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# The Bonsai News of Houston

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE  
**Houston Bonsai Society, Inc.**

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## November Meeting

The next meeting of the Houston Bonsai Society (HBS) will be held Wednesday, November 5 at 7:30 p.m. at the Houston Garden Center in Hermann Park, which is located at 1500 Hermann Drive. Refreshments will be served at 7 p.m. Be sure to come early so you can visit with other members before the meeting begins.

The November program will be a lecture on the care, feeding and training of *Ficus nerifolia* by Phillip, owner of Cabrera Farms Nursery.

Phillip will discuss the horticultural aspects of the narrow leaf ficus. This species is very well suited to the Houston climate, and Phillip has many years of experience with this special cultivar. *Nerifolia* is very easy to grow in this climate. I personally have several examples of this species and have had great success.

Come join us for this special program on a species so well adapted to the Houston area.

Bring your special ficus specimens and share your experience with other club members.

See you at the meeting!

--Ken

## Nomination of Officers, Delegates

At the November meeting of the HBS, the board will accept nomination for the positions of first vice president, secretary, two members at large and two delegates to the Lone Star Bonsai Federation (LSBF). The qualifications and duties are set out in full below on pages 57-59.

The board will present a slate of nominees chosen by the nominating committee. Nominations will also be accepted from the floor. You will recall that the HBS bylaws were amended last June to provide that nominations from the floor can ONLY be made at the November meeting.

Elections will be held in December, and the new officers will assume their duties in January.

## Saturday Study Group Nov. 15

Our study group will meet Saturday, November 15, at 9

a.m. at Bayland Center in Bayland Park, 6400 Bissonnet (Bissonnet at Hillcroft--south of 59 and east of Fondren). Everyone is welcome--beginners and seasoned veterans alike. We all have a good time.

--Don, Buddy

## Calendar of Events

Nov. 5 HBS monthly meeting. *Ficus Nerifolia* by Phillip. Nominations for secretary, 1<sup>st</sup> vice-president, 2 members at large and LSBF delegates.

Nov. 15 Saturday Study Group, 9:00, Bayland Park

Dec. 3 HBS monthly meeting, 7:30 p.m. Hermann Park. Election of officers and delegates. Holiday party: Covered dish buffet and "gift exchange."

## 2004

Feb. 6-8 Shohin Seminar, Ramada Inn (1-209-826-4444), Santa Nella, California. For forms and map, Terry Ward, 512-280-5575 or [TexShohin@aol.com](mailto:TexShohin@aol.com)

Feb. 21 Shohin Society Of Texas (SSOT): Propagation. Contact: Terry or Sheila Ward at 512-280-5575 or [TexShohin@aol.com](mailto:TexShohin@aol.com).

Apr. 3-4 HBS Spring Bonsai Show

Apr. 17 Shohin Society Of Texas (SSOT). Convention exhibit; accent plant program; sale & swap

May 21-23 LSBF State Convention, Houston. Kathy Shaner, Guy Guidry, Mary Miller

June 26 Shohin Society Of Texas (SSOT). Bougainvilleas.

Sept. 18 Shohin Society Of Texas (SSOT). Business and panel critique.

Oct. 9-10 HBS Fall Bonsai Show

## Monthly Bonsai Care

by John Miller

*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, damper climate, with its early springs, long summers, late falls and erratic winters.*

How do you tell when its time to work on evergreens?

All the articles and books are written giving dates in the authors' particular neck of the woods which probably isn't of any use to you since they may be off by a month or so. Since most operations, styling, pruning, repotting, etc., are best done during the dormant season, try going by your own deciduous trees. When your deciduous trees go dormant, the evergreens will also be in their slowed winter state.

