



The Bonsai News of Houston

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE
Houston Bonsai Society, Inc.

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June 2009

Chinese Bonsai Society Show May 30-31

The Houston Chinese Bonsai Society will have a show Saturday, May 30 (10 a.m. to 5 p.m.), and Sunday, May 31 (10 a.m. to 4 p.m.), at the Chinese Cultural Center, 10303 Westoffice Dr. For map, <http://maps.google.com/maps?hl=en&um=1&ie=UTF8&q=10303+Westoffice+Dr+Houston,+TX+77042&fb=1&geocode=5921779440099010984,29.721089,-95.548860&oi=manybox&ct=14&cd=1&resnum=6>.

This show has wonderful trees. Don't miss it!

Monthly Meeting, Hansen, Black Pines

The next meeting of the Houston Bonsai Society (HBS) will be Wednesday, June 3, at 7:30 p.m., Houston Garden Center, Hermann Park, 1500 Hermann Drive. Refreshments will be served at 7:00.

Mike Hansen, of MBP Bonsai Studio in Pflugerville, Texas, will speak on black pines. He has asked that you bring a black pine and sharp bonsai scissors to the meeting.

Mike first became interested in bonsai in 1972 and has been involved in it ever since. He is particularly known and respected for his work with the Japanese black pine. He is recognized internationally and has served in various positions in the Minnesota Bonsai Society, Bonsai Clubs International, the Austin Bonsai Society, and The Texas State Bonsai Exhibit, Inc.

In 1994 he led the People to People Bonsai Expedition to the Peoples Republic of China and gave a lecture-demonstration to the Shanghai Bonsai Club in China. For more information, see <http://www.mbpbonsai.com/20.html>.

Saturday Study Group, June 20

The next meeting of the HBS Study Group will be Saturday, June 20, at Bayland Center in Bayland Park. We'll get started at 9:00 am and go to noon.

The center is located at 6400 Bissonnet (Bissonnet at Hillcroft—south of 59 and west of Hillcroft). This is an opportunity to bring in your trees if you need some input or assistance. You can also come by if you just want to assist others. All are welcome, the novice and advanced bonsaist. The only requirement is to have a good time. So bring your trees tools, wire, or just yourself and we will see you there.

Enjoy – Learn - Share

--Michael

Correction, Apology

I apologize for sending the newsletter out a week early last month. As a result, some material was left out. In particular, Buddy and John had submitted material that did not get printed. Again, I am sorry. Buddy's article appears below; the first paragraph of John's, on the next page. --ed.

Thank you to Cabrera Farm Nursery

Special thanks for making the 2009 L.S.B.F./H.B.S convention a success go to Phillip and Pat Drilling of Cabrera Farm Nursery in Sugar Land. For the past two and a half years, Phillip has cared for the trees for the workshop and lecture-demonstration.

During a five-week period after Ike, they hand watered our trees using the water from his pond because he had no power to run his water pumps. It took a lot of their time caring for our trees and they never complained. Phillip and Pat, we thank you.

--Buddy

Let me add my thanks for all you do for the club. --ed.

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 is how John began his article for the May newsletter. I thought it needed to be included. –ed.

At the convention I watched two good artists working on black pine. Roy had the student cut all needles to 1/4 inch. Boon had them pluck all old needles and left the one- year needles full length. Both techniques will work if followed by the correct care for that technique. For this reason I don't say much on conifers in this column. Whichever way you do it, you should learn the complete method of your instructor and not mix them. Don't change methods unless you have a very good reason. Then it may take a full year to get everything on track.

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If ants, or any other creatures, are building nests in the soil, the tunnels and cavities will prevent proper watering and result in loss of roots. After you get rid of the ants, be sure to grab your chopsticks and work the soil down and eliminate any holes. You will probably need to add a little more soil on top.

This year has been pretty weird. I had a freeze in the middle of April. You might still be able to leaf prune if you need to but be careful, it could turn hot in a hurry. Remember do it only on healthy vigorous trees. Put the tree in a semi-shaded location out of the wind until new foliage appears. Again never leaf prune the atropurpeum varieties of Japanese maples; they do not rebud but will usually come out again next spring.

However, some tropicals can be leaf pruned all summer. The *Ficus nerifolia* especially benefits by leaf pruning and can be done more than once each summer. That will develop the heavy twigginess you see in the ficus bonsai from the Far East.

When night temperatures stay above 60 degrees, you can think about repotting some of the tropicals. I would wait another month though for the buttonwood. I am going to work on some *Grewia* that need it but missed earlier due to convention and flu. I will strip all the leaves and then repot. Ask me next month how they did.

It is important to continue the twig pruning of trees on a regular basis. While doing this chore, look

at the tree to see if there is a need to do some refinement pruning. Refinement pruning is a deeper pruning to replace a branch that has grown too long or too big with a smaller one. This is usually done with the secondary or tertiary branches not the primary branch coming from the trunk. I prefer to do refinement pruning on deciduous trees in the winter when I can see the branch structure. But on bonsai like the yaupon holly, I like to do it at this time when the tree is actively growing so any winter dieback is apparent. Trees that weep a lot from cuts, such as maples or pines, should not be done at this time.

