

# NORTH FLORIDA BONSAI CLUB

## February 2018

### NFBC Officers

Josh Brown	President
Open	VicePresident
Bruce Washington	Treasurer
Ron Price	Secretary

### February News

- We have soil! If you need soil contact Mike [bettsmike@hotmail.com](mailto:bettsmike@hotmail.com), and please return your empty buckets.
- Our meeting night is **Monday February 12. 7:00 PM**

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### Meeting Agenda

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Elm Forest Planting – Club hands-on event, you may get dirty

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2015 Winter Silhouette Show North Carolina



## 2018 Calendar

The NFBC website has been updated with the tentative 2018 calendar. We are still looking for ideas so please feel free to let one of the board members know if there is something that sounds interesting to you.

February Elm Forest Planting – Club hands-on event, you may get dirty

Cypress & Azalea collecting – To be Scheduled

March Japanese Maples – Growing them in Jacksonville

by Bob Woodard

Special Trip to Bob's Garden – To be Scheduled

April Help with Seasonal Work - topic(s) TBD

May Style Discussion – Exposed Root/Banyan?

June Species Session – an in-depth focus on a TBD species

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I will just mention a few things. If you have not yet repotted dormant trees, especially Cypress, better get going. Once we hit mid February, spring comes fast. Even though we can still have a frost; a hard freeze is unlikely. Our average last frost date is Feb 15. Average is the operative word. Remember we can still have a cold snap.

Continue to look for insects feasting on the tender new shoots and leaves. Aphids, scale to name a few. If the tree is dormant, you can use a dormant oil spray - an all seasons horticultural oil product will work well. If your trees have begun to show new growth, try the Bayer Advanced 3-In-1 Insect, Disease & Mite Control product - Liquid spray.

- [BSOB Multi-Club picnic/auction](#) on March 3, 2018 10:00 am
- [Lighthouse Bonsai Society – 3rd Annual Auction](#) on March 24, 2018
- [Bonsai Societies of Florida Annual Convention](#) May 25 - May 28 2018

## Why create a bonsai forest?

While individual bonsai specimens can take a number of years of training to create a strong visual image, well designed group plantings can be far more instantly satisfying. Successful groups can be created using young, thin trunked plants with little taper, that would otherwise have little use as individual bonsai specimens without considerable training. Successful group plantings are not so reliant on the material used; it is the artist's creativity that makes for satisfying results.

## What's the difference between a forest and a raft?

Group plantings replicate a number of trees growing together and reflect the interplay as they compete for light and

A Single Root System (Raft) and System are two approaches to forest single root system involves taking a laying it down and training branches to individual trees. The primary tree is still appearance is of a tree that "fell over" growing.

## What makes a good forest

Outstanding forest arrangements can be large extended family with each member different appearance and unique

The ability to recognize individuality while combining them into a harmonious composition is the challenge.

In nature all forests start with one tree and grow from there. That initial tree will be the primary tree and is the tallest and thickest one in the planting. If a larger tree is not available, two trees can be planted close together to appear as one large specimen. Alternatively, the primary tree can be raised and planted a bit higher in the container. Medium size trees are then used around the larger specimens working toward the container rim. The further you get from the primary tree the younger and smaller the trees will get. The youngest trees should be at the edges of the forest as if they have sprouted there in the warm sunshine.

**Key Point:** No natural forest is made of trees that are all the same size so it's important to pick plants of different size and age even if you have to find several sources for material.

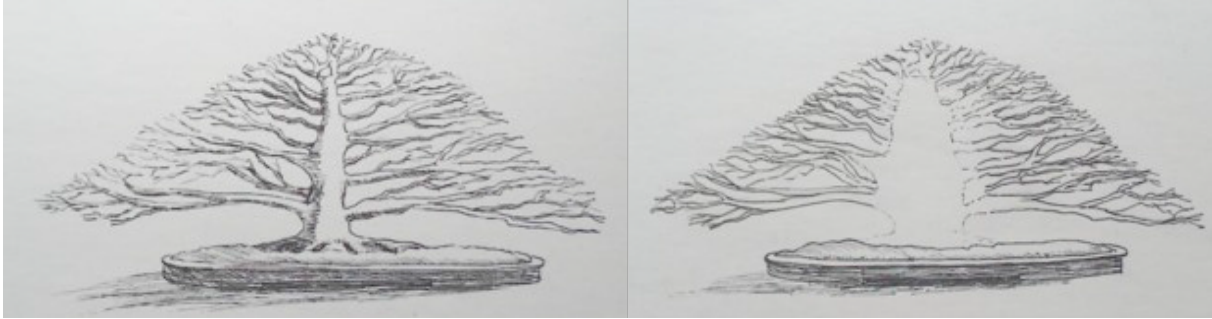
Branches should be positioned so they grow towards the outside of the forest. The silhouette of the group is a scalene triangle and plantings follow the branch selection rules we know for singular trees. However, the rules are applied to the group as a whole rather than each tree as an individual. Branches should grow out from trunks uniformly, this creates cohesion to the composition and reflects the fact that all the trees would be subject to similar growing conditions.



