

Bonsai Notebook

A Publication of the Austin Bonsai Society

November 2008

November Programs

by Joey McCoy

This month we have one of our most exiting events of the year. **On Wednesday November 12th we will have our annual auction!** This program is not only fun, but really helps the club to finance all of our great programs. Many of us have trees with which we've hit a wall, stylistically. Also many of us have pots, tools or other items that we don't use any longer, and that others would cherish. Please bring in Bonsai or related items (items that might auction well for the club) which have been properly labeled by copying the enclosed tags and filling one out for each item. If you have an expensive item which you'd like to see have a minimum bid, please write this separately in RED ink and be sure to include your name at the bottom in case it is not sold so it can be returned. Be sure to stick around and bid, bid, bid! And bring a friend or neighbor with you too, it's a great way to get some terrific material at low price and help out your club!

Tuesday November 18th we're going to have an **Open Workshop**. The yearly growth on our trees has pretty much wound down, and it's a good time to look at deciduous trees without leaves and examine the open branches to make changes. Also some of our trees which we've been "growing out" now need their end-of-year haircuts and it's a good time to show others what we've been growing. Bring your Bonsai to share with others and any tools you need. So come to this casual setting to work on our trees and set them up for a winter sleep.

Calendar of Events

November 12 ABS Monthly Meeting Reception
Hosts: James Costabile and Sunny Huang
Zilker Garden Center 7:00 pm
(Hosts for January's reception: Alisan Clarke and Pat Ware)

November 12 ABS Monthly Meeting
Annual Auction
Zilker Garden Center 7:30 - 9:00 pm

November 18 ABS Board Meeting
Zilker Garden Center 7:00 - 7:30 pm

November 18 ABS Members Workshop
Open Workshop
Zilker Garden Center 7:30 - 9:00 pm



A Korean Hornbeam used by Mike Hansen for his presentation on Fall Color during October's Member's Workshop

Austin Bonsai Society Board of Directors

Jim Trahan

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Pat Ware

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Member at-Large

Mike Watson

Member at-Large

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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.

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President's Message by Jim Trahan

Wouldn't it be nice to just be entertained, to be a passive participant, to not really become involved? There have been several garden clubs that have died over the past few years because no one volunteered to take a position on their boards. This is what we have been faced with recently and it has been frightening to see. There is little room for passivity in any volunteer enterprise. Everyone is needed to take a turn, to give the wheel another spin.

It is discouraging to see the same people volunteer again and again while others do not. I cannot blame them for not raising their hands to help. It is discouraging to see the same handful of people volunteer to give demonstrations again and again. I cannot blame them for being reluctant to volunteer yet again.

Every club suffers from this: clubs operate on the contributions of less than 25% of their active membership. Though every club has this problem, it is a dangerous one. Clubs die because of a lack of volunteer leadership.

I believe that everyone has something worthwhile to contribute to the club. Our strength is in our diversity—we are students, project managers, biologists, leaders in other organizations, doctors, laborers, etc. In other words, each of us is a subject matter expert, capable of bringing new tools and insights into the club.

I believe that everyone can use volunteer efforts for their personal growth. Before becoming a member of the board I was quiet and passive. I was afraid to socialize with people outside my immediate demographic. Because of my volunteer efforts I have made a tremendous transformation. I am able to comfortably talk to just about anyone. The club is a safe environment for growing ourselves (not just bonsai).

To put it most plainly: I believe that all of you have something valuable to contribute to the club and it is in your best interests to volunteer. Both you and the club prosper. I want to leave the club in as good or better condition as I found it. The last thing I wanted to do was write this:

I stood before you and asked for a single volunteer and not one person raised a hand. If no one volunteers, how will we stay alive?

Kathy Shaner Demonstration

Photos by Joey McCoy



Kathy Shaner gave a demonstration during October's Monthly Meeting, the tree was raffled and won by Connie King

Kathy Shaner Workshop with TTSBE Trees
Photos by Joey McCoy



Foster parents of TTSBE trees had the opportunity to work on their trees under Kathy Shaner's guidance

October 2008 AAGC Meeting Minutes

by Charlotte Cranberg, AAGC Representative

The current update on Dinoland was presented. The Exhibit will run through November so the final report will not be ready until December at the earliest. They have brought in over \$286,000 so far including cash for tickets and contributions. Also, in-kind contributions amounted to \$149,000. That would be things like advertising, t-shirts, kiddie bags and masks. We are \$17,000 in the hole right now but they think the next two months will bring a positive balance.

