

# BONSAI NOTEBOOK

A Publication of the Austin Bonsai Society

April 2017 vol 75



## *Calendar of Events*

- Th-Su Apr. 6 - 9 LSBF Convention in Dallas
- Wed. Apr. 12 7:30 Kusamono presented by Sooncheng Cheah
- Tues. Apr. 18 7:00 Board Meeting  
7:30 Members Workshop: Kusamono
- Wed. May 10 7:30 L/D with Robert Pressler
- St-Sn. May 20 & 21: **ANNUAL AUSTIN BONSAI SOCIETY SHOW!**

## OUR NEWS

PRESIDENTS  
MESSAGE P.2

VICE PRESIDENT'S  
MESSAGE P.3

LSBF BONSAI  
CONVENTION P.4

MINUTES P.6

APRIL BONSAI  
BY JOHN MILLER P.7

## *2017 Board of Directors*

**SIMON TSE**  
President

**ZACH RABALAIS**  
Vice President

**ROBERT NOWICKI**  
Secretary

**PAT WARE**  
Treasurer

**RUBY CHAING**  
Member-at-large

**KEVIN PATUREAU**  
Member-at-large

**DANIEL (RETANA) LIM**  
Member at large

**April  
Meeting  
Volunteers**

**APRIL 12TH  
FOOD:**  
**QUOC HOANG  
LIZZIE CHEN  
NATHAN GAAR**

**APRIL 12TH  
TREES:**  
**QUOC HOANG  
JONATHAN  
WOOD**

# President's Message

by Simon Tse



**O**ur club organized a mini boxwood dig in East Austin during the first weekend of March. We all had a blast collecting our boxwood through lots of hard work. As some of you may recall, Austin was blessed with lots of rain right before the dig and all participants experienced the

wrath of wet mud. What a great way to demonstrate urban collecting by our very own, Joey McCoy. Thank you Joey! We really appreciated your experience that lead us on another successful dig. Mission accomplished!

**O**n April 12th, we are honored and pleased to feature Sooncheng Cheah as our bonsai artist. Soon specializes in Kusamono and has recently been awarded first place in Kusamono display at the US National Bonsai Exhibition in Rochester, New York. Kusamono (literally “grass thing”) and shitakusa (literally “undergrass”) are potted collections of plants designed to either be viewed in accompaniment with bonsai, or alone. Kusamono are usually exhibited as the focus. One can also accompany the kusamono with a scroll, figurine, or suiseki to complete the picture. Kusamono can be tall, mixed plantings or a single plant, in or out of a container. The kusamono determines the impression of a place and season, such as a meadow, a bog, the mountains or other sceneries. Looking forward to this special presentation.

Cheers!

Simon

## Get Connected

ABS ON THE

INTERNET:

Online Discussions

Picture and Video

Sharing

Question and Answer

Section

Upcoming Event

Discussion

NO SPAM

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/austinbonsai/>

Or message Joey:

[jvmccoy@](mailto:jvmccoy@sbcglobal.net)

[sbcglobal.net](mailto:jvmccoy@sbcglobal.net)

## FACEBOOK

LIKE US ON

FACEBOOK

[www.facebook.com/](http://www.facebook.com/AustinBonsaiSociety)

[AustinBonsaiSociety](http://www.facebook.com/AustinBonsaiSociety)

Terrific place for us to

gather, chat, and talk

Bonsai!

