



Bonsai Notebook

www.austinbonsaisociety.com

A Publication of the Austin Bonsai Society

June 2012 vol 18

June 2012 Programs

by Bill Boytim

During Zilker Garden fest and our recent May Show, our members have invited numerous interested visitors to take up the art of Bonsai. Many of the visitors are interested, but have expressed a very limited knowledge about Bonsai. Our **Wednesday June 13th** meeting will provide some answers for the novice Bonsai artist. The **Tuesday June 19th** workshop will provide some hands on experience. Both of these, the regular meeting and the following workshop, will be a chance for our more experienced members to do some mentoring for these novices.

Some topics covered will be collecting or buying your own trees. Selecting tools and other Bonsai equipment and supplies. Basic styling for new trees. Maintaining your tree's health. This program will help remove the perceived mysteries surrounding creating and maintaining a Bonsai.

Joey McCoy will lead the **June 13th meeting and the June 19th workshop**. Please plan on attending and if you are able please mentor one of these interested novices. We all started from ground zero at one point in our journey and appreciated that one person who took an interest and answered our questions. Please bring your tools and tree to the **June 19th Workshop**.

Calendar of Events

June 13th ABS Monthly Meeting Reception

Hosts: Cindy Hansen

& Marvin Chambers

Zilker Garden Center 7:00 pm

June 13th ABS Monthly Meeting

Bonsai Basics

by Joey McCoy

Zilker Garden Center 7:00 - 9:00 pm

June 19th ABS Board Meeting

Zilker Garden Center 7:00 - 7:30 pm

June 19th ABS Member's Workshop

Workshop - Basic Bonsai Styling,

Maintaining, Equipment and Supplies

Zilker Garden Center 7:30 - 9:00 pm



Member Trees Evaluated by Warren Hill

May 2012 - Photo by Joey McCoy

Austin Bonsai Society Board of Directors

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John Muller is the editor of "Bonsai Notebook". He may be contacted at jcm2austx@sprintmail.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 Mike Watson

The people in this bonsai club are the best! Our annual bonsai show this past month was a terrific success thanks to all of you! Whether you brought bonsai trees to show, tables and scrolls, accent plants and suiseki, food for us all to munch on, or just came and volunteered your time to help, you were all amazing and it makes me proud to be a part of a club like ours. It was great to hang out with members, both new and not so new, and share our passion with the curious public. Some of the people who visited became members of our club as well. I'm sure the beauty of the trees sparked their interest but I know for a fact that they were sold on bonsai by the sheer joy we all express when answering questions. Well... the "How old is it?" question gets annoying sometimes but we all were patient and helpful to the uninitiated.

I thought the bonsai displayed this year were top notch! I congratulate all of you who obviously took the time to make them look great. However, remember that now is not the time to rest on our laurels. We are less than a year away from the 2013 bonsai convention in New Braunfels! Now is the time to take those wonderful bonsai you all showed and move them to the next level. Really look at your trees, stands, accents, scrolls, etc. with a critical eye and think of what you can do to improve them, even if just a little. If you have questions on something, I highly advise talking to one of your fellow members who have bonsai that you admire. Bonsai knowledge is open source and should be shared by all so remember, when in doubt, feel free to ask. That's what we're all here for!



Photo by Editor

AUSTIN BONSAI SOCIETY GENERAL MEETING
May 9, 2012

President Mike Watson called the meeting to order at 7:26 p.m. following the refreshment time. We thanked Connie King and Becky Drozd for the great refreshments.

Deb Van Cleaf introduced the guests and new members: Clyde Adley, Greg and Gayanne Crump, Ruby Chaing, and Gerrett Clemence.

Announcements:

Joey McCoy announced that the planning meeting for the convention in 2013 will be Sunday, June 10th at 1:00 at Jade Gardens in Wimberly.

Bill Boytim asked for more volunteers to help with the annual exhibit, for set up, take down, and during the show several people need to be there to sell raffle tickets, be a counter at the entrance, and to act as docents to answer questions. There will be two demonstrations at 2:00 on Saturday and Sunday. Mike Watson and Joey McCoy will do them.

Alisan Clarke announced that The Texas State Bonsai Exhibit gave away stones from the property at this year's convention along with the newsletter. Those are available for ABS members as well.

Program:

Warren Hill, visiting artist from Tennessee, was here to do tree critiques for those who paid for the opportunity. His information was helpful and gave us another view point on styling.

We adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Nan Jenkins, Secretary

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LSBF (Lone Star Bonsai Federation), of which all members of the Austin Bonsai Society are members, has a website which might help members understand the organization better.

Please go to: <http://www.bonsai-lsbf.com>

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

Bonsai Calendar

- **SSOT meeting schedule for 2012:**

June 23 Part II Diaza workshop; Sept. 15 Annual business meeting and panel critique.

