



Bonsai Society of Dallas

Monthly newsletter

June 2010

Message from the President

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I hope everyone enjoyed last month's program and workshop with Jim Gremel. We had good participation in both events. A special thank you to the people who helped pull it all together: Bill Weber for contacting, Diane Lowe for coordinating and facilities, and to Howard and Sylvia Smith for hosting and transporting. Special congratulations to Lois Flood for winning the Mustang Grape demonstration tree through the raffle.

It sure feels like June is here. I put my shade cloth up today, trees are loaded with fertilizer cakes, and my tridents are growing like weeds. I can barely keep up with the wiring and pruning. Each month John Miller's column in this newsletter provides us with great information. We'd like to build on that sharing of information and plan an additional monthly gathering for club members to work on their trees together. We are planning an additional get together outside of our regular meeting that will allow us to work on our trees and share insight. Look for additional details in the newsletter on this fun addition.

Our June 5th program at North Haven Gardens is a return of our favorite Larry, Moe, and Curly program. It is your opportunity to bring in your bonsai material and get advice on how best to proceed. Three of our veteran club members will be available for the critique and follow-up consultation afterwards. Please make sure to bring a couple of trees and we'll be sure to get to at least one per person depending on time. Our veterans will give advice on how to make the tree better. No matter what stage your material is in, you are sure to gain a new perspective through this form of show and tell. Our regular program is followed by another session of Bonsai 101 at 11:00 a.m. The topic this month is The Care of Bonsai, Part 1. Long time club member Van Davis and Diane Lowe will be presenting horticultural fundamentals for healthy trees.

I don't know about you, but I am saving a few bucks for the LSBF Cowtown Convention in Fort Worth June 11th – 13th. I registered for the Trident workshop with Matt Ouwinga and



Jim brought some of his famous annealed copper wire to help get the job done. Photo C. Scholz

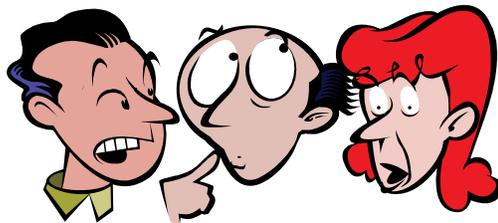
I am trying to decide which tree I should bring to the Guy Guidry workshop. Saturday I will be helping with the auction. Remember the convention will have great raffles and Saturday night will feature an auction of nicer trees. It is also a great way to visit with some of our favorite vendors and stock up on some new material and supplies. I hope to see you there!

Speaking of conventions, Dallas will host the 2012 LSBF Convention and planning is already underway. We need members who will serve on the various committees and also members willing to take a leadership role by chairing a committee. Attending the Ft. Worth Convention will give you a good idea of what lies ahead. Please let me know if you can help out in either a leadership role or serve on a committee. I've got more information available, so just reach out and we can discuss it further. We all need to pitch in to make it a success.

On a final note, welcome to our new members who have joined in the past couple of months. They are Blake Meehan, Chris Milligan, David Parry, Jean Wallace, Lorrie Pritchard, and Stephen Potter. We are excited you found us and look forward to getting to know you better.

See you soon!
Chuck

Three Stooges Advice Panel



May Program with Moe, Curly and... Lucy?
9 AM to 12 Noon, June 5th

Join us Saturday, June 5th for this year's annual Stooze-fest...ah, Ask-the-Expert advice panel, starring Howard and Sylvia Smith of BonsaiSmiths and member Dave Schleser as our panel of experts! That's right; we have a female stooze this year (Curly accidentally hit Larry on the head with a two-by-four, so Lucy is filling in). Any and all questions pertaining to bonsai will be fielded by these nincompoops...er, I mean, experts. From beginner to advanced, this interactive program will address your questions. So, don't be shy; bring a tree or three...and be ready to duck!

This is a great opportunity for the beginners among us. Our panel will start by critiquing one tree per person and if time allows a second tree can be done. This is one of the best ways to develop your visualization and forward-thinking skills which will improve your collection. The stoozes panel is usually one of the favorites on the agenda, so don't miss it!

Bonsai 101: Care of Bonsai – Part I

After our regular June meeting, we will have the third in our series of Bonsai 101 sessions. This time Diane Lowe is joined by Van Davis and they will discuss and present "The Care of Bonsai", Part 1. This session focuses on the horticultural practices that are essential to keeping our trees alive and thriving, especially during our hot Texas summers. They will also review some of the tools you will want to have available to care for your trees. What's in your tool bag? Please join us at 11:00 a.m. June 5th!

