



# Bonsai Notebook

[www.austinbonsaisociety.com](http://www.austinbonsaisociety.com)

A Publication of the Austin Bonsai Society

June 2018 vol 91

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## Calendar of Events

- **Wed June 13**  
7:30pm - 9:00pm  
Slab Tree Plantings with **Joe Day**
- **Tues June 19**  
7:30pm - 9:00pm  
ABS Member's Workshop:  
Saikei Ficus landscape planting with **Yvonne Padilla**

## 2018 Board of Directors

**Simon Tse**  
President

**Brandon Baldauf**  
Vice President

**Mike Garza**  
Secretary

**Gloria Norberg**  
Treasurer

**Ruby Chaing**  
Member-At-Large

**Daniel Lara**  
Member-At-Large

**Pat Ware**  
Member-At-Large

## Volunteers

**Candy Hansen**  
**Simon & May**  
*Food*

**Joey McCoy**  
**Mike Hansen**  
*Trees*

## President's Message

*By Simon Tse*

Greetings! May was an eventful month for us. We heard positive and encouraging feedback from our members regarding the 3-person critique. I truly appreciate Terry Ward, Chuck Ware and Mike Hansen for their willingness to share with us their invaluable wisdom during our regular club meeting. It was an eye opener for many new members as they embarked on their bonsai journey and discovered numerous techniques and expectations to properly display their bonsai. Many thanks to Terry, Chuck and Mike again!

Our next meeting will feature Joe Day who is best known for his natural rock slab carvings and his work with Trident Maples. He has studied with John Naka and has also helped form the Azalea City Bonsai Society in Mobile, Alabama in 1981. I can't wait to see what he will create with the materials we've prepared. Please invite friends and join us!

Last but not least, our annual Bonsai Show at Zilker was a great success! We could not have accomplished all of these feats without the dedication and hard work from all our volunteers and members. Joey, our show chair, was also instrumental in this event. Thank you Joey!

Cheers,  
Simon

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**Owners**



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and Pat  
Ware**

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**<http://www.bonsaiexhibittexas.com>**

## Message from the Show Chair

I'd like to thank all our wonderful volunteers who put in the time to make our 2018 Austin Bonsai show a success! We had some great members who took time off on Friday to help load all the material in to Zilker and then all the ones who pitched in together to put up our tables, backdrops and displays. We had some beautiful trees on display this year, some of which had never been to our show before. It is always wonderful to see our visitors experience the wonder of this art we create, some of them seeing bonsai for the first time. Thank you to those who brought trees and I hope it inspires more to bring a tree to the show next year. Our demonstrations by Brandon Baldauf and Daniel Lara drew quite a crowd while educating about bonsai with a Procumbens Juniper & Bougainvillea. Thanks to those who brought in raffle items, they were a hit. I believe we made more on our raffle than ever before! A big thank you to everyone who came to be a docent, greeter or raffle seller.. you were the faces who greeted and welcomed the public with a personal touch. Our "army ant" helpers made quick work of taking down the display, big thank you to those who stayed late and helped put it all away, load into the vehicles and to those who drove it all to our storage. The show is about the bonsai, but it is also about our members and you all really showed what a great community we have built!

Joey McCoy  
2018 Show Chair



## May Meeting

The Austin Bonsai Society had a three person critique featuring Terry, Chuck, and Mike.



*(Photos by Joey McCoy and Brandon Baldauf)*



**This meeting provided a lot of helpful feedback!**



# TTSBE Big Ficus Move

On May 13, everyone came together to flex on these big trees.

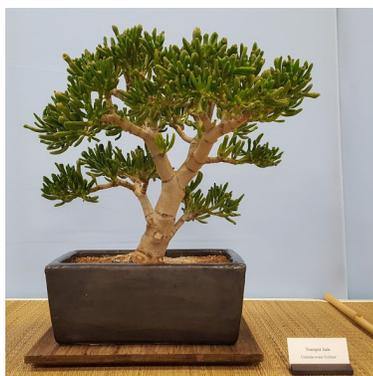


*(Photos by May Lau)*



## ABS Show 2018

The annual show starred trees from all the members. Demonstrations were also hosted on both days at 2 pm by Daniel and Brandon respectively.



*(Photos by Joey McCoy)*

## Get Connected!

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Join our online discussion  
page! NO SPAM!  
[http://  
groups.yahoo.com/  
group/austinbonsai/](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/austinbonsai/)

Or message Joey at:  
[jvmccoy@sbcglobal.com](mailto:jvmccoy@sbcglobal.com)

## Official Website

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## Vice President's Message

*By Brandon Baldauf*

Greetings Austin Bonsai Society Members,

Texas Summer is here and the heat is upon us. Best of luck to you weathering the upcoming months. I've had to relocate a number of trees throughout my garden-yard in order to help different trees find the best location for the summer.

Our Monthly Meeting on June 13th will be especially exciting, we are hosting an artist named Joe Day who has practiced the art for over 30 years. He is especially known for his ability to create slab plantings and he has accepted our request to demonstrate his techniques. Chuck is providing a beautiful selection of Green Island or Green Mound Ficus trees and a slab. Joe will use these supplies and explain how to put it all together. The final piece will be raffled off at the end of the meeting.



