



The Bonsai News of Houston

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

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March 2009

Monthly Meeting, March 4

The next meeting of the Houston Bonsai Society (HBS) will be Wednesday, March 4, at 7:30 p.m., Houston Garden Center, Hermann Park, 1500 Hermann Drive. Refreshments will be served at 7:00.

The Spirit of Bonsai: State Convention

The Houston Bonsai Society cordially invites you to join "The Spirit of Bonsai," April 17-19, at the Houston Marriott Westchase Hotel. The planners of this state convention have arranged exciting and rewarding activities that will surely please all who attend.

The program will feature workshops conducted by nationally known guest artists and an international guest artist. Boon Manakitivipart of California will conduct two workshops (black pine and Brazilian raintree) and a lecture/demonstration. Our international artist, Mrs. Milagros Rauber Herrera of Venezuela, will do two workshops (water jasmine and tiger bark ficus) and one lecture/demonstration. Roy Nagatoshi also of California will conduct two workshops (European olive & Saunders boxwood) and a lecture/demonstration. Boon and Roy have each agreed to conduct an additional workshop (bring your own tree) if the other workshops are filled.

The exhibit area will present a collection of outstanding bonsai specimen that will surely please your senses and stimulate your imagination. The exhibition will consist of masterpieces from the collections of members from clubs across the state. Contact Exhibit Chairperson Alan Raymond of the Houston club, phone 281-358-9562, e-mail amraymond@kingwoodcable.com for information and to discuss placing trees in the exhibit.

There will be vendors from Texas and other states to satisfy your desire for bonsai trees, plant materials, tools, pots, stones, books, videos, and other related items. There will be raffles, raffles, and raffles—throughout the convention. Several raffles will be conducted on some days, offering bonsai, bonsai-related material, and other items.

The Houston Marriott Westchase Hotel is located at 2900 Briarpark Drive, Houston, TX 77042. Phone 713-978-7400. The number of rooms is limited, so book early. Ask for the \$89 per night bonsai convention rate. For more information see: <http://www.marriott.com/hotels/travel/houwm-houston-marriotwestchase>.

The convention registration form and program can be downloaded and printed from www.houstonbonsai.com then select State Convention.

Early registration forms must be received by March 15. --Donald

Saturday Study Group, March 21

The HBS Study Group will meet Saturday March 21 at Cabrera Farms Nursery, 3910 Cabrera Dr., Sugar Land, phone, 281-313-2000. Map page 16.

The first day of spring is March 20 so come enjoy and celebrate spring in a relaxing and spacious setting. This is an excellent time to attend the study group. Cabrera Farms has for sale bonsai supplies, soil, pots and a large selection of trees. So if you need supplies or a tree to work on it is available for purchase. Con'd page 16.

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.

Regardless of where you live in Texas, three things are probably calling for your immediate attention. Repotting is still being needed; new growth is running rampant and needs to be controlled; and you must keep any tree to be exhibited at the spring shows well groomed. Throw on top of that an aphid invasion or some scale and you should be plenty busy.

By this time most of you have finished repotting the early breaking species. Late starting species like the yaupons and oaks might still be candidates for repotting this year. Since I am two weeks or more behind Dallas, I have only done a few but will have many done in the next two weeks.

Now you should get your tweezers and shears ready for the real job ahead. To develop the ramification and fine twigs you want, you must be pruning the new growth as it develops. Waiting until the shoots are three or four inches or longer results in coarse twigs with long internodes. These will have to be cut off and new ones developed if you are to have a good bonsai. Tweezers are my preferred tool for this job. If you do the cutting at the right time, the twig will still be soft and can be plucked with the tweezers. After a few tries, you will be able to work faster with tweezers than with shears. I prefer tweezers with a dull point, sharp points catch the foliage and rounded points are too big.

Essentially there are two kinds of growing habits, those with leaves growing alternately on the twigs, *e.g.*, elms, oak, and hawthorn, and those with opposite growing leaves, *e.g.*, maple.

The alternate growing leaves start out with small leaves and each succeeding leaf will be larger and the internodes longer. Also each leaf will have a latent bud in each leaf axial. Therefore if you let the shoot grow to four or five new leaves and cut it back to two or three, you will be keeping smaller leaves and also getting twice as many growing tips on each branch and each will be a finer twig. Keep this up and you will soon have nice development on the branches of your bonsai. In determining whether to cut to two or three, note the direction that you wish the end of the branch to take and cut to the leaf which has the bud on that side of the branch. Note: If last year's twig

has been let grow long it should be cut back to the first two or three buds.

