots are growing and more buds are opening every day. It seems like it's growing awfully slowly to me, but, after all, it's a tree and that's how trees grow. I wonder if it gets tired of me stopping to stare at it every time I walk by to see if it's grown any more since last time I walked by and stopped and stared at it. My parents used to do that to me and I'm still not over it.

We've been working in the woods every day for the last two months and, until quite recently, we've been shuffling through cold, deep snow all day long. The past two winters were pretty dry and warm, so it's nice that the ground is white again. The wind whips the drifts into the most graceful and lovely arcs and curves and I think it's odd something can be so beautiful with no intention or purpose behind it. And there's something nice about the snowy winter woods. They're quiet and a little somber. They make me feel calm and cold inside.

But then it finally began to warm up a bit, which also felt good, and the snow started to melt. And I noticed something was missing. Snow fleas? Where did all the trillions and trillions of snow fleas go? Snow fleas are little critters so tiny that two of them, and their itty-bitty dog, could use the period at the end of this sentence for a king-size bed.

They are so small that usually they just look like a faint gray shadow on the snow. But then you see the shadow move like an amoeba and you stoop down and squint and you see it's not a shadow: it's a whole metropolis of snow fleas, countless tens of thousands of them, having a huge party on the ice. They're hopping and dancing around and presumably drinking Bud light in very, very tiny cans.

I asked a professor at the local university what they were and what they ate and he said they were snow fleas and they ate the bacteria that live on the snow. The bacteria that live on snow are like peel-and-eat shrimp on ice to a snow flea, so they are living large, even though they're very, very small. Every winter on warm sunny days you can find about a gazillion of them on any patch of snow in the woods.

But this year I can't find a single one. My wife, Judy, noticed it too. It makes me a little sad because it always looks like they're having a snow flea Mardi Gras down there and I'm glad someone has their priorities straight. Where they went is a mystery.

But that's how it is around here. We are just ending a massive infestation of pine beetles that seemed like it would never end. A few years ago I was seeing tens of thousands of beetle-infested trees every summer. Last summer I saw exactly three. Where did they all go? No one knows. Two years in a row we were plagued with voles, which, by the way, have a healthy appetite for bonsai trees. But now there are none. Where did they go?

Before that we were plagued with miller moths. Before that it was boxelder bugs. Before that it was mountain lions and before that, mosquitoes. The last couple years we've been swimming in cottontail rabbits, which I never used to see around here. I have them hopping

around in my driveway and greenhouses. But one day they'll suddenly all be gone and we won't see them again for years. I hope the snow fleas don't stay away that long. I can buy a postcard with a rabbit on it, if I feel the need to gaze upon a rabbit. But it would be hard to find a postcard of a snow flea.

Winter nights are a good time to fire up the woodstove, bring an old pine inside and get out the bonsai wire. I do that from time to time, but I find that it's easier to plan to do than carry through with it. The problem is that by the time I get the tree inside and set up to work on, my concentration is shot and it's already past my bedtime. So sometimes they're in the house a couple days before I can give them the attention they deserve.

But, for the last few years I've been ordering bare-root conifer seedlings and potting them up every spring. My plan as to what to do with these things has been vague at best, and they've been starting to kind of pile up around here. The voles thinned them out pretty good for a couple years, but I can't rely on them anymore because the voles have suddenly gone AWOL.

So I've got all these little seedlings, and I've got long winter nights and coils of bonsai wire stacked on my shelves. And one day it suddenly dawned on me that if I put those three things together I could use the long nights and the bonsai wire to shape the conifer seedlings into little bonsai trees. So, that's what I've been doing.

I find this to be very enjoyable. You might think that since my business revolves around selling old collected trees I'd look down my nose at the thought of using a mere seedling, with no character at all, as a bonsai. I'd think that too, except it isn't true.

It's fun to start out with some little spruce

or pine seedling and see what shape you can give it and imagine what future it might have. You don't have to worry so much about making some artistically cloddish decision that will ruin the tree, because the tree has such a long potential future in front of it that it will undoubtedly change a lot and can overcome almost anything. If it lives another 200 years someone else might well make some cloddish design mistake with it, but that won't be on you.

I think my favorite bonsai in the whole world is the fabulous Yamaki Pine at the U.S. National Arboretum. Every time I see it, or even a picture of it, it gives me a thrill. It started bonsai training in 1625 and is believed to be about 400 years old. Presumably it started training when it was just a seedling, and so for many, many years it probably was not a very good bonsai.