The extended cool and damp weather is good for fungal diseases like black leaf spot. Hot and damp bring other fungals like mildew. Treat with potassium bicarbonate or sodium bicarbonate (baking soda). After the foliage is hardened a bit, you can treat with a 1% hydrogen peroxide (1 part 3% peroxide to 2 parts water) weekly.

Also watch for signs of insect problems. The spider mite will always be near. Others to look for are scale of various forms, aphids, and mealy bugs. I use the organic foliar feed (1 tablespoon each fish emulsion, liquid kelp, molasses and cider vinegar per gallon water) to control all these. It also gets any caterpillars and even bagworms. You can use some of the other organic controls like horticultural oil or a chemical according to label directions. Read the label directions carefully, and DO NOT apply oil-based chemicals to BUTTONWOODS.

It does not do much good to spray if you do not do it correctly. Hose-end sprayers have too coarse a spray and usually do not cover thoroughly. All pathogen controls must be sprayed with a sprayer that has a nozzle which produces a fine spray in order to cover the entire leaf surface, top and bottom. You must get all them bugs or they come right back. And you need to spray on a regular basis. Any bugs or spores hiding in cracks will repeat the infestation.

Even if the days are relatively cool, the sun can still get the pots pretty hot. Not only does this dry out the soil very fast but the tree roots cannot live in a hot soil. A temperature I have heard given is that 120 degrees will kill roots on most plants. I cannot give you a precise to-do list since your backyard is different from mine but you should be sure that the sun does not hit the pots directly. If you use a cover of any kind, be sure that the side of the pot is protected also. A loose weave cover is preferable to solid paper or foil. Leave an air space between the cover and pot and soil. Do not use foil; it reflects rays back up into the underside of the leaf giving it a double dose of too much sun.

Con'd next page.

Most plants in pots will not enjoy a full day of 90-plus-degree sun. Partial shade should be provided. A shade cloth awning is the best as it will protect in the middle of the day. A shade cloth on the west side will protect from the late afternoon sun. This is the worst sun as the temperature is already high and the drier air makes the rays more intense.

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Second Offering –Introduction to Bonsai

The first offering of the *Introduction to Bonsai* course was such a great success and we had such a great time that we are going to do it again. The educational material, methods and techniques will be covered over five Saturdays -- June 13 and 27 and July 11, 18, and 25 --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 information presented will cover a broad range of topics. If you are just getting started, this course covers what you need to know to be successful. If you have been in bonsai for awhile, the course can expand your existing knowledge.

The cost for the course is \$25 per person for HBS members and \$40 per person, which includes membership in HBS, for nonmembers.

The registration fee includes the course manual, instructions, and visual presentations. Payment should be made at time of registration. **The deadline for registration is June 3, 2009.**

For course information contact Hurley Johnson or Michael at the HBS monthly meetings or by e-mail at education@houstonbonsai.com. This is a great opportunity for anyone who is interested in bonsai whether just getting started or long time bonsaist. Make plans to attend and sign up early.

Enjoy – Learn – Share -- *Education Committee*

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 me at 281-358-9562 or amraymond@kingwoodcable.com. If we get at least 10, I'll coordinate our registrations. --Alan

Spring Show-Japanese Festival

The spring show/festival was held the last weekend in April. To all those that pitched in and helped, thanks! For those that worked both days, double thanks!! Events like these are not a success without people like y'all. Thanks You!!!

This annual event is by far one of the most enjoyable activities of the season. In one weekend an estimate 500+ people visited our display in the Japanese Gardens. It was a great opportunity to reach out and connect with the public and people interested in bonsai. We chatted and answered questions about the art of bonsai and informed visitors about our organization, meetings, membership and classes. The HBS has a lot to offer those who are truly interested in bonsai.

When speaking with people, one thing I found interesting was that about half of them had previously owned a bonsai and were not successful at keeping the tree alive. Obviously bonsai is a learned skill. Of course the most frequently asked question was, "How old is the tree?"

Besides having a great time talking about what we enjoy doing, the festival had entertainment in the forms of music, singing, drums, games, cultural foods and drinks also demonstrations in swordsmanship and the martial arts. Attendees had a great opportunity to enjoy and savor all that the festival had to offer.

This is one of the most fun events we put on. If you couldn't make it this year, don't miss it next year.

--Michael



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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.