It is a beautiful exhibit in a delightful setting among rock ledges, gullies, gardens and new paths through the wilder part of the gardens that we've never had access to before. If you haven't seen it, be sure to go before it leaves and take a kid if you have one. The owner of the dinos said this is the best display of his dinos he has ever seen and he's been all over the country.

The next Down the Garden Path will be published and in the mail by Nov. 30th. If you have input please get it to Bob Byers by Oct. 30th.

The club Christmas trees will be decorated on the afternoon of Nov. 21st and the morning of Dec. 22nd. We have a tree every year.

Anyone who wants to see the balance sheets on the Dino Exhibit or the AAGC please see me and I will show them to you. Also some very interesting curriculum that goes with the Dinoland for grades pre-kindergarten through grade 5. It is coordinated with state requirements for teachers. Every 5th grader in the 52 title schools will come to Dinoland free. Every child in the Austin School System through grade 5 will come to the Dinoland through private donations.

Be sure to get me your hours. If you worked in the Dino Exhibit or gave a talk other than to our own club I need those hours. You can e-mail me or give me your hours at the meeting. Phone me or e-mail me if you have any questions.

October 2008 ABS General Meeting Minutes

by Charlotte Cranberg, Secretary

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 PM at the Austin Area Garden Center by President Jim Trahan.

Hosts Jim Trahan and Mike Watson were thanked.

Visitors, Chris Hix and Zenta Rogers were introduced.

Joey McCoy introduced Kathy Shaner who worked on a native Texas Ebony for her lecture demo.

The meeting adjourned at 9:30PM.

October 2008 ABS Board Meeting Minutes

by Charlotte Cranberg, Secretary

The meeting was called to order at 7:15 PM by President Jim Trahan in the library of the Austin Area Garden Center. Also present were Pat Ware, Joey McCoy, Collin Murphy, Charlotte Cranberg and Chuck Ware.

Treasurer, Pat Ware reported \$966.62 income over expenses for the year to date. There was a profit of \$161 for the Michael Hagedorn visit.

The difficulty of finding members who would serve on the next Bonsai board was discussed.

The November auction was discussed and Chuck Ware agreed to be the lead auctioneer. It was decided that a minimum bid could be put on items, to assist the auctioneer. Items not sold at the minimum would be returned to the donor.

The Christmas party will be the first Saturday in December and members will be asked to bring their favorite dishes. Meat and tea and coffee will be supplied by the club.

Newsletter editor, Collin Murphy said that if members are willing to accept an e-mail only version of the newsletter it could save the club money and he would be willing to do this with the member's consent.

The meeting was adjourned at 8 PM.

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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.

If you have doubts on how and why to use raffia or other branch protecting materials, be sure to read this fall's issue of Texas Bonsai. You can get it on line or your LSBF rep has a few copies for those without internet capability. This is the only article I have seen in this depth.

Fall and winter is the proper time to do wiring, styling, and plucking work on pines. Repotting is saved until growth starts in the spring and candle pruning in summer. Other conifers may also be worked on.

Watch the weather so you can protect tender and semi-hardy plants. I prefer to keep them outside as long as possible but you should remember that frost, which can damage tender leaves, can occur at temps in the upper thirties. I watch the dew point temp which is when the moisture can condense out of the air. Also clear nights with no wind along with that low dew point really spell trouble.

Have your winter quarters clean and ready so that you can put your trees there quickly in the event a freeze is forecast. But don't put them there too soon as they are easier to care for up on the bench. Some use an unheated garage. I prefer to set the pots on a gravel area on the ground. This utilizes the ground heat to keep the roots from freezing as hard. The pots can then be covered with a loose mulch for insulation. Do not cover the ground with plastic, it will hold puddles of water.

After moving the bonsai, it would be a good idea to spray the benches with lime-sulfur to kill insect eggs and mold spores. If you will be putting the trees back under them for the winter, move the trees away and spray them. It would be good to have enough cold to stop the insect activity on the trees so you will not re-infest the area when the trees go back to await cold weather.

