



The Bonsai News of Houston

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE
Houston Bonsai Society, Inc.

Volume 38 Number 12, Internet Edition

December 2009

Monthly Meeting: Elections, Party

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

Election of Officers and Representatives. At the December meeting we will elect officers for 2009. The nominees are: 1st vice president, Hurley; Secretary, Seda; Members at large, Phillip and Dean; LSBF delegate, Buddy; LSBF alternate, Carmen.

There were no nominees from the floor. Under our bylaws, no nominations can be accepted at the December meeting. Officers also serve as directors.

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 year. The gift exchange rules are explained on page 67, 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 dessert.

Name Tags. Please wear your name tag if you have one. 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.

Bonsai Tree Decorating Contest. At the party, the HBS will have its first bonsai-tree-decorating contest. Simply bring a decorated bonsai tree or bring a bonsai and decorate it on the spot. The tree can be decorated in any way, style or theme, simple

or complex. Just let your imagination run wild. Why not have some family fun and enter a tree decorated by your family?

We call this a contest and so it is. The judging will be done after we have consumed our fill of food and drinks but before the gift exchange. Judging and placements will be decided by crowd noise with ribbons given and a \$25 gift certificate for first place.

This is all in fun so let's enjoy.

No December Study Group

The December Saturday Study Group has been **canceled** due to the holidays. The study group meeting will be Saturday, January 9, 2010 at Cabrera Farm Nursery, in Sugar Land.

Establishing an Advance Study Group

There will be an open meeting on Saturday, January 30, at 9 a.m. in Bayland Center in Bayland Park to establish an Advance Study Group. In the meeting we will determine the interest and need for an advance group. We will discuss and establish goals, objectives, meeting location/time, and the meeting format. At the end of the meeting, we will have developed a plan for the advance study group that will be presented to the board at the February board meeting for review and approval.

Meeting attendance will be the best indicator of interest and need. So, if interested, attend this meeting and come to express your ideas. This will be an open meeting with an open discussion. All are invited to attend. If you are unable to attend the

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Advance Study Group, con'd

meeting and want to express your thoughts, please send them to Michael by January 27.

Bayland Park is located at 6400 Bissonnet (Bissonnet at Hillcroft—south of 59 and west of Hillcroft).

Enjoy-Learn-Share --Education Committee

Planning HBS Activities and Events

The HBS is in the process of planning the calendar of bonsai activities for 2010. This includes programs, topics for monthly meetings, identifying and scheduling internal and external speakers, and identifying instructors for the introductory class.

The art of bonsai is best relayed, learned, taught and handed down by teacher to student(s) or from person to person. Passing on the techniques and methods is and should be something that we all participate in. So why not volunteer to do a presentation at the monthly meeting or cover a topic(s) in the introductory class? Don't wait to be asked!! This is an opportunity to assist others by sharing, teaching and demonstrating what you know about a bonsai topic, subject or technique. This is also an opportunity to return some of the fun, knowledge and enjoyment that others have shared with you. We are always looking for participation from our members in this area. If you are interested in preparing or presenting a program, please contact Hurley.

One last thought, why not do a program or presentation with another person. It is always easier and more enjoyable if you share the responsibility and fun with another.

Enjoy-Learn-Share --Education Committee

Deadline for Committee Reports

At the October HBS board meeting, the board agreed to have each program leader write a brief review of our progress and accomplishments in 2009 and goals for 2010 in their area of responsibility. The reports will be published in our newsletter in early 2010. Please email your review to Dolores and Alan by December 5 so Dolores will have time to edit and include them in the newsletter.

—Alan, President HBS

TTSBE Highlights 2009**JAN 09:**

- a. Chris Hewitt, a consultant for TTSBE, completed the site plan for the exhibit.
- b. Fall 2008 fund raiser added 12 donors to the Cornerstone Society.

