



## Thirty-eight Years of Bonsai Education and Volunteerism - 1970 - 2009

### President's Corner - Chuck Croft

Happy New Year! By now, all of you should have 'recovered' from the holiday season and the inauguration. With the inauguration, it seems as though the holiday season has been extended for an extra three weeks, in this area. Most of us are probably beginning to plan our spring repotting and pruning and are chomping at the bit to get started.

Our Spring Festival this year will be a good one. In addition to the regular PBA Spring Show in the U.S. National Arboretum Auditorium, we are going to have two gifted bonsai artists as speakers and demonstrators, and, in conjunction with the National Arboretum and the National Bonsai Foundation, will be sponsoring a regional juried show. Our speakers and demonstrators will be David DeGroot of the Weyerhaeuser Bonsai Collection and David Kreutz from St. Louis. David DeGroot is one of the best speakers I have ever heard on the artistic aspects of bonsai, and David Kreutz is well known for his knowledge of Satsuki Azaleas.

The juried show will be the first for our region (as far as I know). If it is successful, I hope to keep it as an annual or biannual event in an effort to raise an already high level of bonsai expertise to an even higher plane within our region. A committee of three from PBA, NBF and the National Bonsai and Penjing Museum will make the selection from photographs of the trees to be placed on display and then David DeGroot will be the final Judge for the prizes. There is an article later in this issue with the details of the juried show. I look forward to the show and hope to see a lot of participation from PBA members, not only in the Spring PBA Bonsai Show but the Regional Juried Show as well.

### 2009 PBA Spring Festival Activities

There are going to be several activities of interest during the PBA Spring Festival this year. All activities are going to be jointly sponsored by the U.S. National Arboretum, the National Bonsai Foundation and PBA. Where fees are to be assessed, please note that they will be collected by the US National Arboretum. You may get details regarding fee collection on the U.S. National Arboretum's web site: [www.usna.usda.gov](http://www.usna.usda.gov).

As mentioned in the President's Column, David DeGroot will be the headline speaker for the Festival and David Kreutz will be the other speaker. In addition to the PBA Spring Bonsai Show that will be held in the U.S. National Arboretum Auditorium, the Spring Festival will have other activities as listed below:

- Regional juried show - the details are provided in another article in this issue of the PBA Clippings.
- David DeGroot Lecture/Demo – This activity will be a no fee, open to the public activity located in the Program Tent.
- David DeGroot workshop – There will be one BYOT (Bring Your Own Tree) workshop. This will be on Friday, 1 May 2009 in the Program Tent. There will be a fee for this workshop so it behooves you to sign up early.
- David DeGroot Tree Critiques – There will be two tree critiques conducted by David. The first will occur between 1700 and 1830 on Saturday, 2 May 2009 in the USNA Arboretum. This tree critique will be followed by the annual PBA members' meeting on the terrace of the U.S. National Arboretum. The second critique will be of the trees in the juried show and will occur between 0900 and 1000 Sunday, 3 May 2009 in the Special Exhibits Wing

of the Bonsai and Penjing Museum. Both of these activities will be limited to 20 people and will have a small fee associated with them.

- David DeGroot Lecture – The subject of this lecture will be ‘Bonsai Aesthetics’. Mr. DeGroot gives one of the best talks I have heard on this topic. The lecture will be held in the Yoshimura Center and will have a fee associated with it. The lecture will be held between 1200 and 1400, Sunday 3 May 2009 in the Yoshimura Center.
- David Kreutz Workshops – David Kreutz will be giving two Satsuki Azalea workshops over the weekend. Each workshop will have fees, which include the trees, associated with them. The first workshop will have a fee of \$95.00 and will be held Saturday, 2 May 2009 between 0900 and 1200 in the Yoshimura Center. The second workshop will have a fee of \$250 and will be held Sunday, 3 May 2009 between 0900 and 1200 in the Yoshimura Center.
- David Kreutz Lecture/Demo – Mr. Kreutz will give one lecture/demo in the Program Tent between 1400 and 1600, Sunday 3 May 2009. There will be no fee associated with this lecture/demo and it will be open to the public.