trees growing between the nutrients.

Multiple Root bonsai. The single tree and grow as shown and the and kept

compared to a having a personality.



### Things to remember

- Use mostly upright trees, a composition could look unnatural when using different shapes of trees.
- The distance between trees in the group should vary giving a natural appearance rather than a planned grid planting.
- Trees should not be placed directly behind or beside another tree.
- Trees at the front of the group should have branches that start higher up the trunk to allow the viewer to be able to glimpse through the planting. Trees at the back should have branches that start to grow from a lower position.
- The primary tree should incline slightly forward at its apex to create a sense of height.
- It is recommended that forests are made using young deciduous seedlings that can be positioned closer together than potted specimens with a larger root system.
- Negative spaces add to the balance and beauty of the composition.

## What kind of container

Use large containers and leave enough empty space to simulate the vastness of land. Selecting the right Bonsai pot is very important; choose a large shallow pot and take into account the normal guideline for deciding on color etc. Containers without prominent feet are better since a flat base provides a solid visual anchor.

## Let's plan your Forest

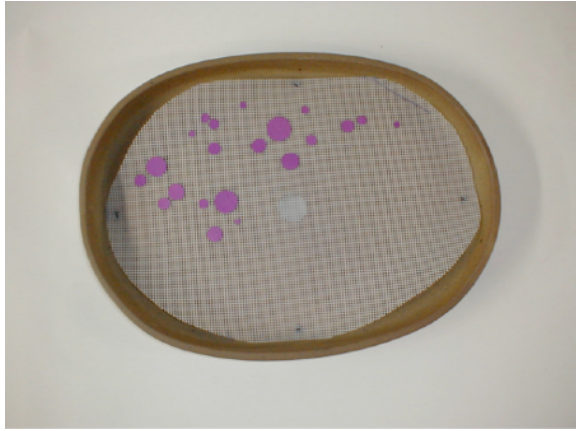
### Steps 1 - Determine perspective

Groups of trees have different feelings of space based on the observer's viewpoint. They can be viewed as if the observer is standing within the group looking towards the outer edge or viewed from a distance looking into the forest. Hence the terms near view forest or far view forest.

### Step 2 – Plan ahead

A good idea is to draw a placement diagram, like the examples below, and then remove the trees and evaluate your plan. As you remove the trees use a marker to indicate where each tree will be placed directly on the grid. There is an old bonsai adage “Less is more”. This may not always hold much credence but here it is an absolute.





A sense of perspective can be created by creating sub-groups of trees so that the entire planting will consist of 2 or 3 smaller groups. For the viewer this also leads the eye through the trunks of the planting to the back, re-enforcing the sense of perspective.

**Step 3 – Find your “Sweet Spot”**


The place you want your viewer’s eye to go is the “sweet spot.” Confirm that your primary tree is positioned for maximum effect and directs the eye of the viewer to that sweet spot. Now emphasize the sweet spot so a viewer’s eyes don’t just wander there, they go straight there. Direct the viewer towards what you want them to see.

There are many ways to direct the eye of the viewer. But a good way in a forest planting is to give just a hint of winding path through the planting. Not really a path but more of a negative space. This space starts at the front of the forest and gently forms an “S” curve that meanders behind the primary tree, seeming to taper off to nothing somewhere in the forest.

## Bellota Bonsai Auction

An HVAC system manager by trade, Paul Katich slowly embraced bonsai as a way to unwind after work. A firm believer in self-teaching, he began collecting trees from around his neighborhood and work sites in 1985. As a hobby, bonsai's multifaceted nature let Paul combine his love of plants with that of craftsmanship. Whether grown from seed or collected, he favored local trees, and enjoyed the challenge of working with them.

