



# Bonsai Notebook

*A Publication of the Austin Bonsai Society*

*August 2010*

## August Programs

by Mike Watson

It seems like ages ago that the temperatures were still in the 30s and 40s and we were struggling to get all of our hardy and sub-tropical trees repotted. Timing is crucial! We have to catch that moment when the buds are just about to open. Our window of opportunity is over before we know it.

Luckily, for those of us with tropical trees, we have all summer to repot. I hope you saved some soil from your spring repotting because now is the perfect

## ROY NAGATOSHI Bring Your Own Tree Workshop

September 7  
7:00 p.m.

**Persimmon Hill Bonsai**

*only a few open spots left...*

Contact any board member for more  
information

## Calendar of Events

**August 11th ABS Monthly Meeting Reception**

**Hosts: Sunny Huang and  
Charlotte Cranberg**

(Next months hosts: Candy Hansen and  
Victor Engel)

**Zilker Garden Center 7:00 pm**

**August 11th ABS Monthly Meeting**

**Tropical Repotting with Elaine White**

**Zilker Garden Center 7:30 - 9:00 pm**

**August 12th San Antonio Bonsai Society Picnic**

**2809 Broadway**

**San Antonio, TX 78209**

**7:00 pm**

**August 17th ABS Board Meeting**

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

**August 17th ABS Member's Workshop**

**Bring Your Own Tropical Tree**

time to get our hands dirty again! For our regularly meeting on **Wednesday, August 11th**, our very own Elaine White will take us through the "ins-and-outs" of tropical repotting. I hope to see you all there!

For our member's workshop on **Tuesday, August 17th** we will bring in our tropicals, pots, tools, and soil and do our own transplanting. If you're like me, you've got a ficus or two that have been patiently waiting for a fresh start. Of course, if you don't have any tropicals to repot you are welcome to come out and work on anything you want. See you then!

## Austin Bonsai Society Board of Directors

**Joey McCoy**  
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**Mike Watson**  
Vice President

**Collin Murphy**  
Secretary

**Pat Ware**  
Treasurer

**Becki Drozd**  
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**Charlotte Cranberg**  
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**Nan Jenkins**  
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**Jim Trahan**  
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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.

Collin Murphy is the editor of "Bonsai Notebook". He may be contacted at [ckmurphy2000@yahoo.com](mailto:ckmurphy2000@yahoo.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 Joey McCoy

The month of August is usually a pretty slow month, Bonsai-wise. With the heat and our usual drought, our trees slow down to a crawl. This year has been different so far. We have yet (as of this writing) to reach the typical 100 degree mark, and it has also been one of our wettest summers as well. For me, this means that I haven't had any of my trees slow down for the "summer break". We can take advantage of this extra growth to improve ramification, or let whips grow uncontrolled to callous over wounds. Here's hoping for more (relatively) mild and wet summertime to come! Of course summer is always the perfect time to work on tropicals and I look forward to Elaine's program this month.

A special event is coming up on Thursday August 12th. The San Antonio Bonsai Society is hosting a club picnic which will include an area for buying and selling! There will be food, fun and bonsai, a terrific evening. It's going to be the day after Austin's regular Wednesday 11th meeting. I'm planning on going and have some space to carpool others. Let me know if you'd like to join. Even if not riding with others, I recommend going. San Antonio always puts on a great party!

Roy Nagatoshi's September visit has been well received and the available spaces are quickly filling up for the Tuesday Sept. 7th Bring Your Own Tree workshop quickly! I think that there are only a couple openings left at this point. Plants to bring could be raw, unstyled material with character to make it into future Bonsai, or it can be a tree which is in it's "finished" state and Roy can guide you through some of the refinement, making a good Bonsai top-notch! Again, Roy has had a lifetime's experience with Bonsai and is sharing with us. Don't miss this opportunity! Call Pat Ware to reserve your space on the list.

Happy trimming!

**Date: NOW**  
**GO SHOPPING!!**



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AND TAPE NEAR YOUR MONITOR!**

**Find the Line with Donna Dobberfuhl**  
*(Photos by Joey McCoy)*



## ABS July Board Meeting Minutes

by Collin Murphy, Secretary

Joey called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. present were Pat Ware, Joey McCoy, Collin Murphy, and Charlotte Cranberg, and Nan Jenkins.