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. Try to position them so you can check the soil. If you are not watching the soil in their pots you may either get root rot fungus or it dries out, either way--you have a finished (for you beginners that reads dead) bonsai. It is easier to care for if you have them under roof, that way you know you need to tend to watering.

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.

The general wisdom is that dormant trees need no fertilizer. However, as long as the soil is not frozen there will be some root activity. I do not add any fertilizer to dormant trees but I will leave the organic fertilizer cakes on until spring in case they happen to get some good out of them. The organics will not break down much in cold weather anyway. Evergreen types (e.g. pines, junipers, yuccas and live oaks) however continue some activity and therefore can use a small amount of low nitrogen fertilizer.

A horticultural oil spray should be applied during the winter to control scale. It will also get any overwinter insects or eggs that may be trying to get thru the winter on your plant. This purpose is what lime-sulphur was first used for, and some Japanese still use it, but the oil is safer on bonsai and may be used on evergreens where the lime-sulphur should not be used. Again, do not use oil based spray on buttonwoods.

By this time any tropicals 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.

Take advantage of the slowdown in bonsai care to determine your repotting needs. Do you need a different pot? Do you need to get more soil components? How about mixing some potting soils for your needs? (Be sure to label the use of each type of mix so you won't forget what is what)



Vaughn Lionel Banting

BANTING Vaughn Lionel Banting, age 61 years, died on Saturday, October 11, 2008 at Ochsner Foundation Hospital following a short illness. He was born August 23, 1947 in Red Wing, Minnesota and lived in the New Orleans area for over 50 years. He was a well known horticulturist, and his service company, Nicholas and Banting, designed and maintained some of the finest gardens and plantings in the city. He was also well known for his work with Bonsai.

Mr. Banting was a US Army Veteran of the Vietnam War and was a Purple Heart recipient. He was a member of the Jefferson United Methodist Church. He is the son of the late Cyril K. and Irene Weston Banting and is survived by four sisters, Ruth Chauff (late Lowell), Beth Perkins (Skeeter), Joy Phillips (Gary) Ivy Schlegel (Mads). He is also survived by numerous nieces and nephews, including Christopher Segar, who was central to Vaughn's care and support during his battle with brain cancer.

Memorial contributions in memory of Mr. Banting are suggested to the American Cancer Society, 2605 River Road, New Orleans, LA. 70121 or your favorite charity. Information: (504) 835-2341

TTSBE Board of Directors Nominees

The following is a list of nominees to the TTSBE Board of Directors, along with a brief biography of each nominee.

Bill Boytim - Austin

Bill has been involved with bonsai and gardening for many years. He is a past president of the Travis County Master Gardener's Association and has given member's workshops for the Austin Bonsai Society. Bill is also an excellent craftsman and has created several bonsai display stands and turntables.

Collin Murphy - Austin

Collin is new to bonsai, having started almost three years ago. He is active in the Austin Bonsai Society as a board member-at-large and newsletter editor.



PERSIMMON HILL BONSAI STUDIO & NURSERY

Terry & Sheila Ward Austin, Texas
512-280-5575 - phbonsai@sbcglobal.net - By Appointment

Directory Corrections

None

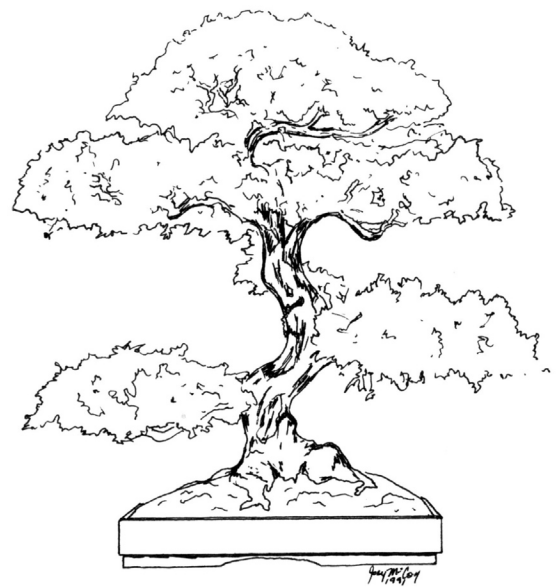
Directory Additions

None

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

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