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# The Bonsai News of Houston

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

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## December Meeting

The next meeting of the Houston Bonsai Society (HBS) will be held Wednesday, December 7, 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.

We will elect officers and LSBF delegates for 2006.

The nominees are:

Secretary--Rosanna

Members-at-Large--Michael, Ken and Catherine.

LSBF delegate—Buddy

LSBF alternate—John

As of this writing, the nominating committee had not found a candidate for first vice president. If you are willing to serve, please contact a member of the nominating committee, Donald, Anthony or Buddy.

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.

The gift exchange rules are explained on this page, 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.

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

## Membership Fees 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.

## Saturday Study Group, Dec. 17

Our study group will meet Saturday, December 17, 9:00 a.m. at the Bayland Center in Bayland Park, 6400

Bissonnet (Bissonnet at Hillcroft--south of I-59 and east of Fondren).

## Mike Hansen Black Pine Workshop Series

The workshop series on Japanese black pines led by Mike Hansen of MBP Bonsai kicked off on November 5. Attendees at the workshop were treated to an in-depth discussion of the annual maintenance cycle for black pines. Workshop participants then completed the first step in the annual cycle, needle thinning, under Mike's practiced eye.

The second workshop in the series will be held January 14 in the main room of the Garden Center in Hermann Park. The main theme in January will be styling. Workshop participants are reminded to bring their tree, tools and wire. In addition, if you have a pot in mind for the tree (we will report in February), please bring it to the January workshop.

As mentioned in the monthly meeting, silent observers are welcome at the workshops (\$10/day fee). *--Pete*

## Gift Exchange Rules

The rules for the HBS holiday party gift exchange are:

1. Everyone wraps and brings a gift with a value of about \$25, not necessarily bonsai related.
2. Everyone draws a number.
3. The person with #1 ("Alphie") picks 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.

## 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.*

Finally got the temperature low enough to move all my trees out and spray the benches and greenhouse with lime sulfur diluted to the dormant spray recommendation. I first sprayed all plants with the old Garrett juice formula a couple of times a week apart and again before bringing them in to prevent any re-infestation with insects. Right now for the first time in a long while I do not see any fire ants in the greenhouse.

A caution on lime sulfur--the same stuff we use on jin and shari. The liquid lime sulfur is somewhat caustic so should be used with caution. If used as a dormant spray application should only be made to fully dormant plants, deciduous trees with tight winter buds, not on very warm days, and only when diluted as given on the bottle.

For a dormant spray to control over-wintering insects I would rather use a horticultural oil spray. This is a lighter, less toxic version of the older dormant oil spray. Used accordingly to the label directions for strength and temperature limitations you should be able to use it on the evergreens also.

Want to know how cold it could get to? Try looking at the dew point temperature. That is how low 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.

Since the trees are not using as much water during dormancy, it is easy to overlook checking on them. The low humidity usually found during winter helps dry the soil. Winter sun can be pretty hot and if it shines directly on the pot, it will hasten the drying process. Winter will usually also be windier. Therefore, however you bed down the trees, you need to check the dryness often. The same trees that needed more water last summer will also need to be checked more often during the winter. I think that more trees are lost during the winter to having the soil dry out than from the actual 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.

Deciduous trees should **not** be placed where they receive winter sun. After a period of dormancy, a warm spell could heat the tree and could possibly cause it to break dormancy prematurely. If that happened you would need to keep it above freezing the rest of the winter.

While you are enjoying the winter silhouette of your deciduous trees 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? Complete this work before sap flow starts in the spring.

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 to 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 at all from the longer growing season.

Bonsai in greenhouses or indoor bonsai will need to be watched for the normal indoor problems. Spider mites and scales are the biggest problems here. Trying to keep the humidity up by placing you trees on a humidity tray can possibly give you some soil problems, root rot or some other fungal disease.

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 thru the winter. Clean unused pots and prepare soils screens and tools for next spring's work.

