

# Bonsai Notebook

*www.austinbonsaisociety.com*

*A Publication of the Austin Bonsai Society*

*July 2014 vol 43*

## **July 2014 Programs** by Jimbo Baumann

### **Ikebana (Japanese Flower Arranging) with Alisan Clarke**

Many of the Asian art forms utilize the concept of nature and space. And so, the July 2014 program will discuss "Design Principles of Ikebana" and their relation to the subjects of bonsai and toknoma display. The triangle design system is an excellent starting point for our discussion. Please take time to do a little personal study of the culture and background to this wonderful artform. You may utilize the weblink at the bottom of this article and/or search the web for yourself. You are also urged to consult the Austin Bonsai Society website specifically, <http://www.austinbonsaisociety.com/articles.html>, the Articles Section, where some excellent resource material in design can be found.

Bring cut flowers and any personal vases to create something to take home. Alisan will also bring a few of her own special demonstration pieces.

Our artist leading this lecture/demo/discussion will be Alisan Clarke, RN, Univ. of Pennsylvania, BFA, UT Austin, and 2 yrs postgraduate study in the Creative Spirit, UT Austin. Alisan, is a special artist, originally trained in nursing she refocused her energies after moving to Japan. While in Japan, she studied in the Ikenobo-Ikebana School and graduated as a certified artist in this special discipline. Alisan, was one of the first 12 twelve American women to earn this distinctive certificate. Alisan later trained students in the USA; primarily show judges and florists, and students in Europe and Turkey representing more diverse cultures / backgrounds. As a Quaker daughter, of one of the founding families of Philadelphia, Alisan's life has focused on blending fine arts with cultural diversity and enthusiasm. Please join us for this special monthly program.

<http://www.presentationzen.com/presentationzen/2009/09/0-design-lessons-from-ikebana.html>

## Calendar of Events

**July 9 ABS Monthly Meeting**  
**Ikebana with Alisan Clarke**  
**Reception Hosts: Becki Drozd and Els Ulug**  
**Zilker Garden Center 7:00 pm**

**June 15 Board Meeting**  
**Members Worksop-Bring cuttings to share**

**September 8 Workshop with Visiting Artist, Peter Tea**

**September 9 LSBF Visiting Artist, Peter Tea**



**Alisan Clarke with her scrolls**  
*(Photo by Joey McCoy)*

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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.

Lizzie Chen is the editor of "Bonsai Notebook". She may be contacted at [lizziechen09@gmail.com](mailto:lizziechen09@gmail.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 Nan Jenkins

Hi, Everyone!

All the rain we've had in the last few weeks have been so wonderful! We've done much less watering, saving the lakes a bit, plus we haven't needed the extra measures needed for our trees during the hot summer. But that may be over for several months, so attend to your trees and most importantly, the pots they are in. Hot pots kill roots, so put them in the shade or, for those trees who still need lots of sun, find other ways to shade the pots. If you can water your trees mid afternoon, that will also help them.

We have a special opportunity at July's general meeting. Alisan Clarke is going to share some of her knowledge about ikebana with us. That is the beautiful way of arranging flowers that is one of the arts from Japan, and is related to the bonsai art. You will not want to miss this program!

I'm getting excited about the workshop we will have with Peter Tea in September. The visiting artist program is one of the best things the Lone Star Bonsai Federation does for the clubs. We get the advantage of gleaning knowledge from some of the best bonsai artists. And sharing the expenses helps all of us to enjoy their presence. We will have the workshop for only 6 people on Tuesday evening, September 9th and he will do a demonstration for us at the September meeting on the 10th.

I look forward to seeing all of you on July 9th. Keep those trees happy!

-Nan

**Austin Bonsai Society**  
**General Meeting Minutes: June 11, 2014**

Nan Jenkins called the meeting to order 7:30 pm.

Welcome to new members: Emily and Michael Boudreaux, Daniel Axson, Marlene Lagerquist, Jaime and Doris Molina, and returning member Dario and Maria Octaviano.

Guests included six folks for the June meeting.

Many thanks to Nan Jenkins, Timmi Kuykendall, Noreen and Pete Quisenberry for refreshments. They were most appreciated by our crowd of over forty attendees.

