



The Bonsai News of Houston

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE
Houston Bonsai Society, Inc.

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November 2009

Monthly Meeting: Nominations

The next meeting of the Houston Bonsai Society (HBS) will be Wednesday, November 4, at 7:30 p.m. at the Houston Garden Center in Hermann Park, 1500 Hermann Drive. Refreshments **and Curbside Consultation** at 7:00.

Nomination of Officers, Delegates. At the November meeting, the board will accept nomination for the positions of first vice president, secretary, two members at large and the delegate and alternate delegate to the Lone Star Bonsai Federation (LSBF).

Qualifications and duties are set out in full on pages 59-60, below. The board of HBS is made up of the officers of the club; the new officers will automatically be on the board.

The board will present a slate of nominees chosen by the nominating committee composed of Alan, Buddy, and Donald. The nominating committee has selected:

- 1st vice president – Hurley
- Secretary – Seda
- Member at large – Phillip
- Member at large – Dean
- LSBF delegate – Buddy
- LSBF alternate – Carmen

Nominations will also be accepted from the floor.

The HBS bylaws provide that nominations can **ONLY** be made at the November meeting—no nominations in December.

Elections will be held in December, and the new officers will assume their duties in January.

Program. The November program will be a slide show of the pictures from the state convention and a short seminar on re-potting.

Name Tags. Please wear your name tag if you have one. It's easier to talk with people when you

can address them by name. If do not have a name tag, place an order with Donald at a cost of \$7. We will keep the name tags on site in a box. They will be available at each meeting to pick up and drop off at the front table.

Bring a Tree. Historically HBS members each brought a tree for show and tell or for just an informal exchange of ideas. We want to revive this practice. It's fun and informative to see what others are doing. So each member, bring a tree! Something you need help with, or a work in progress to share, or just a tree that deserves a night out (pretty flowers, fall color, winter silhouette, rugged individualism)!

Curbside Consultation. In addition, HBS is trying a pilot program called, "Curbside Consultation." From 7:00 to 7:25, two or three experienced members will sit at a table and give three-to-five minute consultations about members' trees, **LIMIT ONE** tree, please to give everyone a chance. For any member who wants more help, Michael will be available with information about the mentor program. Those in a line for help will undoubtedly want to compare notes and make suggestions while waiting their turn.

The consultation will stop promptly so the meeting can begin on time.

Finally, we have gotten lax about visiting together while speakers are speaking. Any speaker, whether an HBS officer or representative or a guest speaker, deserves respect and attention. Anything less is a poor reflection on us as an organization. If you need to discuss something with someone, please go outside. If it too cold or hot or rainy to go outside, take care of the business before or after the meeting.

--Hurley, JoAnn

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.

This article is reprinted from the November 2008 issue of The Bonsai News of Texas.

If you have doubts on how and why to use raffia or other branch protecting materials, be sure to read the fall 2008 issue of *Texas Bonsai*. You can get it online, or your LSBF representative has a few copies for those without Internet capability. This is the only article I have seen in this depth.

Fall and winter is the proper time to do wiring, styling, and plucking work on pines. Repotting is saved until growth starts in the spring, and candle pruning, until summer. Other conifers may also be worked on now.

Watch the weather so you can protect tender and semi-hardy plants. I prefer to keep them outside as long as possible, but you should remember that frost, which can damage tender leaves, can occur at temperatures in the upper thirties. I watch the dew point temperature which is when the moisture can condense out of the air. Also clear nights with no wind and low dew point really spell trouble.

Have your winter quarters clean and ready so that you can put your trees there quickly in the event a freeze is forecast. But don't put them there too soon as they are easier to care for on the bench. Some use an unheated garage. I prefer to set the pots on a gravel area on the ground. This utilizes the ground heat to keep the roots from freezing as hard. The pots can then be covered with loose mulch for insulation. Do not cover the ground with plastic because it will hold puddles of water.

After moving the bonsai, it would be a good idea to spray the benches with lime-sulfur to kill insect eggs and mold spores. If you will be putting the trees back under the benches for the winter, move the trees away before you spray. It would be good to have enough cold to stop the insect activity on the trees so you will not re-infest the area when the trees go back to await cold weather.

Most important in winter is to keep the soil moisture at a proper level. This sometimes is hard to do because the trees do not use as much water as when they are growing. However the cold winds will dry out the tops quickly. I believe that most winter

damage in Texas is due to lack of water rather than to low temperatures. Mulch helps keep the roots warm and retards evaporation but it makes for difficulty in seeing if the soil is damp enough. Most soils with enough organic material to keep the tree happy in the summer will be too wet if watered daily in the winter and wet cold means root rot. Try to position them so you can check the soil. If you are not watching the soil in their pots, you may get root rot fungus or the tree may dry out. Either way--you have a finished (for you beginners that reads, "dead") bonsai. Trees are easier to care for if you have them under roof, that way you know you need to tend to watering.