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

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### Calendar of Events

*The HBS meets the first Wednesday of every month at 7:30 p.m. in the Houston Garden Center in Hermann Park, 1500 Hermann Drive, next to the rose garden.*

Dec. 7	Monthly HBS meeting, 7:30. Elections to the HBS board; Holiday party.
Dec. 17	Study Group, Bayland Park
<b>2006</b>	
Jan. 14	Mike Hansen: Styling
Feb. 18	SSOT. Trident maple Workshop--fused trunk style and/or stone clasping. Terry, Austin, <a href="mailto:texshohin@sbcglobal.net">texshohin@sbcglobal.net</a>
Feb. 25	Mike Hansen: Styling continued, special topics
Mar. 11	Mike Hansen: Springtime care
Apr. 22	SSOT. Workshop, raft style by John Miller.
June 17	Mike Hansen: Candle pruning and series wrap-up
June 17	SSOT. Workshop, Steven, tropical shohin refinement and air layering. Shohin display for the CCBC/LSBF convention. Annual sale & swap meet.
July 14- 16	State Bonsai Convention, Corpus Christi
Sept. 16	Panel critique. Annual business meeting. Workshop, Alisan, Japanese style scroll.

### The Texas State Bonsai Exhibit, Inc.

#### Fifth Annual Report

November 2005

We fully intended to be well on our way to opening, at the fifth year of our existence, but to keep things in perspective, the Golden State Bonsai Federation Collection-North took ten years to open.

After spending a year and half waiting to finalize lease agreements and deed restrictions with our pro-bono lawyer and the Tokyo Electron America lawyer, it was decided to cease negotiations as office park restrictions on the land could not be resolved.

We have been pursuing all possibilities for exhibit land, including realtors, new developments such as the Muller airport, Asian American Resource Center and once again Austin Parks and Recreation.

Letters were sent to the Austin Mayor and Council member who referred us to Parks and Recreation. There has been a change in leadership and reorganization of PARD

since we first sent them our proposal and this time we have been able to actually present our power point presentation

twice and answer questions. While we wait for their final decision, we will continue to explore other areas.

In January Mike and Elaine visited the Dallas club for selling the most cruise tickets. Mike's Black Pine presentation on seasonal care was very well received and he gave a small pine as a door prize. Elaine presented the seller of the most cruise tickets with a collected Cedar elm and got to talk to last year's cruise winner.

As a non-profit organization we were given a free table at a large Asian 2-day festival in April called Cosmofest in Round Rock. This consisted of about 60 vendors in costume, demonstrations and non-stop ethnic dancers and music. We displayed posters and bonsai and gave handouts.

**Fund Raising.** We have continued our fund raising efforts. It is very difficult to raise funds (such as with Grant proposals) without an address. We received no suggestions from any clubs as to what we might do differently so we did the cruise raffle and garage sale again.

We are very grateful for the use of Audrey garage and all those who helped with the sale and especially those who gave things to sell. We made \$995.85 on the garage sale.

The Caribbean Cruise ticket sale profits were \$795.70. The top sellers were:

Versie, CC -25

Donna, SA- 24

Del, A—15

Buddy, H—14 and

(10 each), Debbie, Eileen and Greg and Shelia, all of Austin.

Austin sold the most tickets and the winner of the cruise was Rosanna of Austin.

We have contacted a professional fund raiser but have not been able to meet with him yet.

**Looking Ahead.** I personally would like to thank the directors who have worked so hard and given their time and talents in laying a foundation for this organization from the beginning. They were: Alisan, Bill, Audrey, John, Mike and Candy, and Terry and Sheila. Their expertise can be counted on to assist TTSBE whenever needed in the future.

According to our bylaws it is time for fresh ideas and some new leadership.

We now have representatives in all Texas bonsai clubs. They have forms for donations if anyone feels they can no longer care for their bonsai, and we will come and get them. This includes pots, tools, and other supplies that we could raffle/ auction to sustain the permanent exhibit. Please give these representatives your ideas and assistance in helping to make TTSBE a reality.

--Elaine

## Lone Star Bonsai Federation Meeting Minutes

October 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2005 – 1:00 PM

Zilker Garden Center, Austin, Texas

The President called for approval of the minutes. Pat pointed out that the minutes did not include Steven as the nominee for LSBF secretary. The motion was made and carried to approve the minutes as amended.

**Treasurer's Report .** Pat presented the Treasurer's Report and expressed concern at the dwindling of LSBF funds. She passed out reimbursement checks to the clubs who hosted Marc Noelanders during the 2005 LSBF speaker tour.

Pat indicated that only 3 or 4 clubs have made use of the extra Texas Speaker that had been approved for one year only. That extra speaker included the speaker fee (\$75) and mileage (\$0.31/mile) and if a workshop, \$10/member.

