



Bonsai Notebook

www.austinbonsaisociety.com

A Publication of the Austin Bonsai Society

February 2015 vol 50

February 2015 Program

by Jimbo Baumann

Well considering our winter / spring (not sure whether it is winter or spring?) weather conditions along with a hefty dose of “cedar fever” our next meeting is right in line with our repotting schedule. We are concentrating our efforts with Seasonal Care for Japanese Black Pine and the featured artist this night will be Mike Hansen. Japanese Black Pine can do quite well in central Texas and is a mainstay for any bonsai collection. In fact some bonsai experts will call this tree the king of any collection.

Mike Hansen has had a very busy winter season with classes at MBP Studio (Plugerville, TX) with Forest Bonsai, A Trident Maple Dig, and a Beginners Series of classes. His programs are always well received by his students and we are fortunate to have time with him in February. Mike and his family (wife Candy and daughter Lori) developed an early fascination with bonsai in the late seventies and early eighties and started their initial business as Midwest Bonsai Pottery in St. Paul, Minnesota; however fascination with bonsai in a warmer/less snowy environment sounded good so they relocated to Austin in 1985 and have been working diligently with bonsai ever since. As a featured artist in the USA and world, Mike has exhibited his bonsai for over 35 years. In 1987 he was honored as an Outstanding American Bonsai Artist at the International Congress Exhibition. Mike also served as President of Bonsai Clubs International from 1992 through 1994.

For those of you with pines please be sure to bring them for any questions or just a “show and tell”. In addition, Mike is really an expert in any evergreen bonsai and do not hesitate to bring those evergreen questions with you to receive some scientific advice and excellent experience. MPB Studio is open with hours posted via their website (www.mbpbonsai.com) six days a week and access to excellent soils, pots, tools and other equipment.

The member’s workshop in FEB (17 FEB) will feature member assistance for repotting and refining, so bring those trees for help and assistance. And read John Miller’s column closely for those winter time “to dos”.

Good Luck with those winter repotting duties and see you in February !

Calendar of Events

Feb 11, 7pm: ABS Meeting, Pine Care with Mike Hansen
Hosts: Shelia & Terry Ward and Nathan and Lizzie

Feb 12, 1-4pm: San Antonio Bonsai Society Workshop
Artist: Guy Guidry bonsaiode@gmail.com for info

Feb 12: Lecture/Demo with G. Guidry San Antonio Bonsai Society Lions Field Center

Feb 17, 7:30pm: ABS Members Only Workshop and Board Meeting

Feb 21/22: Trident Maple Dig www.mbpbonsai.com

Feb 21: Shohin Society of Texas, contact Terry Ward for more info



Rafting with Jimbo Baumann

(Photo by Joey McCoy)

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hes. 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.

Lizzie Chen is the editor of "Bonsai Notebook". She may be contacted at lizziechen09@gmail.com

Austin Bonsai on the Internet

Online discussions
Picture and video sharing
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NO SPAM

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/austinbonsai/>
or
jvmccoy@sbcglobal.net.

President's Message by Jonathan Wood

What a fun reception from you bonsai folks for me at our first general meeting of 2015. Thank you for your enthusiasm and kindness! Also, let's keep sending praise to our volunteers who help ABS be such an informative fellowship of which to be a part.

Welcome to our new members who have joined recently... we're looking forward to sharing our knowledge and getting to know you! I found club members very receptive to me but sometimes I had to reach out and say Hi! I'm into bonsai, too! And so it began...

A word about the weather... we in Central Texas have to be on the lookout for early budding and waking of dormant plants, only to have them go back through a hard freeze. It is worth keeping in mind that sometimes in February it feels like spring, only to snap back down into a freeze. In years' past, we have occasionally had ice and snow around mid-to-late February. Conversely, watch out for roasting plants in greenhouses on warmer days (we may be seeing close to 80 degrees soon!) Be on the look out to protect varieties during a potential roller coaster climate if you're new to the region or to bonsai.

The ABS Board is working diligently to bring an excellent variety of programs to 2015 Looking forward to the wonderful programs our Vice President (and Programs coordinator), Jimbo has in store for us! I know he cares so much for our learning and enjoyment and puts a lot into bringing us such wonderful presentations and workshops.