When trees go dormant, which indicates a reduced sap flow, they may be pruned, that is, have major limbs removed. Trimming may also be done while the leaves are off the trees and you can see what you are doing. Evergreens will probably still be active. Pruning them should be held until later.

The general wisdom is that dormant trees need no fertilizer. However, as long as the soil is not frozen, there will be some root activity. I do not add any fertilizer to dormant trees, but I will leave the organic fertilizer cakes on until spring in case they happen to get some good out of them. The organics will not break down much in cold weather anyway. Evergreens (*e.g.*, pines, junipers, yaupons, live oaks and most tropicals), however, continue some activity and therefore can use a small amount of low nitrogen fertilizer.

A horticultural oil spray should be applied during the winter to control scale. It will also get any overwinter insects or eggs that may be trying to get through the winter on your plant. This was the original purpose for lime-sulphur, and some Japanese still use it this way, but the oil is safer on bonsai and may be used on evergreens where the lime-sulphur should not be used. Again, do not use oil-based spray on buttonwoods.

By now any tropicals you have should be under cover. Most do not like the temperatures below 50 degrees. All tropicals should be checked and treated for insect problems since insects will multiply fast when they get into warm quarters. Spider mites and scale are especially damaging if the plant is moved into the house where the humidity is low.

The semi-tropical plants like crape myrtle pomegranate and pyracantha need to go dormant to stay healthy over a long time but they cannot take much cold on the roots. They will be killed by temperatures somewhere between 25 and 30 degrees. These I set down on the ground and mulch for light

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freezes and then bring into a protected area for the colder winter. Sometimes I will let them go dormant for a month and then take into the greenhouse to start early and I can enjoy their new foliage in January.

Take advantage of the slowdown in bonsai care to determine your repotting needs. Do you need a different pot? Do you need to get more soil components? How about mixing some potting soils for your needs? Be sure to label the use of each type of mix so you don't forget what is what.

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November Study Group and Video

The HBS study group will meet Saturday November 21 at Bayland Center in Bayland Park. We will start at 9:00 a.m. and go to noon. The meeting is open to members and non-members and all are welcome. The center is located at 6400 Bissonnet (Bissonnet at Hillcroft- south of 59 and west of Hillcroft).

Bring some popcorn because at 9:15 we will be watching a video called *The Growing Art of Bonsai*, a novice/intermediate video. We will also be working on trees so bring your trees, tools, and wire or just yourself and we will see you there.

Enjoy- Learn- Share --Michael

GSBF Magazine Free Online

The Golden State Bonsai Federation's magazine, *Golden Statements* now has a free online version at <http://www.gsbf-bonsai.org/gsbfmag.html>.



PERSIMMON HILL BONSAI STUDIO & NURSERY

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

Ruby Holt Wins Saikei

Chuck Ware gave a great presentation as usual at last month's HBS meeting. Congratulations to HBS member Ruby Holt who won the saikei that Chuck created.



Chuck Ware with Ruby, raffle winner.

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Ashe Junipers Available for Adoption

Bill has donated fifteen collected Ashe junipers to The Texas State Bonsai Exhibit (TTSBE). These trees are now available for "adoption" by "foster parents." The trees, of varying sizes all with dead wood, were collected in 2002 and 2003. We need more foster parents for these junipers!

Adopting a tree provides the opportunity to work on very large collected material and, at the same time, contribute to the state exhibit. If you are relatively new to bonsai, this is a particularly good opportunity to work on outstanding specimen trees with supervision from highly experienced bonsai professionals and hobbyists. In addition, visiting artists give no-charge workshops in Austin for the foster parents.

Foster parents do not have to go to Austin often. TTSBE has a standby crew to fill in gaps.

For information, contact Elaine. This is very exciting, very rare opportunity.

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Bill Suffers Stroke

Some of you may be aware that Bill suffered a stroke in mid October. Our thoughts and prayers are with him.

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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. Refreshments and Curbside Consultation at 7:00 p.m.

- Nov. 4 Monthly meeting of the HBS. Nominations for board and officers. Video, potting workshop.
- Nov. 21 Saturday Study Group, 9 a.m., Bayland Park.
- Dec. 2 Monthly meeting of the HBS. Elections of board and officers. Holiday pot luck supper and gift exchange.
- Dec. 19 Saturday Study Group, 9 a.m., Bayland Park

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- Jan 22-23 Roy Nagatoshi, lecture-demo, workshops. Details tba.
- Feb. 5-7 Biennial California Shohin Society seminar, Ramada Inn, Santa Nella, CA. Call 209-826-4444 for hotel reservations ASAP.

Duties of HBS Officers

First Vice President

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY

First Vice President shall assume all of the duties of the President if the President is unable to preside. This officer shall be responsible for any committees appointed by the President, will schedule the programs for the monthly meetings and oversee the functions of the library.

TERM OF OFFICE

Two years. No officer may serve more than two consecutive terms in the same office.

BONSAI EXPERIENCE

Must have a minimum of three years experience with bonsai, and at least one year as an active member of HBS or an organized Bonsai club.