Pat gave the treasurer's report. As of the end of June our income over expenses is \$213.74. This includes storage rental and AAGC dues.

The board discussed demo trees for the upcoming Kathy Shaner and Roy Nagatoshi demonstrations. We may have a donation for at least one of the demonstrations.

Several members will be having dinner with Roy Nagatoshi the evening of his demonstration on September 8th. We will be meeting at Shady Grove on Barton Springs at 5:00 p.m.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

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**Russell and Chuck discuss a tree during the Find the Line workshop**

*Photo by Joey McCoy*

## August 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.*

You have only two main jobs in August: (1) keep your bonsai alive and (2) keep them healthy. Regardless of where you live in Texas you can expect 90+ temperatures and the direct sun will be merciless. The sun on the pots raises the temperature of the soil high enough to kill the roots. It also speeds up the drying of the soil. Many pathogens (e.g. spider mites) thrive at higher temperatures and the stressed plants cannot cope with added problems.

Two things can be done to cope with the sun. You can supply partial shade and you may provide a cover over the pots. The shade, whether from a natural source (tree cover) or a shade cloth material, should provide greater protection from the afternoon sun. Late afternoon sun can be a problem because the temperature is highest and the soil is usually drier at that time. A cover over the pot should not touch the pot. A non-porous cover may create an oven. There should be good air flow around the pot for cooling. Ideally watering should be done at 2pm or so. That would lower the soil temp to around 70 and would provide for some evaporative cooling the rest of the afternoon.

Keeping the plants healthy means taking care of insects and diseases promptly, keeping them out of water stress, and feeding properly. A good many species could take full sun (on the tops) if they are healthy. A 30% shade cloth over them during this time would be better. Japanese maples and others with thin leaves would need more shade.

During these extremely hot periods take care when using chemicals. This is true whether you are using organic chemicals or the other kind. I do not use my organic spray unless it can have a few hours before it gets to 90. Heat makes chemicals more active and they can damage your plants. Be sure to read the fine print on the label re temperature use. You may need to use them early in the morning or very late evening. Most commercial chemicals are sold in an oil based mixture which can damage some like buttonwood at any temperature.

When checking the results on your plants after spraying remember that the spray usually will not remove the 'evidence' of problems. The webs will still be there after the mites are killed, the shells of the scale will be attached to the leaf or stem. These will have to be removed by hand, by a jet of water, or some other way. A soft toothbrush works good on the scale shells.

Good fertilizer techniques will help you maintain healthy bonsai. The best technique is to use organic fertilizer balls on the surface. They will supply a very low dose of nutrients every time you water. Time release fertilizer will work but you do not have much control, it releases a lot when you first put it on and you do not know when it peters out. Water soluble fertilizers are concentrated chemicals that may be too active for high temp use. They also quickly wash out of the soil as you water and you are doing that more often now. Check to see that your fertilizer supplies the many micronutrients that plants need.

Azaleas set their buds in July. Other spring flowering plants also set buds in the fall. They should not be pruned after bud set if you desire the blooms. If you are in a developmental stage you can still prune them. Other flowering plants should have the dead blooms and seed pods removed. That may encourage more flowering. Some tropicals like the bougainvillea flower after a dry period which is their natural dormancy. Check growth habits for your species.

Check your trees for moss growing on trunks. Bark seems to hold moisture pretty good and the extra watering may cause moss to grow. Kill it with 90% isopropyl alcohol. Let it die before picking off gently with tweezers. Too much moss on the soil interferes with proper watering.

More on water practices. I prefer to water heavily in the evening (in normal weather). That gives the plant all night to renew itself without losing most of its water to evaporation. Then in the early morning, they get a quick foliage spray and wetting the surface of the soil which may have dried out overnight. Very porous soil may need more morning water. This was what I did while working since the morning task only took 10 minutes or so. Now I still prefer to water heavily in the evening but the morning watering is more done more slowly and trees given a little more individual atten-

tion as some of them will not need water in the soil. Be sure to do the double watering bit--water thoroughly and then after a few minutes water again so that the dry soil particles will get moistened.

