



Bonsai Notebook

A Publication of the Austin Bonsai Society

March 2010

March Program

by Mike Watson

This January, I was fortunate to have the opportunity to observe and take part in a repotting seminar led by the wonderful Kathy Shaner. We learned many techniques and tricks that we had never seen or even thought of. Kathy's one commandment (well, one of them) was that we "share this knowledge with our clubs". With this in mind, we will be doing something a bit different. On **Wednesday, March 10th**, we are going to "share the knowledge" by repotting several



Mike Hansen used Zelkova seedlings to demonstrate a technique used to create good nebari

Calendar of Events

March 7th Hiroyoshi Yamaji Demo
MBP Bonsai 12:00 pm

March 10th ABS Monthly Meeting Reception
Hosts: **Connie King and Joey McCoy**
Zilker Garden Center 7:00 pm

March 10th ABS Monthly Meeting
Repotting Demonstration
Zilker Garden Center 7:30 - 9:00 pm

March 16th ABS Board Meeting
Zilker Garden Center 7:00 - 7:30 pm

March 16th ABS Member's Workshop
Repotting Workshop
Zilker Garden Center 7:30 - 9:00 pm

March 27th - 28th Zilker Garden Festival
Zilker Garden Center 10:00 am- 5:00 pm

trees using the methods that Kathy taught us. This will be a group effort where we will all get to gather 'round and get a good look. Questions and comments are highly encouraged. It's going to be enlightening and fun!!

On **Tuesday, March 16th**, we will continue this idea by having a repotting workshop where you will learn "hands-on" how to use these tips and tricks on your own trees. Bring in something you would like to repot (please bring a pot and soil too if possible although there may be some extra soil there) or just come and observe.

Austin Bonsai Society Board of Directors

Joey McCoy
President

Mike Watson
Vice President

Collin Murphy
Secretary

Pat Ware
Treasurer

Becki Drozd
Member at-Large

Charlotte Cranberg
Member at-Large

Nan Jenkins
Member at-Large

Jim Trahan
Former President

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.

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

President's Message by Joey McCoy

Often times Bonsai can be a solitary hobby. Besides our terrific meetings of Austin Bonsai and precious other events, we work on our trees alone, sometimes meditating on the cycles of growth in nature. I talked with a neighbor recently, describing what I do with all these twisted little plants, trying to explain Bonsai to her. Strangely to me she had never heard of this art form. It's moments like this that really brings home the need to show our trees to the public. We have a great opportunity coming up this month where Austin Bonsai will display trees at the Ladybird Wildflower Center. There will be so many people to see our Bonsai who may have their first exposure to this wonderful blend of art and nature. Mike Hansen is organizing the show, so please contact him and let him know you'd like to add your trees to this show.

Is everyone else repotting all their overdue trees like crazy this year? Or is it just me with permanent dirt under his nails? It's exciting to see trees collected or cut down years ago finally start to have the shape we've been working towards. I read a quote online recently from a Bonsaiist in Europe: In my keep, no one sleeps. This was meant to keep after all your trees, be on top of fertilizing, trimming and wiring, and to repot when it's needed. When they're "worked" at the right time our Bonsai develop faster and are healthier. I decided this is to be one of my New Year's resolutions.

We are still looking for a Refreshment Chair as Alisan Clarke has stepped down. We're looking for someone out there who would like to be in charge of this important but not-too-taxing position. Please contact me and I'll fill you in on the details. Thanks!

JADE GARDENS

HOME OF



Chuck & Pat Ware
Owners

Visa & MasterCard

e-mail: bonsaijg@gmail.com

web page: <http://www.bonsaiexhibittexas.com>

12404 Ranch Road 12
Wimberley, TX 78676

(512) 847-2514

The Ladybird Johnson Wildflower Bonsai Exhibit

Due to the unusually cold weather this year we have agreed with the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center to delay the opening of the Bonsai Exhibit there by two weeks. The new opening date will be March 27. This should give our trees a chance to leaf out so you can do whatever spring maintenance that may be needed before showing the trees

We want to thank everyone who has already indicated they will show one or more native Texas bonsai and the invitation is still open to everyone to bring more trees the Wildflower Center for our Exhibit.

