



The Bonsai News of Houston

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE
Houston Bonsai Society, Inc.

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December 2006

December Meeting

The next meeting of the Houston Bonsai Society (HBS) will be held Wednesday, December 6, 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 2007. The nominees are:

President: Donald,
Second vice president: Anthony,
Treasurer: JoAnn and
Members at large: David, Hurley.

Under our bylaws, no nominations can be accepted at the December meeting. Officers also serve on the board.

Pot Luck Supper and Gift Exchange. The December program will be our annual potluck 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 page 58, below. Before the gift exchange, we will have a covered dish supper. HBS will provide the meat, drinks and plates, napkins, forks, knives, and such. Each member will bring a side dish, bread or a dessert.

Upcoming Programs. The January program will be a combination program on collecting trees that I will do and an open workshop. In February, Mike will give a presentation on maples. In March, Donald will do a root-over-rock trident maple workshop.

Club Dig, Saturday, January 13. Our annual HBS dig will be on Saturday, January 13 at Addicks Reservoir. Get your tools together and plan on joining the group as we go after that prized (and free) specimen. No experience with collecting? Then join us at the January meeting where we will talk about what tools are needed and how to go about collecting.

--Pete

LSBF Silver Anniversary Convention

You will find some of the old and some new things at the 25th LSBF convention to be held in Dallas next year. It will be held on April 20-22, 2007, at the Holiday Inn Select, 3300 West Mockingbird Lane, across from Dallas Love Field. This happens to be the same hotel as the first Dallas LSBF convention but was then the Executive Inn.

We will return to the original format of having evening demonstrations after the Friday and Saturday dinners. There will also be other lectures and demos during the day.

The convention theme, Art, Education & Excellence, points to the convention being more than cutting on trees. The exhibit is planned to be a more formal exhibit along the lines of Kokofu-ten in Japan. We wish something like a three point display (tree, accent, and companion with appropriate stands). We also wish to encourage all LSBF members to consider displaying as was done in the early years. There will be prizes for the best displays. Exact details have not been completed but should be like best in show, 2nd and 3rd or possibly best in show, best evergreen, best deciduous, etc. Also, it may well be that the best display will be the winner not the best individual tree.

Convention registration forms and information are available from your club LSBF representative. Information will be available also on the Dallas club website: <http://www.bonsaisocietyofdallas.com/>. You can get questions answered by the registration chair: Sylvia Smith, sylsmith@earthlink.net or any other member of the committee.

--John Miller, *Bonsai Society of Dallas*

Saturday Study Group

Our study group will meet Saturday, December 16, 9:00 at Bayland Center in Bayland Park, 6400 Bissonnet (Bissonnet at Hillcroft--south of I-59 and east of Fondren). Everyone is welcome--beginners and seasoned veterans alike. We all have a good time.

--Anthony, *Buddy*

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.

Instead of thinking of December as the end of the year, I like to think of it as the beginning of the bonsai calendar. What the trees are doing during their dormant season determines what they will do when growth starts later on.

While you are enjoying the beauty of the winter silhouettes, you have time to enhance their appearance by selective pruning and trimming. Get rid of crossing branches and heavy top growth. Let the winter light penetrate to the heart of the tree to stimulate new buds which produce the new growth and strengthen weak branches in the spring.

Remove any trash on the surface of pots. This harbors insects, and fungi spores overwinter. If you have problems with weeds, Kathy Shaner suggests to remove the top half-inch of soil, which contains the majority of the seeds, and replace it with new clean soil.

Watering is as much a problem in the winter as in summer. Since the temperature and humidity vary so much, you need to watch the soil and water on an as-needed basis. Deciduous trees will not need as much watering as the evergreens, especially the broad-leafed evergreens. Remember that if the soil is frozen, the tree cannot take up moisture but the winds will still dry out the top, on deciduous as well as evergreen. Quite a problem, dry kills by desiccation while wet causes root rot.

Unless you are positively sure that you have no bad insects, it's probably a good idea to use a horticultural oil spray. This kills overwintering insects and their eggs as well. I do not do this unless I find scale type insects because I want to keep the praying mantis egg cases for next year. These guys and the ladybugs take care of my aphids and mites. I also spray the evergreens with the fish emulsion; liquid kelp, vinegar and molasses spray during the winter.

Fertilization is usually ignored in the winter. Deciduous trees will only be doing a little root growth at this time and thus will not be utilizing fertilizer effectively. The evergreens could use a low nitrogen fertilizer. Always use one with the trace minerals.

It would be advisable to remove any buildup of moss from your pots. Moss can act much as a thatch in your lawn to prevent water from penetrating evenly. It also prevents you from seeing how dry the soil really is. Remove moss that tries to grow on the trunk and buttress roots as this will hold moisture and cause the bark to decay. Try spraying the moss on the trunk with alcohol.

Take care of your tools during this time when you don't use them much. Clean and sharpen tools and apply a good rust inhibiting oil. Remove the buildup of sap and grime.

Also clean all your spare pots to be ready for the repotting season ahead.

Make plans to get out and locate some good material for enhancing your collection. If the club has a dig scheduled, be a part of it. There are many places where you can find one or two specimens to dig. The problem is in finding a place with enough material to warrant taking the whole club. If you know of a possible location, tell one of the officers about it. This comes under the heading, "Be an active member." The rest of the group (especially your program chairman) will appreciate it.

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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.