FEB 09:

- a. A riding mower has been donated along with a push-mower, chainsaw, two wheelbarrows, pick axe and other small items.
- b. A permanent entrance gate was completed.
- c. TTSBE sponsored the third annual Red Bird Ranch collecting trip. Two Houston area bonsai artists participated, **Kerry** and **Pete**.

MAR 09:

- a. The spring newsletter will be available at the Houston state convention.
- b. A new presentation folder has been completed. It is a full color package to be used for presentations to potential donors.

APR 09: A surveyor has volunteered to mark the locations of the buildings to be placed on the site.

MAY 09:

- a. The Houston convention hosts placed our booth at a prominent location. The TTSBE booth was very visible and the sales reflected that. Approximately \$1700 was added to the treasury. **THANK YOU, HBS AND LSBF, FOR YOUR SUPPORT.**
- b. Alamo Community College student surveyors under the supervision of their teacher, Mike Ritter of the Texas Park and Wildlife Department, continued the surveying of the site.
- c. Bonsai Video Production: Students from Austin Film Works supervised by a University of Texas professor interviewed TTSBE board members and Mike Hansen and produced a film, *Bonsai in Texas*. It was shown on May 11.
- d. MaryAnn, the wife of Bill, donated bonsai items in her husband's name. A donation of approximately \$1500 of library and history of bonsai items were received.

JUNE 09: Oscar and Trent have become the final two foster parents for the cedar elm group.

(The board did not meet in July and August.)

SEPT 09: 15 Ashe Junipers were donated by Bill and are available for foster care.

OCT 09:

- a. Mike Watson has completed the design work on the reception building which will include all

--Con'd next page.

TTSBE Highlights, con'd

- functions until the other buildings are built.
- b. Two sheds have been acquired for storage on the exhibit land, one purchased and the second donated.
 - c. Kathy Shaner supervised foster parents on the cedar elm care and some of the recently acquired Ashe junipers. She also toured the participants of the October seminar held at Persimmon Hill Bonsai on a trip to the site of the TTSBE land.
 - d. The pro-bono surveyor, Michael Ritter of the Texas Parks and Wildlife, with his students continued the work on the land.

NOV 09:

- a. Additional board members are being sought. The new additions will be announced and voted on at the Austin Bonsai Society meeting December 9.
- b. Three small fund raisers during the year were very successful.
- c. The board will begin 2010 with the submission of grant proposals to several foundations.

*--Submitted by Donna,
secretary TTSBE, November 18, 2009*

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.

There are only two must do things for bonsai in December.

One--Watch the weather forecasts. I always look at the ten day forecast, too. It is not accurate enough to trust your bonsai to, but it may give you some extra time. I like to get the dew point temperature on cold days also. On clear calm nights, the temperature can drop to the dew point. I trust that as much as the low given on the tv news. Frost can also occur and damage sensitive leaves at temperatures above 32 degrees. A light cover will usually protect your trees from that or even just having them under a patio cover.

Two--Watch the water in your pots. I think more winter damage is done (on most bonsai) from the soil getting too dry. In the good ole days women hung the wash out even in freezing weather because the ice

would sublime leaving the clothes bone dry. Also plants cannot absorb water from a frozen soil. Then there is the wind. It doesn't take much air flow to desiccate the top of the trees and dry the soil, especially if the sun is warming it some.

I consider repotting during the winter a no-no. When you repot, you will stimulate new root growth. New roots are much more susceptible to cold damage; therefore, you would have to move that tree to an area protected from freezing. Repotting tropicals would be subject to your own particular growing area. If you keep the area above 60 degrees and cool enough during the day that the plants are actively growing, you could probably do it.

I do a lot of extra work on some of my shohin, especially the Catlin elms so that I can enjoy them in January. I have found that, if I let them get fully dormant and some freezing for about 4 weeks, I can take them into my cool (40 degree at night) greenhouse. They will then break dormancy and I can repot them and act like it is March. So I spend a lot of winter playing with them. Other species can be treated in a similar fashion, adjusting the amount of cold and length of dormancy for each species.

