

Iowa Bonsai Association Newsletter

www.iabonsai.org

<https://sites.google.com/site/cedarrapidsbonsai/>



July 2021

Volume 81, Issue 6

From the Editor

Happy July, Bonsai Enthusiasts! It's SHOW TIME! Well, August is show time. The Bonsai Show at the Iowa State Fair is August 15, 2021, and the Mid-America Bonsai Society Show & Sale is being held at the Chicago Botanic Gardens August 20-22, 2021. And Guess What? Anyone can enter. If anyone has questions about the State Fair, contact Dave Richmond at david.richmond@simpson.edu. Information regarding the Chicago show is available at midwestbonsai.org. Trees going to Chicago have to be there by 7 pm on Thursday evening before the show and cannot be taken away until 5 pm on Sunday. This may be a deterrent for many of you, but let's get creative! Perhaps someone who's planning to stay the whole time can take your tree up or bring it back. If you are interested in Chicago, but can't be there the whole time, talk to Cat or me.

With all that in mind, Alan Magruder has contributed two articles about display stands. One of these addresses the aspects that you need to consider when choosing a stand for a particular tree and venue. The other is for those of us who are very handy and have good tools and tells us how to build a display stand. There is a little bit about Moss and Accent plants, as well.

With respect to member activities, both Todd Schlafer and Jennifer Price were in Iowa during the month of June doing workshops. Members' meetings were held and the June work on trees continues. Don't miss Ron's article about collecting trees from a floating bog in Wisconsin with Randy Hoshaw!

Send me pictures and information about what you are doing and any weblinks, pages or posts you think should be shared with the club and I'll put them in future Newsletters!

Remember that prior Newsletters are available on the Iowa Bonsai Association website (www.iabonsai.org). There's a lot of good information there.

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Susan Daufeldt

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From the IBA and EIBA Presidents

IBA

IBA President's Report

Good day. I hope you're all doing well, and your trees are growing strong. The IBA had its second club meeting since the pandemic on June 19th and the turnout was better than I expected. Some new members showed up with trees which resulted in some good discussion. The Todd Schlafer workshop was great and some nice trees were transformed into beautiful bonsai.

A few IBA members made the annual yamadori trek to Wyoming in early June. We had a great time and collected some fine trees. Look for the article about the Wyoming trip in the August Newsletter.

The next IBA meeting will be Saturday July 17, 2021, from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm, at the Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden and we hope to see you all there. The meeting locations within the GDMBG have changed so please check with the front desk for meeting location.

The IBA will be doing another Bonsai for Beginners class at Ted Lare Garden Center in July so if you're interested in that please contact Ted Lare for particulars.

As mentioned last month, if you haven't done so already please renew your membership. If you're an early shopper looking for stocking stuffers IBA memberships are a great choice.

Hope to see you all soon!
Scott



EIBA

EIBA President's Report

Members: Note that EIBA board meetings are OPEN meetings. This means that you do NOT need to be a board member in order to attend. Because board meetings are now being routinely held on ZOOM, the meetings are more accessible. The link for the board meeting will be sent to all members. Please feel free to attend.

July 8, 2021, 6:30 pm
EIBA Board Meeting via Zoom. The link will be sent out the Monday or Tuesday prior to the meeting. Please contact me by phone prior to the meeting if you think you have not received the link.

July 15, 2021, 6:30 pm

Club Meeting: Gary Gnade will present on his trip to Japan in the Spring of 2019. Come and hear Gary talk, ask questions and see many wonderful photographs! Pierson's Greenhouse, 1800 Ellis Blvd NW, Cedar Rapids, IA 52405.

August 12, 2021, 6:30 pm
EIBA Board Meeting via Zoom. The link will be sent out the Monday or Tuesday prior to the meeting. Please contact me by phone prior to the meeting if you think you have not received the link.



August 15, 2021

Iowa State Fair Bonsai Show.

August 19, 2021

Club Meeting.

August 20-22, 2021

Mid-America Bonsai Society Show & Sale, Chicago Botanic Garden. Information available at midwestbonsai.org.