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. 6 Monthly HBS meeting, 7:30.
Elections to the HBS board; Holiday party.
- Dec. 16 Study Group, Bayland Park
- Dec. 16 Saturday Study Group, 9 a.m., Bayland Park.
- Jan. 3 Monthly meeting of the HBS. Pete on collecting trees for bonsai and an open workshop.
- Jan. 13 Saturday. Club dig at Addicks Reservoir.
- Jan. 20 Saturday Study Group, 9 a.m., Bayland Park.
- Feb. 7 Monthly meeting of the HBS. Mike on maples.
- Feb. 17 Saturday Study Group, 9 a.m., Bayland Park.
- Mar. 7 Monthly meeting of the HBS. Donald, root-over-rock trident maple.
- Mar. 17 Saturday Study Group, 9 a.m., Cabrera Farm Nursery
- Apr. 20-22 25th
LSBF State Bonsai Convention, Dallas.
Holiday Inn Select, 3300 W. Mockingbird. Marco Invernizzi, Boon Manakitivipart, Suthin Sukosolvisit, Shane Cary, Mike Hagedorn, Howard and Sylvia Smith, John Miller.
- Apr. 21 Saturday Study Group, 9 a.m., Bayland Park.
- May 19 Saturday Study Group, 9 a.m., Bayland Park.
- June 16 Saturday Study Group, 9 a.m., Cabrera Farm Nursery
- June 21-24 American Bonsai Society (ABS) with Virginia Bonsai Society. 2007 Learning Seminars. Virginia Beach at the Cavalier Resort Hotel. For information www.absbonsai.org or email ABS@pfmbonsai.com
- July 4 NO MONTHLY MEETING.
- July 21 Saturday Study Group, 9 a.m., Bayland Park.
- Aug. 18 Saturday Study Group, 9 a.m., Bayland Park.
- Sept. 15 Saturday Study Group, 9 a.m., Bayland Park.
- Oct. 13-14 Fall bonsai show, Houston Garden Center, Hermann Park

Lone Star Bonsai Federation Meeting Minutes October 21st, 2006

President, John, called the meeting to order at 1:10. John called for any changes to the minutes of the last meeting. Pat indicated that the end of the meeting should be around 3:00 and not 2:00 as indicated. A motion was made and carried to approve the minutes as amended.

Treasurer's Report. Pat presented the Treasurer's Report. She reported that when all the outstanding bills were paid, the treasury would be down to around \$2,200. She suggested we wait until Corpus Christi gave their convention results before the board votes on whether to reimburse the clubs some money for the Cheryl tour. A motion was made and carried to approve the Treasurer's Report.

LSBF Conventions.

2006 - Yvonne indicated that the LSBF Convention in Corpus Christi in 2006 had produced a profit of \$14,105.57. She presented the board with a check for \$7,05.78. Corpus was roundly applauded for the quality of the convention.

2007 - John discussed the upcoming convention in Dallas. He indicated that a website was not up yet but would soon be available and that registration would be available on-line. At the Dallas convention they would like to have a more formal exhibit. They are trying to encourage more participation by offering awards for "Best of" trees. John delivered to each club representative copies of the registration forms for their members. More information will be forthcoming.

2008 - Marty discussed the 2008 convention, which will be hosted jointly by San Antonio, Austin and the American Bonsai Society. The convention will be held June 19-22, 2008.

1. They have a contract with the Tropicana Hotel on the river walk for \$119/night and have reserved a block of 245-250 rooms.
2. It will be a seminar with no workshops. Each registrant will pick the seminars which they wish to attend. All seminars are 3 hours.
3. The convention begins on Thursday with an all day styling competition of 10 artists sponsored by Joshua Roth Tools.
4. ABS will handle the registration, airline tickets, and contracting with artists.
5. San Antonio and Austin will handle goodie bags, raffles, and the convention pin.
6. The split of proceeds will be 40% ABS, 20% San Antonio, 20% Austin, and 20% LSBF.
7. The ABS requested that we provide the names of several artists that we would like to see present seminars at the convention. Marty took down several names and will pass them on.

Con't next page.

Convention Attendance – Buddy was not present to discuss this issue with the board.

LSBF Speaker Tour

2006 - Ron was not present to discuss the speaker tour but all agreed that Cheryl Manning was personable and a skilled artist. A motion was made and passed by a vote of 6 to 1 that the LSBF reimburse the clubs \$150 each for the tour.

2007 – John announced that Ron had resigned as chairman of the 2007 tour and asked for volunteers. Yvonne Padilla said that she would arrange the tour if we invited Pedro Morales as the visiting artist. It was moved and approved before she could change her mind.

Expanding the LSBF. Marty presented a proposal for the LSBF to consider expanding the federation to include adjoining states. This was presented as one means of fighting the decline in clubs and memberships in the past few years. The LSBF had, in the past, been approached by outside clubs to join the federation. She proposed that the LSBF would retain the same name but include other clubs in full or associative memberships. Yvonne proposed that we take this issue back our respective clubs and bring their questions and concerns back to be discussed at the next meeting.

Next Meetings. Pat canvassed the attendees on their impression of the suitability of the LCRA Board Room as an alternative to Zilker Park. Pat indicated that, while a kitchen is not available, it is still workable for her for serving a light lunch. It was then suggested that the members could eat before arriving and give Pat a break in her lunch preparations. All agreed, so there will be no lunch served before subsequent meetings.

Dates were proposed for the next year's (2007) meetings. They are:
January 20, 2007
June 9, 2007
October 13, 2007

All meetings will begin at 1:00 and will be held at the LCRA Board Room located in the Hancock building at 3700 Lake Austin Blvd.

A motion was made and passed to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 3:06.

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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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Houston Bonsai Society, Inc.
P. O. Box 540727
Houston, Texas 77254-0727