

Bonsai Notebook

A Publication of the Austin Bonsai Society

October 2008

October Programs

by Joey McCoy

On **Wednesday October 8th** our club will host the great talent of **Kathy Shaner**, who will give a **demonstration on styling a Bonsai** which will then be raffled off to the attendees. Kathy is the curator of the Golden State Bonsai Exhibit's Collection North in Oakland California as well as an advisor to the Texas State Bonsai Exhibit here. She has been involved in Bonsai for 25 years, apprenticed under Yasuo Mitsuya, and became the first non-Japanese and first woman to be certified by the Nippon Bonsai Kyodo Kumai, the professional Bonsai grower's branch of the Nippon Bonsai association of Japan. Kathy always impresses with her work, so this is a program not to miss!

For our meeting on **Tuesday October 21st** we will have **Mike Hansen** give a talk about the best trees, native and acclimatized for our area for **Fall color**. There are ways to enhance the color display we have in the fall, to get the most out of the season. Bring in a tree so we can discuss aspects of that species with the group. Cooler weather and Autumn colors are just around the corner and there's no reason we shouldn't get the most of the season's display just as we do flowers in the spring. See everyone there!

Calendar of Events

October 8 ABS Monthly Meeting Reception

Hosts: Mike Watson and Jim Trahan

Zilker Garden Center 7:00 pm

(Hosts for October's reception: James Costabile and Sunny Huang)

October 8 ABS Monthly Meeting

Lecture/Demo with Kathy Shaner

Zilker Garden Center 7:30 - 9:00 pm

October 21 ABS Board Meeting

Zilker Garden Center 7:00 - 7:30 pm

October 21 ABS Members Workshop

Fall Color with Mike Hansen

Zilker Garden Center 7:30 - 9:00 pm



This Boxwood was the subject of Michael Hagedorn's demonstration performed at September's Monthly Meeting

Austin Bonsai Society Board of Directors

Jim Trahan
President

Joey McCoy
Vice President

Charlotte Cranberg
Secretary

Pat Ware
Treasurer

Nancy Moore
Member at-Large

Collin Murphy
Member at-Large

Mike Watson
Member at-Large

Carl Quisenberry
Past President

President's Message by Jim Trahan

The Cedar Elms are turning orange and tatty trees are ready for rest. As one Japanese poet wrote, "Autumn leaves fall, but not in vain". Our trees will slumber, gathering their strength to force new growth in the new year. It is an obvious example of Change, the same Change that occurs in every moment but seldom apprehended in the moment of its turning. A spinning top will topple and a watch will run out of time. As bonsai enthusiasts we may become keenly aware of an entropic cycle of time: every tree moves from seed to the bone-yard, yet cycles between frenetic growth and torpor. Without the cycles of growth and rest our trees would soon wither away.

It is time that our club begins accepting nominations for a new Board. If you are approached for a board position please consider that this has been a very rewarding endeavor for all of us, just as it will be for you. This is because you can have a direct effect on the direction of the club. It has never been more important that younger members become involved in the leadership of the club. As many of our senior members, who know the club forwards and backwards, retire from bonsai it is up to us to carry on in their places. Without passing the torch to members that have not held a Board position, important tribal knowledge will be lost and the club could soon wither away.



Donna Dobberfuhr gave September's workshop on aging techniques



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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.

Aging Techniques with Donna Dobberfuhl
Photos by Joey McCoy



Donna gives advice and discusses techniques on trees brought in by members.

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web page: <http://www.wimberley-tx.com/~bonsaijg>

Lecture and Demonstration by Michael Hagedorn
Photos by Joey McCoy



Foster Care a Tree Program

By Alisan Clarke, The Texas State Bonsai Exhibit

The collected cedar elms, *Ulmus crassifolia*, is part of an exciting new hands-on program from TTSBE. These trees, along with others, are available for foster care! To see photographs of more trees in the program contact your clubs TTSBE Representative.

Foster care is a program where an individual can pick a tree — ranging from rough material to styled bonsai — and become its foster parent at the TTSBE development site. Trees are available for bonsai skill levels ranging from basic through advanced. Skilled bonsai artists will consult with each foster parent about their tree and help design a development program. Foster parents are responsible for the maintenance and development of their tree for a renewable one year commitment. This includes pruning, pinching, weeding, spotting and addressing any problems with the tree and, as needed, wiring, repotting and styling. Watering, insect/fungal control and feeding are taken care of by other volunteers.

Becoming a foster parent requires dedication and a commitment of time. Bonsai enthusiasts who live outside the greater Austin area can work with TTSBE to set up their schedule. Schedules must include a minimum of three to five timely, hands-on sessions per year with the tree. Foster parents must adjust their time to meet the plants needs throughout the year. A co-foster parent will look after the tree at other times.