Alisan Clarke, the club designee for the Austin Area Garden Council, (<http://www.zilker garden.org/aagc/>), gave a brief update on the success of the Austin Garden Festival held this spring. She also indicated each member had received a survey electronically requesting information on the long term plan for Zilker Gardens. She requested along with President Nan Jenkins that all members complete the survey. Future plans will include wider input from the community and the clubs that support the garden.

Jonathan Wood, club designee for the Lone Star Bonsai Federation (LSBF) (<http://www.lonestarbonsai.org/>), gave a brief update. The Federation is sponsoring a visiting artist in the fall. Peter Tea is the artist and he will be conducting workshops at all Texas clubs. See the article in another part of this newsletter.

The program for June was introduced by Jimbo Baumann. Jimbo had noted a tremendous interest in Maples and how to cultivate that special Maple Tree in your bonsai collection. Our special artist for the evening lecture was Chuck Ware of Jade Gardens of Wimberly, TX.

Chuck concentrated his lecture presentation on specifics to central Texas maple bonsai development. He discussed the maple (*acer palmatum*) with special consideration to soil mixtures, tree environment, watering needs, and pruning refinement. Tree environment was stressed with a discussion of sun, wind protection, temperatures, etc. Pruning technique in regards to the leafing patterns and development of the overall horizontal branching structure. Care must be taken in the pruning refinement of all maples, the leaf arrangement is always opposite. The twigs and branches repeat the opposite arrangement of the leaves, growing in opposite pairs. Chuck's presentation was enhanced with several maples which he brought in for his lecture—Trident Maples and several Japanese Maples. These maples illustrated several of the examples and techniques as part of the lecture.

Members are urged to see the library for several good texts on maple growth and development. In addition, Chuck referenced the book entitled Japanese Maples by J.D. Vertrees, published by Timber Press. In addition, members are urged to review the website for the Newsletter of the American Bonsai Society, there is one discussing Advanced Refinement Techniques. The FEB 2014 newsletter <http://www.austinbonsaisociety.com/americanbonsaisociety.html>.

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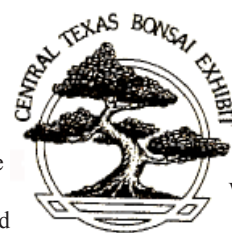
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<https://www.facebook.com/AustinBonsaiSociety>

## JADE GARDENS

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**ABS Board Meeting Minutes  
June 17, 2014**

Present: Nan Jenkins, Jimbo Baumann, Deborah Van Cleaf, Zerita Rogers, Pat Ware, Russell Kohlert, Angie Hewes

Nan called to order: 7:00 pm.

Treasurer Report: Pat booked Senior Activity Center for Peter Tea workshop in September.

ABS profit made on end of May exhibit & raffle was \$473 but expenses brought that down to -\$26.90.

Deborah outlined a plan to promote the Peter Tea workshop to the members. The cost estimate per workshop participant is estimated at approximate--\$55.00 each, BOD still must determine final cost in July—maximum participation has been limited to 6. The club will raffle the lecture/demo tree at our regular meeting to help offset the expenses of his visit. Our cost for this visiting artist visit will be approximately \$652.50.

Nan discussed the motion carried by the board from June. The club forwarded a check for \$50.00 to the Austin Area Garden Council(AAGC) to support the development of a WEB Virtual Tour; highlighting Zilker Botanical Garden and each of the supporting clubs. In addition, Nan composed a summary of our club to be included as text and a photo provided by Joey McCoy.

Jimbo talked about programs for upcoming meetings. He thought a panel discussion would be good to find out what members would like to discuss about their projects. People could bring in their tools to meetings so they can work on their projects. Tropics in August might be a good time for this.

New Business: N. Jenkins brought up:

1. Job descriptions – board members summary of actions
2. Recruitment of newsletter editor to fulfill current role of Lizzie Chen. BOD to seek a member.

Adjourned: 7:45 pm

Angie Hewes, Secretary

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**Attention Members A Special Event— Tuesday, SEP 9th  
Visiting Artist Workshop with Peter Tea**

As members of the Austin Bonsai Society, we are fortunate each year to host a workshop event featuring a special bonsai artist. This workshop is usually a hands-on training experience (in a small group setting) where you will be working directly with the artist and a tree you have selected and brought. With this training you will need to bring your own tree, tools, and any material (soil, wire, carving tools, etc.). Please remember SEP is usually not a time for “repotting” for any central Texas tree types. Selection of material should be considered. This event is partially sponsored by Lone Star Bonsai Federation (LSBF).

