



Bonsai Notebook

A Publication of the Austin Bonsai Society

July 2010

July Programs

by Mike Watson

July is here and summer is in full swing. While I'm watering my trees (sometimes for the 2nd or even 3rd time that day!) I will often look at a subject that I haven't really figured out a design for and contemplate the possibilities as I move on to water it's neighbors. Let's face it, there are some trees that leave you baffled. You just can't see the "line" that



Mike grafting a boxwood at June's member's workshop

Calendar of Events

July 14th ABS Monthly Meeting Reception

Hosts: Becki Drozd and Zerita Rogers

(Next months hosts: Sunny Huang and

Charlotte Cranberg)

Zilker Garden Center 7:00 pm

July 14th ABS Monthly Meeting

Find the Line with Donna Dobberfuhr

Zilker Garden Center 7:30 - 9:00 pm

July 20th ABS Board Meeting

Zilker Garden Center 7:00 - 7:30 pm

July 20th ABS Member's Workshop

Find the Line Workshop - Bring your own tree

Zilker Garden Center 7:30 - 9:00 pm

will become the main trunk. For our monthly meeting on **Wednesday, July 14th**, Donna Dobberfuhr will give us some tips on doing just that. Donna is one of our fellow members as well as the current president of the San Antonio Bonsai Society. She is also an artist and an amazing sculptor. As we all know, a bonsai is a "living sculpture" so Donna's talents give her an insight that we can all learn and use on our trees.

For our member's workshop on **Tuesday, July 20th** we will bring in our "problem children" and see if we can't put them on the proper path. That's right, bring your tree or trees that have you stumped (pun intended) and we will try to "find the line". Sometimes it just takes another set of eyes looking at it to see the tree within!

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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.

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 Joey McCoy

The Fort Worth LSBF convention wrapped to a close and those who left had a terrific time. For people who made the trip, I know they drove home with added skills, a new Bonsai or pre-Bonsai or two, and a strong basis for a further friendship in the Texas Bonsai community. A few of my highlights:

1. Comparing species used from Chicago, Texas and Louisiana with the visiting artists
2. Learning about the Japanese teaching program from someone who's about to go for a 3 year apprenticeship.
3. A lively discussion about esthetics based on Japanese, American and European "styles"
4. Watching a member of the Corpus Christi club take over the raffle sales to bump up the income
5. Working on some fantastic material under the eye of a visiting artist
6. Most of all just having time to spend with friends, both in Austin Bonsai and from the rest of the state.

Corpus Christi is next year's location, and you know I'll be there!

There is still plenty of time to be picking out material for the workshop by our visiting artist Roy Nagatoshi on Tuesday September 2nd. It may sound like it's a ways off, but the date can creep up on us quickly! See Mike Watson about reserving a spot early. Roy is an terrific 2nd generation Bonsai artist who is well known for his teaching skills. I met Roy a few years ago, visiting his nursery in California. I was equally impressed with his amazing trees and his kind and funny nature.

Membership is something a club always has to worry over. We're always trying to raise the number of members by letting Austin and surrounding areas know about us and by making it an interesting place for visitors and regulars. Even in this age of technology, the best way to pass knowledge is person to person, and this is what a society like ours does best.

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By having a diverse group with different skills, our club becomes a much more dynamic place to learn and grow. This is why getting the word out is so important. As a club, we do a yearly display at Zilker Garden Fest and of course our annual show. Outreach shouldn't necessarily stop there. If you know someone who has an interest in this art, encourage them to come to a meeting or two. We all focus ourselves differently: some like the horticultural challenge, some are in it for the artistry, others simply love to be around Bonsai but don't have many plants of their own, others are enamored by the pottery, the display, the miniature accent plants, natives, collecting, etc. And they're all needed; a club without an active volunteer membership is one that won't be around much longer. Everyone is welcome and encouraged to add their voice to our song. So let's all get the word out whenever possible.

LSBF Convention Report

by Mark Bynum, 2010 LSBF Convention Chairman

I am actually sad that the Convention is over because I had such a good time. Our #1 goal was to provide a venue of learning and personal advancement in the bonsai art and I believe we accomplished just that in an atmosphere of fun to boot! The three out of State guest artists, Peter Warren, Matt Ouwinga, and Guy Guidry, energetically commented to me on the focused atmosphere of the convention. It seemed to them a non-stop merry-go-round of bonsai learning and fun. They each liked the workshop material, the smoothness of the schedule, and the attitude of the people in attendance. Peter Tea*, an up and coming artist from California and a guest at our convention, was quite impressed with the learning attitude of the people in attendance saying, "You do not see this high level of learning commitment in many of the bonsai conventions in California." Peter Warren from the UK just plain likes the "folks", as he called us in his English accent, in Texas and donated time before the convention to work on a few private collections and raised \$500 for us.

The raffles, the auction, and the "Bonsai Maniac" contest provided the fun part of the convention. Buddy Allen, current LSBF president and past chairman of several bonsai conventions, says that a convention will be a success if the food is good. Because of this advice, the hotel chef and I worked out the menu well in advance and I advised him of the riotous nature of bonsai enthusiasts with sharp shears in their hands! Not surprisingly then the food was above average for a hotel. I hope you enjoyed the white glove service on Saturday evening. We had many favorable comments. As a matter of fact, I have not heard one unfavorable comment.

