



# Bonsai Notebook

*www.austinbonsaisociety.com*

*A Publication of the Austin Bonsai Society*

*January 2014 vol 37*

## **January 2014 Programs**

by Bill Boytim

### **Pine Care and Styling with Mike Hansen**

It has been several years since we have had a program on Pines. Now is almost the ideal time in Austin to do major work on Pines. Mike Hansen of MBP Bonsai in Pflugerville has a vast amount of professional experience in Pines and will be our presenter. Mike travels to Japan to select Pines for import to the United States, he also has one of the few USDA plant quarantine facilities in the United States where newly imported plants are held for extended observation prior to release.

Mike's Wednesday January 8th presentation will include a powerpoint illustrating the major points for caring and styling a Pine. The follow on Workshop on Tuesday January 14th will be a chance to do actual work on your Pine trees and have Mike answer your questions relating to your tree. Please plan on attending these sessions to learn from a master.

**Call for Inputs:** The program schedule and workshop schedule for 2014 is currently being developed.

Please provide any ideas that you have for a program or workshop to Jim Bauman or one of the other officers. The programs are usually finalized in February and are printed in the directory that is available.

## **Calendar of Events**

**January 8, 2014: ABS Montly Meeting  
Pine Care Styling with Mike Hansen**

**January 11, 2014: LSBF Meeting  
11:30am at Jade Gardens**

**January 14, 2014: ABS Monthly Workshop  
Pine Care and Training with Mike Hansen**

**January 21, 2014: Board Meeting**



**May with her winning decorated bonsai tree**

(Photo by Joey McCoy)

**2013 December Holiday Party** (Photo by Editor)

## Austin Bonsai Society Board of Directors

**Nan Jenkins**  
President

**Jimbo Baumann**  
Vice President

**Angelina Hewes**  
Secretary

**Pat Ware**  
Treasurer

**Russell Kohlert**  
Member at-Large

**Zerita Rogers**  
Member at-Large

**Deb Van Cleaf**  
Member at-Large

**Zerita Rogers**  
Member at-Large

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.

Lizzie Chen is the editor of "Bonsai Notebook". She may be contacted at [lizziechen09@gmail.com](mailto:lizziechen09@gmail.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](mailto:jvmccoy@sbcglobal.net).

## President's Message by Nan Jenkins

Happy New Year everyone! I hope your holidays were fun and filled with good food and presents.

The warm days that we've been having make me want to play with my trees, but I can't find much to do. Even in the green house, the trees seem happy as long as I remember that they still need more water than the ones outside. But we need to remember that the ones outside need some water also.

I suppose I'm going to be left with plenty of time to clean pots and mix soil--- neither of which is my favorite activity. But come February and March, I'll be so happy I did it!

I need a volunteer. I need to find someone to serve as our representative to the Lone Star Bonsai Federation (LSBF). It is an easy task since they only meet four times a year, and usually at Jade Gardens in Wimberley. I would love for someone to say to me, "I'll be happy to do that for the next year or two." Get me out of my hesitancy to ask people to help out, and volunteer!

Happy cleaning! Happy mixing! And don't forget to come to the meeting to learn about pine trees. The work with them is different from all the others. It will be a very helpful class. And you get to practice at the workshop the following Tuesday! See you on the 8th. The meeting comes early this month!

-Nan

Austin Bonsai Society Board Meeting  
No minutes or board meeting in December

Chrysalis Gift Shop  
at the Austin Area Garden Center  
Members only sale  
20% Discount

It's Time to Pay Your Dues:

Dues are due and payable on January 1st:  
Single Membership is \$30.00  
Family Membership is: \$35.00  
Cash and Checks are accepted

ABS is on Facebook

Like our ABS Facebook Page to stay up  
to date with news and events! It's also a  
great place to share tips and photos!  
<https://www.facebook.com/AustinBonsaiSociety>

## 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)

## 888-352-1604



Marine Canvas & Upholstery  
(interior & exterior)



# Toucan Canvas

Austin, Texas

Email: [info@toucancanvas.com](mailto:info@toucancanvas.com) [www.toucancanvas.com](http://www.toucancanvas.com)  
Repairs, new builds, parts, care & cleaning products

