



The Bonsai News of Houston

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE
Houston Bonsai Society, Inc.

Volume 33 Number 3 Internet Edition

March 2004

March Meeting--Design Contest

The next meeting of the Houston Bonsai Society (HBS) will be held Wednesday, March 3, at 7:30 p.m. at the Houston Garden Center in Hermann Park, 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 March meeting will see the conclusion of the Windswept Juniper competition and awarding of prizes. The 23 entrants should plan to set up their tree during the social hour. If you're not entered, come and help us pick the winners.

--Pete

Raffle Items Needed - Have You Done Your Part??

OK everybody, the bedroom where I'm collecting raffle items only has one SMALL corner occupied and most of the items are from me. There were 4 members who brought items to the meeting last month and I want to thank them for some really nice things. Now I really need for everyone to get motivated about this. Remember, we are working with Corpus Christi and will need to split our proceeds with them as well as with LSBF, so we need to try to raise as much as we can!

Get creative! If everyone can bring at least 5 (FIVE) nice items, then we will have a really good chance at success!

LAST RESORT: If you just don't have anything or can't think of anything or don't know who to approach, you can donate money so I can buy some items on your behalf. You know it's a tax write-off.....we're a non-profit group!!!

RAFFLE IDEAS:

- do you have a hobby where you make things, if so, then donate something you've made

- IDEA: one member will be donating a metal sculpture of a scorpion
- do you have a service you perform, if so, donate that as a gift certificate
- IDEA: my massage therapist will be donating 1 hour sessions where he gives an in-home massage *(cont'd page 15)*

Saturday Study Group to Cabrera Farm Nursery

Our study group will meet Saturday March 13th, 9:00 A.M. at the Cabrera Farm Nursery. Phillip and Pat Drilling are the owners and operators of the nursery that specializes in orchids, bonsai, roses, landscape plants, pottery, soils, etc. You may bring your own tree(s) to work on, or you may select something from the greenhouses at the nursery. Below is a map. Directions to the nursery can be found at www.orchidsandbonsai.com or they can be obtained from 281-313-2000. Everyone is welcome. You will enjoy the quiet, tranquil, and beautiful atmosphere at Cabrera Farm Nursery.

--Donald, Buddy

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. Reprinted from The Bonsai News of Houston, March 2003.

The end of winter is evidenced by the club digs collecting new material which means that new growth is imminent. New growth tells you to put away the repotting tools and get out the shears and tweezers because your period of rest is over.

The work to be done now is trimming the new shoots. Pruning, that is removing branches, should not be done during times of strong sap flow which starts just before you see the buds begin to swell.

In order to develop the ramification and fine twigs you want you must be trimming the new growth as it develops. Waiting until the shoots are three or four inches or longer results in coarse twigs with long internodes. These will have to be cut off and new ones developed if you are to have a good bonsai. Tweezers are the preferred tool for this job. If you do the cutting at the right time, the twig will still be soft and can be plucked with the tweezers. After a few tries you will be able to work faster with tweezers than with shears. I prefer tweezers with a dull point; sharp points catch the foliage and rounded points are too big.

Tune your trimming to the species. Essentially there are two kinds of growing habits, those with alternate growing leaves on the twigs, e.g. elms, oak, and hawthorn, and those with opposite growing leaves, e.g. maple.

The alternate growing leaves start out with small leaves and each succeeding leaf will be larger and the internodes longer. Also each leaf will have a latent bud in each leaf axial. Therefore if you let the shoot grow to 4 or 5 new leaves and cut it back to 2 or 3, you will be keeping smaller leaves and also getting twice as many growing tips on each branch and each will be a finer twig. Keep this up and you will soon have nice development on the branches of your bonsai. In determining whether to cut to 2 or 3, note the direction that you wish the end of the branch to take and cut to the leaf which has the bud on that side of the branch.

Tweezers are almost a necessity in working on maples. The opposite growing leaves clasp the new growing tip and will be extending from the old but on a lengthening stem. If the new tip is taken off as soon as the leaves separate, the result is that the leaves will be smaller and the stem will stop lengthening. Then two new tips will pop from the new leaf axials and you will have to repeat the tip plucking. Tweezers work much better for this job. I will sometimes help the new pair of leaves to separate from the new tip but be careful not to bruise them.

Junipers should be trimmed with the fingers. As the new growth develops grasp the twigs with one hand

spreading the foliage in a fan shape. Then with the other hand grasp the tips between the fleshy part of your thumb and finger and pull it off. Using fingernails or scissors will result in brown tips on the junipers. If the juniper still has needle foliage, you can avoid being stuck by moving your hand toward the tip while grasping the twig. This, in effect, causes the needle to lie down along the twig while you are holding it.

If your area is subject to late freezes, check the forecasts and be sure to take precautions. Newly developing roots in either freshly repotted trees or in established pots can be tender to freezes. Trees with new sap flow will also be more tender. And of course the new foliage will not take the cold or the strong winds that dry it and cause leaf burn.

As the weather warms up, the insects will make their appearance. The biggest problem in cool weather is usually aphids which seem to appear overnight. Use foliar spray (1 tablespoon each of fish emulsion, liquid kelp, molasses, and apple cider vinegar per gallon of water, or the commercial 'Garret Juice') weekly to control aphid, mites, etc. It also takes care of scale.. Spring also usually means wet weather--so watch for fungal problems such as black spot. I usually only get it on hollies and elms. A 1% solution of hydrogen peroxide or potassium bicarbonate (substitute baking soda which is sodium bicarbonate) can be used for fungal problems.

