

Program: The Science in Bonsai Design

Speaker: Carl Wooldridge, D.O., Surgeon, retired; VP, Indianapolis Bonsai Society

Introduced by: Self

Attendance: 105

Guests: Art Brown, Bob Hooker, Tony Lane, Diane Willson, Clint Reck, Lynn Cohee, Garry Keener, Matt Wooldridge

Scribe: Jim Dashiell

Editor: Bill Elliott

Today's talk, by Carl Wooldridge D. O., was titled "The Science of Bonsai Design" emphasizing the thinking (science) in bonsai. Bonsai literally means 'tree in training' and represents the art form started 2,000 years ago in China and perfected in Japan about 700 years ago to emphasize the growth of individual trees in containers. There is a convention of bonsai enthusiasts July 8, 9, and 10 at the Clarion hotel on the west side of Indy.

When you look at bonsai look at the pot. It is desirable that the tree looks old, that the roots stick out and branches hang down. A big part of the display of the tree is its pot, which may be considered an art form in itself. Care of the plant requires precise watering, fertilizing, repotting and positioning. Most who enjoy bonsai look at the trunk and limbs, not the leaves.

A perfect form of the tree can be a numerical rhythm (fibonacci progression) with the limbs starting a distance that is a fraction of its width, etc. Also, the diameter of the tree should equal the width of the pot. Two styles of bonsai are the dynamic style that gives tension, like Picasso, and a balanced style that reminds one of Monet.

Many different species of trees will work as bonsai trees. They may be hardy, tropical or tender. When they are transplanted the roots are also trimmed. Big roots are removed. There are no 'organic' trees as many types of sprays are used to combat insects and diseases and pests. Grandkids are also a common threat to the trees' well-being.



Carl Wooldridge