The Buffalo Bonsai Society

Saturday 9,2024. 1pm

SUNY Erie Community College North Campus

6205 Main St, Williamsville, NY 14221

STEM Building

President's Corner

Greetings everyone,
I hope everyone enjoyed Mark Arpag's demonstration on Hinoki cypress.
The transformation of the tree was skillfully done. Carving on the tree gives it such character It gives it a story.
Mark, who is president of the Rochester Bonsai Club has agreed to come back next year!

Next month Sean Smith will be doing a presentation on Tanuki Bonsai. Sean is known for his knowledge of suiseki and bonsai. One of Sean's greatest talents are creating the carved wooden stands (daizza) that the suiseki are displayed on. Sean has earned the honor of being known as the number one diazo carver outside Japan by the Japanese Suiseki Association.

Please sign up for the Christmas party at the next meeting so we can provide an accurate head count. Cost is $35 per person (nonrefundable)

For those that have done some carving on trees you will have noticed a few things that Mark did. First, he did not run his rotary tool at full speed. This is done for several reasons, the faster the bit is spinning if it catches the wood and kicks the harder it will kick and possibly cause damage to a nearby branch. Spinning at full speed can also cause the bit to bite in and remove more material than you want to. His comment on his favorite bit, the bit was not an aggressive or coarse.

Third if you were listening to the sound of the rotary tool when he was using it, you did not hear the motor bog down. This was because he was allowing the bit to remove material at its own rate and not trying to force it to remove more material than the bit could handle. Using a rotary tool at full speed, with an aggressive and trying to remove more material than the bit can handle is how you set yourself up to create problems and poor results. Books have been written on how to carve and trying to explain it in a few paragraphs is impossible. A good caring will look aged and not created.

Think of it as a piece of beach glass. When the glass was first broken, it had sharp edges but over time those hard edges have become softened. The same is true with carving. When carving you do not want things
symmetrical or straight, there should be some unevenness. To get good results you have to take your time. When you hear somebody, who is experienced in carving say I am going to just do a "quick" carving remember quick is a relative term and they do not mean in five minutes they will have carved out a section of a trunk to look like a lighting
strike.

One of the things new people raise an eyebrow to is when we say we are redistributing energy in a tree, this sounds a little unbelievable to some. Energy can be redistributed by removing branches. To keep it simple we will say there is a tree with 9 branches of equal size on an equal size trunk, so ten sections. If we remove one branch we have removed 10% of the tree requiring energy. This 10% is now available to
the rest of the tree. While a little over 1% increase to every section of the tree may not sound like much it

still a boost over what the growth rate was. While we do not talk about it the same principle is how we achieve leaf reduction. A leaf takes in energy, the larger the leaf the more energy it takes in. So, when we remove a leaf the tree will produce another leaf to make up the loss of energy. What happens is the tree will produce more than one leaf in the process. Why, the tree does not care if it had 1 large leaf or several small ones to bring in energy. It is about total surface area not leaf quantity and this too is a redistribution of energy.

To get leaf reduction should you defoliate the tree? If the tree is healthy you can. I am not a fan of totally defoliating a tree. I know many people do this especially with tropical trees however I am not a fan. Defoliating does put some stress on the tree and sometimes it takes longer for leaves to start growing back because of it. I prefer to remove the larger leaves instead of removing everything.

It puts less stress on the tree, granted it may take longer to see results but I feel it is healthier for the tree and looks better. Not to mention you do not have to explain to your friends that the tree is not dead you have just removed all the leaves. You can also use leaf removal to help thicken up areas of the tree that have less leaf growth (numerically) by removing the leaves where the tree has heavy growth.

If you are like me winter time is when a spend a fair amount of time on the internet reading about bonsai and horticulture. Please be careful it is easy to get caught up in things. Like adding Epsom salt to your trees increases magnesium and promotes growth. I am not singling Epsom salt (magnesium) as bad I am just using it as an example.

Many articles are written on elements that trees require and make it sound like if you do this it will yield big results. Elements / minerals are needed but too much of anything will create problems. If you use to much magnesium it will inhibit the tree's ability to take in iron. Iron is need for growth but if you have added to much iron you can develop rust colored leaves. If your foliage is nice and green safe to say you are getting enough iron and you do not need to add any. The point is elements do a specific thing, if your tree is not displaying a deficiency maybe you should not be adding or increasing an element for issue you do not have. At the very least you should understand how increasing something interacts with other things.

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Scott Russo

Tree of the Month

Hinoki, C. Wilkolaski, Orchard Park

2024 BBS Monthly Agenda:

November 3 Japanese Culture Day

November 9, Sean Smith Tanuki

December 14th Christmas Party

2024 Board Members

Scott Russo- President
Paul Pearson- Treasurer
Bill Barker- Board
Sandy McDougal- Board
Jerry Rucker- Board
Christine Wilkolaski - Board
716-662-9429 membership