## JADE GARDENS

HOME OF



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.bonsaiexhibittx.com>

## Bonsai Calendar

- SSOT meeting schedule for 2014: Feb. 15 - Combining trees with stones/creating fused trunk style shohin;  
Mar. 22 - Selecting bonsai and designing our display for the April L.S.B.F State Bonsai Convention;  
June 7 - Hands-on/how-to workshop to create your own shohin size bonsai pot(s);  
Sep. 20 - Annual business meeting and hands-on/how-to workshop about carving shohin including techniques for creating jin, shari, uro and more.
- LSBF 2014 Convention - Houston  
The 2014 convention will be held at the Houston Marriott-Westchase.

## LSBF 2014 State Convention Information

By: Shawn Nguyen

In preparation for our upcoming LSBF 2014 State convention that HBS will be hosting this year, from April 10-13, as editor of HBS newsletter, I hope to put everybody in the mood for EAST MEETS WEST.

Bonsai is certainly an ancient art form whose roots originated in China. It then flourished in Japan but is no longer exclusively an Oriental art form today. Thanks to the large number of Chinese and Japanese Americans living on both coasts of the Pacific Ocean, thousands of Americans (North and South) work on bonsai each day. Thanks to the Internet, bonsai connections have grown around our planet and united all ethnicities as well as languages in our common love for artistic potted trees. Thanks to the Zen Buddhist monks who brought Bonsai to remote lands, nowadays Christian monks can marvel in bonsai in their daily meditation practice.

Our LSBF 2014 chairman, Donald Green, has rounded up three outstanding artists and masters from distant shores to teach us this year. Arthur Joura is the curator of the Bonsai Collection at the North Carolina Arboretum. This collection is one the must see Bonsai collections, if you have chance to travel to the East Coast.

David DeGroot is the Weyerhaeuser Company's Pacific Rim Bonsai Collection curator, near Seattle. HBS members had the good fortune to visit this fabulous collection on the West Coast through the camera lens of our then president Alan Raymond a couple years ago. Even though "A picture is worth a thousand words", his excellent photographs still fail to capture the drama of Alan's experience in seeing those living treasures up close. The Weyerhaeuser Company's Pacific Rim Bonsai Collection is definitely another must see for all bonsai lovers, when we can make time to travel to the West Coast.

The third artist Peter Adams, one of my most revered teachers, whose column I look forward to reading in Bonsai Focus, unexpectedly passed away. Together with a few friends in HBS, we mourn for the loss of this magnificent teacher.

Fortunately for us, another one of my favorites, Pedro Morales, the maestro of Tropical Bonsai School of Puerto Rico, was able to fill Peter's big shoes. We all will have a blast with this very lively and entertaining yet incredibly superb bonsai professor.

At this time, you may start wondering: Where are the teachers from the East? They have been kept well hidden amongst HBS long time members! Houston has been blessed with a few very artistic Chinese artists, amongst them, is whom I title a Bonsai Gem: Alex Leong. A soft spoken and quite reserved introvert, Alex likes to keep a low profile, always, but it's time he comes into the spotlight to share his talents with others. Formally trained as an artist in many Chinese and Asian disciplines and media, everything Alex touches turns into art. Alex Leong's Ascending Dragon (Chinese Elm) styled with Lingnan Clip and Grow

Not only he coaches us in the creation of the most elegant bonsai, often shockingly unusual but yet incredibly artistic, he also does stunning calligraphy and breathtaking watercolor work. When admiring his trees, I can see how Alex uses living plants to paint the most beautiful images. Some of them look like crawling or flying dragons, with legs and claws formed in the Lingnan technique. Some of his crepe myrtles look like dancing fairies with long hair, robe and sleeves blowing in the wind. Remember to bring a magnifying glass to fully appreciate Alex' Clip & Grow ramification. His trees are also a works of art not to be missed.

In this issue, I would like to introduce all LSBF members to our three artists, one at a time, starting with a brief interview from a famous teacher most of you met at the LSBF 2013 convention in New Braunfels: Colin Lewis. This self-proclaimed Bonsai Hermit writes a very fascinating newsletter: The Ramblings of a Bonsai Hermit. He has a rather peculiar yet humorous way to look at the art form to which he has devoted his life. Over the years, we had many funny discussions about bonsai trends and fads, and how this art form is evolving with trees of the world, especially the American ones.

