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# The Bonsai News of Houston

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

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## **June 1—Deadline for early registration for the state bonsai convention.**

### **June 7 Meeting—Yvonne Padilla**

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

**Forest Plantings.** This month's program will feature Yvonne Padilla, a longtime member of the Corpus Christi society who is a frequent speaker and demonstrator throughout Texas. Yvonne is known for her work with tropical plants, saikei, and forest plantings. She will do a lecture/demonstration on forest plantings. The forest will be raffled at the end of the meeting.

**Vote on Amendment to Bylaws.** We will also be voting on a change to the HBS Bylaws. See article below.

**Drawing, Free LSBF Registration.** Ten lucky winners will receive reimbursement for early registration to the state convention. See article below for details.

### **Proposed Amendment to the HBS Bylaws**

The board of directors of the Houston Bonsai Society is recommending an amendment to the bylaws to reimburse travel expenses for the alternate representative to the Lone Star Bonsai Federation (LSBF). Under the current bylaws, the voting delegate already receives such a reimbursement.

Article II.A.4 currently reads:

- Mileage to Lone Star Bonsai Federation (LSBF) Meetings—The HBS will reimburse the voting delegate for gasoline to travel to the LSBF meetings. The delegate must provide the gas receipt in order to receive reimbursement.

Under the proposed amendment Article II.A.4 would read:

- Mileage to Lone Star Bonsai Federation (LSBF) Meetings—The HBS will reimburse the Delegate and Alternate for gasoline to travel to the LSBF meetings. The Delegate and Alternate must provide the gas receipts in order to receive reimbursement.

The proposed amendment was presented to membership at the monthly meeting on May 3, 2006, and will be voted on at the monthly meeting on June 7, 2006.

### **Saturday Study Group, June 24**

Our study group will meet Saturday, June 24, 9:00 A.M. at Cabrera Farm Nursery, 3914 Cabrera Drive, Sugar Land 77479. See map and directions at the end of this newsletter.

### **Critiques by a Master**

Have your tree critiqued by a Master! Do you want your trees to be ready to show in the 2007 exhibit? The Texas State Bonsai Exhibit (TTSBE) is offering a special critique at the state convention in Corpus Christi in July. The offer is limited to the first 12 to register. Bring a tree from home or from the exhibit.

Register with your club TTSBE representative, Buddy. The cost is \$10.00 per tree. Time of critique: Friday, July 14 between 8:30 and 9:30 p.m. at the state convention in Corpus. Exact location to be announced.

### **Win a Free Night at Hotel for Convention**

The Texas State Bonsai Exhibit is having a drawing for one free night at the hotel during the convention. Tickets are \$5.00 each. If you would like to purchase a ticket or tickets, please see Buddy. He will have tickets available at the June and July meeting.

### **Free Registration to Convention Winners Selected at June Meeting**

Wind~Waves~Bonsai is the theme for the LSBF Convention 2006. The Corpus Christi Bonsai Society will host our state convention July 14-16, 2006, at the Holiday Inn Airport in Corpus Christi. The convention will feature guest artists John Uchida from California, Bruce Baker from Michigan and Ed Trout from Florida. Workshop participants will experience a variety of material consisting of tropicals, sub-tropicals and collected Texas natives. Of course there will be an excellent exhibit, many vendors and lots of

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## 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.*

Usually in June you are slowing down for the summer. But this year there is a convention next month to get ready for. Last minute to get registration in and be ready for workshops. Also gotta make sure your trees are provided for for three days and two nights. If you would like to exhibit a tree call or email Jesse.

The important things going this month are water, fertilizer, and maintenance. If you have any tropicals you can add repotting. Also check for any insect or disease problems.