You can bring trees for exhibit beginning March 21. When you come to the main gate ask for Deryn Davidson and they will give you directions to the unloading area. Please place a card or small piece of paper on each tree with the botanical name. If you do not know the botanical name then write down the common name and we will look up the botanical name.

Thanks again for helping making this a great outreach for our club.

Bill Boytim & Mike Hansen, Committee Co-chairs

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@suddenlink.net
601 Kay Lane
Pflugerville, TX 78660
(call for directions)

PERSIMMON HILL BONSAI

CLOSING SALE

DISCOUNTS ON NURSERY & STUDIO STOCK
INCLUDING A LARGE SELECTION OF POTS
EMAIL US FOR DISCOUNT LIST

Terry & Sheila Ward Austin, Texas
512-280-5575 phbonsai@sbcglobal.net By Appointment

ABS February Board Meeting Minutes

by Collin Murphy, Secretary

Joey called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. present were Mike Watson, Pat Ware, Joey McCoy, Charlotte Cranberg, Collin Murphy, and Nan Jenkins.

Pat reported income over expenses of \$258.44 for the year. Zilker Garden Fest tickets have been purchased and LSBF dues have been paid. Zilker Garden Festival tickets will be distributed to members during the March meeting.

Alisan Clarke presented to the board an idea for TTSBE publishing and selling a beginners bonsai book created several years earlier by the Austin Bonsai Society. The book has not been printed or sold for several years. Alisan asked the board for permission, on behalf of TTSBE, to print and sell the book. TTSBE and ABS will split the profit equally. All rights to the book will still belong to ABS. TTSBE will be responsible for all printing costs. Mike Watson made a motion to approve the idea and it was approved unanimously.

Pat made a motion to make Bill Cody an Honorary Member. Bill's many contributions to the Austin Bonsai Society were discussed, including serving as President, collecting and publishing extensive data on local growing conditions, and donations of collected trees to club auctions. The motion was approved unanimously.

Pat and Alisan agreed to host the AAGC General Meeting on March 9th.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

A FOSTER PARENTS PLAY DAY

By Elaine White

On a cold and rainy mid-January weekend (Yes, even in Central Texas) Foster Parents gathered to care for their charges.

J. R. "Bill" Cody, M.D., donated 15 collected Juniper ashii, all with Shari and in black nursery cans, to The Texas State Bonsai Exhibit. Kathy Shaner, our advisor, had completed preliminary work on the trees in October 2009.

Now it was time to bring to light the invisible! The trees properly placed in bonsai pots. What color, dimension, shape, and depth of pot? We had donated pots on hand. Would we have enough of a selection and the right size?

The group had prepared: Weeks before, 5-gallon containers had been gathered to transport the three types of bonsai soil; Lava rock had been crushed and Hadite added with a small portion of charcoal and shredded bark. Different sizes and lengths of bamboo gathered (green and dry for securing the trees), drainage screens cut and copper wire assembled. With great anticipation we all gathered around and watched and learned as each Juniper was lifted from its ugly confinement to reveal beautiful new root growth and the promise of a bright future! Each parent had guidance by Kathy and a surprise guest, Gordon Deeg -- Chairman of the *G.S.B.F. Northern Collection at Lake Merritt*.

We are grateful for his assistance and much needed help -- even so, the potting of the last tree was managed by flashlight on the last day!

The Foster Parent program originated in California and was introduced in Texas by Terry Ward. The first trees in the collection were donated by Dr. Cody in 2008 -- 9 collected *Ulmus crassifolia*. In May 2009 Dr. Cody also donated a collection of Juniper ashii. Later in the year, an additional 18 Junipers were donated by Dr. Cody's family. The 18 Junipers actually came under a very important program established several years ago by the TTSBE board, "Rescue Bonsai." When a Bonsai Artist is in difficulty the board (with local assistance by our Representatives in the Bonsai clubs around the state) co-ordinate the care of and/or transport the collection to the exhibit facilities. With this program bonsai are

and have been saved from a dyer fate. Because of Dr. Cody's family awareness of our program very important Texas natives were saved.

