

# Bonsai Notebook

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

*A Publication of the Austin Bonsai Society*

*November 2012 vol 23*

## November 2012 Programs

by Bill Boytim

Previously we have covered different parts of the Bonsai display. One additional part is the use of viewing stones or suiseki. Suiseki can be displayed in shallow trays with sand or water. Most often they are displayed on a specially carved wooden stand called a daiza. One of our past presidents has excelled in this art and will present our program at the **Wednesday November 14** meeting.

Jim Trahan has mastered the skills for creating beautiful daiza from wood and finishing these wooden masterpieces using several different finishing techniques. Jim has studied under Sean Smith who is recognized as the best daiza maker in the United States. Jim will share what steps are required to go from a piece of wood and a viewing stone to a beautifully crafted daiza that accentuates and supports the viewing stone. Please join us for this informative program.

**There will not be a workshop this month at Zilker. There will be a workshop on Sunday November 11, 2012 at 1:30 pm at Persimmon Hill Bonsai,** covering basic tool safety and use of power tools that are used in various Bonsai Projects. This program will be geared to cover Dremmels (rotary tools), die grinders, routers, angle grinders and other hand power tools. The program will cover the basics of using the tools, changing the bits, adjustments of the tools, safety equipment and provide experience for the novice and more experienced. This workshop was organized based on a request made during the Kathy Shaner tool sharpening workshop. Please bring your tools with you. Please call or email Alisan Clark or Connie King if you will be attending.

## Calendar of Events

**November 14th ABS Monthly Meeting Reception**

**Hosts: Russell Kohlert & Valerie Morris  
Zilker Garden Center 7:00 pm**

**November 14th ABS Monthly Meeting**

**Creating Beautiful Daiza  
with Jim Trahan  
Zilker Garden Center 7:00 - 9:00 pm**

**November 20th ABS Board Meeting**

**Zilker Garden Center 7:00 - 7:30 pm**

**November 11th ABS Member's Workshop  
at Persimmon Hill Bonsai**

**Basic Tool Safety and use of Power Tools  
used in various Bonsai Projects  
Zilker Garden Center 7:30 - 9:00 pm**



**Our Auctioneer - Chuck Ware  
October 2012 ABS Meeting**

## 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](mailto:jcm2austx@sprintmail.com).

## Austin Bonsai on the Internet

Online discussions  
Picture and video sharing  
Questions and answers  
Upcoming events  
*NO SPAM*

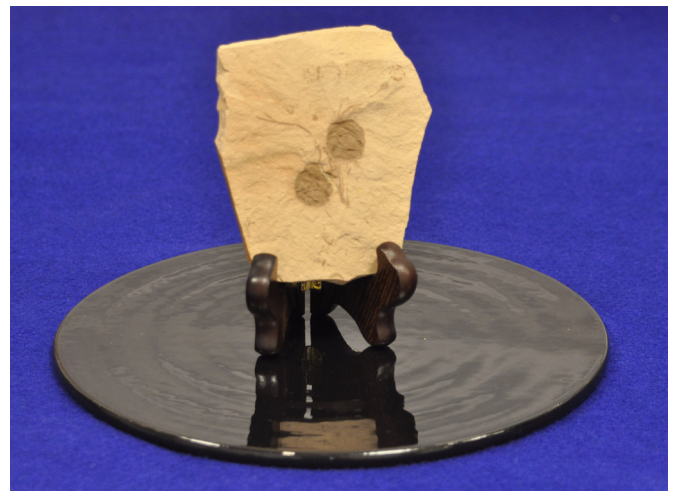
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or  
[jvmccoy@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jvmccoy@sbcglobal.net).

## President's Message by Mike Watson

November is here and with it comes the minor chores in preparation for the winter months. First step for me is to get my few tropical trees inside. If you're lucky enough to have a green house then it's no problem but for those of us not so inclined it becomes an exercise in creative space planning inside the house. I have an east facing window that I put them in and hope for the best!

November is also a time to give thanks to the many blessings we have been bestowed. I am thankful to live in a place that has so many resources for bonsai enthusiasts like you and me. I've met folks who have to drive a hundred miles or more just to go to a meeting. Many and more miles to find a bonsai nursery!

Don't forget to get your donation trees, pots, or other items (bonsai related or not) together in preparation for next year's convention!