Pines should be worked on from the onset of this dormant state on through to the start of sap flow next spring. If you can see the structure of your tree, you can save labor by pruning first then needle cut and then wire. If the structure is not easily seen, first cut needles to open the structure so you can see what to cut. Wiring is always done after needle cutting. Cutting the needles very short rather than finger plucking prevents damage to the latent buds at the base of each needle cluster. The cut needles will die and fall in due time. Working in the fall allows the tree to get latent buds developing further back on the branches so that they may open in the spring. One of the problems with learning how to do pines is that every expert seems to have a slightly different approach (each perfectly good if you stay with that method). But most articles only cover one or two phases of the method leaving you to try to get the other phases from some other article which will be using a different method not necessarily compatible with the first. My suggestion would be to get instruction from one source, be it Mike Hansen, someone else, or a book with a complete section on Pines. When you read, translate the months given to growth periods (i.e., use "when dormant" instead of "October," "candle growth" instead of "April," etc.). Note that some tree cultivars (like the cork bark black pine) are notably weaker than the standard of the species and require different pruning and care.

The dormant season is also a very good time to study your deciduous bonsai. You can see clearly the structure and where improvements should be made. Remove any wire that is tight or where it has done its work and the branch stays in position. Work can be done more leisurely over the winter. Take care not to damage the small buds.

Before putting the trees into winter storage, treat them for over-wintering insects and eggs. Dormant oil spray is good on trees with no green. A dilute solution of lime sulfur is an old gardeners' dormant spray for insect and fungus control. Use it on very cool days and dilute it 1 part lime sulfur to 20 parts water. Be sure to read the label on your bottle in case there are different strengths available. This

solution should also be applied to benches tops, posts and the soil surrounding them (if you have gravel instead of grass) to eliminate hiding eggs and spores. If you have a greenhouse treat it also before the weather gets too cold to put your plants outside or move them to one end while you treat the other.

At this time of the year deciduous plants do not need fertilizer. Evergreens will continue a slow growth and will benefit from a light fertilizer feeding. Use one with a lower nitrogen (first number) like 8-8-8 at no more than half the recommended feeding rate.

Repotting can be done anytime the trees are dormant. However it is safer to do that chore in the spring as the buds are swelling. New roots will start forming immediately upon repotting in order for the tree to absorb water. If you do repot in the fall, you should protect the new roots from freezing during the winter.

Watering should be done with care during the cool and/or cold weather. Deciduous trees will use some water to replace that lost to winds and evaporation. Evergreen trees will need a little more but not as much as summer. The easiest way is to sort your pots into groups, those that dry quickly, those that are slower to dry, and those that seem to stay damp. This will let you water faster and yet not over-water the ones staying damp. Make a mental note to repot the ones staying too damp.

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#### FIRST VICE PRESIDENT

##### CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY

First Vice President shall assume all of the duties of the President if the President is unable to preside. This officer shall be responsible for any committees appointed by the President, will schedule the programs for the monthly meetings and oversee the functions of the library.

##### TERM OF OFFICE

Two years. No officer may serve more than two consecutive terms in the same office.

**BONSAI EXPERIENCE**

Must have a minimum of three years experience with bonsai, and at least one year as an active member of HBS or an organized Bonsai club.

**JOB QUALIFICATION**

1. Must be willing and able to speak in front of an audience.
2. Must be organized and reliable.
3. Needs to be creative in planning programs that will be of interest to the broad spectrum of club members' experience. Needs to be able to solicit suggestions from members of HBS and other clubs in the United States.
4. Must be willing and able to devote the time to the preparation of meeting programs or organizing and follow up of others in the preparation of meeting programs.
5. Must be able to attend almost all meetings.

**JOB DESCRIPTION**

1. Assume all the duties of the President if the President is unable to preside.
2. Plan, schedule, organize, and present the monthly meeting program.
3. Oversee the function of the library and VCR library.
4. Oversee the Sales Committee.
5. Such other assignments as requested by the President or Executive Board.

**SECRETARY****CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY**

The Secretary shall record the minutes of the society's meetings, maintain on file all records of the Society, report the minutes of the meetings in writing at the regular monthly meetings and shall be responsible for publishing a Newsletter.

**TERM OF OFFICE**

Two years. No officer may serve more than two consecutive terms in the same office.

**BONSAI EXPERIENCE**

At least one year active experience with HBS.

**QUALIFICATIONS**

1. Must be able to take notes of meetings.
2. Shorthand is helpful but not required.
3. Must have access to a computer, word processor or typewriter. Helpful to have access to a photocopy machine but not required.
4. Needs to have reasonable proficiency at spelling and English.