But somebody took care of it anyway, and their children did, and their children did. And over the years and decades and centuries it slowly developed into a fine bonsai –not just a fine bonsai, a MAGNIFICENT bonsai. It came through the age of the samurai, through the devastation of a world war, and into the world we live in today. It's awesomely beautiful, and it started as a seedling.

I doubt any of the seedlings I wire are going to be here in 400 years, but you never know. What I really like about it is just that wiring a seedling is fairly fast. It's like doing a sketch instead of an oil painting. Even when I don't have much free time I can sit down and wire a seedling into the start of a bonsai in 15 or 20 minutes, sometimes less. It keeps my hands working on trees. It keeps my mind focused on making the world more beautiful in some small way.

My wife, Judy, says I could make the world more beautiful by picking my socks up off the floor. And she's probably right, but I'd rather

express myself through trees.

Anyway, given proper care and enough time any of these little seedlings could become wonderful bonsai someday. That's great! And why should the start of a journey be any less rewarding than the middle or the end?

News flash! The latest weather report has a blizzard moving in. It's too early for spring and winter is coming back! My trees can go back to sleep for a while longer. The ground will be white again and maybe the snow fleas will come back. Hallelujah!

Creating a Water Jasmine Bonsai From Roots by Budi Sulisty - Jakarta, Indonesia

Water jasmine or *Wrightia religiosa* is a very nice plant from South East Asia for bonsai. It has small leaves, nice small white flowers with very sweet fragrance. The flowers are dangling down like a dangling earring so that people in Indonesia called it as "Anting putri" or maidens earring. Where as in Vietnam this plant is called as "Mai ciu twe" or looking at the flower from the surface of water. The dangling down flowers will look nicer from the mirror of the surface water. Usually two weeks before the Chinese New Year, people will defoliate the leaves of the plant. With the growing of the new buds, the flowers are also coming. People will bring the bonsai inside the room that gives very sweet fragrance during the New Year.



Nowadays some bonsai people enjoy the extreme curving trunk. We can do that with extreme wiring. Anyhow the result will not be as nice as the roots movement in the ground. And it is proved that roots can be changed into a trunk in a bonsai.

This is one example that I did in January



2009. I pulled out a plant from the pot, spray the roots with water, so that we saw the shape of the roots that curling interestingly. I decided to make it as a nice curving bonsai with extreme bending on the trunk.

The plant then planted in a pot. I raised up the curling roots, so that they functioned as a trunk. The curving was so smooth without any wires cut like if we did it with the wire bending system.



The plant grew quickly and with intensive cuttings the ramification was soon achieved. It was interesting to see it in 2010 below.



I tried to change the shape of the bonsai into a cascading bonsai. Besides changing the angle of the trunk, I also put it in a deeper pot. With good care including giving fertilizer the plant grew quickly.

And in 2013 I took the picture from both sides.



In the first side there was a branch growing upward that blocked the view on the beauty of the flowing trunk.



This side is consider better as it can show the nice curving trunk and also supported by the dangling down trunk that grew towards the front side.

This is the shape of the plant in 2015.



And this is in 2016 when the flowers were blooming.



So. What do you think of growing a plant from the roots? Isn't it interesting.



Upcoming Events

March 18-19, 2017 - Atlanta Bonsai Society Annual Show
Atlanta Botanical Gardens
AtlantaBonsaiSociety.com

April 7-9 2017 – MidAtlantic Bonsai Societies Annual Spring Festival
<http://midatlanticbonsai.org/>

May 25-29 2017 – ABS / BSF Convention
Moving American Bonsai Forward – ABS 50th Anniversary.
http://bonsai-bsf.com/?page_id=3103

June 23-25 2017 – U.S. National Shohin Exhibition. Kannapolis, NC

Join your fellow ABS members
To Celebrate 50 years
of
Moving American Bonsai Forward
with the Bonsai Societies of Florida
May 26-28, 2017
at the Florida Hotel & Conference Center
Orlando, Florida, USA



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REGISTRATION FORMS AT
[http://www.absbonsai.org/
PDF/2017-reg.pdf](http://www.absbonsai.org/PDF/2017-reg.pdf)

Reserve the dates now and call in your
hotel reservation to
1-800-568-4656
Rooms are \$106 + tax
use code ABS/BSF 2017



**U.S. National
Shohin Bonsai Exhibition**
June 23-25, 2017
North Carolina Research Campus
Kannapolis, North Carolina

**Exhibition
Demonstrations
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