(Photo by Joey McCoy)

**AUSTIN BONSAI SOCIETY GENERAL MEETING**

**October 10, 2012**

Zilker Garden Club House

The Call to Order was at 7:15 by Vice President Bill Boytim.

Marian Alsup of the Garden Club Council, which ABS is a member of, announced that the council needs help with fundraising and better communication among the club members. She asked for input and several ABS members asked questions and had some suggestions about how things might be made better. Our representatives are Charlotte Cranberg and Alisan Clarke. If anyone would like to speak with Marian or ask her questions regarding the function and work of the council, she can be reached at 480-0311, or you could speak with one of our representatives.

Elaine White made an **announcement** for The Texas State Bonsai Exhibit. There is an information packet in the current newsletter and it is also available at the registration desk. Kathy Shaner will be holding a workshop on October 20th at Elaine's house from 9:00-4:00, and on the 21st at Terry Wood's from 9:00 to noon. All are invited to participate in these workshops that Kathy does for TTSBE to teach us how to care for the trees that have been donated to the Exhibit.

Deb Van Cleaf introduced our two visitors, Bob Carpenter and Mark Bogart

Bill then introduced our auctioneer for the evening's annual auction, Chuck Ware. There were lots of trees to sell, so we had a lot of fun finding new specimens to acquire for our collections. And those who brought some to sell were thrilled to see someone want to continue the work on them. A great time was had by all!  
Adjournment was at 9:15

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>

## JADE GARDENS

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## Bonsai Calendar

- San Antonio Bonsai Society is holding their auction on Thursday November 8th at 7pm at the Lions Field Center at 2809 Broadway.
- SSOT meeting schedule for 2013: Feb. 16 Flat Root/Root over Rock; Mar. 23 Convention Display, DYOT; June 1 Logustrum Workshop or Tropical with Stone; Sept. 28 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](mailto:jcm2austx@sprintmail.com)

## Convention Chronicle #5

Tree Ring Circus – April 11-14, 2013 New Braunfels TX  
by Joey McCoy and Donna Dobberfuhl

I would like to talk about the exhibit space at the convention. There is a very large space reserved for the exhibit area. Mike Watson (Austin) and Donna Dobberfuhl (San Antonio) are the exhibit chairs. They are interested in following some of the protocols set up by the Dallas convention, such as some **pre-organizing of the space by asking information about the trees** you plan to bring and also to give info to the viewing public about each Bonsai. So start thinking about which Bonsai you would like to bring and begin prepping them for the show. **LSBF** will continue to give awards as they did last time and there is the possibility of a national award as well. Competition is not the only reason to show, **please bring a tree you are proud of and would like to share with the rest of the Bonsai family.**

There are going to be **three primary sections to the exhibit:** The **Classical display** for Bonsai with the three point design, **Suiseki (viewing stones)** and **Contemporary Bonsai.**

Ok, don't get excited! What is contemporary? What it is not is weird.

When one learns an art form it is about the rules of aesthetics, about design. Good design follows certain rules; excellent design goes beyond the rules. To learn about good design, follow the rules; internalize them they will serve you well. But if the art form never goes beyond the rules it will become just another pleasant expression of art. When the artist starts pushing the envelope, exploring, understanding the values in design then new dynamic expressions appear. What is interesting about bonsai when applied to native trees with the use of good design **different expressions appear.** Live Oaks just follow their own design lines, same with Bald Cypress and Tropicals; it is the same with all native trees. When the bonsai artist sees these expressions, understands them, then what is born is contemporary design and Bonsai design grows and expands.



October 2012 ABS General Meeting - Annual Auction



*(Photos by Editor)*

## November 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.*

I am concerned this year by the way the fronts seem to be shaping up. Usually the fronts come down with a broad leading edge covering the whole Midwest and behaving rather nicely. This year they seem to be more narrow. The last one (in October) was real thin only as wide as Kansas and Oklahoma. The problem with this is that all the cold air shoots south giving us a sharper and deeper drop in temperature. They tend to move out quicker also with a lot of warm air coming in behind them. That means you get a harder freeze and then it jump up toward 90 in a couple of days. That variation is not good for bonsai.

This made me dig out an interesting fact that is surprising. There is only one month of the entire year, in the Dallas records, that the high temperature did not reach 90 and that month the record high was 89. Surprisingly that month was not January, it was November.