Upcoming Events



Saturday, June 5th, 9–12 Noon
The Three Stooges BYOT Advice &
Show-n-Tell

Thur. – Sat., June 11–13th
LSBF/FWBS State Convention
Fort Worth, Texas
www.fwbonsai.com

Saturday, July 3rd, 9–12 Noon
Make Your Own Pot Workshop
with Sandy McFarland

Saturday, July 10th, 9–12 Noon
2nd Saturday BYOT Workshop Day
Home of Jerry Riley

Links of the Month



Estella Flather is a freelance artist who is heavily involved in the art of Bonsai. She has taught classes at Tarrant County College, the Fort Worth Botanic Garden, has lectured at local and state Bonsai conventions, and was a founder of the Fort Worth Bonsai Society.

<http://www.fwbonsai.com/Convention2010/Artist4.html>

Alisan Clarke is an artist working in sumi-e and drawing for bonsai, as well as designing bonsai pins. Her other two specialties are 15th century Russian Byzantine Ikonography and Ikebana in the Ikenobo School style for which she is certified to teach.

<http://www.fwbonsai.com/Convention2010/Artist5.html>

Both featured artists will be leading workshops at the Cowtown Bonsai convention in Fort Worth.

2010 Convention "Bonsai Maniac" Joke Contest

Do you remember some of the old Jeff Foxworthy redneck jokes?

"If you think that fast food means hitting a possum at 65mph...you just might be a redneck."

"You may be a redneck if you carry a fishing pole into Sea World."

For the 2010 Convention, let's put a special twist on this joke style and substitute "Bonsai Maniac" instead. For example:

"If you have a different pair of pruning shears for each one of your bonsai trees...you just might be a bonsai maniac."

"You may be a bonsai maniac... if, in January, you spend more money on bonsai soil than you do on food!"

Get the idea? Here are the contest details:

- Come up with as many "Bonsai Maniac" jokes as you like. Write them out or type them up each on a separate slip of paper. Be sure and put your name and bonsai club on each submittal.
- At the convention, a ballot type box will be on the registration table for submittals. Paper and pencils will be available also.
- Jokes will be received from the start of the convention through to the start of the Saturday evening meal. You can start now or you may come up with many new jokes during the convention!
- The best joke, as determined by selected judges, will win a prize of \$30 worth of \$5 raffle tickets to be used in the final big raffle.
- Winning joke will be announced Sunday morning just before the final big raffle.
- For fun, the best jokes will be read throughout the convention at meal times and during the Saturday night auction.

This contest should prove to be a lot of fun because there are a lot of bonsai maniacs in the LSBF clubs. Now let's see how clever you all are! ✍

2nd Saturday Workshops

At a recent board meeting, Jerry Riley suggested bringing back the alternate weekend get-together workshops like we've had in the past. The board talked it

over and we've decided it's high time to bringing it back! What is this some of you might ask? This is a wonderful opportunity for us all to get together to work on our own trees in the company of others and work toward improving our bonsai while having other members available for opinions and advice. Many clubs, including the Ft. Worth club, have been doing this for a while now. So, beginning in July, the 2nd Saturday Workshop Day will become a regular event.

In our club, the program has traditionally rotated between member homes from month to month and we'd like to keep that format. However, this is done on a 100% volunteer basis. Also, to reduce the logistics for the host, we've decided that the host provides only the space. Attendees are responsible for all of their own needs and supplies, including lawn chairs.

Jerry has volunteered to host the first workshop at her home in Plano (thanks Jerry!). Details will appear in the July newsletter. ✍

2012 Convention News

The BSD board has begun preparing for the 2012 LSBF convention, which will be in Dallas and hosted by the Dallas club. Current BSD President Chuck Talley has graciously stepped forward to be the Convention Chair.

Chuck is beginning the process of putting together the committees that will be needed to make our event the most successful one to date. There are five committees identified thus far: vendors, raffles, registration, exhibit and workshops. Members interested in serving on a committee, please contact Convention Chair Chuck Talley. ✍



Visit www.fwbonsai.com for more details on the convention.

June Bonsai

Tips and advice by John Miller



Have you sent in your registration for the LSBF convention in Ft Worth yet? It is never too late and you can always register at the gate. Even one day will be well worthwhile.

In general it is well past the repotting time for most bonsai. However, now that night temperatures are above 60 degrees repotting the tropicals is at hand.

If ants, or any other creature, 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.

Leaf defoliation should not be done any more on most species. There must be a month of growing temperatures. And never leaf prune the atropurpeum varieties of Japanese maples, they do not rebud very well 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 twiginess you see in the *Ficus* bonsai from the Far East. I leaf prune my *Eleagnus* a month before a show if it looks ratty.

