



The Bonsai News of Houston

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

Volume 37 Number 4, Internet Edition

April 2008

Monthly Meeting, April 2

The next meeting of the Houston Bonsai Society (HBS) will be held Wednesday, April 2, at 7:30 p.m. at the Houston Garden Center in Hermann Park, located at 1500 Hermann Drive. Refreshments will be served at 7:00.

The April program will be "Preparing Your Bonsai for a Show." It will be presented by Anthony Cutola and Buddy Allen. This should be just in time for the spring show the following weekend.

Spring Bonsai Show, April 5-6

It's that time of year again. Our spring show is just around the corner. We will hold the spring show in conjunction with the Japan Festival the weekend of April 5-6, in the Japanese Garden in Herman Park, from 10:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. both Saturday and Sunday.

We will need volunteers to staff our exhibit and help put up and take down the display. Set up will start at 8:00 a.m. Saturday.

Saturday Study Group, April 19

Our study group meet will meet Saturday, April 19, at 9 a.m. at Bayland Center in Bayland Park, 6400 Bissonet (Bissonet at Hillcroft--south of 59 and east of Fondren). Everyone is welcome--beginners and seasoned veterans alike. We all have a good time.

Martinez To Speak April 25-26

Roberto Martinez from Puerto Rico will present a lecture-demo Friday, April 25, at 7:00 p.m., \$5 per person

admission. On Saturday, April 26, he will conduct two sets of workshops, the first from 9 to 12 and the second from 1 to 4, \$25/person/tree. Bring your own tree. The fee for silent observers is \$5.

Win a Registration to the Convention!

The HBS will award four free registrations for the state-national bonsai convention in San Antonio June 19-22. To be eligible, members must register before the May 19 early registration deadline and give Donald Green a copy of the confirmation on or before the HBS meeting on June 4. The names of the winners will be drawn at the June meeting.

Logo and Theme Winners Selected

Saturday, March 15, the convention committee met to set a budget and select the theme and logo for the 2009 LSBF-HBS state convention to be held here in Houston.

There were three entries in the logo contest; Ken Credeur submitted one and Alex Leong submitted two. All three were excellent. The choice was difficult, but the committee selected Alex's drawings of a Texas persimmon styled as a literati. This logo will be used on the convention stationary and artwork for 2009.

A host of people submitted numerous themes for the convention, but the one that was selected was "The Sprite of Bonsai 2009," which was submitted by a group of four members who would like to remain anonymous. The theme will also be used on convention's stationary and artwork for 2009.

I thank those who participated in this effort to get our 2009 Convention underway.

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.

We have had more rain this year and not as much cold as usual. This is favorable for having more problems from insects and fungal diseases. Aphids especially are showing up. Mildew usually won't be seen until it warms more, but with our Texas weather that could be before this article gets in print. Leaf spot could be a problem.

Fungal diseases can show up with damp weather. Leaf spot can be serious on Catlin and Chinese elms and on hollies. There are organic fungicides available, baking soda is one. Check an organics nursery or publication. A 1% solution of hydrogen peroxide (dilute the standard 3% store-bought stuff 2 parts water to each part peroxide) is also recommended but it can injure very new foliage.

A good organic program takes care of both the feeding and the insect problems. The trick is to thoroughly cover the plant, including all the leaf axils. Use a hand or pump up sprayer to get a fine spray to cover all. A hose-end sprayer does not cover well enough. This is also true if you use commercial chemical sprays.

I recommend the organic mixture of 1 tablespoon each of fish emulsion, liquid kelp, molasses and apple cider vinegar to a gallon of water. I use the mixture both as a foliar feed spray and as a soil-drench fertilizer. As a weekly foliar spray, for me anyhow, it keeps aphids, mites, loopers, bag worms and other insects under control. I try to drench twice a month partly because I don't think the plant can absorb all the minor elements it needs through the foliage. It is a good practice to also use fertilizer cakes on the surface of the soil which feeds a bit every time you water. Commercial water soluble fertilizers wash out with the next watering and result in poorly fed, pale bonsai. They are intended for use in soil that retains water for a long period such as commercial house plant mixes.

Garret Juice, a commercial product intended for the same purpose, uses compost tea, dried seaweed, water, molasses and vinegar. As a fertilizer it should act the same, but it doesn't seem to work as well as an insecticide.