When the temperature gets over 90 and there are no clouds, your trees in pots will be given the hot foot out in the sun. Think of walking barefoot down an open sidewalk. Anything solid will soak up the direct rays and get very hot. It's bad enough when the air temperature goes over a hundred without the sun adding to it. You should do something to block the direct rays of the sun and put a bit of air, however thin, between the material and the pot and/or soil. Afternoon shade helps the foliage but the morning sun can heat up the pot too much. A solid cover on the soil is not very desirable as it makes it hard to water. Long fiber moss on the surface will protect the soil and let water through. Cloth (open weave burlap) would work but does not look very good. Protecting the pot is a harder job. Aluminum foil, shiny side out, has been used but usually does not leave any insulating air space. Some have built wooden boxes the same size as the pot to set the bonsai in. You may figure out something in between. Then when you water, afternoon is the best time to cool down the pot and the plant has overnight to recuperate. Water twice until the water drains freely from the pot, the first time to break the surface tension on the soil particles and then to thoroughly wet the soil.

Maintenance - the act of maintaining. Maintain - to hold or to keep in any particular state. When applied to bonsai maintenance consists of two aspects. HORTICULTURAL maintenance is keeping the tree in good vigorous health. This encompasses providing proper location, sunlight, water, soil, and fertilizers. Horticultural maintenance must be done before you can be successful in doing ARTISTIC maintenance. Artistic maintenance is continuing the plan you used when you styled the tree. It will develop ramification, grow bark, get smaller leaves, and all the other good characteristics of a great bonsai. Each one of these items above is a chapter in a book; all I can hope to do is help you know when to do some of them.

As the summer progresses the growth of the deciduous trees will slow also. But you still need to keep an eye out for errant shoots. Keeping scissors with you when watering

would let you take care of most of them. Just like in the spring a shoot too long will thicken the twig too much. The daily (seems like) pruning chore is transferred to the tropicals.

For most of us it is too late to do leaf pruning on normal plants. They have slowed growth almost to the point of dormancy. Of course your tropical species are in their heyday. Prune, leaf prune, and repot to your hearts content.

Tip pinching on flowering species like the crape myrtle will result in fewer flowers, but, if you let it go, they get out of shape. I prefer to try to balance the flower/design question by pinching early. This provides more growing tip to divide the energy, and the resulting flower is shorter. It's less showy but more in scale.

Also if you have fruiting bonsai, you should reduce the number of fruit on the tree. The number one goal of the tree is to provide seeds for reproduction, and it will starve itself in order to do so. Again, most fruit are too large to look good on a bonsai.

The best way to fertilize bonsai is by using organic fertilizer cakes. The cakes provide a slow constant feeding each time you water. Cakes made with a cottonseed base will provide an acid ph when they break down which we need in any city water system I know of. Making your own is easy and much cheaper than buying them.

Chemical fertilizers such as Miracid or Peters may be used a couple of times a month also. My main problem with chemicals is not knowing how many bad salts may accumulate in the soil and also in knowing that, the next time I water, I am washing the chemicals out on the ground.

As usual, keep an eye open for insect and fungal problems. If you are using the original Garrett juice, you should not have any problems. If any fungicidal problems show up, mildew is a possibility, use potassium bicarbonate (does the same as baking soda but contains no sodium). I have used the 1% solution of hydrogen peroxide (dilute one part of the standard 3% peroxide with two parts water) which worked ok but it did burn some tender new growth on an elm cutting. I will only use that in cooler weather.

### PERSIMMON HILL BONSAI AKADAMA / KANUMA / PUMICE LAVA / GRANITE

**Premium Plant Fertilizers  
Quality Material, Tools, Potting Mix's, Wire, Pots,  
Supplies, Bonsai Services, Instruction, Seminars**

**Terry & Sheila Ward      512-280-5575  
phbonsai@sbcglobal.net  
Austin, Texas 78739      By appointment please**

**Win a Free Registration** *(con'd from page 26)*

raffles. This convention promises to offer loads of fun, great learning opportunities and is well worth attending.