It is important to continue the twig pruning of your trees on a regular basis. While doing this chore, look at the tree to see if there is any need to perform refinement pruning. Refinement pruning is a deeper pruning to replace branches that have grown too long or too big with smaller ones. This is usually done with the secondary or tertiary branches, not the primary branch coming from the trunk. I prefer to do this refinement pruning on deciduous trees in the winter when I can see the branch structure. But on bonsai like the yaupon hollies I like to do it at this time when the tree is actively growing so that

any winter dieback is apparent. Trees that weep a lot from cuts, such as maples or pines, should not be done at this time.

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



Jim takes a look at the demo tree; a Mustang grape. Photo C. Scholz

The warmer the weather the faster the bugs grow. 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 (one 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 very well. 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 as it lets you water more easily. 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.

Most plants in pots will not enjoy a full day of 90 plus sun. Partial shade should be provided. A shade cloth awning 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. The trees can take more sun if the pots are covered loosely. There should be some air space around the sides of the pot.

Get in the habit of turning you bonsai on a regular schedule. One guy turns his a quarter turn every Monday.

May Recap

by James Bonney

In May, Jim Gremel from Occidental, California came and gave a great lecture and demonstration on fruiting bonsai. Jim has been working with bonsai for more than three decades and runs a nursery, Dear Meadow Bonsai, back home. Jim has studied with the likes of Mas Imazumi, Dennis Makishima, Kathy Shaner, and Boon Manakitivipart.

Jim's lecture began with a slide presentation discussing several of his trees, showing their progression and talking about different aspects of bonsai care, styling, correction techniques and timing. The fruiting trees that Jim mostly likes to work on are crabapples. However, if you run into him sometime, ask him to tell you the story of the pear trees he accidentally got in a deal once. It's a long, funny story. I particularly liked the progression shots he included, since much of what we see in presentations are shots of trees in "show condition"; certainly pretty, but less instructive.

Jim then got down to business on a native Mustang grape that was purchased especially for the event. He apologized that he was going to have to be rather ruthless with the plant as this was its first styling. Thankfully, the demonstration was early enough in the year that the plant should be able to set buds for flowering next year should its new owner care to let it. After the demo, the tree was raffled off and Lois was the lucky winner!

Those of us who were participating in the juniper workshop broke for a quick lunch before returning to a reconfigured room. Trees and wire were provided for all

That way they will develop all sides evenly. This would fit in nicely with a good routine—say, rotate on Monday, spray on Wed, and fertilize on Fri (if you do not use organic fertilizer cakes).

It's been a long time since I mentioned that watering is a chore that cannot be taken for granted. You cannot safely assume that the rain did the job. Trees have a way of shedding water to the outside (the drip line?). You need to check each tree daily. Watering bonsai is a twice around the block type of affair. You water thoroughly which wets the outside of the granule and needs a few minutes to break the surface tension. Then come back and water again thoroughly so the particle can be fully soaked. ☞

participants. Jim had brought two varieties of Shinpaku juniper to the workshop—Itoigawa, a finer textured and lighter green variety, and Kishu, a plumper and darker green variety. Participants got their pick. After Jim demonstrated how to start one, everyone started in. The first thing he had us all do was to wire the tree from base to tip. Then the tough part; squash that tree into submission. Jim explained that to get a realistic tree, the bends needed to be erratic with bends in several directions and curves of varying sharpness. He ensured we had interesting and non-uniform curls by collaboratively bending them with us. The twisting and curling part had several of us convinced we were going to snap the tops off, but all the trees made it through. With proper aftercare and several years of growth, these trees should begin to look like something plucked from nature. Thanks Jim! ☞



Mustang grape demo. A small bunch of grapes that withered on the vine. *Photo J. Bonney*



Jim's presentation. He talked a lot about the progression of his trees. *Photo J. Bonney*



Many members turned out for the juniper workshop. *Photo J. Bonney*



Wired up and ready for some extreme bending. *Photo J. Bonney*



Jim reduced the Mustang grape quite a bit and wired the newly selected primary branches. *Photo C. Scholz*



Lois was the lucky winner of the raffle. *Photo J. Bonney*



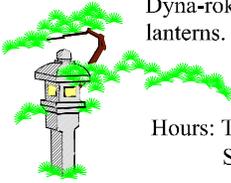
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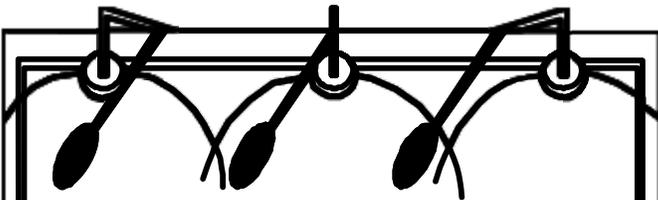
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