



Bonsai Notebook

A Publication of the Austin Bonsai Society

March 2009

March Programs

by Mike Watson

When I first opened a bonsai book, I was astounded by the variety of shapes that trees could be styled in. Amidst the pictures of formal uprights, cascades, windswepts, twin trunks, and group plantings, I saw a style that has intrigued me ever since. I am talking about what we know as the “Raft” style. This is the form a tree in nature will take if it has met with some misfortune which has caused it to be lying on the ground horizontally and yet still alive. Sometimes, when conditions are right, the tree will grow roots on the side of the tree touching the ground while the upward facing branches will grow into trees of their right. What a survival trait!



Chuck Ware gave an excellent demonstration on water retention in bonsai pots and repotting during February’s monthly meeting.

Calendar of Events

- March 11 ABS Monthly Meeting Reception**
Hosts: Connie King and Bill Boytim
Zilker Garden Center 7:00 pm
(Hosts for April’s reception: Elaine White, Audrey Lanier, Zenta Rogers)
- March 11 ABS Monthly Meeting**
Juniper Rafts with Elaine White
Zilker Garden Center 7:30 - 9:00 pm
- March 17 ABS Board Meeting**
Zilker Garden Center 7:00 - 7:30 pm
- March 17 ABS Members Workshop**
Making Juniper Rafts with Elaine White
(Cost: \$24/member)
Zilker Garden Center 7:30 - 9:00 pm
- March 28-29 Zilker Garden Festival**
Zilker Botanical Garden
10:00 am - 5:00 pm

With this in mind, our monthly program on **Wednesday, March 11th** will be about “**Juniper Rafts**” and will be presented by Elaine White. I think this will be a fascinating study on a wonderful bonsai form that will have many of us eager to try it ourselves.

The good news is... we can! Put your name on the sign-up sheet (available at the meeting) and join Elaine as she leads a **hands-on workshop on Tuesday, March 17th**. The cost of the workshop is \$24 which is a tremendous bargain considering what you get in return: a high quality, oval-shaped, plastic bonsai pot, bonsai soil, and a beautiful juniper. What a deal!

Austin Bonsai Society Board of Directors

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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.

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.

President's Message by Joey McCoy

Our family at the Austin Bonsai Society is such a diverse mix. We have different personalities, interests and even reasons for joining together for this wonderful hobby. One of the ways we can keep our club thriving is to encourage new members to come to our meetings, learn about Bonsai and even join our club. This is why meeting with the public at events like Zilker Garden Fest becomes so important. I have several friends in the Bonsai Society who I've met this way and who have joined and added to the strength of our club. The next Zilker Garden Festival is going to take place on March 28th-29th, and the Austin Bonsai Society will have an educational display and demo area available in the Greene Room. If anyone would like to show a tree, volunteer to meet the public or volunteer to help out, please see Mike Watson or me. It's always a fun time being there and sharing our love of Bonsai with the public. If you've never helped out in one of these public events, I highly recommend it!

Another fantastic Bonsai experience is just around the corner: **the LSBF State Bonsai Convention on April 17-19th in Houston**. The deadline for early registration is March 15th – coming up soon, and I'd recommend getting a hotel reservation early as well. Go to www.houstonbonsai.com to register or for more information. They still have openings for many of the workshops, but they're filling up fast, so check it out! Outstanding artists such as Roy Nagatoshi, Boon Manakitivipart, and Milagros Rauber Herrera will be running the workshops and a representation of the entire Texas Bonsai community comes together for this great event. I'll be there and hope to see a good turnout from our Austin club.



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ABS February General Meeting Minutes

by Collin Murphy, Secretary

Joey recognized Els Ulug and himself for hosting February's meeting.

New members John Muller, Zerita Rogers, and Sharon Tedford were recognized. Guests Ida Carter, Ryan Savard, Katharine Flynn, Jordyn Benson, Molly Gibbons, Kat Bickert, Matt Adams, Thomas Tilton, and Lance Trewitt were also recognized.

Charlotte Cranberg gave a report from AAGC. There are several upcoming events, including the Austin Herb Society Spring Symposium on February 21st, a rose workshop on February 14th, and the Austin Organic Gardener's Spring plant sale on March 7th.

The Zilker Garden Festival is March 28th and 29th. As with previous years there will be a raffle with lots of prizes. Cost of tickets is \$1 each or 6 for \$5. See Charlotte for tickets.

Treasurer Pat Ware reminded everyone that membership dues are due by February 28th in order to be included in the membership directory.

Mike Watson then reminded everyone about the member's workshop for March. The workshop will be creating a raft style juniper led by Elaine White. The cost is \$24 per person.