Mike Hansen, Terry Ward and I are the daily care-takers of a growing family of 49 donated Bonsai. Our Foster Parents are called upon for seasonal maintenance and also when Kathy is available to us for direction. With that many trees under Foster Care more parents are being sought.

The first booklet project on "Repotting Techniques and Care" with photos of Kathy's work with the Foster Parents from this last session is in development. Also in development is a booklet of "Texas Ashe Juniper Care" including articles authored by Dr. Cody and additional information from other practicing bonsai artists throughout the state.

Bill was the first treasurer for TTSBE and sadly, he had a massive stroke in October 2009. The family has acquired a caretaker for both him and Elizabeth.

We are very grateful to the family for keeping in touch with TTSBE, allowing us to care for his remaining collected Juniper ashii and outstanding *Ulmus crassifolia*.

Bill, a true scientist, pursued the knowledge of what was going on with his trees, in them, on them and around them with fervor, publishing his findings to share with the rest of the bonsai community.

Now with on-going development of the 12 acres of The Texas State Bonsai Exhibit home in Mustang Ridge, TX, these Bonsai, the future of the exhibit, the "Foster Care" program, the "Rescue Bonsai" and additional educational activities are assured.

About the author: Elaine White attended her first bonsai class in 1963 in Japan. After her husband retired from the Air Force, Elaine joined the Austin Bonsai Society in 1980. She has been President, Vice-President and Publicity Chair of that organization. She also was Chairman of two Lone Star Bonsai Federation conventions. She has held the position of Secretary and Recording Secretary of the Bonsai Clubs International and is a Lifetime member. In 2000 she closed her business, Lake view Bonsai, to spend full time to help establish The Texas State Bonsai Exhibit.

Creating Good Nebari with Mike Hansen
Photos by Joey McCoy



Mike demonstrated a process to create good nebari by drilling a hole in a ceramic tile and threading a seedling through it

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.

An article I read made me think I should remind you to look at the label on anything you use, for bonsai or personally. There are a number of items that have the same name but have entirely different uses. I have recommended using potassium bicarbonate instead of sodium bicarbonate (baking soda) for fungal control. One brand name is Remedy. However there is also a herbicide widely marketed under the name Remedy. One good for us one real bad. Another is tea tree oil. One is from melaleuca alternifolia used in alternative medicine and by some organic gardeners. The other is from Camellia sinesis and used in cooking. There are probably others too.

Some tasks being performed this month are repotting, trimming new growth, and watching for the spring flush of insects. Usually you will be going back and forth between all three. An article like this can only tell you what to do not give much in the way of how to do it.

The optimum time to repot most outdoor trees is when they are just beginning to grow again as evidenced by the buds starting to swell. As a rule, the elms will be first, maples next, and oaks later. There will always be those exceptions. Cedar elm will hang back and open in the middle of maples. My tridents are usually late. Other species will depend a lot on your own backyard environment. Pines will usually show candles before you can see juniper growth. Things like pomegranate and crape myrtle really depend upon your care. If you are able to take them in and out depending on the weather you may be able to make the start growth early and beat the rush as I do my shohin. I try to do the broadleaf evergreens, yaupons and other hollies, a little later maybe into April.

After repotting you must protect the new roots from freezing. Setting them on the ground with some mulch over the pot will offer several degrees of freeze protection, especially if the late freeze doesn't last more than 1-2 days. A light weight row cover (don't use plastic sheeting) will help protect from a light freeze or a frost that you might get especially on a clear night.

Do not fertilize after repotting until the new growth show some hardening. Then you may apply some organic balls,

sprangly (1 or 2 small balls) at first and then more as the tree slows down.

For bonsai that have required branches and you are developing twigs or maintaining ramification, whether repotted or not, when the new growth starts you should grab your tweezers or scissors. Ones with a rounded point work best. The technique is different for alternate leafed species (als) (elm) than for opposite leafed species (ols)(maple).

On als let the growth go to 5 new leaves. Then pinch (with the tweezers) back to 2 or 3 leaves depending on the desired direction of the new growth. This controls the length of the internodes and diameter of the twig and could give you up to 64 twigs in a year.