In addition to the above activities, the vendors’ will be available, as usual. We will also be manning a booth in the vendors’ tent to provide assistance to beginners and to the public with any trees they may purchase at the Festival or that they bring in. Additional details about these activities may be obtained from your PBA President or your individual club Presidents. If you have questions about any of these activities, please do not hesitate to contact one of these individuals.

### 2009 Regional Juried Bonsai Show

The U.S. National Arboretum, the National Bonsai Foundation and the Potomac Bonsai Association are jointly sponsoring a regional juried bonsai show during the Spring Bonsai Festival at the U.S. National Arboretum, 1 – 3 May 2009. Up to 25 trees will be selected from photographs submitted for review by a committee of three from the sponsoring organizations. The selected trees will be displayed in the Exhibits Wing of the National Bonsai and Penjing Museum and the final judging for prizes will be performed by

Mr. David DeGroot, Curator of the Weyerhaeuser Bonsai Collection, Tacoma, Washington. Members of the initial selection committee may submit trees for selection, if needed to fill the exhibit space, but their trees will not be eligible for a prize. They will be for display purposes only. Please submit photographs (preferably electronic but prints will be accepted) of your trees to Chuck Croft at:

Chuck Croft  
5256 Queens Wood Drive  
Burke, VA 22015-1532

PH: (7030978-6841)

Email: [crcroft@mindspring.com](mailto:crcroft@mindspring.com)

by 1 April, 2009. Selection of the trees to be exhibited will be made by 10 April 2009 and all submitters will be notified of their selection status by 15 April 2009. Please include the following information with each submission:

Owner’s name and contact information  
(address, phone number, email address)

## SPRING OPEN HOUSE & SALE

Saturday, May 9, 2009  
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guest artist Suthin Sukosolvisit

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Ron Lang: ronlang@embarqmail.com  
Sharon Edwards-Russell

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- Common Name
- Botanical Name
- Tree and exhibit size (width, height, depth)
- Tree style
- Time in training
- Tree's age

Tree and exhibit size are needed in order to determine how many trees will be displayed in the final show. The exhibit wing of the National Bonsai and Penjing Museum has a finite amount of exhibit space. The dimensions of the exhibit need to include scrolls and/or companion plants, if any.

Those trees selected for the show must be delivered (and picked up) in person by the owner or their designated representative. We cannot accept nor can we return trees by shipment. All trees need to be received by 1200 hours on 30 April 2009 in order to get the show set up. The show will be open to the public at 1000 hours Friday, 1 May 2009 through 1600 hours Sunday, 3 May 2009.

The owner of every tree selected to be in the show will receive a certificate of participation signed by the Director of

the U.S. National Arboretum, The Curator of the National Bonsai and Penjing Museum, the President of the National Bonsai Foundation, and the President of the Potomac Bonsai Association. In addition, the first, second, third and two honorable mentions will receive an additional certificate of award. Finally, a first, second and third place prize will be awarded. All certificates and prizes will be awarded at an NBF reception to be held at the National Bonsai and Penjing Museum the evening of Friday, 1 May 2009. The certificates of award will be displayed with the appropriate tree throughout the rest of the show.

If you have any questions, please get in touch with Chuck Croft at the above location.

### Illegal Bonsai imports - Roger Case

Like many ABS members, I too use Ebay and often have browsed and purchased items under the bonsai category listing.

Recently, and after some investigation, it has become clear the Ebay seller \*green\*

ice, who often lists their merchandise with the words "SEXY BONSAI" is illegally selling and importing Chinese bonsai stock into the USA (and apparently other countries including the EU and Canada).

The seller lists their location as Finland, and they have indicated they have a phytosanitary certificate allowing them to import into the USA -- they do not!! Their material is "sold" as if it is coming from Finland, when it is directly shipped illegally from China to US destinations.

They get around the import inspection rules and regulations of the USDA and US DHS CBP by mislabeling their material as "vases or lamps or other items" and use sealed Styrofoam packing so much of the material does make it into the USA.

Both USDA (APHIS) and Ebay have been informed and are investigating these people -- however, all ABS members should be aware that purchasing this material and importing it into the USA is indeed illegal.



