

# BONSAI NOTEBOOK

A Publication of the Austin Bonsai Society

February 2017 vol 73



## Calendar of Events

- **DUES ARE DUE!!! Please bring dues February 8th!!!**
- Wed. Feb. 8 7:30pm Repotting with Joey McCoy
- Tues: Feb. 21 7:00pm BOARD MEETING
- 7:30pm MEMBERS WORKSHOP - Repotting
- Wed. Mar. 8 7:30pm Cascades & Semi-cascades
- Apr. 6-9: LSBF Convention in Dallas

### OUR NEWS

#### PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

P.2

#### FEBRUARY BONSAI

BY JOHN MILLER P.3

#### VICE PRESIDENT'S

MESSAGE P.6

#### LSBF BONSAI

CONVENTION P.8

### 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

*February Meeting Volunteers*

**FEBRUARY 8TH  
FOOD:**  
NAN JENKINS  
TIMMI KUYKENDALL  
ELS ULUG

**FEBRUARY 8TH  
TREES:**  
JOEY MCCOY  
ZACH RABALAIS

# Winter Update

by Simon Tse



President Simon Tse leading the January meeting. Photo by May Lau

What a great way to start a new year by seeing so many familiar faces in our January meeting.

All board members are working diligently on the upcoming programs. As we are in the process of finalizing schedules with speakers, we always welcome new ideas and will try to incorporate them into our workshops or presentations. Feel free to email

Zach ([zacharyrabalais@gmail.com](mailto:zacharyrabalais@gmail.com)) or myself ([simonltse@gmail.com](mailto:simonltse@gmail.com)) directly for ideas or suggestions.

Central Texas is known for unpredictable weather. We may be enjoying the lovely warm weather but it can dip below freezing without much warning. Such temperature swing could easily damage and weaken our trees if proper precautions are not taken to protect them. We will cover some of these topics in our future meetings. In addition, the random weather patterns could greatly affect our repotting opportunities and time table. Repotting is a great way to analyze the health of your precious bonsai by inspecting areas usually buried underneath the soil. This also provides lots of prospects to improve your beloved collections. We will have a seasoned bonsai artist demonstrate repotting in our February meeting followed by a workshop the week after. Hope to see everyone there!

Our annual Bonsai Show in May seems like months away but I want to encourage our members to start the preparation process for the potential show trees. For new members who are unfamiliar with this event, the show provides a great venue to showcase collections from our members to the general public. One of the exciting things of Bonsai is to share our enthusiasm with others. We can always utilize social media to educate and communicate, but showing the public the beauty of our artwork will bring the awareness of Bonsai to a whole new level. Every member is an ambassador of Bonsai and this is a rare opportunity for all the Bonsai enthusiasts to gather, promote and share their own experiences. As always, we will need lots of volunteers so stay tuned for more information.

Our club dig is fast approaching, if interested, please contact me to reserve a spot as soon as possible. Cheers! Simon Tse

# February Bonsai

by John Miller

February is the start of the active cycle for bonsai, first the repotting when new growth is first evident, then the refinement process starts as soon as the green comes, all the while tending to the tasks of watering, feeding, and watching for insects.



What happens when you miss a turn in removing wire from your bonsai? You get a large swelling in the branch that destroys the smooth taper you are working for. The only rule for removing wire is to start with the end of the wire and work down the wire completely to the other end, no jumping from wire to wire. To do this you have a choice--you can untwist the wire or you can cut each loop. If you cut it is very easy to miss a loop. The only sure way is to develop a routine. Hold the tip with pliers while you cut the next loop, remove the cut loop, lay it aside keeping your eye on the cut end, hold the new cut tip and repeat. Do not get distracted and do something else. Following a routine keeps you on the one job.

Spring is a long drawn out affair and each species has its own time table in dealing with it. To be really successful in bonsai, then, you must know what each species you have will need and how it responds to YOUR OWN backyard climate. If you have kept your trees from freezing they will want to start growing much earlier than those kept outside all winter. Typically, in my collection which stays outside, the elms will be first, foliage showing about the end of February or the first of March depending on the winter, along with the earliest maples. Then later in March, the rest of the maples and most of the

New  
Members  
Corner

Gerrit Clemence  
[gerritclemence@gmail.com](mailto:gerritclemence@gmail.com)

Greg & Elizabeth Fliehler  
[gfliehler@aol.com](mailto:gfliehler@aol.com)

Welcome!