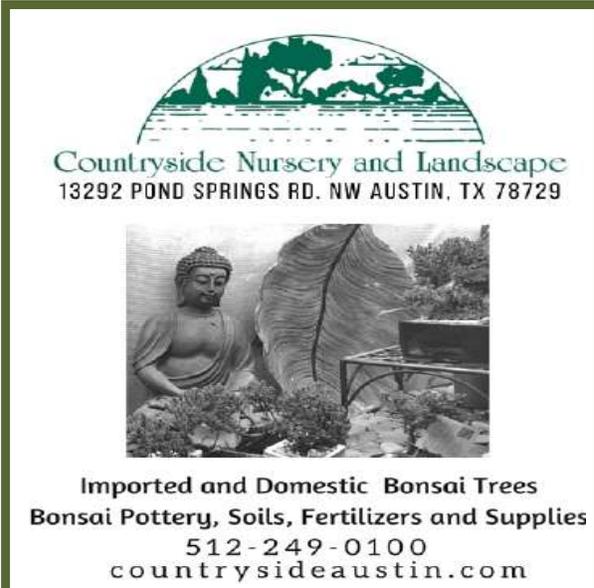
# Vice President's Message

## *Potting season!!*

*by Zach Rabalais*

I'm sure everyone has been elbow deep in potting soil over the past month getting all of your bonsai into new pots, or getting them to fit perfectly into their established pots. Now that repotting is coming to a close, focus will start to shift to getting our trees looking their best for the up coming spring show. One of the essential elements of any great display is the accent that accompanies your tree. If you've ever wondered about kusimono, what they are for, how to make them, what plant goes best with what tree, then make sure to make it to the meeting this month.

The club meeting for the month of April will be presented by Soongheng Cheah from the Huston Bonsai Club, and is going to be all bout kusimono. She will be sharing her know how with us and helping us get ready to create some beautiful kusimono of our own for the upcoming spring show.



Countryside Nursery and Landscape  
13292 POND SPRINGS RD. NW AUSTIN, TX 78729

Imported and Domestic Bonsai Trees  
Bonsai Pottery, Soils, Fertilizers and Supplies  
512-249-0100  
[countrysideaustin.com](http://countrysideaustin.com)

# LSBF 2017 Dallas Convention

*April 6th - 9th 2017*

*by Sylvia Smith, Convention Chair*

Ok, you've all read why you should come to the upcoming Dallas LSBF convention; the artists, workshop material, and viewing an amazing exhibition but now let's chat about the real purpose of a convention which is education and camaraderie.

Our headliners are some of the most talented bonsai teachers and artists of the time. All of them have studied under renowned masters in Japan and all have spent time learning the latest techniques and those once secret techniques passed down through the generations. Each of them continue to learn from their perspective teachers/schools to continue their education. For us this means watching and learning new techniques and improving on old ones.



Here is where you will see them in action. Friday night they all take the stage after dinner and do an initial styling on three very different trees. They include a huge Bald Cypress, a collected Ashe Juniper, and a Rocky Mountain Juniper. A good variety of trees that should encompass ownership from the far south to the far north. On Saturday afternoon, Full registrants and Observation Only registrants will have the opportunity to enjoy a dual rock planting demo with Bjorn and Daisaku with a lively and interactive Q&A opportunity. All four of these trees will be part of the auction on Saturday night. And finally, after our Sunday brunch Bjorn takes the stage again to create an almost show-ready Procumbens Juniper after working his magic. That tree will be part of the fifth and final raffle of the event after brunch. You can be part of

any or all of these events – full registration covers it all or you can buy a ticket to any of them individually.

But the best part about this convention will be meeting up with bunches of bonsai enthusiasts and getting to know our very down to earth artists and have fun doing it! As an LSBF club member, you are most welcome to attend any day that weekend to enjoy the vendor area, the exhibit area, and be a part of the fun raffles at **no charge**. So head on up or over to Dallas for whatever time your schedule allows.



# March Madness!

*Here are some great photos from various events this month in Austin.*



ABS General Meeting Minutes  
March, 2017

Meeting called to order by President, Simon Tse.



This evenings hostesses were recognized and Simon also welcomed guests and newcomers.

Alisan talked about Zilker Garden Fest and asked for volunteers

Simon mentioned LSBF convention in April. Registration and details are available here: <http://www.lonestarbonsai.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Registration-Form-and-Workshop-Listing-2017.pdf>

TTSBE is asking for volunteers/docents to check on the Pilot project.

Simon introduced Chuck Ware for this evenings program on Cascades and Semi-Cascades

Chuck Ware always does a great job on his subjects and he gave us a terrific lesson on the various styles of Bonsai, focusing on cascades and semi-cascades.

Simon asked the people who brought Bonsai to talk about them and each person presented their Bonsai.

Simon adjourned the meeting.