In 2014, the featured artist is Peter Tea ( <http://peterteabonsai.wordpress.com/about-me/>) of San Jose, CA. Peter has worked in bonsai for many years and had extensive training under the leadership of Boon Manakitivitpart ( <http://bonsaiboon.com/> ) of Hayward, CA and Mr. Junichiro Tanaka of Nagoya, Japan ( <http://bonsaiaichien.com/> )

Peter has worked with a variety of trees and will be traveling throughout Texas during September working with members of our Lone Star Bonsai Community.

This workshop will be held at the South Austin Senior Activity Center 3911 Manchaca Road Austin 78704 (on Manchaca between South Lamar and Ben White Blvds. on Tuesday, SEP 9th, details announced in July.

**LONE STAR BONSAI FEDERATION MEETING MINUTES**  
**April 10th 2014**  
**Marriott Westchase, Houston**

**Attendees:**        **Mark Bynum – President, Ft. Worth delegate**  
                         **Howard Smith – Vice President, Dallas delegate**  
                         **Kevin Preston – Treasurer, San Antonio delegate**

**Pete Parker – Secretary, Houston delegate**

**Nan Jenkins – Austin alternate**

**Yvonne Padilla – Corpus Christi delegate**

**Bill Jacobson, Ft. Worth alternate and proxy**

**Shannon Gilliland, Longview delegate**

**Alisan Clarke – Shohin society alternate**

**Versie Marks – Corpus Christi alternate**

**Mike Denholm – Longview alternate**

**Donald Green – 2014 Convention chairman**

**Terry Ward – Shohin society**

**Unable to attend:**

**Jonathan Wood – Austin delegate**

**John Miller – Dallas alternate**

**Terry Dubois – Houston alternate**

**Donna Dobberfuhr – San Antonio alternate**

**Mike Watson – Shohin Society delegate**

President Mark Bynum called the meeting to order at 8:04 PM.

1.            2014 Convention Report

Donald Green reported that we have 102 full registrants for the convention along with 17 single day registrations and 15 people that have purchased meal tickets. The workshops are in good shape with 3 that are full, one opening in the ficus workshop, 2 openings in the wisteria workshop, and 4 openings in each of the remaining workshops.

2.            President's Report

Mark's written report is included as an attachment to these minutes. One highlight in the report is that a Facebook page for LSBF was proposed, approved by the member clubs and implemented by Bill Jacobson. It has had 187 likes so far.

Another action taken since the last meeting was to drop our existing insurance and replace it with term insurance. The proposal was made electronically and approved by the member clubs on April 3, 2014. Howard Smith obtained the new insurance in time for the convention and will supply any certificates needed by the hotel.

3.            Treasurer's Report

The 2013 books were audited by Kevin Preston and Jonathan and certified as appropriate. 2013 tax forms have been completed.

4.            Secretary's Report

Pete Parker distributed the most recent contact information for the board. Additional information was provided. Minutes of the previous meeting held on January 11, 2014 were distributed. No changes were surfaced so the minutes were approved.

5.            LSBF Communications – Bill Jacobson

a.            The last LSBF newsletter went out electronically only, no hard copies were printed. Since that time Brian Gurrola of the Houston club has indicated that he would print the 120 copies that we have required in the past for \$450. After discussion, there was a consensus that we should go to 2 newsletters per year (pre- and post-convention), and that the newsletter should be electronic only. Individual clubs that wish to have hard copies for some of their members will print their own copies.

b.            The new LSBF website is up and running. It needs more content. After the convention the Excellence in Bonsai winners will be added. There will also be a gallery of convention photos. Eventually an archive containing the LSBF newsletter will be added.

c.            The Facebook page is intended to be more informal than the website. There are four administrators (Bill, Mark, Howard and Pete). Please take the time to Like the page and invite your Facebook friends to like it as well. Bill is considering a facility that will automatically add any material that goes on the website to the Facebook page.

