

Bonsai Notebook

www.austinbonsaisociety.com

A Publication of the Austin Bonsai Society

October 2015 vol 58

October 2015 Program

by Jimbo Baumann

We are pleased that guest artist, Kathy Shaner will be our program for October. We encourage our members to bring trees for her to evaluate and gives suggestions on.

Kathy is internationally recognized for her excellence in the art of bonsai. Kathy's students are taught to find the "Soul of the Tree" before beginning any major work on a tree. Kathy spent 5 years as an apprentice in Toyohashi, Japan where she worked for Yasuo Mitsuya, winner of the Minister of Education and Kokufu awards. Kathy was the first woman and first non-Japanese citizen to be certified by the Nippon Bonsai Kyodo Kumaii.

She maintains and designs private collections throughout the United States and is the curator of the Golden State Bonsai Collection. She has been very helpful to our own TTSBE.

Calendar of Events

Oct 9/10: LSBF Bunjin Seminar in Kingwood, TX
Good luck May Lau Tse! She is representing ABS in the Emerging Talent Contest

Oct 14: ABS Monthly Meeting: Design Questions with guest artist, Kathy Shaner
Hosts: Nilda Garcia and May Lau Tse
7:30pm

Oct 20: ABS Board Meeting 7pm
Members only workshop: 7:30pm

Nov. 11: ABS Annual Holiday Party



Pots for auction last month
(Photo by May Lau Tse)



Jimbo leading the annual ABS auction.
(Photo by May Lau Tse)

Austin Bonsai Society Board of Directors

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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

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 Jonathan Wood

What an incredible auction we had in September! Rows and rows of auction items from our club members pitching-in to donate to the cause. I enjoyed working alongside Jimbo, Quoc and our Treasurer, Pat, to help so many thoughtful donations become funding to sustain our Bonsai Club. Our annual auction is the largest source of program funding. As club members, we should all be proud and grateful for the generous donations and winning bids on bonsai, pre-bonsai, pots, and similar items. Thank you, Thank you, Thanks!

For October 14th, 2015 general meeting, we have scheduled a surprise guest artist and bonsai master, Kathy Shaner! Also we are asking all members to bring in one tree, somewhat progressed in its styling, that Kathy can discuss before the group. She may not be able to discuss all the trees, but much can be learned from her insight and styling perspective. We are sure to take home many pearls of wisdom across a wide variety of tree species and styles. Please be sure to read her bio in this newsletter and come prepared with any questions.

Also at this October meeting, we will have sign ups for the November Holiday party potluck and will announce the nominated Board member candidates for 2016. Board member voting will take place at the November meeting.

Happy Styling,

Jonathan Wood ABS President

Bonsai Quote:

Masahiko Kimura said, "One of the most important things any beginner needs to learn is how to expose the structure of a tree. Until we do this, our plants are just bushes."

NEWS CORNER

2015 Kathy Shaner Seminar
October 16-18th
Buda TX

- *Seminar*
- *Home-cooked Dinner*
- *Bring your own tree Workshop*

Registration available in July. To be notified when registration is open, email:
ckmurphy2000@gmail.com



Photos by May Lau Tse

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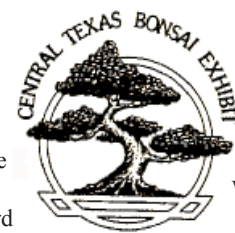
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**ABS Board Meeting Minutes
September 15, 2015
Zilker Garden Club House**

Jonathon Wood called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

The board members present were Jonathon Wood, Jimbo Baumann, Pat Ware, Angie Hewes, May Lau, Zerita Rogers.

Meeting was called to order by Jonathon at 7:05.

There were no minutes to approve from the August 18, 2015 meeting. Due to not having a Secretary at that time.

Pat presented her treasurer report ending in August, we have \$1,527.50. She had great news of the auction. The auction yielded \$2,531.00. The board will be discussing the budget at the November meeting. Report was accepted by Zerita Rogers and the board voted to accept.

We discussed who will be on the panel for the next Wednesday meeting of pre or finish Bonsai. It is being confirmed.

Also discuss the next club Tuesday night workshop that members bring their trees.

May will be the emerging artist representing ABS at the LSBF Symposium in October. It was voted to reimburse her for the registration fee of \$75.

Since we will not have a Christmas Party this year. We will be having a Thanksgiving Feast and it is time for all of us to sign up for dish you will bring for this happy occasion. At next meeting we will have a list that will be passed around for all of us to sign.

Jonathon adjourned meeting at 7:50 p.m.

“How can I tell how old my bonsai is?”

You probably can't. If someone tells you exactly how old a bonsai is, they're either guessing, have historical documentation or perhaps they grew it from seed.

When people speak of the age of trees in general, it is usually determined by the inner rings of the trunk. Of course, the tree would either be dead, or would die if you cut it this way. Sometimes you can roughly estimate the age by the rings on a large branch.

All that goes out the window when you're growing bonsai with tropics! Some tropics have no growth rings, some hard wood tropics do have rings, but apparently they don't know how to count. Sometimes they will get two rings in a year, sometimes they skip a year.

BTW If someone tells you, they have a 100 year old Ficus nerifolia (salicifolia,) I can assure you they're wrong. (Although, according to the internet, there is one!)

The bottom line is ... with bonsai, it's the appearance of age that counts!

(taken from Bonsai Banter by Mary Miller)

BUNJIN AND DISPLAY: THE REEL DEAL

It is time to get in your registration for the LSBF seminar, October 9-10 in Kingwood, Texas. After September 9th, it will cost you \$10 more for registration and to sign up for workshops. There is an azalea workshop and a BYOT workshop. Nan has registration materials at the sign in desk or you can download them from the Austin Bonsai Society web page or the LSBF webpage.