To my relief, the auction was a success and set a good starting standard for future LSBF auctions. Auctions have many unknown factors to them: how many trees will come, what will the quality and value be, how many varieties will we have, will people bid? All I could do is set up the format/venue and see what happened. Thanks to all selling owners and winning bidders for your help. All of Texas bonsai benefited from the financial success of this auction as well, raising over \$2000 proceeds. I would like to see this auction continued at future LSBF conventions. If the members know that a big auction is coming up, preparations will be made well in advance and the auction will just get bigger and better over the next few years. As you know in our bonsai world, it may take 2+ years for a tree to reach a saleable maturity. Please consider this when your club hosts the Texas Bonsai Convention.

Thanks to all the LSBF clubs for your donations to the raffle and your enthusiasm. On behalf of the members of the Fort Worth Bonsai Society, we enjoyed having you visit us and we hope you enjoyed the show!

"If you have already started packing for the next Texas Bonsai Convention in Corpus Christi..... then YOU are a bonsai maniac!"

*Peter Tea has been featured as an up and coming bonsai artist in Bonsai Focus Magazine. When he returns from his apprenticeship in Japan, he will be a good candidate for a LSBF traveling artist tour.

Boxwood Grafting with Joey McCoy
Photos by Mike Watson





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ABS June Board Meeting Minutes by Collin Murphy, Secretary

Joey called the meeting to order at 7:10 p.m. present were Mike Watson, Pat Ware, Joey McCoy, Collin Murphy, Becki Drozd, and Charlotte Cranberg.

Pat gave the treasurer's report. Our income over expenses for the year through May 31st is \$283.40. There was a total of \$367.28 profit from the show.

The board discussed a tree for the Roy Nagatoshi demonstration in September but did not come to a conclusion.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:25 p.m.



*Members grafting boxwoods during June's workshop
(Photos by Joey McCoy)*

July 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.

July and August are the two most stressful months for bonsai in Texas. High temps cause watering problems and promote insect growth for many of the worst species.

Most healthy trees can take the full sun on their foliage. But the high ambient temperatures and the heating effect of the sun on the pots and soil create temperatures on the roots that they are not designed to cope with. Trees with thin leaves like the Japanese maple, *Acer Palmatum*, will probably scorch in full sun. They can also suffer from chemical burn from some fertilizers and insecticides.

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. If you use a cover of any kind be sure that the side of the pot is protected also. A loose weave cover that allows air flow is preferable to solid paper or foil. My opinion that the reason for this is that the sun still heats the soil and there is no air flow to cool it. A solid cover over the pot and box would create an oven type enclosure. A 30% shade cloth over pines, junipers, and elms and maybe 50% over maples would be ideal. And don't forget to provide protection on the west side from the mean afternoon sun.

An ideal watering might be to water at 2pm to lower the soil temperature and allow for evaporative cooling during the afternoon. Then water again after sundown so the trees renew overnight.

A more practical approach for most would be to water heavily and completely when you get home and then again more briefly in the morning. Include misting of the foliage in the evening. While watering you might check which soil mixes give you the best conditions for your backyard.

Also keep an eye open 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 a weekly 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 any oil based chemicals to buttonwoods and some others may be damaged by the oil at high temps. 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

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.

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.

Usually we do not feed our trees enough. Since the mix we use has very little nutrient value, we must make up with our fertilizer practice. The best "rule" I have heard was given by Matt Ouwinga who primarily grows trident maples.

Matt's rule:

- A. Apply organic fertilizer balls each 6 weeks. Discard old balls.
- B. Apply fish emulsion every two weeks.
- C. Apply liquid plant food on alternate weeks.

Many spring flowering plants will be setting buds for next years flowers. Azaleas will set their buds toward the end of July. If you prune tips after that you remove the new buds.

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Now that night temperatures are staying above 60 degrees you should think about repotting some of the tropicals. Most tropicals do well with an annual repotting. I would emphasize to check the wires on your trees and also see that the drains are not blocked in any way. Especially check them after a rain to be sure that your pots have drained properly. Keep the tropicals trimmed as they will be growing like crazy. However, if you want flowers on those that produce on the end of the twigs, bougainvillea-pomegranate-crape myrtle, you will have to forgo the bonsai shape to let them flower. These species should be pruned more drastically before the growing season starts so they can still be in a pretty good shape.

You still need to visit the barber shop or beauty salon and get your top worked on during the summer. Your trees too keep growing and need their periodic beauty treatment. Keep the ends trimmed and the stray shoots cut out. Its not that bad when you can sit in the shade with a big lemonade and really enjoy being with your bonsai. That way you will have your tree ready for the fall show or you will be ready to enjoy it when the change of seasons give it pretty colors.

TTSBE GARAGE SALE

No not this month—in September, but keep us in mind as you do your Spring housecleaning! You do DO Spring housecleaning, don't you??

Or whenever the mood strikes to get rid of those things that you're not using!

We need all of your good 'ole stuff!!

ABS June General Meeting Minutes

by Collin Murphy, Secretary

Joey called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. He introduced guests Marc Dominguez and Jimmy Wuertz and new members David Gross, Rollie Sidla, and Russell Kohlert. He then thanked Carl and Noreen Quisenberry for hosting.

Joey reminded everyone the LSBF convention is tomorrow in Ft Worth. There are still workshops openings.

Alisan announced that she had a room reservation that she no longer needs. If anyone has not yet made a hotel reservation contact Alisan immediately.

Joey then introduced Mike Watson who reintroduced Joey who gave the evening's program on boxwood grafting.

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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 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