**JADE GARDENS**  
HOME OF THE



CENTRAL TEXAS BONSAI EXHIBIT  
JADE GARDENS  
Wimberley, Texas

Chuck & Pat Ware  
Owners  
Visa & MasterCard

12404 Ranch Road 12  
Wimberley, TX 78676  
(512) 847-2514

e-mail: [bonsaijg@gmail.com](mailto:bonsaijg@gmail.com)  
web page: <http://www.bonsaiehibittexas.com>

others. The deciduous oaks will come out around April 1. Out here in the country I am 2 or 3 weeks later than I was in town, 30 miles away. The timetable has to be your own set by watching the trees themselves. All bonsai functions should be done when your tree tells you that the timing is right.

**R**epotting 'can' be done at any time during the dormancy but new roots are susceptible to freezing so you need to have some place to protect them after repotting. If not repotting this year, you can help weed control by removing the top ¼" of soil and replace it with new soil. The best time to repot the deciduous temperate zone trees is when the buds are just beginning to swell but before green is showing. Generally this will be before the last of the freezing weather. Trees that leaf out early, maples and elms, can withstand a few degrees of frost but if repotted you should protect the newly growing roots. Sometimes this just means setting them on the ground. Some species such as the oaks and willows are naturally programmed to wait much later so that there is very little chance to get nipped.

**T**he newer wisdom on azaleas is that you also repot them at this time. The roots will be reestablished by blooming time. This is much easier on the tree than waiting until after bloom when the temperature will be hot. Before blooming starts you will be removing a lot of excess buds anyway which will reduce the stress on the tree at that time. Remove enough buds to allow the remaining flowers to have room to fully open. This should be done in late February or early March on the early blooming species (Karume) but may go later in March for the Satsuki types.

**R**efinement is the process that makes a well styled tree look great developing fine ramification and obtaining smaller leaves. Part of the refinement starts as soon as new growth appears. Keep it pinched so you keep the internodes short and develop a compact set of twigs with small leaves on the branches. On alternate leaved species (e.g. elms) pinch when the shoot gets 4 or 5 leaves. Fingernails or shears can be used. If the twig gets too long it will be tough and you have to use shears. On opposite leaved trees (maples) pinch the central shoot as soon as it can be distinguished from the two leaves. To do this really right you need to use tweezers with a dull point.

**D**evelopment pruning is difficult for beginners in that to develop thickness you need to let the new branch grow wild which destroys the look of your 'bonsai'. You also will have long internodes which will not produce buds at the right places especially on the opposite leaved species. You need to do refinement pruning the first couple of times to get some short internodes and then let the tips go wild.

**S**pring flowering plants will have their buds set on last years growth so pruning them will remove some flowers. Those that bloom later in the year will generally bloom on this years growth. Pruning them will reduce the amount of flowers. In some cases such as crape myrtle, tip pruning of the branch will result in no flowers at all. In these cases you must decide which is most important, ramification or flowers. An compromise would be to prune the branch shorter than you normally would and then let it bloom on new growth which will at



the proper length, at least for the first flowering of the season.

**W**hen the growth starts the tree will need fertilizer. However, use one that has a smaller amount of nitrogen (the first number). The tree is naturally programmed to grow rapidly at this time so you don't need to encourage it further. Feed lightly to maintain a healthy green foliage.

Ideally use an organic fertilizer which provides nutrients more slowly when the weather is cool. Trace minerals should be added to help with both the foliage color and the color of blooms.

If you have not used an horticultural oil, the time is fast running out. The oil would be used to kill scale and over-wintering mites and other boogers. When new growth starts oil might damage the tender foliage. When new growth starts, the problems to look for are the above mentioned (con't pg. 6) mites but especially aphids and mealy bugs. These can be controlled as well as giving the plants the required fertilizer by using an organic spray. (1 tablespoon each of liquid kelp, liquid fish emulsion, apple cider vinegar (5%), and molasses in one gallon of water. Or use a commercial mix like Garrett Juice. All these are available in any organic nursery.) If leaf spot, mildew or any other fungal problems appear, use a baking soda (sodium bicarbonate), potassium bicarbonate spray, or a commercial fungicide. There is now a summer oil spray but it is lighter and not quite as effective as the older winter oil treatment.