Late March or early April is when I repot things like dwarf yaupon holly and boxwood. They do well when kept in light shade and out of the wind. Repotting for the hardy bonsai has ended, and it's still too early for the tropicals. Depending on temperature some tropicals may be done by the end of April.

If you have early blooming azaleas, you should remove some of the excess buds. Most azaleas will have

way too many buds for the tree to look nice if all are left and are too crowded to open fully.

So what is left to do? Just trimming, feeding, trimming, check for insects, trimming, shows, trimming. You get the idea. Trimming--that is the pinching, plucking or whatever of new growth--is the process that both develops refinement on your tree and is vital to keep it from growing out of the desired state. This is not pruning which is cutting of branches which should not be done when there is a strong sap flow which starts when the tree breaks dormancy and continues until after the leaves harden or later.

At the risk of repeating the process too much, I repeat it for the beginners. On elms and other trees with leaves appearing alternately down the shoot, do not let more than 5 new leaves appear. Cut back to 2 or 3 leaves, leaving the last leaf on the side that you want the new growth to appear. On maples and others with leaves coming in pairs on opposite sides of the twig, cut the center shoot as soon as you can determine it. Tweezers work best for this operation. Since the shoots do not all open at the same time this could be a daily chore for the best results.

Be sure to check your soils each day for proper water content. It is easy to assume that the soil has plenty of water when the days are cool or there has been some rain. A tree with full leaves may shed water outside the pot, or a good sun and low humidity after a front will dry the soil. I suggest that you remove some of the moss so that you can see and feel the soil in order to determine how dry it is. (Moss growing on the trunk or roots will also cause the bark to rot.) An automatic watering system is an aid, but you should not rely on it to replace hand watering. Best use might be to use it for a shot of watering in the morning and again at noon, then do hand watering in the evening. Most automatic systems just water a spot or two in the pot. Hand watering covers the entire pot and allows you to adjust the watering for each tree individually and see that the pot is draining properly. A clogged drainage hole can drown trees in less than a week.

Most trees will do well in the full sun at this time of year. However, if you have had them in partial shade, be careful about moving them directly to full sun. They probably should be acclimated gradually. Too much wind will cause the leaves to burn. Some damage may not show up until hot weather.



**PERSIMMON HILL BONSAI
STUDIO & NURSERY**

Terry & Sheila Ward Austin, Texas
512-280-5575 - phbonsai@sbcglobal.net - By Appointment

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.

- Apr. 2 Monthly meeting of the HBS
- Apr. 5-6 Spring Bonsai Show, Hermann Park, Japanese Garden
- Apr. 12 SSOT. Critique—Shohin bonsai and rough material critique by a 3-person panel. 10:30, Persimmon Hill, Austin. Terry, Sheila Ward, texshohin@sbcglobal.net or 512-280-5575
- Apr. 19 Saturday Study Group, Bayland Park
- Apr. 25 Roberto Martinez, Lecture-demo, 7:00 p.m.
- Apr. 26 Roberto Martinez, Workshops 9-12 and 1-4.
- May 7 Van Meer all day workshop, 9 a.m., San Antonio
- May 17-18 Austin Bonsai Society show, Zilker Garden
- May 19 Deadline, early registration for June convention.
- May 23-25 Brussel's Bonsai Rendezvous, Olive Branch, http://www.brusselsbonsai.com/about_us/special_events.shtml
- June 4 Drawing for registration for June convention
- June 7 SSOT, Austin, Display selection & workshop
- June 19-22 Convention hosted by San Antonio, Austin & American Bonsai Society at the Tropicana Hotel, river walk, <http://absbonsai.org/seminars/ABS2008/main2008.html>
- Sept. 24-28 BCI-IBS Congress. Saint Vincent, Italy. <http://www.bci-ibs2008.it/home-en.asp>
- Sept. 27 SSOT, Austin. Business meeting & workshop, slabs from slate.
- 2009**
- State LSBF bonsai convention in Houston, Marriott Hotel--Westchase .
- July 7-13 6th World Bonsai Convention, San Juan, PR, Condado Plaza Hotel & Casino www.worldbonsaiconvention2009.com

Smith's Hornbeam Takes Honors

In January 2008, Ron Smith's Korean hornbeam, pictured below, took top honors in the deciduous class of trees at the prestigious Bay Island Bonsai's annual exhibit in Hayward, California. The members of BIB themselves choose the best trees in each class.