Also we can use general help sweeping and wiping down tables after each meeting/workshop night at Zilker for anyone who can pitch in an extra couple of minutes.. Thank you to all who have helped in the past. Please email me at Jonathan.WoodJS@gmail.com if you think you have a little extra time for set-up and take down some of our events. Also if you're interested in helping promote our club or see yourself pitching in something unique ... we are open :-)

Jonathan Wood, President

NEWS CORNER

A wonderful bonsai opportunity is just around the corner or make that south in San Antonio!

The San Antonio Bonsai Society (SABS) has a few extra spaces left in their workshop with bonsai artist Guy Guidry (New Orleans) at the low cost of \$25.00. Those of you that have met Guy know he is skilled with most trees, his specialty are Bald Cypress (see photo). The workshop is scheduled for Thursday FEB 12th from 1 to 4 pm at the studio of Donna Dobberfuhl (947 N. Alamo Street, SATX). Fee is \$25.00 directly payable to David Whitaker at the event. Reservations must be made via Ryan Odegaard at bonsaiode@gmail.com.

The workshop is a "bring your own tree" (or up to 3 trees) for vision for the future, review, styling input). The lecture demo at the San Antonio Society meeting that evening will be at Lion's Field Center (no charge). Email Ryan for further information.

REMINDER

*****DUES ARE DUE!!!*****

\$30.00 individual \$35.00 family of 2

**BRING DUES TO MEETING OR
MAIL A CHECK PAYABLE TO ABS
TO:**

**Pat Ware
12404 Ranch Road 12
Wimberley, Tx. 78676**

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WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Robert & Nancy Gordon
361-205-0912
nancelwg@gmail.com

Tom Hollingshead
512-970-6930
treandme@gmail.com

Stephanie Quisenberry
512-282-1529
sdquisenberry@yahoo.com

ABS Board Meeting
Date: 20 January 2015

Locations: Austin Area Garden Center at Zilker Park

Board Members Present: Jonathan Wood, Jim Baumann, Pat Ware, Angelina Hewes, Zerita Rogers, May Chan Lau, Deborah Van Cleaf, Others Present: Nan Jenkins

Called to Order by President at 7:08 pm

1. No amendments to the Secretary's Report as they appear in current newsletter. Minutes accepted as written and approved as published.
2. Treasurer's Report: P. Ware presented a Profit and Loss Year to Year Comparison Chart from 2014 to 2013. This data was comparable with the exception of the Profit from the 2013 convention of \$5400.00. Further discussion of the P & L Budget vs. Actual was discussed as presented at the General Meeting on 14 January 2015. It was noted that CD interest of \$727.19 was reflected for 2014, this CD currently yields 4.5% interest and is due for rollover in July 2015. It was noted that finding a CD with a good interest rate will be difficult. Approximately 25 members have renewed to date with 1 new member—Tom Hollingshead.
The Treasurer's Report was accepted by the board.
3. Preparation for Next Club Meeting: FEB 11th Mtg: Seasonal Care for Japanese Black Pine by Mike Hansen PPT presentation and discussion, members bring pines. Buddy for Mike is Jimbo FEB 17 Workshop Refining and Repotting
4. Additional Reports/Announcements
 - a. LSBF Delegate Report: N. Jenkins stated LSBF has confirmed the Visiting Artist schedule of Owen Reich for July for TX / LA Clubs. LSBF Seminar is still planned for Fall 2015 in the Houston area. Exact date not yet available.
 - b. TTSBE Announcements: K. Shaner work dates for TTSBE collection set for Jan 23 and 24
 - c. Austin Area Garden Council(AAGC) Report: No update
5. Old Business
 - a. Seeking Volunteers for Librarian and Publicity for ABS—newsletter and meeting announcements
 - b. N. Jenkins providing care for Workshop trees—Ficus and TX Ebony—seeking timeframe in 2015 schedule
6. New Business
 - a. Planning meeting for 2015 schedule: board members worked through a calendar schedule for 2015 for meetings, workshops, annual show, visiting artist program, annual auction, and an artist for fall 2015 and winter season 2015/2016 timeframe.
 - b. Pending and Deliverable Items: Presenters for April and May mtg—Jimbo, ABS New member Tropical Workshop finalize workshop presenters, fee, and organizational structure, Contact information for Dave Gutman to be provided by D. Van Cleaf to Jimbo, contact information for Alex Leong provided by Nan Jenkins to Jimbo. Finalize fee for Visiting Artist Workshop. Finalize auctioneer for Annual Auction, DVan Cleaf to research potential artist/speaker M. Ouwinga for winter 2016 timeframe with M. Hansen.
 - c. Draft Schedule to be updated by J. Wood, finalized for print by FEB board meeting.
7. Board meeting closed by board at 8:50 pm.

