

# BONSAI SOCIETY OF SW FLORIDA, INC.

THE WORD “BON-SAI” (OFTEN MISPELLED AS BONZAI OR BANZAI) IS A JAPANESE TERM WHICH, LITERALLY TRANSLATED, MEANS “PLANTED IN A CONTAINER”. THIS ART FORM IS DERIVED FROM AN ANCIENT CHINESE HORTICULTURAL PRACTICE, PART OF WHICH WAS THEN REDEVELOPED UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF JAPANESE ZEN BUDDHISM.

## BONSAI CLIPPER

VOLUME 33 ISSUE 2

### FEBRUARY PROGRAM VIA ZOOM

#### PROPAGATION & AIR LAYERING

Troy Randall talked about seeds and cuttings. Jim Bremer explained the basics of air layering, click [HERE](#) to see the full Zoom meeting.

### What is “Air layering”? By Jim Bremer

The technique of air-layering (also known as “marcottage and Chinese layering) is not unique to bonsai. It is believed to have originated in China (inspired by trees with low-hanging branches that started rooting in the soil\*), and has been used for many years by nurserymen to increase their stock. Briefly described, air-layering is a means of detaching a portion of a tree, vine or shrub while keeping it alive.

#### What are the purposes of air-layering?

Several objectives can be accomplished with this technique. You may:

- 1) Create a second tree- (propagation),
- 2) Reduce the length of a trunk or branch,
- 3) Reduce the diameter of a trunk or branch (to eliminate reverse taper), and
- 4) Allow extraction of an attractive portion of the parent tree.

#### How is it done?

- 1) Cutting through the outer bark, phloem and cambium to expose the xylem and to cut off the phloem distribution of food from the foliage to the lower part of the tree,
- 2) Surrounding the cut area with moist organic material (usually sphagnum moss), and holding it in place, and
- 3) Keeping the cut area dark and moist until roots appear at the top of the cut; when the upper portion has sufficient roots it may be removed.

The effect is to create an “underground environment into which the tree’s cambium will project roots, as though it were in soil. Variations are many, and I suggest you find your own preferred method of applying the technique (and that you consider varying your technique when the circumstances call for it). Many different cutting tools might be used. The cuts can be even or ragged, scalloped, or the upper portion might be flaps. ( See Bonsai by Deborah Koreshof, p. 27 et seq.) You might leave one or more uncut channels, or even partially cut through the trunk (see Bonsai Techniques II by John Naka , p.126) The Chinese wrapped a handful of mud and moss around the cut area, and renewed it daily; most modern folks use pieces of of plastic, and more recently, cut plastic pots (and plastic “globes “specifically designed for the purpose). There are many videos on the internet demonstratng how air-layering is done.



#### ABOUT US:

*We meet every third Saturday of each month at the Berne Davis Botanical Garden building located just north of the Edison Estates at 2166 Virginia Avenue. Parking is located on Larchmont street located one block south of Virginia off McGregor Boulevard.*

*Our website is:*

**[www.bonsaiswfl.org](http://www.bonsaiswfl.org)**

*We welcome everybody interested in this ancient art form to take advantage of our many experienced artists and teachers.*

*See you soon...*

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### NOTES FROM JANUARY CLUB MEETING

We had interesting presentations on “Rules of Thumb” and the anatomy of a tree.

**MOST IMPORTANT!** It is past time to pay your dues for 2021. Failure to pay dues will end your membership with us and with BSF, making it difficult to attend the convention this year and get your BSF magazine.

Speaking of the magazine, if you did not get an email notification of the latest issue, please let Judy Giandelone know (jahartner@comcast.net).

We talked about the possibility of having a live auction in April. The format will need to be altered to provide social distancing and appropriate covid precautions.

### IMPORTANT REMINDER!

**Finally, 2020 has ended, which means, if you haven't paid your dues, you are late!**

**It is now time to renew your membership for 2021.** We pay dues for the calendar year which begins in January. BSF urges us to have a current, up to date membership list by the first of January. The club will continue with innovative programming next year, either virtually or in person. You can mail your check to BSSWFL PO Box 61945, Fort Myers, Fl 33906-1945. Please enclose a membership form that you can find at <https://bonsaiswfl.org/sites/default/files/BONSAI-MembershipForm.pdf>

### FREE STUFF

Jim Bremer has travertine tiles left over from a pool re-decking—various sizes, and usable as slabs, small tabletops, and penjing projects.

Also, mini venetian blind slats for cutting up and use as tree labels.

Call Jim at 239-482-7543 and come and get'um.

**MEMBER INTERVIEW**  
**GETTING TO KNOW JUDY GIANDELONE**

**#1 Where are you originally from and did you do Bonsai there?**

I was born and raised in Western Pennsylvania. In my twenties, I discovered there are places in this world where it does not snow. One of those places is Honolulu and it was there that I first saw bonsai. I didn't start doing bonsai until we moved to Fort Myers.

**#2 What brought you to the art of Bonsai and what year did you begin?**

We moved here from the Phoenix area. There we had an acre of ground and I grew fruit trees. I enjoyed caring for the trees and when we moved here into a two bedroom, second floor apartment, I found that I missed caring for trees. I began by experimenting with mahogany seeds and reading books from the Lee County library. This was in 1992.

**#3 Do you still have your first tree? If not what species was it and what happen to it?**

Yes, I still have my first tree. I bought it from Judy Gore and Ginny Boka at an event at the Alliance for the Arts for \$35 (I think). That was 1992 or 1993. It is a green island Ficus and too big for me to move. I should sell it, but I still have sentimental attachments.

**#4 How many hours do you devote to Bonsai per week? No judgment here.**

Depends. I had a bad 2020, and my trees show it.