**JOB DESCRIPTION**

1. Keep the minutes of the monthly meetings and Executive Board meetings when called. Type the minutes by the following meeting and keep a copy in the permanent records of HBS.
2. Give a summary report of all meetings of the membership and Executive Board, occurring since the last Newsletter was published to the Newsletter Editor to be published in the next issue of the newsletter.

3. Make sure that all members of HBS fill out a membership application when they pay their dues for the current year in order to keep the membership roster current at all times.

3. Keep a current roster showing the name, address and phone number of all paid members of HBS. Make available to the membership a telephone list upon request. Make sure that those members who do not wish their address published to the general membership are excluded from the Telephone List. Provide the Executive Board a complete list with current membership changes as necessary. Check the roster for duplication of names.
5. Oversee the publication of the Newsletter. Proof for spelling, English, and accuracy before the Newsletter is mailed.
6. Oversee the function of the telephone committee.
7. Make reservations for the monthly meeting location.
8. Send all new members a letter of welcome, a list of HBS Officers and the Officers' telephone numbers, a list of HBS Committees (only committees anyone can volunteer for), the HBS Committee Chairman and the Chairman telephone numbers. Encourage each new member to volunteer and take an active part.
9. Send a letter to all guests asking them to join HBS, a sheet about HBS with an application for membership.

**MEMBER-AT-LARGE****CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY**

It shall be the duty of the two Members-at-Large to attend meeting and bring forth any pertinent information from the members. They are charged with the responsibility of greeting guests and new members at each of the Society's functions

**TERM OF OFFICE**

One year. No member-at-large may serve two consecutive terms.

**BONSAI EXPERIENCE**

At least one year active experience with HBS.

**JOB QUALIFICATIONS**

1. Attend monthly meetings.
1. Attend Executive Board Meetings.

**JOB DESCRIPTION**

1. Meet members and guests at the door and welcome them to the meeting.
2. Receive ideas concerning the meetings or activities of HBS and present them at the Executive Board meetings.

**LSBF VOTING DELEGATE****CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY**

None

**TERM OF OFFICE**

One year with no limitation on the number of times a person can serve.

**BONSAI EXPERIENCE**

At least two years active experience with HBS.

**JOB QUALIFICATIONS**

1. Willing to travel to the location of the LSBF meeting three times a year, and the delegate must make the meetings at least twice a year.
2. Willing to attend Executive Board meetings.

**JOB DESCRIPTION**

1. Attend all LSBF meetings to let the attendees know what is happening at HBS and represent the wishes of HBS Executive Board and membership.
2. Attend all Executive Board meetings to remain involved and informed on all the activities of HBS and keep the HBS Executive Board informed on the activities and issues of LSBF.
3. Provide a written report of LSBF activities and issues to the membership of HBS.

**LSBF DELEGATE ALTERNATE****CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY**

None

**TERM OF OFFICE** One year with no limitation on the number of terms a person can serve.

**BONSAI EXPERIENCE**

At least two years active experience with HBS.

**JOB QUALIFICATIONS**

1. Willing to travel to the location of the LSBP meeting.
2. Helpful but not required if Alternate would attend all the LSBF meetings in order to remain up to date on the current issues before LSBF.

**JOB DESCRIPTION**

1. Attend all LSBF meetings and stand in for the LSBF Voting Delegate if the Voting Delegate is unable to attend.
2. Attend all Executive Board meetings to remain involved and keep informed as to the activities of HBS and to keep the HBS Executive Board informed on the activities and issues of LSBF if the LSBF Voting Delegate is unable to attend.
3. Report LSBF duties and issues to the membership of HBS if the Voting Delegate is unable to attend.

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For special requests or questions related to *The Bonsai News of Houston*, contact the Editor or the **Houston Bonsai Society, Inc., P. O. Box 540727, Houston, Texas 77254-0727, [www.HoustonBonsai.com](http://www.HoustonBonsai.com).**

The deadline for submission of articles is 8:00 p.m. the Wednesday 2 weeks before the monthly meeting. *The Bonsai News of Houston* is available by e-mail. To receive a copy by e-mail instead of regular mail, contact the editor at the address above.

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