Enjoy the conversation Colin had with one of our LSBF 2014's artists:

Arthur Joura and get to know him a little better.

Shawn Nguyen

## 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.*

Saying winter is here now is a bit of overkill. The ice storm had temps near 20. Since then its been back up to 70. Those kind of swings are bad for bonsai. Try to select locations to temporize the lows and highs by utilizing ground heat and artificial shade. At Fort Worth last month Mark Bynum reported that he measured pot soil temperatures of 33 degrees when the outside was 22. He had the trees sitting on the ground with a good layer of mulch over them.

Be sure your trees are well watered before going thru a deep freeze. They will be losing water to evaporation but will not be able to replenish it if the soil in the pot is frozen. Protection from high winds is necessary so they will not dry the tops out. Sunlight is not necessary on deciduous trees when they have lost their leaves. In fact, it can be bad for the tree because it may heat up the trunk and could make the tree come out of dormancy too early.

I advocate placing deciduous trees on a well-drained ground bed in a protected shady area. Then cover the pots with a shallow layer of mulch. This will give the roots several degrees of protection. You should know which trees have a greater need for water. If you put these trees together it will be easier to check your need for watering while they are in the bed.

I would treat the evergreens in a similar manner but put them where they can get some sun.

Of course the tender and semi-tender trees need protection. The semi-tender get left out for some frost but no freezing. When freezing is expected they should be put in a cool area. If they show growth again they will need light.

Indoor trees will be using more water to offset the lower humidity. Soil will also be losing water faster through its surface. Be sure to watch the indoor trees for insect problems. Most plant insects love a

controlled atmosphere like the indoors. Spider mites seem to get the most attention here because they do great in a low humidity and the lack of foliage spraying. Scale can be an easily overlooked source of trouble. There is usually more severe problems with plants that have been kept outdoors in summer than brought in without any treatment. Indoor trees need to be fertilized regularly and will require periodic trimming as they continue to grow through the winter.

Greenhouses are much the same as indoors. However, most greenhouses are kept more humid. The higher humidity is to the liking of aphids and fungal diseases. It may also result in your keeping the soil too moist with associated root problems. Use your standard insect controls that you used last summer. I use my Garrett Juice mixture.

January and early February are ideal times to review your trees, especially the deciduous ones. Old wire should be exposed and you can easily remove it. Limbs expand during the fall and winter months and the wire may be cutting into them. Unless you wired late in the fall the branches should be set and the wires can be removed. On conifers you may have to leave the wire on longer. Check it and rewire any that are in danger of being girdled.

Styling can be done at this time but no repotting unless you are going to keep the tree from freezing after that. Repotting initiates new root development, which is usually not very hardy.

A better approach would be to study one or two thoroughly each day making notes on what needs to be done. January is an excellent time to start any remodeling projects that may be necessary. While the trees are dormant you have better view of the branch structure. Do any need to be moved or removed? Do any coarse branches need to be cut back to a smaller side branch for refinement? Do any long straight branches need wiring to give them motion? Does the tree really need a drastic redesign? You can also trim the twigs back while you have them there. You can also decide if that tree will need to be repotted this spring, is the present pot good or should you find a more appropriate pot for it.

Any long warm spells during the month could activate some of the insect problems but as a rule there are no special needs to look for in January. Spraying with a dormant oil spray will kill adults, nymphs, and eggs of any trying to over-winter on your trees. Some dormant sprays can be used on new growth but better results overall will be obtained if you do it before Valentines Day. A weak lime sulphur dormant spray will also get fungal spores and should be done before Feb 1. Always read the label directions before using chemicals.

If you have your summer display and growing benches cleared, you could use a stronger solution lime sulphur to disinfect that area too. The underside of the benches should be sprayed also. Might even eliminate spider mites next year.

If you have several trees and find that you run short of time during the repotting season you may gain a little advantage by mixing your soil this month.

# 2013 HOLIDAY PARTY

All Photos by Joey McCoy



# 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 \$30.00 for an individual and \$35.00 for a family membership.

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



Spotlight of the Month  
*(Photo by John Muller)*