American Bonsai Society

Learning Seminars resume May 26-29, 2022, Olive Branch, MS. Forms and details available on the ABS website

If you haven't had the opportunity to pay your dues yet, you can send dues or donations to our club Treasurer: Jim Rajtora, 3512 Sue Lane NW, Cedar Rapids, IA 52405. Checks should be made out to "EIBA." Dues without soil: \$15.00. Dues with one bucket of Soil: \$30.00

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Timely Tips

Susan Daufeldt

Well, here we are – it is summer, I think. We are still facing extreme swings in temperature and a lot of wind. A challenging year in the Bonsai Garden. The fungal disease Black spot is right around the corner as the heat and humidity increase. We need to be managing growth and being sure that our trees are getting the right amount and types of nutrients that keep them healthy and looking well.

The Japanese Beetles have arrived. I wish I could un-arrive them. You can put netting over your trees. You can spray for them. You can walk back and forth in your Bonsai Garden with a bucket of soapy water and hand pick the little buggers all day long. Well, you can if you have nothing else to do. I know from experience what they go for. I actually keep roses with my Bonsai – fragrant ones - because they will go for the roses first every time. I also have Dog's Bane, a wild native. The Beetles love that, too. Still, I have to watch my elms and various members of the rose family for Beetles. I spray with Eight the minute I see them on a tree. But I hate doing that. This summer, I am also trying the Beetle traps. I have them nowhere near the Bonsai and hope that they will draw them away.

With the really hot weather, some members are reporting that their trees have shut down and are not drawing water as they were a few weeks ago. This is not true in my yard, however. Watch your trees' water needs. Some of my trees get watered once a day. Some get watered twice and others three times. Trees in boxes and nursery pots that are planted in collection soil often do not need to be watered daily. Small trees will need less sun and may need water more often. Accent plants are often thirsty little fellows, too, but this can vary depending on what you have. Your trees will dry out a lot faster on windy days. Junipers are being sprayed with water two to three times a day in my yard. They like this A LOT and it helps to prevent spider mite infestations. I also use a strong spray of water on trees that are susceptible to insect infestation that are NOT prone to fungal infections.

A few words about summer fertilizing – We’ve said a lot about this already this year and the principles apply. Developing trees need more fertilizer than developed trees. Too much fertilizer on developed trees will cause them to put on undesirable growth and will interfere with ramification. Do not fertilize double flush pine bonsai until after their second flush of needles open. John Denny recommends beginning heavy fertilization about August 15 and continuing through late fall. He also recommends that you wait to fertilize single flush pines like Ponderosa until their needle growth is finished. This will occur about the middle of August also. This is the time to repot Tropical Trees, if you haven’t already done so. They are growing hard. Waiting to repot until too late in the year can may weaken your tree, as they may not have enough growing days left to fully recover.

Have a great month and be sure to contact someone in the club for help if you need it. That’s why we have a club!

Information in this month’s Timley Tips specifically relating to conifers and tropicals was gleaned from prior Timley Tips written by John Denny.

Susan Daufeld

All Photo Credits: Alan Magruder

DISPLAY OF A BONSAI TREE

Alan Magruder



If you have found a wonderful show table that is absolutely beautiful, be careful. It could easily become the center of your display and overshadow your bonsai. This is not an uncommon mistake. Anything that takes attention away from the Bonsai tree is not good in a Bonsai show. The purpose of a show table is to make the tree look good.

1. Height

The observer should be looking directly into the tree, not down on it or up into it. This means that the show table must have the proper length of legs. Frequently the legs of our tables are much too short. This is particularly true in the United States. In order to know the proper length of your display stand you

need to know what the height of the table it sits on at the show. Most tables that the displays sits on are about 30 inches tall. Use a little math and determine the proper height of your display stand so the average persons eyes are looking directly into the tree. I have been known to take two stands of different length legs to a show so that I can have the proper height for the tree being shown. The tree and stand (pictured above) are on a table that is 30 inches tall and works well in terms of height. The show table top is slightly too large, but the legs look strong enough to take the weight.

2. Complexity

A very ornate stand will draw attention away from the tree. If the tree is very complex, maybe, the stand will only match it and thus complement the tree. If the stand makes the tree and the overall display look good by all means use it.

3. Redundancy

Do not repeat something you already have. If your tree is on a slab it is not a good idea to use another slab for your accent plant.