Ron has been studying with Boon Manakitivipart, BIB's sensei, for over three years. Boon will be here in Houston for our 2009 convention. Ron, the proprietor of The Ancient Bonsai Co. in Santa Fe, Texas, will be relocating to Arkansas, probably within the year.



Hiroyoshi Yamaji at MBP

Here's the link to photographs of Hiroyoshi Yamaji's Japanese black pine demonstration at MBP Studio, Sunday, February 24, to benefit The Texas State Bonsai Exhibit. An amazing transformation! MBP donated the tree and pot, Hiroyoshi gave his time and talent, and we all benefitted by the day. Elaine White won the raffle and has donated the tree to the back to TTSBE, so we can all enjoy it. Quite a weekend!

Mike & Candy Hansen own MBP Studio in Pflugerville, Texas.

Just follow this link to my photos:

<http://www.flickr.com/gp/9290304@N06/6UkWXt>

If the link doesn't work, try copying and pasting it from this article into your browser's address bar.

--Joey McCoy, Austin Bonsai Society



Hans Van Meer

Hosted by Irene

The Place: *Sculptural Designs Atelier*
 1514 Broadway, San Antonio, Texas
Spend a day with award-winning artist Hans Van Meer!

Event: *Really get to know Hans in an intensive workshop.*
When: *May 7, 2008 (Wednesday)*
Start Time: *9:00 AM (we will break for lunch at 1:00 PM)*

Sculptural Designs Atelier is located in the heart of downtown San Antonio with many local hotels, motels and restaurants available.

Cost: \$100.00 for the day.

Limited seating of 15 for this workshop! *RSVP requested not later than April 2, 2008!*

RSVP To: irene_b@devtex.net

A non-refundable deposit of \$50.00 dollars is required.

Mail check to Terry Britton, 397 CR 5633 Castroville, Tx 78009, not later than April 2, 2008

Shinro

Thanks to HBS member L D Dornell for sending us this puzzle and obtaining permission for us to use it.

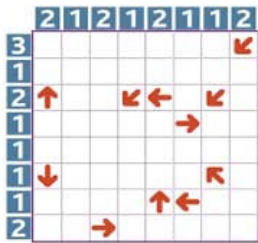
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Directions

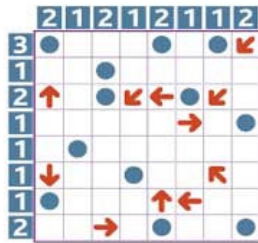
Shinro is Japanese for "compass bearing." Each grid below contains 12 holes for you to locate in the empty spaces. The number holes in each row and column is indicated by the corresponding number beside the grid. In addition, each arrow points directly toward one or more of these holes. An arrow may be immediately next to the hole it points to, or all the way across the grid from it. Not every hole will have an arrow pointing to it.

The solution will appear in the May newsletter.

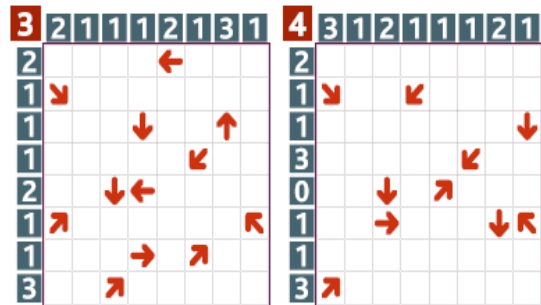
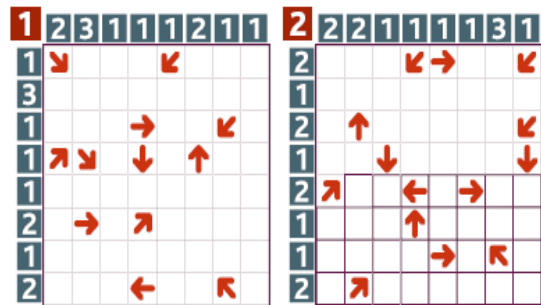
Example



Solution



Shinro



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For special requests or questions related to *The Bonsai News of Houston*, contact the editor (address and phone number above) 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 address above.

Space for advertising in *The Bonsai News of Houston* can be requested by contacting the editor at the address above or at www.HoustonBonsai.com. 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.