Additionally, in the upcoming meeting the club will vote on a couple of items. One of them is the decision of whether or not Austin Bonsai Society wants to officially commit to host the LSBF annual convention in 2021. These events take planning, time, resources, and volunteers in order to be successful. Consider and we will vote at the meeting. If we do elect to go forward with the event, I volunteer to be the convention chair responsible for coordinating and planning the various components.

as well as any other supplies you think you might need. The cost is \$40, please send me an email or text to sign up, we have 8 spots available, see the attached flyer for pictures and examples.

Cheers,  
Brandon

Later in the month on June 19th we are having a special workshop which has limited availability. We will be hosting Yvonne Padilla from the Corpus Christi Bonsai Society who will be guiding the workshop in the creation of a Saikei landscape planting. From 7 to 9 PM Yvonne will describe the art behind this technique for planting a bonsai tree. The main tree is a Ficus which will be complimented by a selection of rocks and small accent plants. Soil and container are provided. Please bring your own wire and tools

**Austin Bonsai Society**  
Workshop  
June 19th  
2018

**\$40 Includes:**  
1 Ficus Prebonsai  
Planting Rocks  
Accent Plants  
Container

**Saikei**  
Ficus  
Landscape  
Planting

with  
**Yvonne Padilla**  
of Corpus Christi  
Bonsai Society

Example of Hillier Elm Saikei  
on a slab by Chuck Ware

## May Meeting Minutes

*May 9, 2018*

- Brandon opens meeting at 7:33 pm
- Mentioned how LSBF Convention was great and several ABS members attended and had a great time
- Alisan got introduced - mentioned how Zilker Botanical 53,000 Flower Fest was a success; every weekend, Zilker is having some sort of plant sale, so check out their website for more details
- ABS welcomed one new member and several new guests
- Treasurer Update: Gloria mentioned she's about to pay a bunch of bills; mentioned our show is in 10 days; give her receipts for reimbursements for the show; contact Gloria with questions or concerns
- Joey mentioned to sign up to volunteer for show; pickup trucks needed to pick up things at Quoc's house; pizza will be ordered for people who help on Friday; need volunteers for take down on Sunday; thanks given to Quoc for housing supplies for bonsai show at his house
- Joey and TTSBE: The large ficus trees at MBP, need to be taken out of the greenhouse; meet on Sunday to accomplish this
- ABS dig on Saturday; max of 12 people; dig in Georgetown
- Special thanks to the food host - Ruby and Gloria
- Tree Hosts: Nan brought in a boxwood and Gloria brought in a beautiful Japanese maple that she got from Bjron
- Brandon mentioned that next month, Joe Day will be doing a demo on slab planting, at the monthly meeting
- Yvonne Padilla will be running next month's workshop on tropicals - please contact Brandon or Simon if you'd like to join
- Pat Ware shared her vest with all her convention pins; she sure did have some serious flare!
- The program started at 7:58 pm with Terry Ward, Mike Hansen, and Chuck Ware giving critiques on members' trees

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## Board Meeting Minutes

*May 15, 2018*

- Meeting started at 7:08
- Gloria mentioned Zilker needed a list of all our members for a fee
- Next months meeting will be with Joe Day and some board members will go out to Jade Gardens for slab planting and tree ideas
- For June, Brandon will set up the workshop for Yvonne; unfortunately, the fringe flowers have been worked on, so we might need a plan B
- Gloria mentioned we need to pay Quoc for storage of ABS materials
- We received a check from LSBF for \$100
- May brought in \$22 from our raffle at our monthly meeting
- Board voted no problem for LSBF Yaupon Holly overage
- Meeting was adjourned at 7:49 pm

# June Bonsai

By John Miller

A subject brought up in an azalea workshop at the LSBF convention indicated that a lot of people do not really know what the growing conditions are in their back yards or what plants need. Or that it may depend on local mini-environments. I have a maple that was red in December in Dallas but now turns in November only 30 air miles away. You should know not only the general weather as reported on the news but, **more importantly**, the particular happenings in your back yard at the different times of day. Late afternoon may be more detrimental to bonsai than overhead sun (hotter, shining in low from the West & very low humidity).

Most plants in pots will not enjoy a full day of 90 plus sun. Partial shade should be provided. A shade cloth awning is the best as it will protect in the middle of the day. A vertical shade cloth on the **WEST** side may be needed to protect from the late afternoon sun. This is the worst sun as the temperature

is already high and the drier air makes the rays more intense. A higher humidity on the coast may alleviate the problem some.

Leaf pruning should not be considered a yearly task. It usually should be done only as needed and only on very healthy trees. Broadleaf evergreens would not get it. I usually consider Memorial Day as the end of leaf pruning.

If you think you need to leaf prune, you probably can still do it but need to be careful, it could turn hot in a hurry. The tree needs time to replace the energy used to grow new foliage. I have done it on Shumard oaks successfully. Again never leaf prune the atropurpeum varieties of Japanese maples, they don't rebud very well.