Tweezers are almost a necessity in working on maples and other trees with opposite growing leaves. The opposite growing leaves clasp the new growing tip and will be extending from the old bud but on a lengthening stem. If the new tip is taken off as soon as the leaves separate, the result is that the leaves will be smaller and the stem will stop lengthening. Then two new tips will pop from the new leaf axials and you will repeat the tip plucking. Tweezers work much better for this job. I will sometimes separate the new pair of leaves from the new tip with tweezers but be careful not to bruise them.

Junipers should not be pinched. Junipers should be trimmed with the fingers. As the new growth develops grasp the twigs with one hand spreading the foliage in a fan shape. Then with the other hand grasp the tips between the fleshy part of your thumb and finger and pull it off. Using fingernails or scissors will result in brown tips on the junipers. If the juniper still has needle foliage, you can avoid being stuck by moving your hand toward the tip while grasping the twig. This in effects causes the needle to lie along the twig while you are holding it.

If your area is subject to late freezes, check the forecasts and be sure to take precautions. Newly developing roots in either freshly repotted trees or in established pots can be tender to freezes. Trees with new sap flow will also be more tender. And of course the new foliage will not take the cold or the strong winds that dry it and cause leaf burn.

As the weather warms up, the insects will probably make their appearance. Use the foliar spray (one tablespoon each of fish emulsion, liquid kelp, molasses, and apple cider vinegar per gallon of water, I do not recommend the commercial 'Garret Juice' for insect control) weekly to control aphid, mites, etc. Spring often means wet weather so weather for fungal problems such as black spot. I usually only get it on hollies and elms. You can use a 1% solution of hydrogen peroxide or baking soda spray for fungal problems. Do not mix baking soda with the foliar spray.

Use fertilizers sparingly at this time. Most contain a healthy supply of nitrogen which causes too much lanky growth. So far I haven't had any problems using the foliar spray probably because organics need warmer weather to break down into plant soluble nutrients and therefore are not as stimulating in this weather.

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Spring Show, Japan Festival, April 25-26

It's springtime and it's the time of year that we have our spring show in conjunction with the Japan festival. We all have such a great time at this event. The Japan festival will be on April 25 and 26, the weekend after the state convention. The festival and our show will be held in Hermann Park from 11:00 to 5:00 on Saturday and Sunday. Our area will be in the Japanese gardens with tables to display the trees and a cover to protect us from the sun and weather.

To have a successful show we will need volunteers to bring trees and to do the set-up on Saturday morning at 8:30 am. Trees can be dropped off Saturday morning and should be picked up Sunday after 4:30. We will also need individuals to work the show on Saturday or Sunday or both, and to assist with the take down after the festival is over Sunday. We will have sign up sheets and complete information at our April meeting.

Parking is a concern; we will have a drop off area for trees and limited reserve parking available for those who will be working the show. You will need to get there early to get a parking space.

The festival is a great time to experience ethnic foods and visit vendors selling novelty items and collectables. There will be performances with drums, music, singing, dancing. This activity is a treat for the mind and senses. We have a large number of people visiting our display and asking questions about the art of bonsai and the HBS. It is never a dull moment with plenty of fun & action!!!

--Michael

BCI Convention, New Orleans, Discount

Bonsai Clubs International will hold its International Bonsai Congress 2009 at the botanical gardens in New Orleans' City Park June 19, 20, 21.

Featured speakers are Peter Chan, Great Britain; Nacho Marin, Venezuela; Sandro Segneri and Massimo Bandera, Italy; Glenis and Lindsay Bebb, Australia; Tedy Boy, Indonesia; Jim and Linda Brant, Pennsylvania; Guy Guidry, Louisiana; Ed Trout, Florida; William N. Valavanis, New York; stone connoisseurs Willi Benz, Germany, and I.C. Su, Taiwan; ikebana artists Richard Cranford and Dora Ross, Louisiana.

If you plan to attend, consider waiting to register because we may be able to aggregate 10 or more registrants from HBS and get a 10% discount. If you

are interested, contact Alan. If we get at least 10, I'll coordinate our registrations.

--Alan

Raffle Donations

Only two meetings before our convention! Remember to bring your raffle donations.

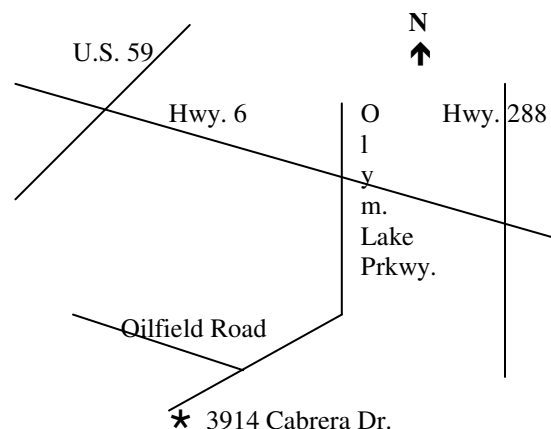
Thank you to the members who have already made donations. So far we have received lots of great items. Please continue to hunt through your closets, garage and work spaces for more raffle donations.