ABS Board Meeting Minutes  
March, 2017

In attendance were Simon Tse, President, Pat Ware, Treasurer, and Kevin Patureau, Member at Large. As there was not a quorum, discussions were held on the May show, Auction, Newsletter, Social Media and Zilker Garden Fest but nothing could be voted on.

# April Bonsai

by John Miller

**A**nother group of good articles from [bonsaitonight.com](http://bonsaitonight.com). The pictures (especially of pinching growing tip of maples) is worth ten thousand words. The ones is March especially good are:

- Mar 7--first spring work on Jap maple. The pictures clearly show how to develop short internodes and smaller leaves on all maples. Leaves and nodes will both grow until the tip is pinched Same technique on almost all opposite leafed trees. As a general rule this applies to alternate leafed species also. He was very lucky to have all buds open in one week but you will need to keep pinching during the growing season.
- Mar 10--work on an ume. Saving the tree and develop a way to go in future. Never quit looking for a better front or way to go.
- Mar 21--How to fertilize JBP. Different techniques for growing trunks and developing branches. The same fertilizer is used but applied at different times



**R**epotting of deciduous trees should be pretty much over. Broad leaved evergreens, such as the hollies, usually start growth a little later and may still be repotted when their buds swell. Conifers and other evergreens should be in active growth and therefore not repotted. Newly repotted trees should not be wired until they show they have recovered.

**JADE GARDENS**  
HOME OF THE  
CENTRAL TEXAS BONSAI EXHIBIT

Owners  Chuck and Pat Ware

JADE GARDENS  
Wimberley, Texas  
12404 Ranch Road 12  
Wimberley, TX 78676  
Visa & MasterCard  
(512) 847-2514  
e-mail: [bonsaijg@gmail.com](mailto:bonsaijg@gmail.com)  
<http://www.bonsaiexhibittexas.com>

*New Members Corner*

Ross Canlas  
[canlasross@gmail.com](mailto:canlasross@gmail.com)

Chris Frechette  
[christopher.frechette@gmail.com](mailto:christopher.frechette@gmail.com)

Chris Johnson  
[cjohnson@npraustin.com](mailto:cjohnson@npraustin.com)

Peter Shipman  
[pshipman411@yahoo.com](mailto:pshipman411@yahoo.com)

Alex Villa  
[alexv81155@gmail.com](mailto:alexv81155@gmail.com)

**A**ny trees that have wire on them should be watched very closely during the spring flush of growth. Branches and twigs can expand pretty rapidly and result in the wire cutting into the branch. Watch especially the junction of the branch with the trunk or a larger branch. Remove the wire if it is cutting into the branch and rewire if needed.

**G**eneral care for all species is pretty much the same at this time. Feed, prune, and look out for insects and other pathogens.

**W**hat kind of fertilizer you use is not as important as that you use it right. Plants would like a small amount of nourishment to be available all the time. For bonsai, the best way to supply it is by using organic fertilizer cakes on the surface. They release nutrients each time you water and are held by the particles such as pumice to be used all day. Water soluble fertilizers are fairly good but the next watering will wash the remaining nutrients out. You would have to water with it daily using a very dilute solution. Some organic fertilizers like bat guano or chicken manure release too much nutrients at once (are too hot). Many lawn and garden fertilizers are the same. Whichever you use be sure to follow directions.

**F**eeding needs to be done judiciously. A lot of nitrogen will push the new flush of growth too much but with no fertilizer you will get foliage with poor color that lasts all year. The organic fertilizer balls are the best solution. You can add a few at the start and increase

them as the foliage matures. (See Jonas's tech on the pines). If you use chemicals be sure to follow directions and too use them lightly at first. Also be sure to get a brand with the minor elements listed. Commercial water soluble fertilizers wash out with the next watering and result in poorly fed pale bonsai.

**M**ost trees will do good in the full sun at this time of year. However, if you have had them in partial shade be careful about giving them full sun. They probably should be acclimated gradually.

**W**hether you use the organic or chemical spray, the trick is to be sure to thoroughly cover the plant including all the leaf axils. Use a hand or pump up sprayer to get a fine mist spray to cover all surfaces, a hose-end sprayer does not cover good enough.

