



---

---

# The Bonsai News of Houston

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

---

Volume 32 Number 12 Internet Edition

December 2003

---

## December Meeting—Annual Holiday Dinner and Gift Exchange

The next meeting of the Houston Bonsai Society (HBS) will be held Wednesday, December 3 at 7:30 p.m. at the Houston Garden Center in Hermann Park, which is located at 1500 Hermann Drive. Be sure to come early so you can visit with other members before the meeting begins.

We will elect officers for 2004. The nominees are:

First vice president: Al

Secretary: Janel

Members at large: Bill and Phil

LSBF Delegate: Buddy

LSBF Alternate: John

The December program will be our annual holiday dinner and gift exchange. This meeting is one of the most entertaining club events of the entire year.

In years past I have received many special gifts and I have also left with some real "white elephants," but that's what makes it so much fun. Every one eyes what every one else has selected from the stack of gifts in the center of the room. So, when it's your turn, expect some excitement as you either take a gift from someone or decide to open a new gift. The gift exchange rules are explained on page 63, below.

Before the gift exchange, we will have a covered dish dinner. HBS will provide the meat, drinks and plates, napkins, forks, knives, and such. Each member will bring a side dish, bread or a dessert. Buddy and Wanda have volunteered to cook the meat again this year.

Come join your fellow club members for a special evening of fun and fellowship.

See you at the meeting!

--Ken

## No Saturday Study Group in December

Our study group will not meet in December.

For 2004, the group plans seven meetings at Bayland and three meetings at Cabrera Farm Nursery (Phillip's place in Sugar Land). The dates are Bayland Community Center--Jan 10, Feb 7, April 17, May 15, July 17, Aug 21 and Sept 18.

Cabrera Farm Nursery--March 13, June 12 and Nov 13.  
Happy holidays to everyone.

--Donald, Buddy

## Convention Chairmen Announced

Buddy Allen announced the names of the committee chairmen for the 2004 convention here in Houston:

Janel --Registration Chairman (including goody bags)

Virgil -- Speakers Chairman

Janet --Treasurer

Donald --Publications Chairman

John --Vendors Chairman

Yvonne --Bonsai Exhibit Chairman

Paula --Raffle (with help from Corpus Christi)

Our thanks to these members for taking on a very difficult job. They will be asking you for help in the coming weeks and months. Your support is essential to make the convention successful and fun for all.

## Membership Dues are Due

Your membership expires at the end of this month. Renew now to be sure you do not miss a single newsletter or any information about up-coming events. An individual membership is \$25.00; a family membership, \$30.00. A membership form appears at the end of this newsletter.

## Letter from the President

Don't miss the Christmas party, it is always good fun and fellowship. The Christmas party is a great way to end the year and start thinking about the new year to come. Come hungry and bring a gift. Bring your favorite dish to share with everybody at the dinner and show off your cooking skills. We will be voting on members to be added to the board. It looks like we will have some new and interesting ideas for the coming new year. I look forward to seeing everybody and visiting.

--Virgil President, HBS

## 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.*

Want to know how cold it could get to? Try looking at the dew point temperature. That is where the nighttime temperature could go to on a clear windless night. I base my bonsai activities on that just in case the conditions on which the official forecast is made change overnight. Probably the most important thing you can do this month for your deciduous bonsai (outside of proper watering) is to treat them to kill any over wintering pathogens. Some insects spend the winter in cracks or fissures on the tree. Others live in the soil. Still others lays eggs either on the tree or in the soil. Same goes for fungus spores. Use a horticultural oil spray. This is a lighter, less toxic version of the older dormant oil spray. If you use it accordingly to the label directions for strength and temperature, you should be able to use it on the evergreens also.

I just read an article in Golden Statements regarding practices used by a nursery in Japan. They use the old old old dormant spray of diluted lime sulfur--the same stuff we use on jin and shari. The liquid lime sulfur is somewhat caustic so should be used with caution. Application should only be made to fully dormant plants: evergreens with fully mature foliage and deciduous trees with tight winter buds. They use a dilution ranging from 1:40 to 1:10 depending on the month of application with no applications at all in the warmer months. I would suggest a 1:20 rate in December, January, or very early February. Application at other times must be made at a higher dilution and may need more applications.

Lime sulfur is both an insecticide and a fungicide. Therefore the Japanese use it also on the bench tops and the soil surrounding them. Wet the soil and pot thoroughly both BEFORE and AFTER application. This serves to dilute the lime sulfur entering the soil and to keep the white residue from staining the pot. It is best to apply lime sulfur at midday, in clear weather, so that it dries and sets before rain, dew, or freezing temperatures reduce its effectiveness.