## Commune with Sensei Sam

by Jim Sullivan (Baltimore)

This column invites questions, or contrary experiences, methods, or information. Send your thoughts to Sensei Sam at [jvsullivan@aol.com](mailto:jvsullivan@aol.com). Your questions or responses can appear in *Clippings* anonymously if you prefer.

### *Stress - A Dirty Dilemma*

The following question was submitted to Sensei in April of 2008, and I responded via e-mail, but circumstances did not allow a timely reply in *Clippings*. Hopefully this expanded response will be useful to John and others for the upcoming bonsai collecting and purchasing season.

Sensei Sam, A question about the use of sand to grow bonsai. I've recently collected a couple of nursery stock plants, trimmed them back and now I want to put them into soil to continue shaping and growth. I've heard others talk about putting trees in sand to train them. Any thoughts and suggestions? Thanks, John Hudson Washington Bonsai Club

If one has only a few bonsai, I would suggest buying bonsai "soil" (growing media) from a vendor, perhaps at PBA's Spring Festival at the National Arboretum. But in addition to saving a few dollars, I enjoy the process of mixing and experimenting with mixes. You will find almost as many "favorite mixes" as there are bonsai enthusiasts. Almost any media that drains well and does not contain toxins or pathogens can be used to grow bonsai, either in training pots or bonsai containers. Fine sand, such as play sand, would not fit the "well draining" description. But even coarse sand, which would usually be devoid of nutrients including trace elements would be a poor environment unless those nutrients were added frequently in small doses. For an inexpensive training pot mix I would suggest amending the coarse sand (builders sand) with about 25% by volume small pine bark (or "fines") mulch for most bonsai, or with 25% peat moss for ericaceous plants (azaleas, rhododendrons, mountain laurel, blueberry). The amendments would reduce the weight and density of the media, and would act as a reservoir for moisture and nutrients and in the case of the azaleas and related plants, supply a more appropriate pH. Top dress with a slow release fertilizer such as Osmocote with trace elements according to manufacturer's directions. For large collected material, which is almost always severely compromised by massive root reduction, I would suggest planting in the ground for at least a year, or placing the container in the ground up to the pot or planter rim. A well drained spot is a must for most species. The ground will moderate environmental conditions and require less attention. I have had good luck with transplanting container grown nursery stock, even large material

(10 gallons plus) directly into training pots or bonsai pots. Obviously a substantial portion of the root mass had to be removed, but unlike most large collected material, plenty remained to sustain the tree (after initial pruning of the branches).

### Tree pH Ranges

It has been several years since we have had any discussion about or seen a list of the preferred pH for our bonsai soil. As with most plants, our bonsai have preferred soil pH ranges. Some trees will continue to grow outside these ranges, although not well. Others will not thrive at all outside their preferred pH range. I thought I would give you a list of preferred soil pH for a variety of trees used as bonsai. If you keep your trees within these pH ranges, your tree should continue to grow and thrive, and you will greatly lessen any threat of stress on your tree. This, of course, assumes that the tree is being fed and otherwise cared for.

This list of preferred soil pH is based on an article that appeared in the *PBA Clippings* several years ago and that I believe was originally written by Jules Koetsch. It is also a list that I keep handy in my notebook when I am working with my trees.

- Acacia 6.5 - 7.5
- Apple 5.0 - 6.5
- Arborvitae 6.0 - 8.0
- Ash 6.0 - 8.0
- Azalea 5.0 - 6.0
- Barberry 6.0 - 8.0
- Beech 6.0 - 7.0
- Birch 5.0 - 6.0
- Bougainvillea 4.5 - 5.5
- Boxwood 6.5 - 7.5
- Camellia 4.0 - 5.5
- Cedar 6.0 - 7.0
- Cherry 6.0 - 8.0
- Cotoneaster 6.0 - 8.0
- Crabapple 6.0 - 7.5
- Cypress, Bald 5.0 - 6.0