4. Consistency

If you choose to use a scroll with your overall display, the theme of the scroll should match all other elements of your display. If the companion plant is a spring plant so should the scroll be a spring theme. If your tree is in bloom in the spring your scroll should be a spring theme. All elements of your display should be consistent.

5. Show table

The show table should fit the pot and the tree. This means that the pot should not crowd the interior portion of the stand and also not be lost in it. Most show tables have an interior to the top and a frame around that. The center portion floats inside the frame around it. Usually the pot will have about one inch between the sides of the frame and about one half an inch between the front and back of the frame. The overall canapé of the tree can overlap the sides of the table slightly and uniformly. The pot and tree should fit into the stand so there is a balance. The show table looks strong enough to hold the tree and is tall enough for this tree. The stand is somewhat complex and yet its lines are simple.



Show table and pot



Same stand and similar pot with tree

6. Color

The color of the show table should work with the color of the tree and pot. A very dark tree and pot should not have a light colored stand.

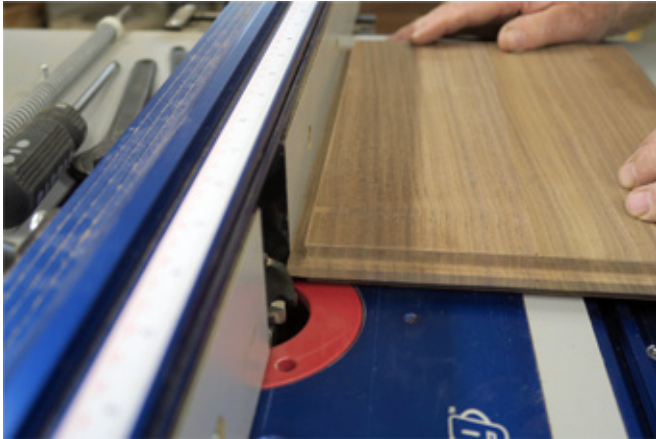
All the elements of a Bonsai display should work together as a unit and make the tree the center of attention. A wonderful show table or a wonderful scroll or accent plant will not necessarily win the show.

How to Build a Bonsai Show Table for a Particular Tree and Pot

Alan Magruder

Many of the show tables that we can buy are generic, not built for any particular tree and pot. Frequently these show tables are well built and attractive. They, however, do not necessarily fit the tree and pot. Many of them are too short or the pot is crowding the top of the stand or is lost in it.

It helps if one draws, to scale, the pot and the tree and then adds to the drawing the shape and size of the show table. After doing this, I have changed my original idea and was glad I did this and had not wasted my time and material on a show table that would not have worked.

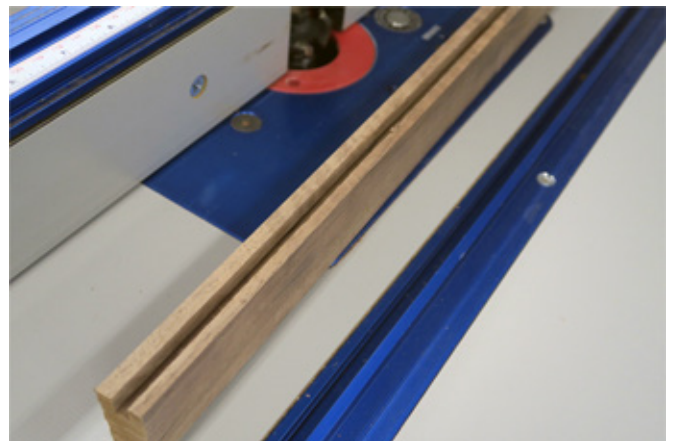


Most show tables have a two part top. A center portion that is a panel that frequently has two or more pieces of wood glued together with a tongue routed around it.

All Photo Credits: Alan Magruder

The next part is a frame around the center panel. This is usually about 1 to 1 1/2 inches wide with a groove routed into the edge.

This frame is mitered to 45 degrees and glued at the corners around the center panel. This allows the center panel to float inside the frame so that it does not warp or bend the panel.



After the top is glued and assembled it is passed through a drum sander or sanded by hand.