Becoming a foster parent is a large responsibility. However, the rewards make it well worth it. Pride in developing your foster tree, advancing your skills, learning new techniques, the camaraderie in sharing with other foster parents plus some special perks.

If you are interested in joining our foster care program or have questions, please contact your local bonsai clubs TTSBE Representative or Elaine White at ewbonsai@austin.rr.com or 512-266-2655.

CLUB REPRESENTATIVES

Austin Bonsai Society

Els Ulug

Bonsai Society of Dallas

John Miller

Corpus Christi Bonsai Club

Jesse Willars

Fort Worth Bonsai Society

Gail Williams

Houston Bonsai Society

Alan Raymond

Longview Bonsai Society

Todd Davis

San Antonio Bonsai Society

Donna Dobberfuhl

September 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. Present were Pat & Chuck Ware, Collin Murphy, Mike Watson, Joey McCoy and Charlotte Cranberg.

Treasurer, Pat Ware reported that every club has to file a 990 with the IRS every year now. We have a new number and we are a 501C4 organization which means we can no longer give tax exemptions to contributors.

A nominating committee will be selected by Jim Trahan and nominations for next year's officers will be presented to the regular meeting in October and additional nominations from the floor will be accepted. Voting will be in November and new officers will take office in January.

Rick Archer has asked our club if he could join our web site and he would list us on his web site, which he says is an informational site. Jim will report back on this after looking into it.

Volunteers are needed in the Dino Exhibit. Call Charlotte and give 4 hours of your time sitting in comfort under a tent and taking tickets. No selling or money involved.

The meeting adjourned at 7:45.

Charlotte Cranberg
Secretary

October 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.

A strange thing about my oaks this year. Last April they did their spring thing and grew a set of new leaves. Then they stopped growing. There was no growth until the middle of August. Now they are all growing again except the post oaks. It did not matter if I had repotted or not, they all did the same. I guess I will just have to watch for any early frosts. On another strange happening note, several of my gardening friends who normally have big tomato crops said that they (like me) had an extremely light fruit set this year.

Anyhow, now is the time to start your trees toward their winter siesta. If you wait until the temperature drops, you get too rushed and omit some of the little housekeeping duties.

When the leaves start turning the sap has quit for the year and you may check the branches and twigs to see if any need to be trimmed. Cutting back any protruding branches will keep them from snagging and possibly breaking other trees when you put them down. Don't cut the buds off the spring flowering plants unless absolutely necessary if you want flowers next spring.

If you have not checked your wiring yet this fall, you had better look at it also. The fall growth can make the tree swell up and get bad wire marks in a hurry. If the tree/limbs do not stay where you want them, then rewire it placing the new wire in a slightly different path or possible wrap in the opposite direction.

Kathy Shaner (and Sylvia says it too) has recommended that you remove the top 1/4 to 1/2 inch of soil and replace it with fresh soil. This will help eliminate weed seed that has blown in and may make watering easier.

Do you need to change the pot? Making notes at this time will give you 3-4 months to find the proper pot.

Winter quarters: Here in Texas more trees are lost in the winter due to drying out than to the cold. Of course that doesn't mean for you to leave the tropicals out or to let the roots freeze on southern trees like the crape myrtle. Even in a greenhouse or sunny window the soil can dry out amazingly fast. The wind in winter has amazing drying powers too. So while protecting the roots be sure to give it a wind screen but make sure that you can check the soil for watering needs. (it helps here if you know which particular plants dry out faster and situate them together. Winter kill usually comes because the soil has frozen and the sun and/or wind is removing water from the tops. The roots cannot obtain water to replenish the loss and the top desiccates to the point of death.

For the beginners, plants like the cedar elm, oak, maple that are

hardy much further north can be set on a clean gravel bed. They do not need any sunlight until spring. When the real cold (26 or lower) gets here cover the pots with a fairly loose mulch to help retain the ground heat. Plants that grow south of Dallas, crape myrtle, pyracantha, some azalea, need to have root protection. I like to let them get frostbit but bring them in before freezing. Of course the tropicals need to be babied.

All this is basically talking about the broadleaf deciduous trees. Evergreens do not go fully dormant in winter. Some broadleaf types like boxwoods slow way down but still need sunlight. These broadleaf ones need the basic winter protection of deciduous trees but have a higher water and sunlight need.

Cut back on the watering now that the temperature is a little lower but do not allow the trees to dry out. Trees require less water during the shorter days and lower temperatures. However you need to remember that the wind can still stress the trees and dry out the soil so water by checking the soil and not just on a given schedule.