**A**n important job which many neglect saying they are not going to show any trees is to detail their trees. This makes them look their best and that helps give you incentive to follow other good practices. Start by checking the branches. Prune any out of place or too long twigs. Remove any unnecessary wire, that is wire on limbs that have set in place. Treat any jin and shari that needs it. Then move down to the pot. Be sure it is clean and all lime deposits are removed. Steel wool works great to clean pots. A coating with a very light wax polish such as leaf shine will make the pot look good and helps keep the mineral deposits from forming. Then check the soil. It should cover the outer roots. The surface of the soil must be clean of any fallen leaves or other debris. Good detailing also makes more twigs and more twigs make smaller leaves. Smaller leaves are what we are all striving for.

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

**FACEBOOK**

LIKE US ON FACEBOOK

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



Terrific place for us to gather, chat, and talk Bonsai!

**DUES DUES DUES!!**

**DUES ARE DUE!**

**\$30.00 INDIVIDUAL  
\$35.00 FAMILY**

**PLEASE BRING CASH OR CHECK TO FEBRUARY MEETING OR MAIL TO PAT WARE**

## Vice President's Message

*This winter sure was a mild one!*

*by Zach Rabalais*

Before you know it re-potting season will have come and gone.

Do you have questions about the process of root pruning and re-potting a bonsai. If you do you're not alone. This seems to be one of the topics that people who are new to the hobby are the most apprehensive about. There is just something about taking a tree out of it's pot and cutting off roots that is definitely a bit unsettling if you don't have any experience with it.



Photo by May Lau

The program for February will be hosted by Joey McCoy and will be all about root pruning and re-potting bonsai. Come ready to dig through some dirt and learn all about getting your trees re-potted and ready for another year of development into bonsai. After this program you should have the confidence to get through re-potting season with no problems.

**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*

Want to know more about our guest artists at the 2017 Convention in Dallas? Here are a few links to introduce you to this fantastic line up of artists.



We are thrilled to host Daisaku Nomoto, winner of Kokufu Ten 2004, from Kyushu, Japan! The link below will take you to a fun Q&A hosted by Jonas Dupich that was held early last year. If you scroll down a bit, it will then take you to several more links including Mr. Nomoto's garden and the work he has done.

<https://bonsaitonight.com/2015/01/16/ask-daisaku-nomoto-anything/>



Another artist that hardly needs an introduction and is probably one of the most humble guys I've met in bonsai is Bjorn Bjornholm. Referred to as the Brad Pitt of bonsai by Architectural Digest, one only need to scroll down to his CV and be blown away! Here is a link to his awesome website, who knows, you might even come out with some extra videos to boot.

[http://www.bjorvalabonsaistudio.com/bjorn\\_bjornholm/](http://www.bjorvalabonsaistudio.com/bjorn_bjornholm/)

# BONSAI



Although Juan Andrade is the newest face in bonsai, it's not because he's the least studied. Known as Bonsaitico in his home country of Santa Anna, Costa Rica, Juan just finished an apprenticeship at Aichi-en in Nogoya, Japan. A young, kind and fun guy, with a hunger for bonsai and talent to match! Below is a link to his Facebook page where you will see many of his fine before and after pictures.

<https://m.facebook.com/juan.andrade.bonsai>

Hope you'll join us in Dallas!

## 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](mailto:mbpbonsai@suddenlink.net)  
601 Kay Lane  
Pflugerville, TX 78660  
(call for directions)

Check out the link below for some terrific photos and details of the Kathy Shaner foster care days for The Texas State Bonsai Exhibit's trees!

<http://www.ttsbe.org/blog/2017/1/ttsbe-foster-care-day-01-12-2017>



HAPPY 97TH  
BIRTHDAY  
GEORGE  
BROWN!!!!  
THE CLUB  
WISHES YOU  
WELL!!!!!!!

## 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.