Legs for the table are an important consideration. The length of the leg is vital to showing the tree properly. The viewer should be able to look directly into the tree, not down or up into the tree. Many of the generic show tables have legs that are too short. Most of the furniture that bonsai displays are shown on are about 30 inches tall. Short legs on a show table may not be tall enough for the viewer to look into the tree. The shape of the leg is important so that it works with the shape of the tree. It is also important to use a joinery consistent with the weight and artistic design of the show table. The legs need to be strong enough to not only support the tree but also look like they will support the tree. A large tree and pot need heavier legs.



Legs can be round, straight, have a pattern, tall, short, bold and light.



Before assembling and glueing the table sand all of the parts to 220 grit. It is easier to sand the parts now. Be careful when glueing the parts together to keep the glue from oozing out of the joints. If there is some glue that oozes out it must be sanded off before finishing the stand.



Now that the stand has been sanded and glued together it is time to have a finish applied.

Find a stain that works with the pot and the tree by testing it out on a scrap piece of wood. After the stain is dry rub, brush or spray a water or oil based finish on the stand following the directions that come with the finish. The finish can be gloss, semi- gloss or satin as long as it works with the pot and the tree. It usually takes at least two coats of finish.

Accent Plants

Susan Daufeldt

In Bonsai display, adding an accent plant to the composition is done to accentuate the tree on display and create a sense of harmony. An accent plant (or companion planting) can be a (flowering) plant, bamboo, grass, ferns, a moss variety or even some mushrooms. It depends on the season, style of Bonsai tree and many other factors what kind and size of accent plant fits the design.



A woodland Galium and moss planting

When choosing an accent plant, the Bonsai artist must consider the season (time of year), flow and style of the Bonsai. Here are some general considerations:

- Season: the accent plant should point the viewer to the current season. This means the color of leaves and the presence of fruits or flowers is of great importance.
- Style and size: Bonsai trees that resemble a struggle to survive (like a windswept or rock styled tree) should be accompanied by a sparser companion plant. Taller styles, like the literati, can be displayed with a tall grass variety. The accent needs to work with the story the tree tells.
- Contrast: Bonsai trees with flowers or fruits should be contrasted by non-flowering accent plants, and vice-versa.
- Origins: when combining several plants to create one accent planting, choosing plants that grow together in nature is a good idea. Otherwise the planting may appear unnatural and create imbalance in the display.
- Pots: companion plantings can be placed in small glazed or unglazed pots, but also on a tile or slate. In the latter case, moss should be grown around the soil to create a mature looking plant.

A successful companion planting is beautiful in its own right, but should not become the dominant part of the display.

Obviously these guidelines should not interfere with your personal taste. Overall, accent plants are rather easy and inexpensive to grow (and the options are endless). Make sure to water regularly, as the small pots and slates do not hold much soil. Because they are small and do not have a lot of soil, accent plants will generally do better on your shohin bench. They will require more water and shade than many larger Bonsai.

The Information in this Article is Adapted from an Article on the Bonsai Empire Website.

A Little Bit About Moss

Susan Daufeldt

I became interested in moss about the same time I became interested in Bonsai, but quite independently. I have been working with moss since that incredible March, when deep snow melted and left the Woods as green as green could be – with MOSS! Moss is a nice finishing touch to many types and styles of Bonsai.

With the Iowa State Fair Bonsai Show in the offing, I've had some inquiries about caring for and establishing moss. So here are a few things that I've learned that may help some of you as you prepare your exhibits for the Fair.

First, it is complete nonsense that moss will die if you fertilize over the top of it. I have used both fish emulsion and full strength miracle grow over moss for years with no ill effects whatsoever. What WILL kill moss is fertilizer cakes set on top of it.

Second, like anything that has been moved and needs to get reestablished, moss -even a full sun moss - will need special care upon collection. That means no sun and no wind and proper watering.

You can kill moss by over watering it. You can kill moss by not watering it enough. Sound familiar? My rule of thumb is one soak-through each day.

I put recently collected moss directly onto a piece of plywood in a full shade-no wind location. This happens to be the bench on the North side of my garage. It gets a little bit of early morning sun, but the moss on it does not because the trees provide shade. This is where I put trees that need shade to prevent leaf burn after pruning, weak or recently repotted deciduous trees that need coddling and accent plants, particularly woodland varieties that I have been working with. I do NOT put members of the rose family on this bench because it gets sprayed down daily. That once a day spray and the afore described conditions is just what the moss wants. Once I put the moss onto the soil surface of the pot, I may keep the tree here for a short period of time as the moss adjusts. This depends on the type of moss and the coverage provided by the canopy of the tree or the lack thereof.