6. 2014 Texas tour

The group discussed potential changes to the proposed schedule and agreed to consider swapping days between Corpus Christi and Houston. ACTION: Howard will incorporate the input and issue a new schedule. Peter Tea is our 2014 artist and charges \$300 per event. He prefers only having 6 people in a workshop, but Howard will discuss this with him again.

7. 2015 Texas tour

Kevin Preston is organizing the 2015 tour. Guy Guidry, Walter Pall, Owen Reich and Hal Sasaki were mentioned as potential artists for the tour. ACTION: Each delegate to discuss the 2015 tour with their club and send Kevin suggested artists names.

8. LSBF Texas Artist Program

The program which makes Texas artists available to other clubs throughout the state has not been updated in some time. Mark will lead and email discussion of the program between now and the next LSBF board meeting.

9. 2015 Educational Seminar

Howard led a discussion of what our educational seminar in 2015 might look like. He is looking for someone who is particularly good with the artistic side of bonsai as the featured artist. Matt Reel, who just finished an 8 year apprenticeship with Shinju Suzuki, will be one candidate. Howard is thinking that we would ask the artist to do a lecture on bunjin style and then a demonstration on that style. He is also considering asking for a demonstration on how to display bonsai. It was generally agreed that we would like to have the seminar in a central location, so somewhere near Austin is likely.

10. LSBF Expansion

We have discussed the possibility of inviting bonsai clubs from surrounding states to join LSBF in past meetings. Shannon Gilliland moved that Mark be instructed to invite clubs from adjacent states to join LSBF. Second by Howard Smith. Motion passed unanimously.

11. Any Other Business

Kevin Preston asked for clarification on LSBF dues for family memberships. The question is whether a family membership should generate LSBF dues of \$3 or \$6. This issue was tabled for the next meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:32 PM.

the tour. ACTION: Each delegate to discuss the 2015 tour with their club and send Kevin suggested artists names.

## WELCOME OUR NEW MEMBERS

**Jennifer & Chuck Fisher**  
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# THE BEAUTY OF BONSAI

By  
Chuck Ware

Bonsai is an ancient art that has maintained the connection between our soul and nature. The history of man has always seemed to have that thread that ties man to the rest of the natural world. Through careful, patient sculpting, the bonsai artist creates the appearance of an aged, rugged tree in a miniature form. This is done over a long period to develop the trunk and branches that have a very natural look. Like any other art form, the things that look the most natural take the longest time and the most work to achieve. Bonsai is translated from the Japanese as “tree in a tray”. Although bonsai is highly valued and developed in Japan, it is an art practiced internationally. All artists are influenced by the culture they represent and American artists are using American trees styled with an American look. The pines and junipers from Japan are sometimes believed to be the only “real bonsai”, but this is far from true. Any type of tree can be used. The pines and junipers are part of the Japanese landscape and have been used for hundreds of years by Japanese artists to depict their environment. In this country, we are now using our own native trees. We are bringing trees in from forests all over our country and learning how to grow them in miniature, in a pot, in our back yard. We have discovered that many tropical trees can be grown indoors very successfully. This enables those with limited space to enjoy bonsai.

The bonsai tree should live long and well in a container. However, it does require some understanding. The care required is determined by the type of tree and the environment it will live in. One should be cautious of generic care instructions that encompass any kind of tree and disregards where it will live. The soil used in bonsai is designed specifically for use in small containers. It should be course so it will drain well. One should also take into consideration the variety of tree when creating the soil, as some trees require more dampness than others. The pot selected for the tree should be in harmony with the size and shape of the tree. The soil, the container and growing environment should develop a tree in the best of health, not one that is stressed. Taking all this into consideration will enable a beginner to have success with bonsai. Much of the enjoyment and satisfaction you receive from bonsai is attained during the time spent in taking care of it.

A tree planted in a shallow pot does not automatically become a bonsai. The plant must be pruned, shaped trained and kept manicured in the desired shape to be a bonsai. A bonsai may live to be very old and change from season to season as in nature. It should, over the years, become more beautiful and valuable. Plants suitable for bonsai can come from nursery stock or from the wild. Many plants, other than juniper, make excellent trained bonsai specimens. Some favorites among local growers include Holly, Pine, Boxwood, Azalea, Flowering Quince, Per-simmon, Pyracantha, Elm, Citrus, and many tropical varieties that will live very well indoors. Plants with overly large leaves, such as Magnolia, will look out of proportion and should not be used for bonsai, although some leaves can be reduced with proper training methods.

