



Bonsai Notebook

A Publication of the Austin Bonsai Society

January 2010

January Program

by Mike Watson

Happy New Year everyone! “Out with the old and in with the new” is pretty much the opposite of what we do with bonsai. How about making something new out of something old? Is that allowed?

Of course it is! For our first meeting of the new year on **Wednesday, January 13th**, Donna Dobberfuhl is going to show us a nifty trick that is called a “Phoenix Graft” (in Japan it is called “Tanuki” after their raccoon-like critter. Google it for a good read!). This is the practice of grafting a living tree to an



The ABS Christmas Tree displayed in the green room

Calendar of Events

January 13th ABS Monthly Meeting Reception
Hosts: Alisan Clarke and Pat Ware
Zilker Garden Center 7:00 pm

January 13th ABS Monthly Meeting
Phoenix Graft
with Donna Dobberfuhl
Zilker Garden Center 7:30 - 9:00 pm

January 19th ABS Board Meeting
Zilker Garden Center 7:00 - 7:30 pm

January 19th ABS Member's Workshop
Grafting
Zilker Garden Center 7:30 - 9:00 pm

January 24th Club Dig
Bastrop, TX
Details at this month's monthly meeting

interesting piece of deadwood. Given time, they fuse into one tree. Something new from old!

The subject of our member's workshop on **Tuesday, January 19th** will concern other types of conventional (and some unconventional) grafting. It may be a little too early to start grafting on some species but we can go over the techniques. Grafting is easier than you think and it's a great way to improve a mediocre bonsai. Come on out and learn more about it.

We will also be having a club dig in Bastrop on **Sunday, January 24th**. I will discuss the details at the Wednesday meeting. It's going to be a fun time!

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The rate of advertising in "Bonsai Notebook" is \$6.00 per month or \$35.00 per year, for two column inches minimum. Additional space must be purchased in increments of two column inches. Two column inches measure approximately 3 1/2 inches wide by 2 inches high. All ads must be camera ready and prepaid. Changes to ads must be received 30 days prior to the month of the desired insertions. Other newsletter content is due on the last day of the month, in order to be published in the next month's newsletter.

Collin Murphy is the editor of "Bonsai Notebook". He may be contacted at ckmurphy2000@yahoo.com.

President's Message by Joey McCoy

Welcome to another exciting year in Bonsai! It seems like last year flew by and it's almost time for another spring repotting season. Great time now to get organized and have soil components ready, pots washed and prepped, and trees chosen. When potting season comes it's always a rush to get everything together in time (at least for me!). It's also a great time to improve our trees and it looks like we'll have some great programs this month involving grafting and creating a tanuki.

Please start thinking about native trees you'd like to show at the Ladybird Wildflower Center beginning March 13th. The center focuses on native Texas plants and they're interested in having a show of Bonsai native plants. The best way to grow our membership and share our art is to show it to the public. Last year's show was successful, let's make this one great as well! Mike Hansen and Bill Boytim will be in charge, so please give them a heads up on Bonsai to expect.

If anyone has any suggestions or ideas to make our club a better place don't hesitate to let me know. After all, our group is only as good as the people who work with it. Happy New Year everyone!

PERSIMMON HILL BONSAI

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December AAGC Meeting Minutes

by Charlotte Cranberg, Secretary

The main emphasis of this meeting was the honoring of the workers in the gardens by Liz McVeetie, head gardener. Liz introduced all the workers and paid some fine compliments to our own Terry Ward. She said "he is so important to the Oriental Garden and has generously given many hours of his time. His vision turned the garden around. Terry has directed our pruning and sculpting and guided us in all the improvements to make this an oriental garden that reflects the vision of Isamu Tanniguchi. His contributions also include the stone coin basin, Japanese lanterns, guide posts, rock work, setting stones, renewal of the waterfall, satsuki azaleas purchased from Bennie Badget and Sheila's gift of a valuable Japanese maple. He has trained so many of our workers."

Don Freeman, VP of horticulture said that the Oriental Garden has been and will be the highest priority for Zilker Botanical Garden.

Electricity is being installed in part of the garden. Lighting will make it possible for night events like outdoor festivals. All will be underground. The Escarpment Trail will be the exhibit area for night use. Also, food courts during the Zilker Festival

needed electricity which had to be installed every year and constantly blew out and was costly.

A check for \$95,000 from the Dino Exhibit was given to Mel to be placed in a special account to be used by AAGC and PARD jointly for improvements to the infrastructure.

The e-newsletter will be published every 3 months. The next one is due out on Dec. 15th. March 1st will be the deadline for the March 15th newsletter. This will be the last newsletter before our Bonsai Exhibit so we need to get an article in it.

Christmas luncheon followed the meeting.