Twenty years later, as his trees and skills matured, Paul struggled to fulfill his artistic visions with the containers available on the market. Taking matters into his own hands, he enrolled in a ceramics course at the local college. Within a few years, he developed his own techniques and glazes, finally



custom pots globally. During this time, Paul displayed his trees and pottery, respectively winning accolades in Florida and nationally.


Sadly, Paul passed away unexpectedly in June 2017. Though Paul may be gone, he lives on through his work and the people he's touched over his thirty years in bonsai. Paul's collection of trees, the inspiration for his pottery, will be available at auction on February 24. Please save the date and join us!

creating the pots he envisioned for his trees.

Paul's innate attention to detail and commitment to quality was noticed in the bonsai community, leading to a number of commissions for custom bonsai pots. In 2009, he and his wife Norine started Bellota Enterprises to sell his handmade porcelain and stoneware at shows around the southeast, as well as

- Trees recently appraised by Florida Artists David VanBuskirk & Mike Rogers
- Both Live and Silent auction
- Most trees also include complete working history, awards (7), traveling artist's drawings (1)

Inquiries – [Bellota.pots@gmail.com](mailto:bellota.pots@gmail.com)



**AUCTIONEER**



**Randy Clark**  
- 40 years as a bonsai professional and auctioneer

**LOCATION**



Agresta Gardens  
1661 S. Chickasaw Trail  
Orlando, FL 32825

**TIME / DATE**

**February 24, 2018**  
Viewing open @ 9am  
Auction begins @ 10am

## Adam Lavigne's Demo Tree Raffle

I hope everyone enjoyed the demonstration Adam performed at our January meeting. Adam is a great artist and a fantastic resource to have so close by. I learned a lot from my time with him and I hope you did also. You can find more of Adam's wisdom at <https://adamaskwhy.com/>

The tree pairing that Adam created will be raffled off at our February meeting. He put together a really nice composition from two trees that many of us might have walked right by at a nursery.

This winged elm bonsai is something that will be a nice addition to any collection.

**Date: February Meeting**

**Cost: Tickets \$5 each or 3 for \$10**





## viewing stones, deadwood specimens and more

Ned and Jeanie Fitchen of Cocoa, FL (West Cocoa, just off I-95) reached out to our club because they are selling a good portion of their collection of rocks, minerals, fossils, and natural art objects. They indicated that their collection includes a large number of “character” rocks that can be used for bonsai rock sculpture or viewing stones. They also have many deadwood pieces of bristlecone pine and limber pine with stunning textures and gnarled windswept shapes that can be used for phoenix grafting. They provided me with a list of the types of stones they have and indicated that the Brevard club members have been by to purchase a few items. This might be a good side trip for any going to the Brevard Picnic on March 3<sup>rd</sup>. If anyone would like more information or would like to see their collection, please feel free to contact them.

Ned and Jeanie Fitchen

321-632-8996

email: [thefitchens@yahoo.com](mailto:thefitchens@yahoo.com)



Our collection includes:

Rustic pieces of Limbercone and Bristlecone pine from the mountains of California, Nevada, and Utah. Beautiful cut specimens for display, bonsai, or any art use.

Specimen rocks, minerals, fossils, lapidary rough and polished materials including:

AGATES - Dryhead, Teepee Canyon, Lysite, Challis, Turritella, pseudomorph after barite, agatized coral (Tampa Bay, Suwannee River), and much more.

GEM AGATIZED DINOSAUR BONE acquired from ranchers and dealers many years ago.

PETRIFIED WOOD - Arizona Jasper wood, Blue Forest, Eden Valley, black opalized, agate replacement, and much more.

OBSIDIAN - rainbow, aurora, mahogany, sheen, double flow, snowflake, needles etc.

FOSSILS - ammonites, baculites, leaves, fish, corals (agatized Tampa Bay and Suwannee River), wood, crinoids, marine and terrestrial, trilobites, and much more.

ONYX, GEODES (cut and uncut), THUNDER EGGS, SEPTARIAN NODULES, TURQUOISE, AUSTRALIAN OPAL, JASPER, GARNETS, FOSSIL CORAL, CRYSTAL CLUSTERS, and much more.

ANTLERS (caribou, deer), ABALONE SHELLS, SKULLS, BONE GEM STANDS.

All from many famous locations, quarries, and mines, collected, acquired, and purchased starting in the 1940's, through my days at the Colorado School of Mines in the 1960's, and during all the decades since.

Again, let us know if your members would like to see our collection. We are showing most afternoons and on the weekends too. Welcome!

Ned and Jeanie Fitchen

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