The appeal to me is the use to eliminate fungal growth on the benches due to being wet so often. I wonder about it leaving a powder after drying. I think I will try it in a couple of places and see what happens.

Watch the watering. Dormant plants do not take as much water out of the soil. There will be much variation in the needs of the different bonsai. Cool temperature do not dry the soil much, but a windy day will evaporate water directly from the soil very quickly and also take it out of the bare branches. More bonsai are lost in winter to dryness than to the cold. Especially watch the plants that will need

repotting next spring. Pots full of circling roots do not hold much water, but those that had a lot of organic matter in the soil mix may be soggy. Organic matter that has composted during the summer will be very fine textured and hold on to the water a long time.

While you are enjoying the winter silhouette, you may plan any improvements to be made. Are there any crossing branches? Any that have grown too long or too thick can be cut back to a smaller branch and ramification improved. Do any of the branches need repositioning?

Keep any evergreens that are growing pinched. Some junipers especially want to grow during the warmer parts of the winter. Those like the dwarf yaupon tend to be self pruning in winter: they grow and then get nipped back by the next freeze. Renew the lime sulfur treatment of jins and shari.

If you have a greenhouse, you can use it to work on some of the species that are normally left outside. Elms, Japanese maples, yaupons are some of the species that you can use. Before taking them into the greenhouse, you should give them some preparation. They should be given some dormancy. Withhold fertilizer and keep on the dry side (not bone dry) until they start dormancy. Leave them out until they have had some frost. Two-three weeks for Chinese or catlin elm. Four weeks for the Japanese maples. I take some small tridents in later in the season (like January). Yaupons will do nicely without much dormancy at all. When you take them in, keep in a cooler corner of the greenhouse and give them lots of water and fertilizer. They should respond fairly quickly. Be ready to pinch new growth or you will not benefit from the longer growing season.

Take time to clean up around your bonsai area. Remove leaf droppings, clipped twigs and any other organic matter. Pick up any trash that may have accumulated. This will help remove sources for unwelcome bugs and fungi to exist through the winter. Clean unused pots and prepare soils screens and tools for next springs work.

And lastly, go out and enjoy those bonsai some more.

*Reprinted from December 2002*

### PERSIMMON HILL BONSAI STUDIO and NURSERY

#### Your Quality Source

**Bonsai Material, Tools, Soil, Wire,  
Supplies, Pots, Bonsai Services,  
Instruction, Club Programs & Seminars**

**Terry & Sheila Ward**

**512-280-5575**

**Austin, Texas 78739**

**E-Mail: PHBonsai@aol.com**

### New Online Book by Andy Rutledge

Just recently Andy Rutledge published his online book about bonsai design. It's an excellent resource since it does not reiterate what every other book details but focuses exclusively on actual design and aesthetics. I consider it to be useful reading to even the most experienced bonsai artists. You will find his online book at <http://www.bonsai365.com/book/index.html>

--Janel

### LSBF Board Meeting October 10, 2003

The minutes from the previous meeting of the Lone Star Bonsai Federation (LSBF) were passed out to each of the representatives. After a couple of corrections, the minutes were approved as corrected.

Pat gave the Treasurer's Report. The report was approved and passed.

In the absence of Terry, Pat presented the 2004 *Texas Bonsai* budget. The budget was approved and passed as presented.

Yvonne presented a copy of the 2003 symposium report. Yvonne reported that the symposium made approximately \$8,975.00. The symposium was discussed and several suggestions were made on ways to improve it.

There was a discussion regarding guidelines for conventions. Each delegate was asked to discuss it with their clubs to see if there is really a need for guidelines.

Pat volunteered to set up a credit card account under LSBF. This would eliminate the different clubs trying to open an account for the convention each year. LSBF will absorb the monthly fees when the account is not being used and the club who is hosting the convention will pay the fees while they are utilizing the credit card machine.

Buddy reported on the 2004 convention, which will be in Houston May 21, 22 and 23. The registration forms will be mailed out or handed out in January 2004.

Marty reported on the insurance for LSBF. The cost will be around \$650 per year. Each individual club will have to purchase their own insurance. A motion was made and approved for LSBF to purchase the insurance.

LSBF bylaws were passed out to each of the delegates.

There was a discussion on ways to spend the extra money received from the 2003 symposium. A committee was formed to come up with ideas to present to the board in January 2004.

Buddy presented the nominations for 2004 and 2005. They were Steve, president; John, first vice president; Lisa, secretary; Pat, treasurer. A motion was made and passed to accept the nominations.