Use fertilizers sparingly at this time. Most contain too large a supply of nitrogen which causes too much lanky growth. So far I haven't had any problems using the foliar spray probably because organics need warmer weather to break down into plant soluble nutrients and therefore are not as stimulating in this weather.

When you start trimming your trees, note which ones are candidates for the club show coming up. Put these in a prominent place and give them extra care. Clean the soil and make sure that moss is not growing on the trunk. Cleaning the pot with steel wool and wiping it with leaf shine will help prevent lime deposit from forming, making the next cleaning easier.

**PERSIMMON HILL BONSAI
STUDIO and NURSERY**
Akadama / Kanuma / Pumice
**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
By appointment, please.



THE ANCIENT BONSAI CO.
7315 FM 646 ROAD SOUTH
SANTA FE, TEXAS 77510

OWNER

RON SMITH

281-798-0004

409-925-4680

BONSAI SPOKEN HERE!

By appointment.

From the President

Just a note, if you missed the last meeting you missed a lot of fun and a chance at a tree. It is going to be interesting to see the many styles of windswept trees that will be presented in March. The March meeting will also have some interesting fun to see how the judges keep from getting their arms twisted. I love to see the trees, the art work, get ideas and enjoy the people.

You need to come, root for, vote for your favorite person (Tree) and have fun. See you at the meeting.

--Virgil, President, HBS

Lone Star Bonsai Federation Board Meeting – January 17, 2004

First Vice President, John Denton, called the Lone Star Bonsai Federation (LSBF) to order at 1:00 p.m.

The minutes from the previous meeting were presented for approval. The board made several changes to the minutes and approved the minutes as amended.

Pat presented the Treasurer's Report. The report was approved as corrected.

Terry, Editor of *Texas Bonsai* requested pictures, a list of club events and articles for the clubs.

Buddy brought the board update on the 2004 convention. He requested that each delegate announce at his/her club that in order to take a workshop, you must be fully registered. Otherwise, your name would be placed on a waiting list.

Fort Worth will host the 2005 Convention and Corpus Christi will host the 2006 Convention.

Marty reported on the insurance rider as to what it would cover for LSBF.

John submitted several speakers for the 2004 Texas Speaker. A motion was made for John to bring in Marco Invernizzi. Dennis and Lisa volunteered to work on the 2005 Texas Speaker's Tour.

There was a discussion on LSBF projects. Several good suggestions were made. This will be discussed at the next board meeting.

Dennis is creating a web page for LSBF.

Meeting adjourned.

--Buddy

Raffle (cont'd)

- do you have friends, family, acquaintances who have talents, then approach them about donating talents or items to our raffle - we can give receipts for tax write-offs
 - IDEA: my real estate lady who sold me my house will be donating gift baskets that she makes as a side business; I'll put the one she gave me when I closed on my house [worth about \$80] in the silent auction....it's nice!!

do you have things around your house that you will not be using, that are in good shape and that someone else might like

- IDEA: I'm donating a ceiling fan [still in the box] AND a small ceramic-element heater I bought that it turns out I won't use or really didn't need... I've decided not to return them for a refund, but to donate them to the raffle...the whole cost is only about \$50
- IDEA: I'm also donating a couple of movies I bought but probably won't watch (still in the cellophane wrapping) & a cold pack you put on your face to relieve sinus headaches (that I've never used)
- do you frequent businesses, restaurants, grocery stores, favorite shops, if so, ask them if they will donate something
 - IDEA: I'm going to ask the hair salon I've been using for 15 years to donate either hair care products or certificates for hair styling...and these guys are good!
 - IDEA: I'm going to ask a friend of mine who regularly eats at some very good restaurants and knows a lot of the hosts/owners if he could get them to donate gift certificates for meals.
- do you have trees, pots, tools, books or other bonsai accessories you don't use/need anymore or have you been thinking of paring down your collection...then donate those items. I'm going through my collection and I know there are trees and pots and perhaps some books I can donate.
 - IDEA: I'm donating some books I won't ever use again (one on roses, one about general gardening, and a "coffee table" book on Geogie O'Keeffe's paintings)
 - IDEA: Matter of fact, if you remember the big Arboricola (Hawaiian Shefflera) I have that Mike Cartrett styled at one of our meetings about 6 or 7 years ago....it will be in the silent auction....yes...but,

I'm giving it up, but for a good cause. Also, it's a back breaker to move and I just can't risk it anymore because I have back problems.

PLEASE, DON'T BRING RAFFLE TREES TO THE MEETINGS.... I want them to get to the raffle ALIVE, so if you have a tree or trees, please email me and let me know what you're donating and how large so I can decide which auction to put it in and make a label. You'll either need to bring it to the hotel Thursday night (May 20) when we're setting everything up, or I can pick it/them up from you sometime in May.

We need everyone to participate in this effort to make it a success....please give us a hand with this...thanks.

--Paula

Bonsai on the Bayou Raffle Chairman

Calendar of Events

Mar. 4	Monthly meeting of HBS, 7:30 p.m. Hermann Park
Mar. 13	Study Group, Cabrera Farms
Mar. 20-21	Kathy Shaner, at Persimmon Hill Bonsai, Austin Challenging Styles.
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
May 21-23	LSBF State Convention, Houston. Kathy Shaner, Guy Guidry, Mary Miller
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 Farm

The Bonsai News of Houston is a monthly publication of the Houston Bonsai Society, Inc. Copyright © 2004. 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.**

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.