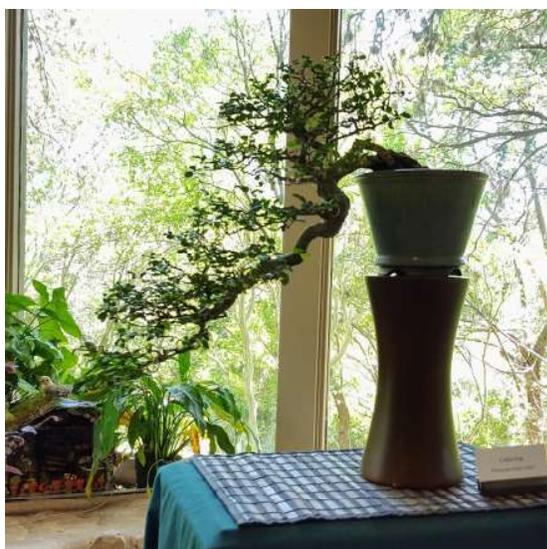
**F**ungal diseases develop during warm humid weather. Too much foliage misting can do it also if the leaves stay damp very long. One of the most prevalent fungus is leaf spot which will hit several kinds of plants especially elms, hollies, and roses. Control consists of spraying with baking soda. A 1% solution of Hydrogen Peroxide (diluted 1 part HP & 2 parts water) can be used except on very young foliage which may be sensitive to it.

**R**emember when pruning that there is no one-size-fits-all, even on the same species. First of all, formation pruning is

when you are doing the initial styling of the tree. In most cases you are trying to grow new branches requiring you to have the branches grow long. After the tree has been styled, you then need to do ramification pruning to develop twiginess and a patina of old age. To properly prune you need to know how they grow and to remember that new twigs, even in the far future, break from the internodes so keep them short.

**F**or formation pruning on opposite leaved species, you must work to get short internodes near the trunk then later let the branch grow for thickening. After the first set of leaves emerges, pinch the tip of the next set of leaves before they actually become leaves. Pointed tweezers are the best tool for this job as you want to get the growth when it just starts to emerge. Use this same technique through three sets of leaves, after which you can let the newly created branches grow to thicken. Each pinch results in two new leaf sets, creating shorter nodes to generate future branches. When the desired primary and secondary branches have been grown, the ramification is achieved by pinching the tip from each set of leaves as it grows thereby doubling the number of twigs each time. This can be a big job on a large maple, but is necessary to get the desired result.

**B**e sure to check your soils each day for proper water content. It is easy to assume that the soil has plenty of water when the days are cool or there has been some rain. Its too easy for a tree with full leaves to shed water outside of the pot or a good sun and low humidity after a front to dry the soil. I suggest that you remove most of the moss so that you can see and feel the soil in order to determine how dry it is. (Moss growing on the trunk or roots will cause the bark to rot also) An automatic watering system will be an aid but you should not rely on it to replace hand watering. Hand watering allows you to adjust the watering for each tree individually.



## **MBP Bonsai Studio**

Importers, Retail & Wholesale

Your source for:

High quality Yagimitsu & Ryukoh tools

Organic Bonsai Fertilizers

Imported and Domestic Trees

Bonsai Pottery, Soils and supplies

Classes & Seminars

*Open Tuesday Through Sunday*

ph: 512-989-5831

e-mail: [mbpbonsai@](mailto:mbpbonsai@suddenlink.net)

[suddenlink.net](http://suddenlink.net)

601 Kay Lane

Pflugerville, TX 78660

(call for directions)



## Austin Bonsai Society P.O.Box 340474 Austin, TX 78734

The Austin Bonsai Society is a nonprofit organization which exists to help in providing guidance and education for individuals in their desire to learn and expand their knowledge and skill in the arts of bonsai.

The Society holds regular meetings, twelve months a year, on the second Wednesday of each month. Our social period begins

at 7:00 PM, followed by our program at 7:30 PM. Normally, unless announced otherwise, these meetings are held in the Zilker Garden Center building, located on Barton Springs Road in Zilker Park, Austin, Texas. We offer a monthly program of interest to the general membership.

The cost of membership is presently only \$30.00 for an

individual and \$35.00 for a family membership. For additional info contact the address above.