All of this means that you should have your winter quarters ready. Select one for deciduous trees that will be out of the sun. Air circulation is good but too much wind will desiccate them especially in freezing temps. Be sure you can check their watering. Clean up all debris.

Before putting the trees into winter storage treat them for over-wintering insects and eggs. Dormant oil spray is good on trees with no green. A dilute solution of lime sulfur is an old gardeners dormant spray for insect and fungus control. Use it on very cool days and dilute it 1 part lime sulfur to 20 parts water. Be sure to read the label on your bottle in case there are different strengths available. This solution should also be applied to benches tops, posts and the soil surrounding them (if you have gravel instead of grass) to eliminate hiding eggs and spores. If you have a greenhouse treat it also before the weather gets too cold to put your plants outside or move them to one end while you treat the other end.

At this time of the year deciduous plants do not need fertilizer. Evergreens will continue a slow growth and will benefit for a light fertilizer feeding. Use one with a lower nitrogen (first number) like 8-8-8 at no more than half the recommended feeding rate.

Watering should be done with care during the cool and/or cold weather. Deciduous trees will use some water to replace that lost to winds and evaporation. Evergreen trees will need a little more but not as much as in summer. The easiest way is to sort your pots into groups, those that dry quickly, those that are slower to dry, and those that seem to stay damp. This will let you water faster and yet not over-water the ones staying damp. Make a mental note to repot the ones staying too damp.

Most important in winter is to keep the soil moisture at a proper level. This sometimes is hard to do because the trees do not use as much water as when they are growing. However the cold winds will dry out the tops quickly. I believe that most winter damage in Texas is due to lack of water rather than to low temperatures. Mulch helps keep the roots warm and retards evaporation but it makes for difficulty in seeing if the soil is damp enough. Most soils with enough organic material to keep the tree happy in the summer will be too wet if watered daily in the winter and wet cold means root rot.

Repotting of hardy trees can be done anytime the trees are dormant. However it is safer to do that chore in the spring as the buds are swelling. New roots will start forming immediately upon repotting in order for the tree to absorb water. If you do repot in the fall you should protect the new roots from freezing during the winter. Do you need to change the pot? Making notes at this time while getting the trees ready for winter will give you 3-4 months to find the proper pot.

When trees go dormant which indicates a reduced sap flow they may be pruned, that is have major limbs removed. Trimming may also be done while the leaves are off the trees and you can see what you are doing. Evergreen types will probably still be active. Pruning them should be held until later.

If you have a tree that is weak and unhealthy you should not attempt to style it in any way, just get it

continued... pg6

happy by adjusting its soil, feeding, and getting rid of any parasites. Styling just adds to its stress and problems

By this time any tropical you have should be under cover. Most do not like the temp below 50 degrees. All tropicals should be checked and treated for any insect problems since any insects will multiply fast when they get into warmer quarters. Spider mites and scale can be especially damaging if the plant is moved in the house where the humidity is low.

The semi-tropical plants like crape myrtle pomegranate and pyracantha need to go dormant to stay healthy over a long time but they cannot take much cold on the roots. They will be killed by temps somewhere between 25 and 30 degrees. These I set down on the ground and mulch for light freezes and then bring into a protected area for the colder winter. Sometimes I will let them go dormant for a month and then take into the greenhouse to start early and I can enjoy their new foliage in January.

Plan your spring repotting tasks so you will have the necessary pots and other supplies. Take advantage of low prices when nurseries are clearing out space for Xmas tree sales. You can sometimes find some bargains there especially if you remember that a tree with broken/dead tops can make nice bonsai starter material.

The dormant season is also a very good time to study your deciduous bonsai. You can see clearly the structure and where improvements should be made. Remove any wire that is tight or where it has done its work and the branch stays in position. Work can be done more leisurely over the winter. Take care not to damage the small buds.

Learn to think in terms related to plant characteristics instead of calendar periods (i.e. use 'when dormant' instead of October, 'candle growth' instead of April, etc). That will enable you to read bonsai articles correctly whether written in Japan Florida or wherever. Note that some tree cultivars (like the cork bark black pine) are notably weaker than the standards of the species and require different pruning and care.

## ABS Board Meeting Minutes October 16, 2012 Zilker Clubhouse

Present: Bill Boytim, Joey McCoy, John Muller, Pat Ware

No meeting could be held, due to lack of quorum

### Michael Feduccia Workshop



(Photos by Bill Boytim)

# 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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