- Deutzia 6.0 - 7.5
- Dogwood 6.0 - 7.0
- Douglas Fir 6.0 - 7.0
- Eleagnus 6.0 - 8.0
- Elder 6.0 - 8.0
- Elm (Ulmus) 6.0 - 8.0
- Eucalyptus 6.0 - 8.0
- Euonymus 6.0 - 8.0
- Euphorbia 5.5 - 6.5
- Ficus 5.0 - 6.0
- Fir 5.0 - 6.0
- Firethorn 6.0 - 8.0
- Forsythia 6.0 - 8.0
- Fuschia 6.0 - 8.0
- Gardenia 5.5 - 6.5
- Geranium 7.0 - 8.0
- Ginkgo 6.0 - 8.0
- Grape (Vitas) 6.0 - 8.0
- Hawthorn 6.0 - 7.5
- Hazelnut 6.0 - 7.0
- Hickory 6.5 - 7.5
- Holly (Ilex) 5.0 - 6.0
- Ivy 7.0 - 8.0
- Juniper 5.5 - 7.5
- Lantana 5.5 - 7.0
- Larch 5.5 - 6.5
- Lemon 5.5 - 7.0
- Lilac 6.0 - 8.0
- Mimosa 5.0 - 7.0
- Magnolia 5.0 - 6.0
- Maple (Acer) 6.0 - 8.0
- Mountain Laurel (Kalmia) 5.0 - 8.0

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#### PBA Officers

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Potomac Viewing Stone Group  
22 1:00 p.m. Yoshimura Center-Exhibit walk-through, Discussion of exhibit, stone selection and placement  
Kiyomizu Bonsai Club  
22 2:00 p.m. Soil mixing

### March

Bonsai Society of the Eastern Shore  
4 7:00 p.m. Demo of thread grafting  
Lancaster Bonsai Society  
11 7:00 p.m. Spotlight on Maples-members bring in any maples for discussion. Leader-Ryan  
14 Repotting workshop in Central Park. Leader-Ken W.  
23 Arthur Jura Lecture in Harrisburg (Partnership with Susquehanna Bonsai Club) Leader Ken W.

28 Bus trip to Brooklyn Botanical Gds. Leader-Ken W.

### Northern Virginia Bonsai Society

14 9:00 a.m. Evaluating your trees  
10:00 a.m. Air layering lecture & Demonstration followed by tree feeding panel

**TBA**-Special repotting workshop-Boone Manakitiv-ipart

### Washington Bonsai Club

21 2:00 p.m. BYOT and preparation for Spring Festival

### Kiyomizu Bonsai Club

22 2:00 p.m. Dig trident maples (Members only)

### Baltimore Bonsai Club

29 1:00 p.m. Skills refresher: The initial potting of a bonsai.

Jim Doyle: Workshop with trees collected with Jim in November 2008

Select trees for display at the PBA

Spring Festival

### Potomac Viewing Stone Group

No meeting this month

### April

### Bonsai society of the Eastern Shore

1 7:00 p.m. Work on trees for show at the PBA Spring Festival

### Northern Virginia Bonsai Society

4-5 Roy Nagatoshi Wksps (Meadowlark Gds) BYOT  
11-12 NVBS Spring Show (Merrifield Gds Nursery)



### Calendar of Events *Compiled by Arschel Morell (BBC)*

Send your club's input to Arschel at [ajmorellsr514@aol.com](mailto:ajmorellsr514@aol.com); or snail mail to: 9 Six Notches Ct., Baltimore, MD 21228

### Calendar of Events February-March-April-2009

#### February

### Lancaster Bonsai Society

11 7:00 p.m. Critique Speak: 3 members bring in trees to critique. Spotlight on pines-Leaders Cindy & Ryan

### Northern Virginia Bonsai Society

14 9:00 a.m. Evaluating your Trees

10:00 a.m. Preparing your trees for a show

### Brookside Bonsai Society

19 7:30 p.m. Julian Adams: Pines are Easy-You don't want to miss this one

### Washington Bonsai Club

21 2:00 p.m. Martha Meehan of Meehan's Miniatures will present

### Baltimore Bonsai Club

22 1:00 p.m. Skills refresher: Fertilizer-Roundtable led by Barry. What to use, When to apply, What quantity, etc. Program TBA

## Lancaster Bonsai Society

4 10:00 a.m. Van Heinigan Dig-Leader Ken W.

8 7:00 p.m. Tree Prep-Preparing a tree for a show

Discussion of Demuth Garden tour week-end. Leaders Cindy & Ken M.