**#5 What part of the practice do you like best and least?**

Lately, I have been enjoying pulling weeds. I also like the trimming. I do not like wiring.

**#6 What skill gives you the biggest challenge?**

Can you guess, wiring!

**#7 Do you have a favorite tree? Please include photo yourself for newsletter. This is optional.**

My current favorite is a shohin sea hibiscus.

**#8 The important question is who is your favorite club president?**

Plead the 5th

Judy Giandelone

**MEMBER INTERVIEW**  
**GETTING TO KNOW RICK HAWK**

**#1 Where are you originally from and did you do Bonsai there?**

I was born in central Oklahoma and lived there until I was graduated from the University of Oklahoma. Forty-six days following graduation I was in USAF Pilot training in Selma, AL.

No interest in Bonsai at 22 years nor did I ever apply my Environmental Engineering degree.

I did cut Bud Wilkinson's lawn while growing up in Norman, OK.

Google his name in relation to OU football, 47-game win streak, Notre Dame, on Nov 16, 1957. Not that I can't get over it, but I still cheer for any team playing football against ND.

**#2 What brought you to the art of Bonsai and what year did you begin?**

After 27 years of AF flying, then teaching with both American and United Airlines, I was pastured out to write training curriculum and delivery methods about flying. When I couldn't do that any longer, I moved to Florida, tossed some dying plants into the yard, and they grew. BANZAI!!

Sometime in 2017, I discovered Banzai and Bonsai have different meanings. Did I mention Oklahoma birthplace?

**#3 Do you still have your first tree? If not what species was it and what happen to it?**

Except for the plants previously mentioned, I never throw out anything. Every aspiring Bonsai artist should join a group class and begin their Bonsai journey with a pair of vice grips, a solid base plastic saucer and a bag of Big Box garden soil; then choose a scratchy juniper as their canvas. Perhaps a record, but this juniper turned a lovely bronze in the fall and then a deep chocolate for the Christmas holiday. On New Year's Day, my army of pet spider mites and I stuffed juniper remains into a bright red glossy urn. That later became my first lesson on pot color choice.

**#4 How many hours do you devote to Bonsai per week? No judgment here.**

I will address the last statement first, if I may. The author of this questionnaire just lost all credibility. May I direct your thoughts to "No judgment here" We are discussing Bonsai, right? Judgment is the mother's milk of Bonsai.

Was not sure if those hours included looking at the plants, secretly destroying incriminating bonsai pot receipts, sharing Bonsai happy hour on the lanai and saying you would be happy to give your sister a 30 minute lesson so she could make her own tree.

So, if it is just time with the boring stuff like watering, fertilizing, chopping, defoliating ... probably 6 hours.

Continued...

MEMBER INTERVIEW

Rick Hawk , continued

**#5 What part of the practice do you like best and least?**

**Best** is the horticulture. I can normally make the plants live and remain pretty healthy. Read the various chemical labels and convert between ml and oz. I also subscribe any plant benefits from a regular, healthy dose of stinky Fish Emulsion.

**Least** is the styling and all the other skills and techniques I lack, yet need, to make the plants distinctive, interesting and pleasing. I am grateful for the Adam's, Mike's and Jason's nearby and their gracious patience.

**#6 What skill gives you the biggest challenge?**

See #5, anything resembling or remotely acquainted to artistic talent.

**#7 Do you have a favorite tree? Please include a photo of yourself for the newsletter. This is optional.**

Oh, I have lots of them. I see them everywhere. Usually at shows, museums, other persons back yards, YouTube.



I am the one with the cute dogs. The other is my favorite “ornamental tree or shrub grown in a pot and artificially prevented from reaching its normal size”.

**#8 Who is your favorite club president?**

Duh!!!

Mr. Miyagi, Of Course!

AKA: Noriyuki “Pat” Morita

Rick Hawk

## BONSAI GLOSSARY

**ADVENTITIOUS BUD** - any latent bud in the cambium layer activated by hormonal changes in the tree. These are undifferentiated cells until activated and may become branches, leaves, flowers, or roots, depending on a wide variety of environmental factors governing the growth of the plant.

**AIR-LAYERING** - a technique used to force a tree or branch to form new roots at a certain point.

**APEX** - highest point of a tree which can be a single branch or a group of small branches.

**APICAL** - most vigorous growth produced by a tree generally at the furthest points of the tree from the root system such as the upper and outermost branches. "To be at the apex", refers to the apex only, not just any branch tips. Contrasting apical would be basal, referring to the base. Apical dominance refers to trees with the primary growth at the top (the bulk of trees). Basal dominance refers to trees with primary growth at the bottom (several dwarf cultivars of *Acer p.* are good examples here)

**ARGILLACEOUS ROCK** - A class of sedimentary rock containing clay components. Untreated, it breaks down fairly readily due to the absorption of water and subsequent swelling, then retracting and cracking into ever-smaller components. Akadama (literally; "clay soil from akadama region" - in the same way kanuma is "clay soil from kanuma region") is heated to a high temperature, which changes the crystalline structure of the clay - not unlike the process of creating bisqueware after forming creamics and before firing to vitrification temperatures..

<https://www.bonsaiempire.com/blog/bonsai-terms>

## 2021 CLUB OFFICERS

### **PRESIDENT**

Sam Wollard

### **VICE-PRESIDENT**

Jim Bremer

### **SECRETARY**

Judy Giandelone

### **TREASURER**

Hamilton Agnew

### **BOARD MEMBERS**

Gail Gehring

Linda Rodriguez

Bill Smith

David Bovio

Wellesley Legier

Phil Krieg



Bougainvillea

*Bougainvillea glabra*

In training since 1985

Gift of Harold M. Harvey,  
1990

<https://www.bonsai-nbf.org/collections>