Winter is the preferred time for working on most bonsai. Junipers and pines can be styled and maintenance work done with a minimum of sap bleeding at the cuts. Now that deciduous species are bare you can really see the structure. Any problem branches should be worked on now. Greenhouse work has to be tailored to your particular greenhouse. If, like me, you merely want to keep them from deteriorating, you will do nothing more than prune a few wild branches. If you keep them actively growing, you may get to do more.

Winter tends to bring a whole new set of pests to contend with. One of the most destructive is animals

Cont'd next page.



**PERSIMMON HILL BONSAI
STUDIO & NURSERY**

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

Monthly Bonsai Care, *con'd.*

who like to chew on twigs and bark in the winter when their preferred food is scarce. There is really nothing you can do to prevent it but you can put repellants around and put out an all season rat-mouse bait. An outdoor cat also works wonders.

Since Texas winters tend to have periods of warm weather that can wake up sleeping insects such as mites and aphids, I suggest spraying evergreens a few times with the organic spray. (1 tbl. each liquid kelp, fish emulsion, 5% apple cider vinegar, and molasses in one gallon water).

Deciduous plants can benefit from a spraying of horticultural oil or a dormant lime-sulfur spray. The lime-sulfur must be done while the plant is completely dormant before any bud swelling.

Finally, some of best collecting trips can be had staying in town. Go check out the back corners of the nurseries especially those that cleared things out for their Christmas tree sales. Especially look for stuff that may have suffered top damage but has healthy growth at the bottom which is where your future bonsai is anyway. Sometimes they let you just take it or at most charge very little.

A Successful October Fall Show

The HBS fall show and sale was held on Saturday, October 10 and Sunday October 11 in the Houston Garden Center in Hermann Park. The set up for the show was on a rainy Friday. The layout of the display area was open with approximately 45 trees on display. The show was well attended with between 350 to 400 individuals viewing the exhibit and/or visiting the vendor.

The show had a relaxed and open atmosphere, which encouraged conversation and communications about the trees on display and the HBS. Those that worked the show can testify to the many questions, both general and specific.

Thanks go out to everyone that attended or participated in the success of the show. A special thanks to those who assisted in the set-up, brought trees for display, worked the exhibit and helped with the take down. Without the involvement and support of our members, this type of show could not be possible.

Everything about the show was positive from the layout, attendance, vendor and member participation. All in all it, was a most excellent and successful show. The HBS really knows how to put its best foot forward to make a great first impression.

However, there are two concerns that should be mentioned for future shows. First, is that we only had one tree that was brought in for the new members/novice display area. Second of the 45 trees on display 20 of them were brought in by 3 individuals. In the future we will need more participation in the area of bringing trees in for display. I'm fairly sure that every member has at least one tree that would fit into one category or another. Thanks Again!!!

Enjoy - Learn - Share

--Michael

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.

Dec. 2 Monthly meeting of the HBS. Elections of board and officers. Holiday pot luck supper and gift exchange, tree decorating contest.

Dec. 5 Deadline: committee reports

NO SATURDAY STUDY GROUP IN DECEMBER.

2010

Jan. 6 Monthly meeting of the HBS, Hermann Park.

Jan. 9 Saturday Study Group, Cabrera Farm Nursery, Sugar Land, 9:00 – 1:00

Jan 22 Roy Nagatoshi, lecture-demo, 7:00 p.m., Hermann Park.

Jan 23 Roy Nagatoshi, workshops. 9 – noon, juniper grafting. 1 – 4, bring your own tree. Hermann Park

Jan. 30 Meeting to discuss advance study group. 9 a.m., Bayland Center, Bayland Park

Feb. 5-7 Biennial California Shohin Society seminar, Ramada Inn, Santa Nella, CA. Call 209-826-4444 for hotel reservations ASAP.