--JoAnn, Chair, Raffle Committee

Saturday Study Group, *cont'd.*

We'll crank up at 9:00 am and work, play and visit til around noon or beyond. This is an opportunity to bring in your trees if you need input or assistance. All are welcome the novice and advance bonsaist. Bring your trees, tools, wire, or just yourself and we will see you there.

Directions. 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 or call 281-313-2000.

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.

- Feb. 28 Course: *Introduction to Bonsai*, Bayland Park, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Instructor, Hurley Johnson.
- Mar. 4 Monthly meeting of the HBS. **Bring raffle items.**
- Mar. 7 Course: *Introduction to Bonsai*, Bayland Park, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Instructor, Hurley.
- Mar. 15 **Deadline early registration, LSBF convention.**
- Mar. 21 Sat. study group, 9 a.m., Cabrera Farm Nursery
- Apr. 1 Monthly meeting of the HBS. **Bring raffle items.**
- Apr. 4 Shohin Society of Texas meeting. Selection of trees for convention, critique of trees. Austin. Terry or Sheila Ward, 512-280-5575 or texshohin@sbcglobal.net
- Apr. 17-19 State LSBF bonsai convention**, Houston Marriott Westside. Boon Manikitivipart and Roy Nagatoshi, both from California, and Milagros Rauber Herrera from Venezuela.
- Apr. 25-26 HBS spring bonsai show & Japan Festival, Japanese gardens, Hermann Park, 11-5 both days. Set up 8:30 a.m. Saturday.
- May 6 Monthly meeting of the HBS.
- May 16 Sat. study group, 9 a.m. Cabrera Farm Nursery
- May 22-24 HBS club trip to Brussel's Rendezvous, Olive Branch, Mississippi.
- June 3 Monthly meeting of the HBS. Mike Hansen on black pines.
- June 6 Shohin Society of Texas meeting. Bring your own tree workshop; Sale & Swap. Austin.
- June 19-21 BCI's International Bonsai Congress 2009, New Orleans. <http://www.bonsai-bci.com/index2.html>
- June 20 Saturday study group, Bayland Park
- July 1 Monthly meeting of the HBS
- July 7-13 6th World Bonsai Convention, San Juan, PR, Condado Plaza Hotel & Casino www.worldbonsaiconvention2009.com
- Sept. 19 Shohin Society of Texas meeting. Business; shohin bonsai pot workshop. Austin.

2009 Membership Fees Are Due

The Houston Bonsai Society's membership fees are due in January. An individual membership is \$25.00; a family membership, \$30.00. Memberships run from January to December of the year.

Did you know?

Your membership fee is one of the major methods by which the HBS finances and funds its operation and activities such as guest speakers, demonstrations, workshops, tree raffles, refreshments, etc

Your membership fee aids in funding the production of *The Bonsai News of Houston*, a monthly HBS publication with valuable information and educational information about the art of bonsai and up-coming events.

Being a member makes you eligible to participate in workshops offered by the HBS.

Included in your fee is a membership in the Lone Star Bonsai Federation (LSBF), our state organization, so your HBS membership helps support their financial activities such as funding the annual tour speakers and aiding with the annual state conferences.

Your membership fee aids in funding the production of *The Texas Bonsai*, a newsletter published three times a year by the LSBF.

The small membership fee goes a long way and without it our/your bonsai organizations, both local and state, could not operate. Your membership and participation is critical. If you have not paid your 2009 membership fees, please do so as soon as possible. You can see how important it is. Those that have already paid, thank you for your payment, support and punctuality.

Enjoy – Learn – Share. --Education Committee



**PERSIMMON HILL BONSAI
STUDIO & NURSERY**

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

Houston Bonsai Society, Inc.

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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.

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.

New Course – Last Chance

The Houston Bonsai society is offering the course, *Introduction to Bonsai*. The text and course material were prepared by the American Bonsai Society, and the course is being put on and offered by the HBS locally. Only two sessions remain: Saturdays February 28 and March 7 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Bayland Center in Bayland Park. Bayland Park is located at 6400 Bissonnet south of 59 and west of Hillcroft. The facilitator will be Hurley Johnson.

The information presented will be extensive, covering a broad range of topics. If you are just getting started, the course covers what you need to know to succeed. If you have been in bonsai for a while, the course can expand your existing knowledge and increase your skill level.

For registration and information, contact Hurley Johnson at the HBS monthly meetings or by e-mail, hurley@all-tex.net.

This is a great opportunity for anyone who is interested in bonsai, whether just getting started or long time bonsaist. Make plans to attend.

Enjoy – Learn – Share.

--Education Committee