Meeting adjourned.

--Buddy

### Calendar of Events

Dec. 3	HBS monthly meeting, 7:30 p.m. Hermann Park. Election of officers and delegates. Holiday party: Covered dish buffet and "gift exchange."
Dec.	No Saturday Study Group
<b>2004</b>	
Jan. 10	Study Group, Bayland Community Center
Feb. 6-8	Shohin Seminar, Ramada Inn (1-209-826-4444), Santa Nella, California. For forms and map, Terry Ward, 512-280-5575 or <a href="mailto:TexShohin@aol.com">TexShohin@aol.com</a>
Feb. 7	Study Group, Bayland Community Center
Feb. 21	Shohin Society Of Texas (SSOT): Propagation. Contact: Terry or Sheila Ward at 512-280-5575 or <a href="mailto:TexShohin@aol.com">TexShohin@aol.com</a> .
Mar. 13	Study Group, Cabrera Farms
Apr. 3-4	HBS Spring Bonsai Show
Apr. 17	Shohin Society Of Texas (SSOT). Convention exhibit; accent plant program; sale & swap
Apr. 17	Study Group, Bayland Community Center
May 15	Study Group, Bayland Community Center
<b>May 21-23</b>	<b>LSBF State Convention, Houston.</b> <b>Kathy Shaner, Guy Guidry, Mary Miller</b>
June 12	Study Group, Cabrera Farms
June 26	Shohin Society Of Texas (SSOT). Bougainvilleas.
July 17	Study Group, Bayland Community Center
August 21	Study Group, Bayland Community Center
Sept. 18	Shohin Society Of Texas (SSOT). Business and panel critique.
Sept 18	Study Group, Bayland Community Center
Oct. 9-10	HBS Fall Bonsai Show
Nov. 13	Study Group, Cabrera Farms

### Gift Exchange Rules

The rules for the gift exchange are simple:

1. Everyone wraps and brings a gift with a value of \$20 or less.
2. Everyone draws a number.
3. The person with #1 ("Alphie") starts by picking a gift.
4. The second person ("Betty") can either pick a new gift or take Alphie's gift.
5. The third person ("Garret") can either pick a new gift or take Alphie's or Betty's gift. A person whose gift was taken either picks a new gift or takes someone else's gift (but not the gift just taken from him).
6. And so on.
7. Once a gift has been taken two times, it cannot be taken again. It is "frozen."

After everyone has a gift, the person with #1 gets to pick from all other gifts, EVEN the "frozen" gifts, because he or she did not have that choice in the beginning. If the person with #1 takes a gift, they simply swap with the person they are stealing from.

*The Bonsai News of Houston* is a monthly publication of the Houston Bonsai Society, Inc. Copyright © 2003. The contents of this publication may not be reproduced in whole or in part without the consent of the editor or a member of the board of directors. Exceptions exist, however, for other not-for-profit and non-profit bonsai organizations or associated bonsai and bonsai nursery newsletters. HBS participates fully with reciprocation of contents and materials between other LSBF member organizations and others. Authors who submit articles for this newsletter thereby give permission to such organization to reprint.

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.

Space for advertising in *The Bonsai News of Houston* can be requested by contacting the editor. Advertising rates for a business-card-sized ad (approx. 3 1/2" x 2") are \$6 per month, \$30 for 6 months and \$50 per year (12 issues). A full-page ad is \$25 per month. Rates are subject to change without notice. 3 1/2" x 2" classified ads are run free of charge for one month once per 12-month period, for noncommercial members.

# HOUSTON BONSAI SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

(Please fill out and mail in or bring to a meeting)

Today's Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Membership Type:** (Select one) \_\_\_\_\_ Individual (\$25.00) \_\_\_\_\_ Family (\$30.00)

**Membership Classification:** (Select one)

\_\_\_\_ Local member      \_\_\_\_ Out of town member      \_\_\_\_ Vendor      \_\_\_\_ Bonsai club

**NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_ **STREET:** \_\_\_\_\_

**CITY:** \_\_\_\_\_ **STATE:** \_\_\_\_\_ **ZIP CODE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**HOME PHONE:** ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ **WORK PHONE:** ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ **E-MAIL** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ *Do not publish my address to general membership*      \_\_\_\_ *Call here ONLY if absolutely necessary*

**Payment Amount Enclosed:**      \$ \_\_\_\_\_ **Paying with:**      \_\_\_\_ Check      \_\_\_\_ Cash

**MAIL TO: HOUSTON BONSAI SOCIETY**

**P.O. BOX 540727  
HOUSTON, TEXAS 77254-0727**