When night temperatures stay above 60 degrees you can think about repotting some of the tropicals. I would wait another month though, for the buttonwood.

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601 Kay Lane  
Pflugerville, TX 78660  
(call for directions)

## New Members

Tommy & Amy Castilleja

Nicholas Kellogg &

Jennifer Meginniss

Joseph & Muriel LeBlanc

Caleb Parsons & Aaron Gage

Brandon Tran

**Welcome!**

However, some tropicals can be leaf pruned all summer. The *Ficus nerifolia* especially benefits by leaf pruning and can be done more than once each summer. That will develop the heavy twiginess you see in the *Ficus* bonsai from the Far East.

As the summer progresses the growth of the deciduous trees will sometimes slow also. But you still need to keep an eye out for errant shoots. Keeping a clipper with you when watering would let you take care of most of them. Just like in the spring a shoot too long will thicken the twig too much. The major pruning chore is now transferred to the tropicals.

Tip pinching on some flowering species like the crape myrtle will result in fewer flowers but if you let it go they get out of shape. I prefer to try to balance the flower/design question by pinching early. This provides more growing tips to divide the energy and the resulting flower is shorter. It is less showy but more in scale.

Also If you have fruiting bonsai, you should reduce the number of fruit on the tree. The number one goal of the tree is to provide seeds for reproduction and it will starve itself in order to do so. Again, most fruit are too large to look good on a bonsai.

Some days may be relatively cool to you but the sun can still make the pot pretty hot. Not only does this dry out the soil very fast but the tree roots do not like a hot soil. A temperature I have heard given is that 120 degrees will kill roots on most plants. I cannot give you a precise to-do list since your backyard is different from mine but you should be sure that the sun does not hit the pots directly. Notice especially where the hot afternoon sun, from 2pm to sundown, hits

your bonsai area. If you use a cover of any kind be sure that the side of the pot is protected also. A loose weave cover is preferable to solid paper or foil. Chopped sphagnum moss spread on the soil surface will reduce evaporation and help keep the soil cooler.

Get to know your trees like your children. Which ones use more water and which ones stay moist between waterings. If some are difficult to keep happy you can try moving those to a cooler location (but be sure they get their sunlight). Another trick is to group these together so that you can hit them with a shot of water twice a day and not have to spent the time going thru all your trees.

Cool or damp weather is good for fungal diseases like black leaf spot. Hot and damp bring other fungals like mildew. Treat with potassium bicarbonate or sodium bicarbonate (baking soda). After the foliage is hardened a bit you can treat with a 1% hydrogen peroxide (1 part 3% peroxide to 2 parts water) weekly

Also watch for signs of insect problems. The spider mite will always be near. Others to look for are scale of various forms, aphids, and mealy bugs. For scale you may need to go to a systemic insecticide. I use the organic foliar feed (1 Tablespoon each fish emulsion, liquid kelp, molasses and cider vinegar per gallon water) to control all these. You can use some of the other organic controls or a chemical according to label directions. Always read the label directions carefully and never apply oil based chemicals to buttonwoods. You should do controls on a regular basis. Also remember that most insecticides kill the insect but do not remove the evidence (the scale shells, webs, etc)

If ants, or any other creature, are building nests in the soil, the tunnels and cavities will prevent proper watering and result in a loss of roots. After you get rid of the ants be sure to grab your chopsticks and work the soil down and eliminate any holes. You will probably need to add a little more soil on top.

The best way to fertilize bonsai is by using fertilizer cakes. The cakes provide a slow constant feeding each time you water. Cakes made with a cottonseed base will provide an acid pH when they break down which we need in any city water system I know of. Making your own is easy and much cheaper than buying them. I use chemical fertilizers such as Miracid or Peters a couple of times a month also. My main problem with chemicals is not knowing how many bad salts they have that may accumulate in the soil and also I know that each time I water I am washing most chemical fertilizers out on the ground.



**One of Joey McCoy's show trees (left) paired with a picture of the same tree in 2012 (above).**

## Recruiting Authors

With a nod of respect to John Miller, who has been diligently writing monthly columns for our newsletter, we would also like to take this time to invite interested members with knowledge and experiences of local Austin conditions to write articles for beginners and potential aspirants keen on raising bonsai. The Bonsai Notebook is looking for a new voice to author a column providing helpful reminders and tips dedicated to caring for bonsai. Be it a monthly routine or winter procedures, we'd like to welcome new perspectives and experiences to be shared in this newsletter. If interested, please contact Simon Tse at [tse\\_simon@hotmail.com](mailto:tse_simon@hotmail.com).

A warm thank you to John Miller for writing the latest columns. Even I, as the editor, may have taken these last months for granted and have been reminded that life is a charming companion that deserves to be appreciated every day. Thank you for your helpful words!



# Bonsai Notebook

Austin Bonsai Society  
P.O. Box 340474  
Austin, Texas 78734



## Austin Bonsai Society

P.O. Box 340474  
Austin, TX 78734



## About Us

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 information, contact the Austin Bonsai Society at P.O. Box 340474, Austin, TX 78734.