- **The 2013 state LSBF convention will be April 11-13, 2013, at the New Braunfels Convention Center.**

Know of an upcoming Bonsai event of interest to club members? Send the details to jcm2austx@sprintmail.com

LSBF Convention 2012 - Fort Worth



May 2012 ABS General Meeting - Member Trees Evaluated



(Photos by Joey McCoy)

2012 Austin Bonsai Society Annual Show



(Photos by Joey McCoy)

June 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.

Maintenance - the act of maintaining. Maintain - to hold or to keep in any particular state. When applied to bonsai maintenance consists of two aspects. HORTICULTURAL maintenance is keeping the tree in good vigorous health. This encompasses providing proper location, sunlight, water, soil, and fertilizers. Horticultural maintenance must be done before you can be successful in doing ARTISTIC maintenance. Artistic maintenance is continuing the plan you used when you styled the tree. It will develop ramification, grow bark, get smaller leaves, and all the other good characteristics of a great bonsai. Each one of these items above is a chapter in a book, all I can hope to do is help you know when to do some of them.

Going into summer means your trees in pots will be given the hot foot out in the sun. Think of walking barefoot down an open sidewalk. Anything solid will soak up the direct rays and get very hot. Its bad enough when the air temp goes over a hundred without the sun adding to it. You should do something to block the direct rays of the sun and put a bit of air, however thin, between the sunscreen material and the pot and/or soil. Afternoon shade helps the foliage but the morning sun can heat up the pot too much. A solid cover on the soil is not very desirable as it makes it hard to water. Long fiber moss on the surface will protect the soil and let water thru. Cloth would work but does not look very good. Protecting the pot is a harder job. Aluminum foil, shiny side out, has been used but usually does not leave enough air around the pot for cooling. Some have built wooden boxes the same size as the pot to set the bonsai in. You may figure out something in between. I would prefer using a coarse fabric. Use a piece big enough to extend well outside the pot. Cut a slit to go around the trunk. Weight it down to prevent blowing away from the pot.

Notice especially where the hot afternoon sun, from 2pm to sundown, hits your bonsai area.

As the summer progresses the growth of the deciduous trees will 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 daily (seems like) pruning chore is now transferred to the tropicals.

Tip pinching on 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 tip to divide the energy and the resulting flower is shorter. Its 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.

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 as 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. Try making them by adding a little water and Elmers glue to one of the Espoma fertilizers like Holly-tone or Plant-tone. 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 may accumulate in the soil and also in knowing that each time I water I am washing the chemicals out on the ground.

As usual, keep an eye open for insect and fungal problems. If you are using the organic spray you should not have any problems. If any fungicidal problems show up, mildew is a possibility, use potassium bicarbonate (does the same as baking soda but contains no sodium). I used the 1% solution of hydrogen peroxide which worked ok but it did burn some tender new growth on an elm cutting. I will only use that in cooler weather. The organic spray is 1 Tbsp each of liquid seaweed, fish emulsion, 5% apple cider vinegar, and molasses in 1 gallon of water. Be sure to use a sprayer with a pretty fine pattern and cover both top and bottom of the leaf.

contunued... pg6

ABS Board Meeting Minutes

May 15, 2012

If ants, or any other creature, are building nests in the soil, the tunnels and cavities will prevent proper watering and result in 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.

It is too late to leaf prune most species. 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.

It is important to continue the twig pruning of your trees on a regular basis. While doing this chore look at the tree to see if there is a need to do some refinement pruning. Refinement pruning is a deeper pruning to replace a branch that has grown too long or too big with a smaller one. This is usually done with the secondary or tertiary branches not the primary branch coming from the trunk. I prefer to do this refinement pruning on deciduous trees in the winter when I can see the branch structure. But on bonsai like the yaupon hollies I like to do it at this time while the tree is actively growing. Trees that weep a lot from cuts such as maples or pines should not be done at this time.

Present: Bill Boytim, Nan Jenkins, Ken Lakin, John Muller, Pat Ware, Joey McCoy

Call to Order: 7:11 pm

The minutes were approved as published in the newsletter.

The treasurer, Pat Ware, announced that in April, we had \$733.36 income over expenses. She asked about paying the rent on the storage unit, which initiated discussion about where it might be located that would be closer to more members. John moved and Nan seconded that we pay 3 months' rent now. Motion passed. Bill and Joey will look for a better place.

Annual Exhibit:

Mike Watson and Joey McCoy are doing the demos on Saturday and Sunday. We have \$50.00 in the budget for the demo trees.

We have some items in storage that can be in the raffles. We also have \$100 in the budget to purchase trees from the vendors and \$75 to provide pizza for the workers on Friday night.

Pat had 200 information sheets printed about ABS. There is one mistake but we cannot get it corrected in time for the show.

We will purchase little felt stickers to put on the bottom of pots so that the stands will not be scratched. We need more people to clean up on Sunday.

New Business:

We need to find a new person to print the newsletter since ours is leaving the place he works. Timmi Kuykendall resigned from the board effective immediately. We need one new person to be a member at large on the board.

We adjourned at 7:39, moved by Ken, seconded by John and it passed.

Respectfully submitted,
Nan Jenkins, Secretary



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

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