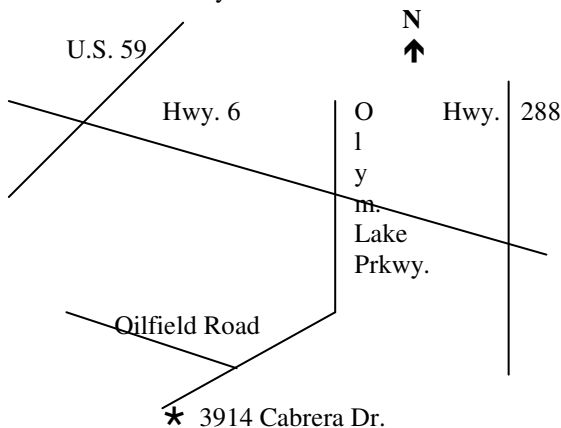
To support the LSBF Convention and to encourage our attendance, the Houston Bonsai Society will reimburse the early full registration fees of ten (10) members, \$110 each. A drawing will be used to select the ten members for fee reimbursements. To be entered in the drawing, members must show receipt of paid Full Registration by June 1, 2006. Present your receipts to me at the June meeting and I will give each registered member a ticket for the drawing. The first ten (10) tickets drawn will be given reimbursements. Convention registration packets will be available again at our June meeting or you may download the materials from the convention website--

<http://www.corpuschristibonsaiclub.com/>

--Donald

**Directions to Cabrera Farm Nursery**

From Houston take Hwy. 59 south towards Sugar Land. Exit at Hwy. 6 and go under the freeway. Go several miles to Lake Olympia Parkway and turn right. The street name changes to Oilfield Road. Proceed approximately 0.9 miles. Oilfield Road will make a sharp turn to the left (a 90 degree turn). Continue on Oilfield Road another 1.6 miles. When Oilfield Road makes a sharp turn to the right, continue straight. You will then be on Cabrera Drive. Follow Cabrera into the nursery.



For another map, see [www.orchidsandbonsai.com](http://www.orchidsandbonsai.com) or call 281-313-2000.

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**When was the last time . . .**

. . . you wrote an article for the newsletter? Well, that's too long! Your contributions are important. You have information you can share with your fellow members. Do it now!

**Garrett Juice**

By John Miller

*John Miller is a co-founder of the Lone Star Bonsai Federation and long-time member of the Bonsai Society of Dallas, the Ft. worth Bonsai Society, and the Shohin Society of Texas. He has written numerous articles and columns for Texas publications and is a regular speaker throughout the state. He prepared the following article in response to questions he received from "down south."*

Before starting on the Garrett Juice, please note a couple of items.

Any insect program, whether organic or chemical, must be done on a repetitive basis which considers the life cycle of the insect. For example, the spider mite can have a life cycle (from laying eggs to hatching to laying eggs again) as short as five days. Since you will not kill all insects hiding in cracks etc, you need to spray for mites 4 times on a 5-day interval. You wouldn't believe how many times I have told a person they have spider mite damage and get the reply, "But I sprayed with ----". Questioning usually reveals that it was sprayed only once after the original damage showed up, and the plant was loaded with both mites and eggs.

Any fertilizer program must consider the stability of the product. Liquid fertilizers are water soluble and will be washed out with the next watering leaving the plant starving. Solid fertilizers require microbial or chemical reactions to release their nutrients and will usually be more active in hot weather but will remain beneficial for a longer period. Slow release forms such as Osmocote fall between these but are generally not recommended for bonsai.

Please note that the commercial version of Garrett Juice found in organic nurseries uses different components and may not have the same insecticidal properties. We use the original version which is one tablespoon each of fish emulsion, liquid kelp (Maxicrop), molasses, and 5% apple cider vinegar mixed in one gallon of water. You can mix the concentrate, equal parts of fish emulsion, liquid kelp (I use Maxicrop brand), molasses, and 5% apple cider vinegar, and store the concentrate. Then when ready to use it, mix 4 tablespoons (2 ounces) to a gallon of water. It is not recommended to store the diluted solution. The diluted solution might develop mold. I just use any diluted spray as a drench so none is left. I have never had mold on the concentrate--and I just used the last of the two gallons I mixed in April 2005.