Bonsai was relatively unknown in the United States until after the end of World War II when U.S. servicemen stations in Japan learned the art, although originating in China, and practiced it when they came home. Today, gardeners world wide use this gardening forum. There are many State, National and International conventions each year. Bonsai has become one of the fastest growing horticultural hobbies during the past decade. In a world that is increasingly hectic, transitory, and stamped plastic, bonsai provides a brief moment for us to walk peacefully through ancient forests, if only in our imagination.



Photo by May Lau

**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.*

I make a big boo-boo last month. I suggested a fungal treatment of sodium hydroxide. The correct stuff is sodium bicarbonate which is baking soda. Potassium bicarbonate may also be used and some think it is a better product.

My daughter makes soap and we had been discussing one ingredient that she uses--lye which is sodium hydroxide. I guess I got in a hurry and read too quickly. Sorry about that.

That is an example of why I keep saying "Read the instructions before using any product" whether on bonsai or for any other use. You would not see any plant usage on a lye bottle.

## JULY BONSAI

What happens to bonsai in July? I guess that depends more on the people taking care of them than on the weather. When the temperature gets to 100 degrees they need to be looked after since they cannot get up and move to the shade or go get a drink of water.

Going into July and August and usually later you will need to keep your bonsai as cool as possible. That means no sun on the pot and soil where the roots are. Without going into a lot of detail some considerations you will be looking at.

1. Shade cloth. 40% for pines, junipers, tridents. 50% for less tough plants. 60% on the west side.
2. Water schedule. At 2pm to cool the soil, at sundown to cool soil and refresh overnight, morning as necessary. This is optimum. You must adjust that schedule and soil mix to work with your schedule.
3. Soil covering. Chopped long fiber sphagnum to retain moisture also helps keep soil cooler.
4. Protect from late afternoon sun. Low humidity lets the full force of the heat come thru.
5. Consider foliage misting especially on junipers. Many species in the wild open stoma at night to take

in dew. Some broadleaf plants do foliage feeding, especially for localized needs.

6. Keep insects under control especially the sucking ones-mites and scale.

7. Pot protection. Shade sides of pot. Use old cloth, shop towels, make boxes to fit. Some air circulation should be allowed.

We usually do not fertilize our bonsai enough. However during these hot days you need to exercise care. Slow release organics are best. Chemical fertilizers may burn roots if the soil temperature (remember the sun factor) gets too warm, probably like upper 90s or more, be sure to read the label for guidance. Most recommendations are to feed the trees with organic fertilizer balls. Many are available commercially or you can make your own, depends on how many bonsai you have. Even with the fertilizer balls I like to give a feeding with a liquid fertilizer every other week also.

Also watch for signs of insect problems. The spider mite will always be near. Others to look for are scale of various forms, aphids, bagworms, and mealy bugs. Preventative medicine is best, spray on a regular schedule. By the time you see signs, the damage is already done, especially from 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. 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. Most controls, whether chemical or organic, must be done on a regular schedule for good control. If you wait until you see damage it is usually too late.

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. There is no damage from this leftover evidence but it prevents you from seeing any new



infestation that may occur.

Be careful when pruning the spring flowering species. They will set buds for next years flowers in the fall. The Kurume azaleas set their buds in July and the Satsuki a little later in August. You need to find out if your particular flowering tree blooms on new or old wood and when it sets buds so you can keep it in shape and yet will not prune next years flowers off.

Tropicals, buttonwoods, fukien tea, serissa, fig, etc., should be repotted during the summer while they are growing strong.

When the humidity is low I mist my junipers in the evening. I believe the story that in the wild junipers open their stomata in the cool of the evening absorbing any dew that may occur and close in the heat of the day to conserve moisture. The other species may get a foliage spray in the morning.

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. Black spot will show up if the foliage stays wet very long. Foliage watering 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.



**June 2014 Monthly Workshop**  
**Photo by Joey McCoy**



**Peter Tea, upcoming artist for September**  
**ABS Monthly Meeting and Workshop**  
**Photo by Joey McCoy**

**ABS Annual Bonsai Show May 2014**  
**Photos by Joey McCoy**



# 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)*