ABS General Club Meeting
Club Meeting Date: WED 14 January 2015

Location: Austin Area Garden Center at Zilker Park

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Number of Attendees: 32

Number of Guests: 4—Arianne Sclerandi, Mary Kraemer, Michael Rigby, and Tom Hollingshead

1. Meeting of ABS called to order by President at 7:30 pm
2. Acknowledgement of previous President Nan Jenkins and returning board members: J. Baumann, A. Hewes, Z. Rodgers, P. Ware, and D. Van Cleaf
3. Thank you to the Hosts for tonight's refreshments—Alisan Clarke and Pat Ware
4. No new members, renewals handled by P. Ware.
5. Reports and Announcements
 - a. Treasurer: P. Ware provided the ABS Profit and Loss Budget vs. Actual for January through December 2014. Income was reported at \$ 6,510.19 for the year with expenses of \$ 5,997.42 yielding a net income of \$ 512.77. This varied to planned budget by a shortfall of \$97.58. Copies were provided to members.
 - b. TTSBE: J. McCoy announced workshop days for TTSBE collection on January 23 rd and 24th. This provides a free training opportunity for all members with hands on experience directly from artist Kathy Shaner. Jan 23rd is to be at E. Whites home and Jan 24th at Persimmon Hill Studio, Terry and Sheila Ward.
 - c. Austin Area Garden Council (AAGC): No report at this time
 - d. LSBF: No report at this time
6. Program: Jimbo Baumann, VP and Program Chair introduced the program on hands on demonstration of Raft Juniper. Jimbo discussed and demonstrated technique and application of a Raft Juniper with 5 trunks. The demonstration took a 1 gallon juniper and turned this tree into a raft styling with 5 trunks. Members and guests circulated during the lecture demo to view 3 additional trees. Two of the raft trees were junipers and one was quince (toya-nishiki variety).
7. The meeting was well received by all attendees and this styling technique was appreciated.

Shohin News Update

The free Shohin Society of Texas (SSOT) will hold their first workshop of 2015 on SAT FEB 21st at Persimmon Hill Studio. The subject of this workshop is all about enhancing shohin size bonsai with a hands on and how to followup on some of our 2013 / 2014 workshop trees.

Complete details will be in the FEB Shohin Society newsletter. If you are not already on our email list and would like a copy or just have questions contact Terry or Sheila at texshohin@sbcglobal.net or 512-280-5575.

The Shohin Society has no dues or fees and anyone interested in shohin size bonsai (up to eight inches in height) is welcome. Meetings start at 10:30 a.m. at Persimmon Hill Bonsai, 12001 Red Hawk Cove in Austin. Come about 10 a.m. and have coffee and nibbles before we get underway. We usually finish by 2:30 p.m. Come to learn, share and enjoy shohin bonsai with friends from all over the state.

Bring a brown bag lunch or enjoy hot dogs and all the trimmings provided by our S.S.O.T. kitty. Vegetarian alternatives available by prior request. New folks are always welcome—from just beginning to bonsai veterans. Your welcome to bring a friend to share the learning and camaraderie.

Kathy Shaner visits TTSBE and worked with volunteers on January 23 and 24. Photos by May Lau



February 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.

What happens when you miss a turn in removing wire from your bonsai? You get a large swelling in the branch that destroys the smooth taper you are working for. The only rule for removing wire is to start with the end of the wire and work down the wire completely to the other end, no jumping from wire to wire. To do this you have a choice—you can untwist the wire or you can cut each loop. If you cut it is very easy to miss a loop. The only sure way is to develop a routine. Hold the tip with pliers while you cut the next loop, remove the cut loop, lay it aside keeping your eye on the cut end, hold the new cut tip and repeat. Do not get distracted and do something else. Following a routine keeps you on the one job.

February is the start of the active cycle for bonsai, first the repotting when new growth is first evident, then the refinement process starts as soon as the green comes, all the while tending to the tasks of watering, feeding, and watching for insects.