Insects will continue to be present. Cooler (but not cold) days mean a resurgence of the aphids. Mites will also still be around. Scale also can be a problem. Evergreens and any deciduous trees whose foliage turns can be treated with an horticultural oil which will kill the adults and also wipe out the eggs and over-wintering pupae. Be sure to cover all the cracks in the bark to get to the eggs. The organic spray (one tablespoon each liquid kelp, fish emulsion, apple cider vinegar, and molasses in one gallon of water) will work on evergreens and will also give them some nutrients.

Feeding of deciduous trees should be discontinued for the winter. Evergreens and conifers will benefit from a low nitrogen feeding. One such mix might be 60% cottonseed meal and 40% bonemeal. Being organic, this will breakdown into nutrients more slowly as the season gets cooler and the trees activity slows also. The organic spray given above can be used as a soil drench. Kelp is an excellent source of the essential minor elements needed by plants.

As the trees loose their foliage, you can study their trunk lines and branch structure. Any faulty styling and the general design features can be observed more easily and corrections planned. Look for crossing branches. Cut vertical growing twigs both growing up and those growing down. Reduce long internodes by cutting back and growing new extensions. Clean out heavy branch clusters the make the tree look too dense. Be particularly attentive to the formation of heavy branches in the top part of the tree where faster growth often occurs. Work can be done now or later during the winter at your leisure but it is too easy to forget about it when the tree is in winter storage.

Some may repot in the fall but I feel that it is counter-productive to do so. New roots are more prone to freeze damage if we get a bad winter. It has been stated that the key to safe repotting is to minimize root disturbance and to exclude severe root pruning. This seems to me to be a recipe for developing root problems, poor drainage leading to root rot and the inability of the soil to hold enough water to last all day. No heavy pruning will lead to the lack of refinement and a top heavy tree. I would recommend that you do the above paragraph this fall and repot at the proper time next spring.

August 2008 ABS General Meeting Minutes

by Charlotte Cranberg, Secretary

The meeting was called to order at 7:15 PM by Vice President Joey McCoy.

Guests Elizabeth & Bob Burchett and Becki Drozd were introduced.

Hostesses Els Ulug and Candy Hansen were thanked.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:20.

Michael Hagedorn was introduced and gave the lecture demo using a Japanese Boxwood which Collin Murphy was fortunate enough to win.

Volunteers are needed in the Dino Exhibit. Call Charlotte to volunteer to sit in a comfortable chair in a tent and take tickets for 4 hours, 9:30 to 1:30 or 1:30 to 5:30.

Charlotte Cranberg
Secretary

Kathy Shaner Workshop

The Foster Care Parents that have signed up will have a free workshop with Kathy Shaner specifically with their tree, on Oct.6 '08 at Elaine White's Lakeview Bonsai garden.

You will be given advice and suggestions on your tree starting at 9:00am – 12:00pm.

We will break for a locally catered lunch from 12:00 – 1:00pm on the deck overlooking Lake Travis. Everyone will pay for their own lunch and can choose from several menus from the local area.

In the afternoon bring-your-own-tree session starting at 1:00, you may attend without signing up for the Foster Care Tree Program. Cost of this Workshop is \$40:00 and will last 'till about 4:00pm.

We will be working outside, so wear your grubbies and layers, as the weather is unpredictable.

You may attend both or only one session-or if you want to work on your tree in the pm you can observe the first session at no cost. Maximum number of participants is 8. Contact Elaine White: (512) 266-2655 or ewbonsai@austin.rr.com

Elaine White

Directory Corrections

Mike and Candy Hansen
mbpbonsai@suddenlink.net

Directory Additions

Rebecca Drozd
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becki@wolfhollow.net

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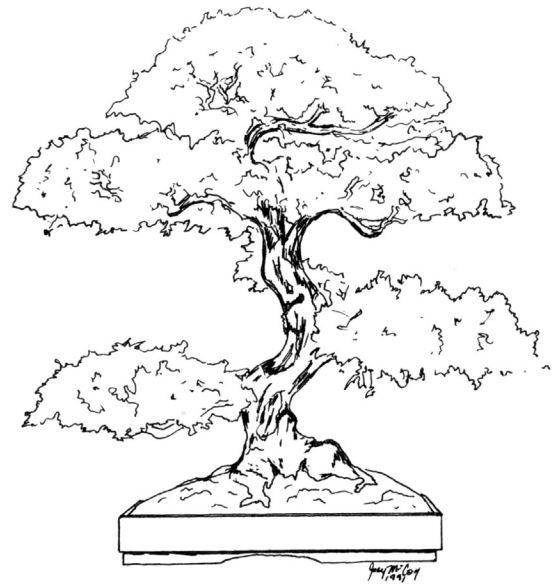


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601 Kay Lane
Pflugerville, TX 78660
(call for directions)

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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