Charlotte Cranberg
AAGC Representative



An elegant floral arrangement on display at the Christmas Dinner

Directory Additions

None

MBP Bonsai Studio
Importers, Retail & Wholesale
Your source for:
High quality Yagimitsu & Ryukoh tools
Organic Bonsai Fertilizers
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Pflugerville, TX 78660
(call for directions)



Terry Ward and the PARD staff working on a rock planting in the Tanniguchi Garden

Bonsai Calendar

**California Shohin Semir
St Louis Shohin Seminar**

**Santa Nella, CA
Collinsville, IL**

**February 5 - 7, 2010
May 20 - 22, 2011**

Know of an upcoming Bonsai event of interest to club members? Send the details to ckmurphy2000@yahoo.com and it will be posted here.

Annual Christmas Potluck Dinner
Photos by Joey McCoy



Several members brought decorated bonsai trees to December's Christmas dinner

January Bonsai

by John Miller

Editor's Note: John Miller, who writes a monthly column for the Bonsai Society of Dallas and the Fort Worth Bonsai Society, has agreed to share his column with us. We need to make adjustments for our warmer, climate, with its early springs, long summers, late falls and erratic winters.

Christmas has gone so now you can devote your full time to bonsai again. Well, if you are not working, not married, are a complete loner, etc. Anyhow you cannot just ignore them since they are dormant. Their needs must be met altho most needs are not as strict as in the summertime.

My most unforgettable January calamity in recent years was having two catlin elms and a trident cut and stripped by a packrat for his nest. The two elms took some time but they recovered. The trident never did. I now keep outdoor rat poison blocks scattered among the trees. I like blocks rather than pellets since they are easier to pick up come spring.

Other outdoor pest problems will depend upon the temperature. If there are many warm days spider mites, scale, and aphids may show up. Use the same controls you did last summer. Too much water could cause root rot, fungus or other damage.

Indoor plants will have the same pest you had last summer and maybe some more since any eggs will hatch and they usually love the warm indoors. So keep your eyes peeled when you are watering.

Watering tends to be a bonsai growers biggest problem in winter. It is difficult to determine how dry the soil is when they are put close together in winter storage. That could be another argument for having a porous well-draining bonsai soil which is very difficult to over water. Just remember that the water will evaporate quickly when the warm winter sun hit's the pots and more so if there is a little breeze.

January is an excellent time to do styling work. Deciduous trees are bare so you see the real tree and are not confused and misled by foliage. Examine the branch structure and decide if you need to reposition any branches. If the trees has been styled for some time, you may need to reduce the length of some branches by selectively cutting back a larger secondary branch and developing a smaller branch. This also gives you more movement

in the branch. Remove vertically growing twigs and branchlets. Do you need to develop more ramification. If so make a note to go on a rigorous tip pruning when growth starts next spring.

Evergreens may be worked on altho the best time would have been last fall. Their sap flow is now at a minimum so they will not bleed too much.

Do not do too much work on spring flowering plants like azaleas, their buds were set late last summer or fall and you will be losing some blooms. Most later bloomers (wisteria and crape myrtle) generally have their blooms on new growth so you can style them now.

Greenhouses can be a great source of bonsai enjoyment in January. Of course, there is always the tropicals that stay green the year around and will therefore need a bunch of care. I let my small elms and maples get a month of cold, hopefully they get to 25 a couple of times to be really dormant. Then between Christmas and New Years I bring them into the greenhouse and can do their repotting in January and enjoy the flush of new foliage before the bigger trees are needing anything.

The cheapest way to upgrade your collection is to join on the club digs. Most digs are scheduled in the late winter which get them at close to the optimum digging stage. If you have doubts about the care after you get home just ask any of your fellow diggers. They all like to share techniques. Collect trees are faster than the other way that I like, grow your own from cuttings. Cuttings do not take any care at all the first year, just put them under the bench and hit them with water when you do the bonsai on top.

The only way to learn bonsai is to do it. You cannot get the why out of a book. You need to have someone help you with the styling and to point out not only what he is doing but why she is doing it. All clubs work hard on having good programs but the real learning is by taking advantage of any workshops offered, both by local club personnel and by visiting artists that the club brings in. The LSBF state convention each year offers a concentrated weekend of study. I still like to watch a master work and listen to his comments. There will always be something slightly new or different or a different approach that will be more clear. Wiring or repotting in itself might be boring but the presentation is never boring.

The December version of Down the Garden Path, the newsletter from Zilker Botanical garden, is now available. Click the link below to view the newsletter in a web browser.

Down the Garden Path, December 2009

or visit <http://www.zilker garden.org/>

REMINDER

Yearly dues are due in January. The membership rates are the same as last year:

\$25.00 for an individual membership

\$30.00 for a family membership

\$12.50 for a student membership

Only club members who have paid the current year's membership dues receive newsletters and can participate in the monthly workshops.

JADE GARDENS

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Chuck & Pat Ware
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Austin Bonsai on the Internet

Online discussions
Picture and video sharing
Questions and answers
Upcoming events
NO SPAM

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

or

jvmccoy@sbcglobal.net

Bonsai Notebook

Austin Bonsai Society
P.O. Box 340474
Austin, Texas 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 \$25.00 for an individual and \$30.00 for a family membership.

For additional information, please contact the Austin Bonsai Society at P.O. Box 340474, Austin, Texas 78734