Spring is a long drawn out affair and each species has its own time table in dealing with it. To be really successful in bonsai, then, you must know what each species you have will need and how it responds to YOUR OWN backyard climate. If you have kept your trees from freezing they will want to start growing much earlier than those kept outside all winter. Typically, in my collection which stays outside, the elms will be first, foliage showing about the end of February or the first of March depending on the winter, along with the earliest maples. Then later in March, the rest of the maples and most of the others. The deciduous oaks will come out around April 1. Out here in the country I am 2 or 3 weeks later than I was in town, 30 miles away. The timetable has to be your own set by watching the trees themselves. All bonsai functions should be done when your tree tells you that the timing is right.

Repotting 'can' be done at any time during the dormancy but new roots are susceptible to freezing so you have to have some place to protect them after repotting. If not repotting this year, you can help weed control by removing the top ¼" of soil and replace it with new soil. The best time to repot the deciduous temperate zone trees is when the buds are just beginning to swell but before green is showing. Generally this will be before the last of the

freezing weather. Trees that leaf out early, maples and elms, can withstand a few degrees of frost but if repotted you should protect the newly growing roots. Sometimes this just means setting them on the ground. Some species such as the oaks and willows are naturally programmed to wait much later so that there is very little chance to get nipped.

The newer wisdom on azaleas is that you also repot them at this time. The roots will be reestablished by blooming time. This is much easier on the tree than waiting until after bloom when the temperature will be hot. Before blooming starts you will be removing a lot of excess buds anyway which will reduce the stress on the tree at that time. Remove enough buds to allow the remaining flowers to have room to fully open. This should be done in late February or early March on the early blooming species (Karume) but may go later in March for the Satsuki types.

Refinement is the process that makes a well styled tree look great developing fine ramification and obtaining smaller leaves. Part of the refinement starts as soon as new growth appears. Keep it pinched so you keep the internodes short and develop a compact set of twigs with small leaves on the branches. On alternate leaved species (e.g. elms) pinch when the shoot gets 4 or 5 leaves. Fingernails or shears can be used. If the twig gets too long it will be tough and you have to use shears. On opposite leaved trees (maples) pinch the central shoot as soon as it can be distinguished from the two leaves. To do this really right you need to use tweezers with a dull point.

Development pruning is difficult for beginners in that to develop thickness you need to let the new branch grow wild which destroys the look of your 'bonsai'. You also will have long internodes which will not produce buds at the right places especially on the opposite leaved species. You need to do refinement pruning the first couple of times to get some short internodes and then let the tips go wild.

Spring flowering plants will have their buds set on last years growth so pruning them will remove some flowers. Those that bloom later in the year will generally bloom on this years growth. Pruning them will reduce the amount of flowers. In some cases such as crape myrtle, tip pruning of the branch will result in no flowers at all. In these cases you must decide which is most important, ramification or flowers. A compromise would be to prune the branch shorter than you normally would and then let it bloom on new growth which will at the proper length, at least for the first flowering of the season.

When the growth starts the tree will need fertilizer. However, use one that has a small amount of nitrogen (the first number). The tree is naturally programmed to grow rapidly at this time so you don't need to encourage it further. Feed lightly to maintain a healthy green foliage. Ideally use an organic fertilizer which provides nutrients more slowly when the weather is cool. Trace minerals should be added to help with both the foliage color and the color of blooms.

If you have not used an horticultural oil, the time is fast running out. The oil would be used to kill scale and overwintering mites and other boogers. When new growth starts oil might damage the tender foliage. When new growth starts, the problems to look for are the above mentioned mites but especially aphids and mealy bugs. These can be controlled as well as giving the plants the required fertilizer by using an organic spray. (1 tablespoon each of liquid kelp, liquid fish emulsion, apple cider vinegar (5%), and molasses in one gallon of water. Or use a commercial mix like Garrett Juice. All these are available in any organic nursery.) If leaf spot, mildew or any other fungal problems appear, use a baking soda (sodium bicarbonate), potassium bicarbonate spray, or a commercial fungicide.

An important job which many neglect saying they are not going to show any trees is to detail their trees. This makes them look their best and that helps give you incentive to follow other good practices. Start by checking the branches. Prune any out of place or too long twigs. Remove any unnecessary wire, that is wire on limbs that have set in place. Treat any jin and shari that needs it. Then move down to the pot. Be sure it is clean and all lime deposits are removed. Steel wool works great to clean pots. A coating with a very light wax polish such as leaf shine will make the pot look good and helps keep the mineral deposits from forming. Then check the soil. It should cover the outer roots. The surface of the soil must be clean of any fallen leaves or other debris. Now it looks so good you might as well take it to a show.

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



Spotlight of the Month
(Photo by Joey McCoy)