JOB QUALIFICATION

1. Must be willing and able to speak in front of an audience.
2. Must be organized and reliable.
3. Needs to be creative in planning programs that will be of interest to the broad spectrum of club members' experience. Needs to be able to solicit suggestions from members of HBS and other clubs in the United States.
4. Must be willing and able to devote the time to the preparation of meeting programs or organizing and follow up of others in the preparation of meeting programs.
5. Must be able to attend almost all meetings.

JOB DESCRIPTION

1. Assume all the duties of the President if the President is unable to preside.
2. Plan, schedule, organize, and present the monthly meeting program.
3. Oversee the function of the library and VCR library.
4. Oversee the Sales Committee.
5. Such other assignments as requested by the President or Executive Board.

Secretary

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY

The Secretary shall record the minutes of the society's meetings, maintain on file all records of the Society, report the minutes of the meetings in writing at the regular monthly meetings and shall be responsible for publishing a Newsletter.

TERM OF OFFICE

Two years. No officer may serve more than two consecutive terms in the same office.

BONSAI EXPERIENCE

At least one year active experience with HBS.

QUALIFICATIONS

1. Must be able to take notes of meetings.
2. Shorthand is helpful but not required. Must have access to a computer, word processor or typewriter. Helpful to have access to a photocopy machine but not required.
3. Needs to have reasonable proficiency at spelling and English.

JOB DESCRIPTION

1. Keep the minutes of the monthly meetings and Executive Board meetings when called. Type the minutes by the following meeting and keep a copy in the permanent records of HBS.
2. Give a summary report of all meetings of the membership and Executive Board, occurring since the last Newsletter was published to the Newsletter Editor to be published in the next issue of the newsletter.

3. Make sure that all members of HBS fill out a membership application when they pay their dues for the current year in order to keep the membership roster current at all times.

Keep a current roster showing the name, address and phone number of all paid members of HBS. Make available to the membership a telephone list upon request. Make sure that those members who do not wish their address published to the general membership are excluded from the Telephone List. Provide the Executive Board a complete list with current membership changes as necessary. Check the roster for duplication of names.

4. Oversee the publication of the Newsletter. Proof for spelling, English, and accuracy before the Newsletter is mailed.

5. Oversee the function of the telephone committee.

6. Make reservations for the monthly meeting location.

7. Send all new members a letter of welcome, a list of HBS Officers and the Officers' telephone numbers, a list of HBS Committees (only committees anyone can volunteer for), the HBS Committee Chairman and the Chairman telephone numbers. Encourage each new member to volunteer and take an active part.

8. Send a letter to all guests asking them to join HBS, a sheet about HBS with an application for membership.

Member-at-Large

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY

It shall be the duty of the two Members-at-Large to attend meeting and bring forth any pertinent information from the members. They are charged with the responsibility of greeting guests and new members at each of the Society's functions.

TERM OF OFFICE

One year. No member-at-large may serve two consecutive terms.

BONSAI EXPERIENCE

At least one year active experience with HBS.

JOB QUALIFICATIONS

- 1. Attend monthly meetings.
- 2. Attend Executive Board Meetings.

JOB DESCRIPTION

- 1. Meet members and guests at the door and welcome them to the meeting.
- 2. Receive ideas concerning the meetings or activities of HBS and present them at the Executive Board meetings.

LSBF Voting delegate

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY

None

TERM OF OFFICE

Two years with no limitation on the number of times a person can serve.

BONSAI EXPERIENCE

At least two years active experience with HBS.

JOB QUALIFICATIONS

- 1. Willing to travel to the location of the LSBF meeting three times a year, and the delegate must make the meetings at least twice a year.
- 2. Willing to attend Executive Board meetings.

JOB DESCRIPTION

- 1. Attend all LSBF meetings to let the attendees know what is happening at HBS and represent the wishes of HBS Executive Board and membership.
- 2. Attend all Executive Board meetings to remain involved and informed on all the activities of HBS and keep the HBS Executive Board informed on the activities and issues of LSBF.
- 3. Provide a written report of LSBF activities and issues to the membership of HBS.

LSBF Delegate Alternate

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY

None

TERM OF OFFICE

Two years with no limitation on the number of terms a person can serve.

BONSAI EXPERIENCE

At least two years active experience with HBS.

JOB QUALIFICATIONS

- 1. Willing to travel to the location of the LSBP meeting.
- 2. Helpful but not required if Alternate would attend all the LSBF meetings in order to remain up to date on the current issues before LSBF.

JOB DESCRIPTION

- 1. Attend all LSBF meetings and stand in for the LSBF Voting Delegate if the Voting Delegate is unable to attend.
- 2. Attend all Executive Board meetings to remain involved and keep informed as to the activities of HBS and to keep the HBS Executive Board informed on the activities and issues of LSBF if the LSBF Voting Delegate is unable to attend.
- 3. Report LSBF duties and issues to the membership of HBS if the Voting Delegate is unable to attend.

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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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