In addition to the demonstration on designing a bunjin (literati) style bonsai, we will have a workshop on how to best display bonsai.

Matt Reel did a 7 year apprenticeship in Japan with a well respected bonsai master. A big part of his assignment was to set up displays at various exhibitions. He will teach us the techniques to put together a show that will be outstanding.

We need to get at least 15 items from each club for the raffles. Anything associated with bonsai or Asian arts is wonderful: trees, pots, tools, stones, figurines, pictures, scrolls, etc. Please get them to Nan as soon as possible (at least by Oct. 5th) and she can get them to the raffle master. Bring a list of what you are donating and a value of each item.

We will also have an auction of any style tree or pot. They must be worth at least \$100.00. And you can do a 80-20% split of the money on your trees. Please consider this if you have a good tree that you feel you can't work with any longer, or that you want to pass on.

I hope to see many of you on October 9-10 in Kingwood, Texas!

-Nan Jenkins



Kathy Shaner — Bonsai Maestro

Kathy's devotion to bonsai began in the 80's. She studied with several noted California bonsai artists and joined numerous bonsai clubs throughout the state. Kathy was aided by the Golden State Bonsai Federation in being accepted as an apprentice to Japanese bonsai master Yasuo Mitsuya in Toyohashi, Japan. It was an extremely arduous internship for a non-Japanese speaking woman. Five years later, devotion, long hours and grueling work were rewarded when Kathy was certified by the Nippon Bonsai Association as a bonsai professional... the first woman ever to be so recognized!

Kathy loves all aspects of bonsai culture. She especially enjoys working with challenging trees. Her bonsai styling is a fusion of avant-garde and a bit of old school design always influenced by what Mother Nature might have done to the tree.

Styling is what we first see, Kathy emphasizes, but learning to care for the daily needs of each tree and when to prune and pot are a 'must' for everyone in bonsai. Kathy has the ability to make you, from beginner to bonsai veteran, a part of everything she does. She is a fantastic, easy going teacher who shares her bonsai passion and opens eyes to facets of our of bonsai world not visited before.

Kathy is an advisor to The Texas State Bonsai Exhibit and Curator of the prestigious Golden State Bonsai Garden at Lake Merritt in Oakland, California. We are fortunate to have Kathy, who is in Austin for her 20th annual bonsai seminar the weekend of October 16-18, for our Wednesday, October 14th meeting. You will learn a great deal and enjoy Kathy from beginning to end. Don't miss her visit.

October Bonsai by John Miller

Time to take a good look at your tropicals. Before going into the dry low light conditions most of us have for winter quarters they need to be vigorous, pruned and free of problems. Give them a good feeding preferably with an organic fertilizer. If you use a water soluble type use a low dilution and feed every 2-3 days. Prune all new growth back to the trees best shape. To increase ramification on developed trees keep any new growth pinched to 2-3 leaves. Use your desired insecticide and/or fungicide now and again just before you take them in.

Remember that some tropicals do not like to go below 50 degrees while others are only semi-tropical and will take a frost but does not want their roots frozen. The buttonwood is an example of the first group and the crepe myrtle would be in the second. Here in the Dallas-Ft Worth area we will probably not see a freeze until late in November but there may be some cool nights in October. I prefer to leave the tropicals out as long as possible. I want the semi-tropicals to go dormant and then put them in a cool location to stay dormant all winter.

Now is the time to start your outdoor trees toward their winter siesta. If you wait until the temperature drops, you get too rushed and omit some of the little housekeeping duties. Start now by making sure that the area will be free of insects and other vermin.

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 close together. Don't cut the buds off the spring flowering plants unless absolutely necessary if you want flowers next spring.

Kathy Shaner suggests removing the top half-inch of soil and replenishing it with new soil. This will remove weed seeds that have blown in and will make next year's job easier. Of course if you plan on repotting next spring that isn't necessary.

Winter quarters: Remember that here in Texas more trees are lost in the winter due to drying out than to the cold. Of course that does not 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 amaz-

ing drying powers too. (Ask your grandmother about hanging the wash and letting it dry while frozen stiff.) So while you protecting the roots be sure to give it a wind screen and make sure that you can check the soil for watering needs. (it helps here if you know which particular plants dry out faster and so you can situate them together). A lot of winter kill comes because the soil has frozen and the sun 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. When the real cold (26 or lower) gets here cover the pots with 3-4 inches of a fairly loose mulch. Plants that grow south of Dallas, crape myrtle, firethorn, some azalea, need to have more 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 and need to be exposed to sunlight. Some broadleaf evergreen types like boxwoods slow way down but still need sunlight. Some leave the needled evergreens on top of benches all winter but I prefer to give the roots the same basic winter protection of deciduous trees but they have a higher water need.

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 70% cottonseed meal and 30% bonemeal. Being organic, this will break-down into nutrients more slowly as the season gets cooler and the trees activity slows also. The organic spray given below can be used as a soil drench but dilute it a little more. Kelp is an excellent source of the essential minor elements needed by plants

Insects will continue to be present. Cooler (but not cold) days mean a resurgence of the aphids. Mites will also still be around and will jump into action during a warm spell. Scale also can be a problem. Treat with a light 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) should still be used on a regular schedule and will work on evergreens and will also give them some nutrients. The dead scale shell will probably have to be removed physically. A soft toothbrush works for me (I sometimes need to wet the branch to loosen the scale).

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 close together. Don't cut the buds off the spring flowering plants unless absolutely necessary if you want flowers next spring.

Some may repot in the fall but I feel that it is counter-productive to do so if you can do it during bud break in the spring. 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 old 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 repot at the proper time next spring which is when the buds swell and new growth is imminent.

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)