## Brookside Bonsai Society

4&5 Wksps with Roy Nagatoshi (NVBS)

11 2:00 p.m. Class of 2009

16 7:30 p.m. Pete Jones-Air layering

Jim Hughes-Tree prep for PBA Spring

Festival

19 (Sunday) 9:00a.m.-5:00 p.m. Bonsai display at Brookside Gds under the Rose Garden Arbor

## Potomac Viewing Stone Group

18 1:00 p.m. (Auditorium) Tom Elias- Two part illustrated lecture on his 2008 trips to Japan and China

## Washington Bonsai Club

18 2:00 p.m. Preparing for the PBA Spring Festival

## Baltimore Bonsai Club

26 1:00 p.m. Skills Refresher: Wiring

Review of Wksp Trees : Members are asked to bring back the following

Wksp trees to discuss progress-Root-over-rock, forest plantings, phoenix

Grafts and 2008 charter trees. The 2009 charter trees will be distributed.

## Kiyomizu Bonsai club

26 2:00 p.m. Bring trees to select for Spring Festival

## **Contacts for club programs not listed:**

Chesapeake Bonsai Society-Sharon Katz 410-263-3307

Mid-Shore-Bonsai Society – Kris Doherty 410-778-6662

Rappahanock Bonsai Society-Todd Stewart 804-448-4499

## **2009 Potomac Viewing Stone Group (PVSG)**

### **Schedule**

All times are from 1 - 4 p.m., and *usually* in the USNA auditorium. Note: one Saturday (4/18), as we've had a few requests for Saturday meetings. So be sure and mark your calendars and I hope to see you Sunday, February 22, 2009 (more info on this meeting below).

1.) Sunday, February 22, Yoshimura Center, 1 - 4

2.) Saturday, April 18, Auditorium, 1 - 4

3.) Sunday, June 7, Auditorium, 1 - 4

• Myrtle	6.5 - 7.5 (cont. Pg.5)
• Oak (Quercus)	5.0 - 7.0
• Oleander	6.0 - 7.5
• Orange	5.0 - 7.0
• Oxalis	6.0 - 8.0
• Pine (Pinus)	5.0 - 6.0
• Podocarpus	5.0 - 6.5
• Pomegranate	5.5 - 6.5
• Poplar	6.0 - 8.0
• Privet (Ligustrum)	6.0 - 8.0
• Prunus	6.0 - 8.0
• Quince	6.0 - 7.5
• Redbud	6.0 - 8.0
• Rhododendron	5.0 - 6.0
• Rose	6.0 - 8.0
• Rosemary	5.0 - 6.0
• Sage	6.0 - 8.0
• Spirea	6.0 - 8.0
• Spruce (Picea)	5.0 - 6.0
• Sumac	6.0 - 8.0
• Sweet Gum	6.0 - 7.0
• Tamarix	6.0 - 8.0
• Tuliptree	6.0 - 7.0
• Viburnum	6.0 - 8.0
• Willow (Salix)	6.0 - 8.0
• Wisteria	6.0 - 8.0
• Witch Hazel	6.0 - 7.0
• Yew	5.5 - 7.0

Please note that this list includes not only trees that we use to create bonsai, but plants that are used in our yards and as herbs.

## Potomac Bonsai Association Membership Application

Welcome! PBA is composed of the clubs listed to the right. Join one and be eligible to attend any club's meeting in addition to receiving the *PBA Clippings* on a quarterly basis. We present a Spring Bonsai Festival and an annual auction, as well as other events. Residents of club communities are expected to join a club to receive all membership benefits, including *PBA Clippings*.

**To become a member**, call the contact person of the club convenient to your location for the current rate and where to send this application and the dues (Please make the check payable to the club you are joining). Individual clubs set their own dues. Check for Beginner's hour and other functions. Meeting locations, times and club contact numbers (for additional information) are subject to change. We suggest that you call before sending in your membership application.

**Individuals residing beyond commuting distance** of a club are invited to subscribe to *PBA Clippings*. For a subscription only (does not include entitlement to participate in club events), complete this application and mail with a check payable to PBA to Ross Campbell, 728 Guilford Ct., Washington, D.C., 20901-3218.