May 22, 23, 24 Rendezvous, Brussel's Bonsai Nursery, Olive Branch, MS, Memorial weekend, May 22, 23, 24. For information, http://www.brusselsbonsai.com/about_us/rendezvous09.shtml or call 1-800-582-2593.

Sept 30- Oct. 12 BCI China tour and convention,

http://www.bonsai-bci.com/BCI_2010/China_10.html

Bonsai Tree Repotting Calendar Houston/Gulf Coast Area

by Michael

Major repotting involves lifting a tree from its container, removing roots and soil then planting the tree back into a container. This is typically done during the time of year when the tree is dormant or is least active. Repotting during this time reduces stress and aids in root development and the tree's ability to recover.

There are three general categories of tree typically used in bonsai: evergreens, deciduous and tropical/subtropical.

Evergreen trees retain their growth of leaves, scales or needles. The optimum time to repot them is the winter months during slow growth or resting period. These are best repotted from November to January (there are a few exceptions).

Deciduous trees lose their leaves as part of an annual cycle. The optimum time to repot them is shortly before the emerging of new leaf buds (bud break). These are best repotted from January to March.

Tropical and Subtropical trees can actively grow all year long. The optimum time to repot them is when the low temperature is above 60 degrees and some types when the low temperature is above 70 degrees. These are best repotted from April to August.

There are various methods used in repotting from up-potting, to partial and full repotting. I developed the chart below for partial or full repotting, where the root system is being reduced and all or part of the soil is being removed.

The chart is in the form of a calendar starting in November and ending in August. This format walks through the repotting cycle listing trees by type and the optimum time for repotting. Please keep in mind that each tree is an individual, so the right time to repot has to be determined by evaluating the needs of the tree.

The listing was developed for use in the Houston/Gulf Coast area. Changes in annual weather patterns could alter the indicated month(s) either earlier or later. Not all trees used in bonsai are listed. Repotting concerns such as the reason for repotting, repotting consideration, methods of repotting, after repotting care, how often to repot, repotting effects on flowering of fruiting trees are topics for future articles and discussions.

I hope that this information creates great success and enjoyment for your bonsai experience.

Repotting Calendar

Prepared 1-26-05, revised 1-14-08, 12-3-08, 11-10-09

<u>Type Tree</u>	<u>Report Target</u>
Junipers	November- December
Quince <i>Key – before flowering</i>	Early December
Pines <i>Key - needs cold weather after repotting</i>	December-January
Azaleas (before flowering) <i>Key – (Optional) remove unopened buds at time of repot</i>	Early January
Yesterday today tomorrow <i>Key – before new growth</i>	January
*Wisterias	January
Fruit and cumquats <i>Key – after fruiting</i>	January
*Chin. elms, *Chin. hackberry	mid-Jan. - mid-Feb.
*Crape myrtles <i>Key - when the tree is leafless</i>	January-February
*Japanese maples, *elms, *trident maples	Jan.- Feb.
Harland boxwood	mid-February – March 1
Bald cypress	February
Gardenia, lantana, razzle dazzle	February -March
Ginkgo	early March
Boxwoods (various)	March
*Sumerian cherry <i>Key - before new buds appear</i>	mid-March - April 1
Oaks	March - April
Azaleas (after flowering) <i>Key - Repot after blooming before the month of June</i>	March - May
Camellia	April
Jasmine <i>Key – After blooming</i>	April-May
Tropical (general) <i>Key - night temperatures should be above 60 degrees</i>	May - August
Bald cypress	June – July (second opportunity)
Crape Myrtle	July – August (second opportunity)
Bougainvillea, buttonwood, ebony, Fukien <u>tea, jaboticaba, black olive, powder puff.</u> (heat of summer)	July – August
<i>* Trees typically repotted before bud break and while leafless.</i>	

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For special requests or questions related to *The Bonsai News of Houston*, contact the editor at bonsainewshouston@yahoo.com 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.

GSBF Magazine Free Online

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

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.