Joey then introduced Chuck Ware who gave an excellent presentation on water retention in pots and repotting.

Bonsai Calendar

| | | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|--|
| SSOT Quarterly Meeting | Persimmon Hill Bonsai | April 4, 2009 | |
| LSBF Convention | Houston, TX | April 16 - 19, 2009 | www.houstonbonsai.com |
| Shohin St Louis | St Louis, MO | April 24 - 26, 2009 | www.stlbonsai.org |
| SSOT Quarterly Meeting | Persimmon Hill Bonsai | June 6, 2009 | |
| ABS Learning Seminars | Boise, ID | June 11 - 14, 2009 | www.absbonsai.org |
| SSOT Quarterly Meeting | Persimmon Hill Bonsai | September 19, 2009 | |

The phone number was omitted on the registration form for the Houston/LSBF Convention April 17-19, 2009. It is 713-914-9180

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

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(call for directions)

Austin Bonsai on the Internet

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

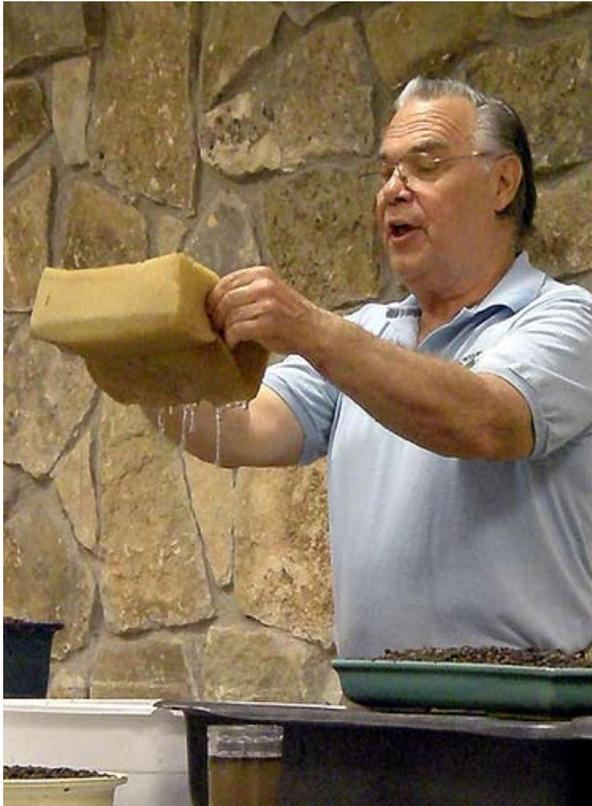
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/austinbonsai/>

or

jvmccoy@sbcglobal.net

Repotting and Water Retention in Pots with Chuck Ware

Photos by Joey McCoy



Chuck demonstrated the differences in water retention of bonsai pots that have identical volumes but different depths, showing that shallower pots retain more water. He then demonstrated this phenomena using an ordinary sponge.

Repotting Workshop with Chuck Ware
Photos by Joey McCoy



Chuck led a repotting workshop during February's workshop.

March 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.

Regardless of where you live in Texas, there are probably three things calling for your immediate attention. Repotting is still being needed; new growth is running rampant and needs to be controlled; and you must keep any tree to be exhibited at the spring shows well groomed. Throw on top of that an aphid invasion or some scale and you should be plenty busy.

By this time most of you have finished repotting the early breaking species. Late starting species like the yaupons and oaks might still be candidates for repotting this year. Since I am two weeks or more behind Dallas I have only done a few but will have many done in the next two weeks.

Now you should get your tweezers and shears ready for the real job ahead. In order to develop the ramification and fine twigs you want you must be pruning the new growth as it develops. Waiting until the shoots are three or four inches or longer results in coarse twigs with long internodes. These will have to be cut off and new ones developed if you are to have a good bonsai. Tweezers are my preferred tool for this job. If you do the cutting at the right time the twig will still be soft and can be plucked with the tweezers. After a few tries you will be able to work faster with tweezers than with shears. I prefer tweezers with a dull point, sharp points catch the foliage and rounded points are too big.

Essentially there are two kinds of growing habits, those with leaves growing alternately on the twigs, e.g. elms, oak, and hawthorn, and those with opposite growing leaves, e.g. maple.

The alternate growing leaves start out with small leaves and each succeeding leaf will be larger and the internodes longer. Also each leaf will have a latent bud in each leaf axial. Therefore if you let the shoot grow to 4 or 5 new leaves and cut it back to 2 or 3, you will be keeping smaller leaves and also getting twice as many growing tips on each branch and each will be a finer twig. Keep this up and you will soon have nice development on the branches of your bonsai. In determining whether to cut to two or three, note the direction that you wish the end of the branch to take

and cut to the leaf which has the bud on that side of the branch. Note: If last years twig has been let grow long it should be cut back to the first 2-3 buds.