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### Type of Membership:

- Individual club membership (includes *PBS Clippings*)
- Family club membership (One *PBA Clippings* subscription per household)
- PBA Clippings* only, US \$20.00 (does not include club activities)
- PBS Clippings*, International subscription, US \$35.00 (E-mail version, \$15)

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Circle one of the following Association activities with which you can help:

Membership	Club Library	Exhibit Planning	Newsletter Staff
Publicity	Raffle Table	Exhibit Construction	Hospitality
Web Page	Meeting Clean-up	OTHER _____	

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Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Nation \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: Home: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Office: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

How did you find out about PBA? \_\_\_\_\_

## 2009 PBA Board Meeting Schedule

The schedule of PBA Board Meetings is listed here. Please note that these meetings are **not** closed meetings and that every PBA member is invited to attend. Normally, each member club is represented by the club President or their designated representative. The schedule for 2009 then, is:

15 March  
12 April  
19 July  
13 September  
15 November

## PBA Member Clubs

**Baltimore Bonsai Club**, 4th Sunday, 1 pm, Towson Branch of Baltimore Public Library; Arschel Morell, (410)744-6478, ajmorellsr14@aol.com

**Bonsai Society of the Eastern Shore**, 1st Wednesday, 7 pm, Talbot Hospice, Easton, Susan Jones-Armari, (410)943-9886, susanja@bcctv.com

**Brookside Bonsai Society**, 3rd Thursday, 7:30 pm, North Chevy Chase Rec Ctr, Bethesda, MD, Jim Hughes, (202) 245-5307, jim6909@msn.com

**Chesapeake Bonsai Society**, Call for meeting time and location, Sharon Katz, (410)263-3307, sharonkatz@excite.com

**Kiyomizu Bonsai Club**, 4th Sunday, 2 pm, Clearwater Nature Center, 11000 Thrift Rd, Clinton, MD, Essie Wilson, (301)839-2471, wilsone@howrey.com

**Lancaster Bonsai Society**, 2nd Wednesday, 7 pm, Conestoga House, 1608 Marietta Pike, Lancaster, PA, Bob Ulrich, (717)468-6458, LancasterBonsai@yahoo.com

**Mid-Shore Bonsai Society**, Saturday meetings TBA, Adkins Arboretum, Ridgley, MD, Kris Doherty, (410)778-6662

**Northern Virginia Bonsai Society**, 2nd Saturday, 9 am, Walter Reed Community Center, 2909 16th St South, Arlington, VA, Jack FitzSimons, jfitzsimons@verizon.net  
jmschwartz@comcast.net

**Potomac Viewing Stone Group**, Meets irregularly (~ 6 times per year), Glenn Reusch, (540)672-5699, Ghreusch@aol.com,

**Rappahanock Bonsai Society**, Call for meeting time and location, Todd Stewart, (804)448-4499

**Washington Bonsai Club**, 3rd Saturday, 2 pm, Call first (no July or August meetings), U.S. National Arboretum, Washington, D.C., Ross Campbell, (301)587-6898

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### *PBA Clippings*

#### Newsletter of the Potomac Bonsai Association

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**Subscriptions:** PBA member Clubs/Societies: Annual subscription is included in the membership dues paid to the PBA club or society of your choice. Telephone numbers of points of contact for information about any member club or society and its annual dues are listed above.

**Non-member Subscriptions:** Individuals residing within the metropolitan areas of our clubs are encouraged to become members of a club to receive the newsletter. Annual subscription for 4 Quarterly issues of the PBA Clippings only is US \$20.00 (US \$35.00 for international mail) which should be made payable to the Potomac Bonsai Association and sent to Ross Campbell, 728 Guilford Ct., Washington, D.C., 20901-3218.

**Advertising Rates:** Annual rates: 1/4 page, \$100.00; Larger than 1/4 page are accepted. Direct inquiries/payment (make checks payable to Potomac Bonsai Association) to Thomas Kodiak, see below. Please send paper ad copy or articles to the editor: Thomas Kodiak. E-mail contributions are preferred and can be sent in Word, WordPerfect, or text documents to Thomas Kodiak. Pictures need to be in jpg format.