- May 30-31 Chinese Bonsai Society Show.
- June 3 Monthly meeting of the HBS. Mike Hansen on black pines. **Deadline for registering for *Introduction to Bonsai*.**
- June 6 Shohin Society of Texas meeting. Tropicals; Sale & Swap. Austin. Sheila or Terry Ward, 512-280-5575 or texshohin@sbcglobal.net. Contact Terry or Sheila to receive the SSOT newsletter.
- June 13 Class – *Intro to Bonsai*, 9 a.m., Bayland Park.
- 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
- June 26 Jason Schley, Florida, on grafting. Lecture-demo.
- June 27 Jason Schley, workshops.
- June 27 Class – *Intro to Bonsai*, 9 a.m., Bayland Park.
- July 1 Monthly meeting of the HBS, John Miller of Dallas on shohin .
- July 11 Class – *Intro to Bonsai*, 9 a.m., Bayland Park.
- July 7-13 6th World Bonsai Convention, San Juan, PR, Condado Plaza Hotel & Casino
www.worldbonsaiconvention2009.com
- July 18 Class – *Intro to Bonsai*, 9 a.m., Bayland Park.
- July 27 Class – *Intro to Bonsai*, 9 a.m., Bayland Park.
- Aug. 21 Roberto Martínez, Lec-demo, raffle. Details tba.
- Aug. 22 Roberto Martínez, workshops, 9-12, 1:30-4:30.
- Sept. 19 Shohin Society of Texas meeting. Business; shohin bonsai pot workshop. Austin.
- Oct. 9 Set-up for fall bonsai show, 6 p.m. – 10 p.m.
- Oct. 10-11 Fall bonsai show and sale, 8 – 5 Sat., 8-4 Sun. Houston Garden Center, Hermann Park.
- Nov. 4 Monthly meeting of the HBS. Nominations for board and officers.
- Dec. 2 Monthly meeting of the HBS. Elections of board and officers. Holiday pot luck supper and gift exchange.
- Feb. 5-7 Biennial California Shohin Society seminar, Ramada Inn, Santa Nella, CA. Call 209-826-4444 for reservations ASAP.

Texas Tour Speaker in August, Martínez

Each year, with the proceeds from the annual state convention, the Lone Star Bonsai Federation sponsors a speaker to visit the bonsai clubs that are part of the LSBF. This year the Texas Tour speaker is Roberto Martinez from Puerto Rico. Those of you who heard his lecture and attended his workshops in April 2008 know how talented he is. He is particularly good with tropical bonsai.

Roberto will give a lecture-demo Friday night, August 21 in the garden center in Hermann Park. The tree will be raffled. On Saturday morning August 22, he will conduct a workshop from 9:00 to 12:00; and in the afternoon another workshop from 1:30 to 4:30, enough people sign up to make a second workshop.

Roberto is scheduled to leave Houston Sunday morning and return to Puerto Rico, making Houston his last stop on the tour.

Further details will be announced at the June meeting and in the July newsletter.

--Buddy, LSBF Delegate

Roberto J. Martínez Acosta

Bonsai Artist

I was born in Puerto Rico in February 1976. All my life I have been passionate about art and nature. My love for the arts was so big that I devoted my earliest years to study this field abroad. I'm a painter, sculptor, sketcher, graphic and bonsai artist. I started making and developing bonsais in 1997 while studying with Mr. Pedro J. Morales, who is still my mentor and my teacher. I'm also part of the Puerto Rican Bonsai Federation, Bonsai Clubs International (register as a teacher), and was recently selected as first vice president of the Latin-American & Caribbean Bonsai Federation.

In 2002, one of my creations was chosen among the 100 best in the World Bonsai Photo Contest. In 2005 another of my bonsai was chosen as an Honorable Mention winner in this same contest, and also in 2006, another one in the category of International Winners. Recently, I received the First Judge Winner of the Certré Award International 2007. Also, I was speaker in BCI-FELAB Convention 2007. I have given many demonstrations around Puerto Rico. In 2006, I released a DVD about developing and maintaining bonsai trees (made with tropical materials). Last year, I was a guest artist at the Second Tropical Shohin Symposium in Puerto

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Houston Bonsai Society, Inc.

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www.HoustonBonsai.com

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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.

small portable tables. Check the goodies, haggle prices, work deals and eat chili dogs at the same time. Who could ask for more?

2010 California Shohin Society Seminar. Mark February 5, 6 & 7 on your 2010 calendar for the dates of the next shohin seminar at the Ramada Inn in Santa Nella, CA. Now is the time to make hotel reservations at 209-826-4444. Rooms at the seminar hotel go fast. Registration info and room rate has not as yet been released. (The 2008 room rate was \$69.00 + tax.)

The biennial shohin seminar is always tops for learning, programs, workshops, exhibit, vendors and true value! It's low cost, very informal and down right fun! --Terry Ward, Austin

Martinez Bio, *con'd.*

Rico with Shan Smith, Suthin Sukosolvisit, Pedro Morales and Carlos Morales.

Recently, I finished the first year of the European Bonsai School with master Salvatore Liporace and I was invited as a guest artist in the upcoming Sixth World Bonsai Convention to be held in San Juan, Puerto Rico in July 2009.

Excerpts from SSOT Newsletter

Tropicals are the focus trees at the June hands-on workshop of the Shohin Society of Texas. Bring any tropical or semitropical trees you want to work on. Refine or restyle or work on rough material or all three. Your choice. All must have the potential for becoming shohin bonsai. Bring your trees, tools and a turntable if you have one. There will be lots of help for the asking.

As always, you may work on any tree or shohin bonsai related project you like. Our workshops are not limited to the 'focus' trees or project. The important thing is to bring something to work on. Learning bonsai is not a spectator sport, it's accomplished by hands-on.

Sale and Swap. Bring anything you would like to sell or swap - bonsai related preferred - and display your 'stuff' on the deck. There will be two