Tweezers are almost a necessity in working on maples. The opposite growing leaves clasp the new growing tip and will be extending from the old bud but on a lengthening stem. If the new tip is taken off as soon as the leaves separate, the result is that the leaves will be smaller and the stem will stop lengthening. Then two new tips will pop from the new leaf axials and you will repeat the tip plucking. Tweezers work much better for this job. I will sometimes separate the new pair of leaves from the new tip with tweezers but be careful not to bruise them.

Junipers should not be pinched. Junipers should be trimmed with the fingers. As the new growth develops grasp the twigs with one hand spreading the foliage in a fan shape. Then with the other hand grasp the tips between the fleshy part of your thumb and finger and pull it off. Using fingernails or scissors will result in brown tips on the junipers. If the juniper still has needle foliage you can avoid being stuck by moving your hand toward the tip while grasping the twig. This in effects causes the needle to lie along the twig while you are holding it.

If your area is subject to late freezes, check the forecasts and be sure to take precautions. Newly developing roots in either freshly repotted trees or in established pots can be tender to freezes. Trees with new sap flow will also be more tender. And of course the new foliage will not take the cold or the strong winds that dry it and cause leaf burn.

AS the weather warms up the insects will surely make their appearance. Use the foliar spray (1 tablespoon each of fish emulsion, liquid kelp, molasses, and apple cider vinegar per gallon of water, (I do not recommend the commercial 'Garret Juice' for insect control) weekly to control aphid, mites, etc. Spring usually means wet weather so weather for fungal problems such as blackspot. I usually only get it on hollies and elms. You can use a 1% solution of hydrogen peroxide or baking soda spray for fungal problems. Do not mix baking soda with the foliar spray.

Use fertilizers sparingly at this time. Most contain a healthy supply of nitrogen which causes too much lanky growth. So far I havent had any problems using the foliar spray probably because organics need warmer weather to break down into plant soluble nutrients and therefore are not as stimulating in this weather.



Hiro Yamaji gave a lecture/demonstration during February. The demonstration tree was raffled and won by Joey McCoy.

ABS Board Meeting Minutes

by Collin Murphy, Secretary

Joey called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm. Present board members were Joey McCoy, Mike Watson, Collin Murphy, and Pat Ware.

Mike presented the programs and workshops for 2009. These will be published in the membership directory to be distributed in March.

The LSBF 2009 visiting artist will be Robert Martinez. Robert will be here in August.

Joey will talk to Charlotte about the August 11th reservation for the green room or the main room at Zilker for the Robert Martinez workshops. There will likely be a meet the artist dinner also.

Membership directories will be distributed at the March general meeting.

Pat found an old list of where club property is being stored. All club property should be stored in our storage facility now. Joey will verify this.

Pat gave the treasurer's report. Year-to-date income over expenses is \$434.45. Only 27 people have paid membership dues for 2009. This resulted in about \$500 less income than usual.

We decided not to have a separate booth at Zilker Garden Festival this year.

Joey adjourned the meeting at 7:40 pm.

JADE GARDENS

HOME OF



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(512) 847-2514

e-mail: bonsaijg@wimberley-tx.com

web page: <http://www.wimberley-tx.com/~bonsaijg>

TTSBE GARAGE SALE

We are having another garage sale!! This will be in September, so please save all your Good Ole' Stuff for us until then.

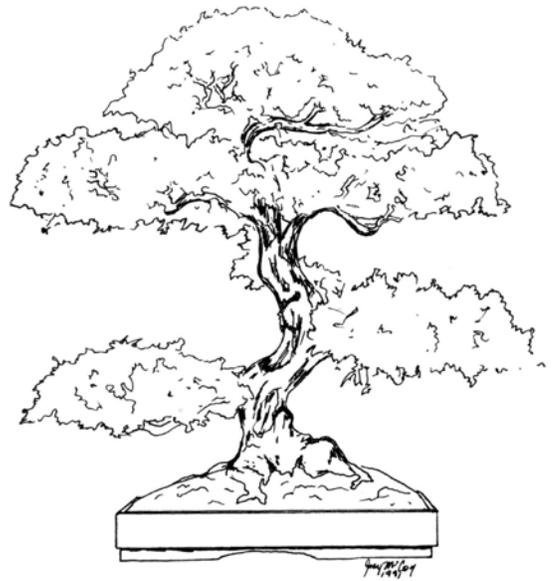
We need kitchen items, books, childrens items, tools and electronics. Please, no clothes.

As in the past, we really appreciate your help. We couldn't do it without you!!

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

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