The procedure on ols is more critical. When the two new leaves open you will see the new growing tip between them. If this tip is allowed to grow the first internode (from the old twig to the new leaves) will also continue to elongate. You must pluck the new tip immediately. On some trees you may have to manually open the new pair of leaves to get the new tip in time. This procedure makes you work on maples every day in order to have good short internodes and perfect ramification. I also sometimes need to manually open the oak leaf (an als) also.

The worst spring insect seems to be the aphids. The best control is the ladybug which also shows up early. But when they finish their job they have no food so they fly off. I use my organic spray for all insects all summer long. It controls mites, scale, bagworms, anything. Spider mites will also be showing up with warm weather. There can be some caterpillars or small worms also. You must keep a sharp eye while you are watering.

My organic spray is 1 tablespoon each of liquid seaweed, fish emulsion, molasses, and 5% apple cider vinegar in one gallon water. Spray both top and bottom of the leaves and also the trunk. When using on the tender first growth, cut the vinegar in half. This spray is most effective when used on a regular basis. I try to spray weekly since the life cycle of mites can be as short as 5 days. If you use something else read the label and follow it. Any insecticide should be applied with a sprayer that makes a fine spray which will coat the leaf evenly. Hose end sprayers are not appropriate for bonsai.

continued...

Azaleas should be repotted now also. If there are a lot of buds on the plant you should pluck some of the so that the remaining buds have space to open fully.

On those that have not been repotted, apply fertilizer somewhat sparingly at first. You must balance the plants need for fertilizer for healthy growth with its desire to produce a rampant spring growth. After the initial flush slows apply more fertilizer until you get the proper amount for good healthy growth. Again, organic fertilizers feed the plant at a more constant rate.

With all this going on don't forget to plan for obtaining

ABS February General Meeting Minutes

by Collin Murphy, Secretary

Joey called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. He thanked Phina Chen and Els Ulug for hosting.

There were no new members or guests.

There was a correction to the February newsletter, the Flat Base Root Workshop was an SSOT meeting, not an ABS meeting.

Pat announced that hosts are still needed for June, October, and November. Contact Pat if you can volunteer for one of these months.

Joey announced that the bonsai display at the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center begins on March 27th. Medium-size and larger native bonsai trees in good condition are needed. The trees will be watered and well-cared for by Mike Hansen and Bill Boytim. Contact Mike or Bill for more information.

more knowledge about bonsai. Make plans to do hands on things like workshops. Watching the demos and workshops will give you some knowledge but it is the hands on effort that instills it in you so that it will be there when your little tree calls for you.

A real good place to go is the LSBF convention in FtWorth June 11-13. Go to www.fwbonsai.com for info.

Also be sure to take advantage of the hard work your officers have done to provide many opportunities locally.

Zilker Garden Festival s March 27th - 28th. ABS will have an educational display. Volunteers are needed to talk with the public and answer questions about bonsai. Contact Joey if you are interested in volunteering. Signup sheets will also be available at club meetings.

ABS is hosting the AAGC meeting on March 9th at 10 a.m. Volunteers are needed to bring refreshments. Contact Charlotte if you can help.

Pat reminded everyone that yearly dues must be paid immediately to be included in this year's membership directory.

Joey then introduced Mike Watson who gave a summary of the upcoming members workshop. The cost will be \$5 per person. Joey then introduced Mike Hansen who gave an excellent demonstration on a technique to create nebari using an ordinary ceramic tile.

Bonsai Calendar

Hiroyoshi Yamaji Demonstration	MBP Bonsai	March 7, 2010, 12:00 p.m.
Koji Hiramatsu Demonstration	MBP Bonsai	April 11, 2010, 1:00 p.m.
Koji Hiramatsu Demonstration	ABS General Meeting	April 14, 2010, 7:30 p.m.
Roy Nagatoshi Demonstration	ABS General Meeting	September 8, 2010, 7:30 p.m.
Roy Nagatoshi Workshop	ABS Members Workshop	September 21, 2010, 7:30 p.m.
Kathy Shaner Demonstration	ABS General Meeting	October 13, 2010, 7:30 p.m.
St Louis Shohin Seminar	Collinsville, IL	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.

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