Recently collected moss placed directly on the wooden bench.



Different varieties of moss established and growing on my full shade-no wind bench. The pot shown has only very recently been populated with freshly collected moss of a variety that tolerates a lot of sun. The tree itself is being babied a little this year because it was repotted this spring, suffered a mite and borer attack shortly after and recently had gentle carving work done on the deadwood. Consequently, it is hanging out in a very protected spot for its own sake and this is good for getting the moss established, too. If you look closely, you will see that there are spaces between the moss and there are fertilizer cakes where there is no moss. I will have to remove the cakes and fill those spaces, preferably with moss or crushed black lava, before showing.

One of the difficulties in Iowa of maintaining moss on Bonsai is that many trees want full sun and what's good for the tree is way too much for the moss. I have addressed this problem in my yard with fiberglass window screen. I cut a square or rectangle of window screen large enough to overhand the pot and tuck under the sides while covering the surface of the pot VERY LOOSELY. Moss does not like pressure on its surface. I then cut a slit to the center and cut out a hole for the nebari. The screen acts as shade cloth and has the added benefit of warding off birds. Birds will often steal my moss. I like birds. A lot. But not when they take my moss.

Moss - continued



Black or dark grey fiberglass window screen cut to fit around the nebari and over the pot of a Bonsai Tree.



Screen protecting established moss on a large Trident Maple in VERY full sun.



Screen protecting established moss on a large Slippery Elm in full sun.



Screen protecting moss on an accent plant recently burglarized by birds.

Member Activities
Susan Daufeldt

Both Todd Schlafer and Jennifer Price came to Iowa in June, providing IBA and EIBA Members two great opportunities to learn and receive professional assistance with their trees. And we have pictures!

Scott ran errands, took pictures, brought us lunch and was, just generally a great host!



Todd Schlafer (kneeling at left) works with IBA member Brian Thacker(left) at the workshop held June 18, 2021, at Scott Allen's home. EIBA member Noah Butler works on a Shimpaku (right).



IBA Member Bob West works on a Juniper at the Todd Schlafer workshop June 18, 2021.

IBA Member Brian Thacker, June 18, 2021.



EIBA Members Dave Spicknell (right) and Bruce Pendland (left) watch and listen as Jennifer Price (center) explains styling changes that will accentuate the beauties of Bruce's Black Pine at the workshop on June 12, 2021, at Susan Daufeldt's home

IBA Member Lee Simpson (foreground) discusses a maple with Jennifer Price (not shown), while Bruce Pendland works on his Black Pine (background) during the June 12 workshop.



EIBA Member Harvey Ireland works on the deadwood of a Bald Cypress with a Dremel fitted with the "Flying Saucer," during a workday with Jennifer Price, June 13, 2021.



Collecting in Wisconsin - 2 Day Hunt

Ron Heinin

Very early on a Sunday morning in April, Randy Hoshaw and I took an impulsive 2 day trip to central Wisconsin to collect larch. Randy's friend invited us to stay at his cabin (off the grid) and collect larch from his backyard floating bogs. I have collected trees from swamps and fens in several states, but the floating bogs afforded an experience I couldn't resist. Walking in a floating bog is like walking on a trampoline. While one of us was digging a tree in foot-long moss, the other, perhaps 20 feet away, was trying to stay upright from your commotion. In 2 days we did not have time to explore the entire bog(s). However, we were able to collect several worthy specimens.



The larger larch, deeper into the bog were out of our reach. In retrospect, we were not well prepared.

But alas, next year we will be.

I was amazed at the variety and quality of collectible material in central Wisconsin.

We were able to dig larch, birch, Hawthorne, hornbeam and wild plum.

Wild Plum

I suspect there were even more trees but most were not leafing out and subsequently difficult to identify.

With each collecting trip there are stories and lifelong memories:

1. Floating bogs at this time of the year are replete with ticks, so wear hip boots.
2. Central Wisconsin has **LOTS** of bears.
3. Make sure your host has **BIG** dogs
4. Make sure your pacemaker is working.
5. Be polite to your host and they may invite you back.