As for the time of year, I use it throughout the year. On outside stuff, I will start when removing from the winter quarters, spraying the evergreen things. Then I use it on deciduous trees after the leaves open and get a little tougher. I have seen some damage on very tender new Japanese maple foliage and some on the very tips of new dwarf yaupon growth. On yaupons that is ok because you will be pruning it back anyway. But others report they have never

*Cont'd next page.*

**Garrett Juice** (cont'd from previous page)

seen damage on anything. I have doubts as to the efficiency of foliar feeding of anything. I use foliar spray for insect control. The beauty of using G.J. on a regular basis is that it is not wasted even if there are no insects. The spray will be washed into the soil and utilized as fertilizer.

I use a pump up sprayer and stick the wand between branches to get a fine mist on both top and bottom of the leaves. A trombone sprayer adjusted for a mist can also be used but more care must be taken to completely cover the leaf. A hose end sprayer does not result in a complete coverage.

I would like to use a foliar spray once a week for complete insect control but I cannot say I am successful at that. I find that, if I get a good weekly start at the beginning of the year and hold the insects in check, later on it doesn't make that much difference if I miss a week. However, I find that I really need to hold to a pretty good schedule in the greenhouse. As for using it as a drench for feeding plants, I don't really have a schedule. I would prefer to use the organic cakes or pellets for fertilizing. However, I have a tendency to use a drench early in the growing season when the plant doesn't need a lot of fertilizer and, as the weather is cool, solid fertilizer doesn't break down easily. Also I feel that, like liquid chemicals, it washes out too easily. Later on if I felt that the tree was not getting enough from the solid fertilizer, I would give it a drench of G.J. As for its insecticide properties, I have used it specifically to control spider mites, aphids, loopers and scale. I have found dead caterpillars and bagworms when trimming trees. The grasshoppers left the yaupons and maples alone after they were sprayed (why? I don't really know. I found no dead hoppers). The effect on ants seems to be minimal.

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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 address above.

**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.*

<b>June 1</b>	<b>Deadline for early registration for state convention and for eligibility for free registration from HBS</b>
June 7	Monthly meeting of the HBS, 7:30 Yvonne Padilla (Corpus Christi), forest plantings
June 17	Mike Hansen: Candle pruning and series wrap-up Garden Center Azalea Room, Hermann Park
June 17	S.S.O.T. Workshop, Steven, tropical shohin refinement and air layering. Shohin display for the state convention. Annual sale & swap meet. Terry Ward, Austin, 512-280-5575, <a href="mailto:texshohin@sbcglobal.net">texshohin@sbcglobal.net</a>
June 24	Saturday Study Group, Cabrara Farm Nursery
July 5	Monthly meeting of the HBS, 7:30 Open workshop
July 14- 16	State Bonsai Convention, Corpus Christi
July 14	Critique by a Master, 8:30-9:30 p.m.
July 15	Saturday Study Group, Bayland Park
Aug. 2	Monthly meeting of the HBS, 7:30 Ficus on a slab, Pt. 2, Pete.
Aug 4 & 5	Pedro Morales from Puerto Rico, details tba.
Aug. 19	Saturday Study Group, Bayland Park
Sept. 6	Monthly meeting of the HBS, 7:30 Club Auction
Sept. 16	Saturday Study Group, Bayland Park
Sept. 16	S.S.O.T. Panel critique. Annual business meeting. Workshop, Alisan, Japanese style scroll.
Oct. 4	Monthly meeting of the HBS, 7:30 Pete, Growing Bonsai from Seed & Cuttings
Oct. 7-8	Fall Bonsai Show
Oct. 21	Saturday Study Group, Bayland Park
Oct. 28-29	Kathy Shaner in Austin, Persimmon Hill. Terry or Sheila Ward, 512-280-5575 or <a href="mailto:phbonsai@sbcglobal.net">phbonsai@sbcglobal.net</a>
Nov. 11	Saturday Study Group, Cabrera Farm Nursery
Dec. 16	Saturday Study Group, Bayland