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. Preventative medicine is best. By the time you see signs, the damage is already done, especially spider mites. I use the organic foliar feed (1 Tablespoon each of fish emulsion, liquid kelp, molasses and 5% apple 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. Read the label directions carefully. Do not apply oil based chemicals to buttonwoods or other sensitive species. A hose end sprayer does not work very well, its droplets are too large and you have little control over where it goes. Use a pump sprayer with a fine spray and cover both top and bottom of leaves

The humidity in summer varies quite a bit but when it sticks around for a few days look for fungal problems to appear, mildew being the most prevalent. Foliage spraying in the morning will usually not be a problem because it dries pretty quickly. Treat with potassium carbonate which you can find at any nursery with a decent organic section. There are several chemical sprays available too.

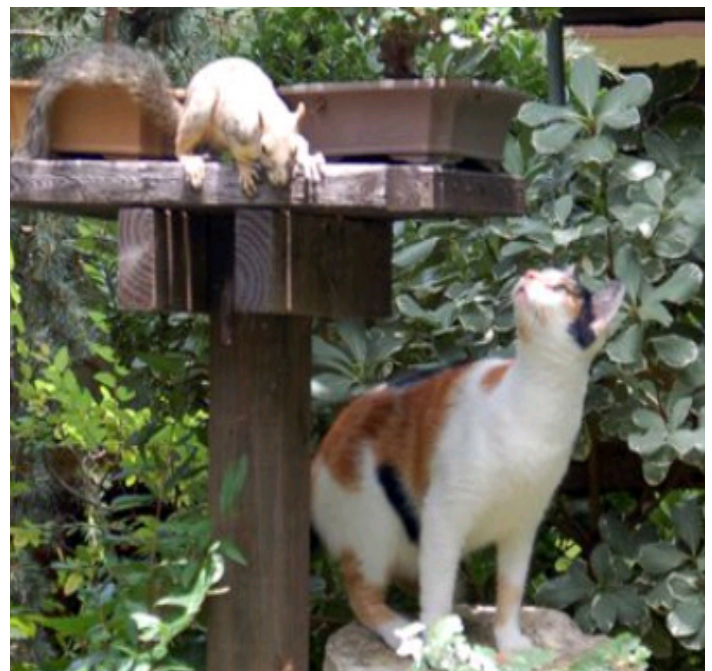
## ABS July General Meeting Minutes by Collin Murphy, Secretary

Joey called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m. Joey informed everyone that Elizabeth Cody passed away on July 1st.

On September 7th, there will be a bring-your-own-tree workshop with Roy Nagatoshi at Persimmon Hill Bonsai. There are still open spaces. The cost is \$55. See any board member for more details. Roy will also be doing a lecture/demonstration at the general meeting on Septmeber 8th.

Donna announced that the San Antonio Bonsai Society is having a club picnic on August 12th at 7 p.m. in San Antonio. There will be lots of food and a bonsai flea market as well. Contact Donna for more information.

Donna then gave an excellent presentation of finding the trunk line when doing initial styling of bonsai.



**Need to keep squirrels off your bonsai and out of your fertilizer cakes? Try a cat!**

*Photo by Joey McCoy*

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## Bonsai Calendar

**Roy Nagatoshi Demonstration**  
**Roy Nagatoshi Workshop**  
**Kathy Shaner Demonstration**  
**St Louis Shohin Seminar**

**ABS General Meeting**  
**ABS Members Workshop**  
**ABS General Meeting**  
**Collinsville, IL**

**September 8, 2010, 7:30 p.m.**  
**September 7, 2010, 7:00 p.m.**  
**October 13, 2010, 7:30 p.m.**  
**May 20 - 22, 2011**

*Know of an upcoming Bonsai event of interest to club members? Send the details to [ckmurphy2000@yahoo.com](mailto:ckmurphy2000@yahoo.com) and it will be posted here.*

# 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 \$25.00 for an individual and \$30.00 for a family membership.

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