Steven presented a check to the LSBF Treasurer as the Federation's half of the profits from the 2005 LSBF Convention.

### LSBF Conventions.

**2006** - Yvonne talked about the upcoming 2006 convention in July in Corpus Christi. She indicated that registration forms would be available in January and a convention web site would be available through the Corpus Christi web page at [www.corpuschristibonsaiclub.com](http://www.corpuschristibonsaiclub.com). She pointed out that the Fall 2005 LSBF Magazine included a description and pictures of the workshop materials. John suggested that pictures of the convention trees on a CD in JPG format might be useful for some clubs to raise interest in the convention. Yvonne indicated that the guest artists for the convention include Johnny Uchida (California), Bruce Baker (Michigan), and Ed Trout (Florida).

**2007** – John indicated that they were still looking for a venue for the 2007 convention. A majority of the material has been procured. Marco Invernizzi and Boon Manakitivipart are already committed to be guest artists and they also hope to have either Suthin Sukosolvisit or Michael Haegedorn. Dallas is aiming for an April convention.

**2008** - Marty briefly discussed the 2008 convention, which will be hosted jointly by San Antonio and Austin. There is still a chance that it might also be co-hosted by the American Bonsai Society. The ABS is currently experimenting with a new format that is more education oriented.

### LSBF Speaker Tour.

**2005** - Dennis and Lisa were not present. The board discussed the need for contact numbers for each club. Marco had some bad problems with flight connections and did not always have needed club contact information. In addition, he had some problems at home during his absence and friends in Belgium did not know how to reach him.

**2006** - Ron was not present. The board discussed artists from a list he previously submitted and voted to instruct Ron to schedule Cheryl Manning if possible and Ted Matson if not. October is preferred but September is acceptable. Els agreed to pass this information on to Ron.

**Candidates for LSBF Officers for 2006/2007** – The board voted to elect the slate of officers presented at the last meeting: President – John, Vice-President – John, Secretary – Steven, Treasurer – Pat.

**Texas Bonsai.** Terry gave his final Annual Report as editor of *Texas Bonsai*. In the absence of a new editor Terry indicated that he had not sent out requests for renewal to advertisers and had no budget request to present for 2006. He turned over all magazine related documents to the President. The board thanked Terry for his hard work in publishing *Texas Bonsai* these past many years.

President Steven asked the assembled representatives if any of their membership had indicated a willingness to take over as editor. David graciously agreed to act as editor for "a couple" of editions. The board gave a resounding thanks to David. All *Bonsai Today* related documentation was turned over to David.

**Bonsai Teach & Speak Seminar.** Yvonne discussed the idea of having Mary Madison come to Texas and present "Teaching Bonsai and Presenting Bonsai Lectures and Demonstrations." LSBF would pay her expenses and those who are interested in becoming a bonsai presenter could pay the cost of registration. It could be scheduled for both the northern part of Texas and the Southern part. Yvonne will contact Mary for additional information.

**Spirit of Bonsai Wristbands.** Marty mentioned a recent email sent out by the ABS to raise money for the organization which is having financial troubles. Wristbands are \$5 or \$6 dollars.

Meeting adjourned at approximately 2:30.

-- Todd, Steven

### Shohin Convention in California

The Shohin Society of California holds biannual conventions in Santa Nella, California. Registration forms for the 2006 convention are now available. [*I am sending you a PDF copy by separate email.—ed.*] If you are not interested in going, please print out the forms and pass them on to someone who may be. If you have a problem opening the forms, 5 pages, let me know.

PLEASE NOTE---TWO CRITICAL INFO!

1. Registrations to the seminar is limited to the first 200 people who register on a first come first served basis. (This is no joke.) If you want to go, do not delay sending in your completed registration forms and check. Priority Mail recommended. You can request more than one workshop.

2. If you have not already done so, call the Ramada Inn at once for reservations at 1-209-826-4444. They sell out very quickly. If they are sold out, ask for the phone numbers of other motels in Santa Nella. I believe there are four others, all less than a mile away from the Ramada.

If you do register and would like driving maps and information on area airports, please let me know. I will send it to you promptly. Remember...register first!

The Shohin Seminar is a wonderful experience. Please, do not miss it if there is any possible way you can go. The next one will not be until 2008.

Sheila and I wish you and yours a Happy and Joyful Holiday Season.

--Terry, Austin

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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 address above.

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