As usual, we had a great time. We came home with some super trees and equally great memories. I look forward to next Spring, **assuming our host invites us back.**

Bonsai Inspiration

David Richmond

Photo Credit: David Richmond



On June 10, 2021, because of a glitch in my normal routine, I found myself in Pella about 11:45 AM Central (DLT) Time. I fired up the truck and headed home. The radio was tuned to, 96.3 Iowa Public Radio out of Pleasantville, Iowa. I recognized that I was listening to Beethoven's 9th Symphony playing somewhere in the 3rd movement. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ru8x6oLO1IM> This is an amazing piece of music. I was looking forward to hearing the emotionally charged chorus in the fourth movement known as the *Ode to Joy*. The English translation of the beginning of this moving piece is as follows:

*Joy, bright spark of divinity,
Daughter of Elysium,
Fire-inspired we tread
Within thy sanctuary.
Thy magic power re-unites
All that custom has divided,
All men become brothers,
Under the sway of thy gentle wings.*



See the information below. The New York Times, URL allows a couple of free hits before they charge: <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/08/arts/music/beethoven-ninth-symphony-classical-music.html>

I was listening to the radio station, 96.3 FM as I drove into the usual parking lot looking over Red Rock lake, 41.418824, -93.051583 (see location indicated on the satellite photograph above).

I pulled into the parking lot at noon. Unfortunately, Pleasantville's radio station chose to end the Beethoven's 9th Symphony at the end of the 3rd movement. The amazing view from the shore and the photographic image that I captured allowed me to record my own visual *Ode to Joy*

Bonsai Classifieds

FOR SALE: At our greenhouse DaSu Bonsai Studio, 27887 Timber Rd., Kelley, Iowa we have sixteen varieties of companion plants stock coming in!! Should arrive this Wednesday or Thursday. Ten percent off to Bonsai Assn. members with a \$100 purchase. Come get some crushed lava for your planting needs and take some very cool miniatures home!

FOR SALE: Seedlings will be available at the farm/greenhouse. I have ordered: 100 Washington Hawthorn for sale \$2.50 each, 50 Malus Baccata Crabapple for sale \$2.56 each, 50 Nanking Cherry for sale \$2.80 each. I will also be offering grow bags (one and 2 gallon size) for growing out in the ground and developing your seedlings. \$2.00 and \$2.50 each per bag. As an incentive free lime sulfur will be given away with a seedling or other item purchase. BRING YOUR OWN CONTAINER TO BE TOPPED OFF or bring a four ounce dark colored bottle with tight fitting lid. Washington hawthorns immediately make great little forests. The other two items are probably best grown out in the ground or a larger container. Bring buckets to fill or waterproof bags for any of our 22 tons of bonsai lava, \$9 per five gallon bucket. Call 515-769-2446 if you have questions or need directions, and/or requests that you would want ready/reserved for pickup. Dave at DaSu Bonsai Studio.

FOR SALE: Pumice \$30 for five gallons. Akadama \$32 per bag, \$30 for members. Bio Gold fertilizer from Japan, \$92.50 per 5kg bag Contact Scott Allen or Tim Peterson

WANTED: (1) **Autumn Olive** (*Elaeagnus umbellata* a/k/a Autumn Berry); (2) **Box Elder** (*Acer negundo*); (3) any variety of native **Hawthorn**; and (4) any variety of **Oak**. Susan Daufeldt, scdaufeldt@icloud.com, sdaufeldt@daufeldtlawfirm.com, (319) 430-3822

FOR SALE: (1) Trident Maple \$50.00. This is a good tree for a beginner and priced to sell. It is the bottom half of a tree that was air-layered. It is a medium-size, with good trunk and nebari. One side is fairly well developed. Your task would be to develop the other side of the tree. (2) Cutting grown Fuji Cherries \$25/\$35. I have a nursery pot with one tree/and an nursery pot with two trees. Beautiful flowers in spring start out white and turn pink – ravishing! Great fall color. Hard to get and generally expensive. Priced to sell. I have other deciduous trees available. Contact me if you are interested and I can get you pictures and more information. Susan Daufeldt, scdaufeldt@icloud.com, sdaufeldt@daufeldtlawfirm.com, (319) 430-3822.

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