



# Bonsai Society of Dallas

February 2005

## From the Editor:

By Sandi McFarland  
I could really use some help! I need some free, black and white drawings of bonsai to spice up our newsletter! If you have access to some, or would like to draw some, please email them to me!

I welcome all of you to contribute to the newsletter! If you have an article that you would like for me to publish, please email it to me at [potter@pegasuspottery.com](mailto:potter@pegasuspottery.com).

## Message from the President:

By George Straw

Our January meeting had a great turnout with 35 people showing up and signing up of several new members. Be sure to tell your friends about the club and the benefits of joining. Mike Hansen did a great job with his talk on black pine.

By the time you get this newsletter, we will probably already have gone on the club dig for Jan 29 in Whitesboro. The next club dig will be Feb 12 and details on that will be included in

this newsletter. Thanks to Michael Smoller for arranging the February dig. These digs are a great opportunity to get some native material to work on and it does not cost anything.

To keep up to date on what you should be doing to your bonsai during the year, be sure to read John Miller's article each month. John does such a great job of keeping all of us informed about our trees and you will not want to miss the February meet-

ing with John and also Dave Schleser.

Remember that there will be someone at the meeting early to help you with questions about your trees or other bonsai related questions.

Hope to see everyone in February.



## February Program

By Daryl Le

Date: February 3, 2005  
Time: 6:30 PM  
Place: North Haven Gardens  
7700 Northaven  
Dallas, TX

Longtime Club members, John Miller and Dave Schleser, will present demos at our February meeting. During the first part of

the evening, Dave will go over the trimming of maples, followed by John's presentation on Chinese elms including the 'Catlin' cultivar. He will cover the intricacies of elm care, providing some examples of repotting and refinement. This presentation will be a lead in to the workshop on Saturday.

I hope you will join us!



## BSD Calendar

- Feb 3 - Dave Schelsler, Japanese Maple and John Miller, Catlin Elm
- Feb 5 - John Miller Workshop, Catlin Elm, 9:00-12:00 at Northaven Gardens
- Feb 12- BSD Club Dig in Van Alstyne
- Mar 3 - Mike Smoller, Cedar Elm
- Mar 5-6 - Spring show at the Dallas Arboretum
- Apr 7 - TBA
- May 5 - TBA
- May 13-15 - LSBF Convention in Fort Worth
- Jun 2 - TBA
- Jul 7 - Club Barbeque
- Aug 4 - TBA
- Sep 1- TBA

## Other Dates of Interest:

- Feb 19 - Shohin Society, 10am, Persimmon Hill Bonsai, Austin
- Apr 16 - Shohin Society, 10am, Persimmon Hill Bonsai, Austin
- May 28-31 - 5th World Bonsai Convention, Washington, DC
- Jun 11 LSBF meeting 1PM Zilker Park, Austin
- Jun 18 Shohin Society, 10am, Persimmon Hill Bonsai, Austin
- Sep 17 Shohin Society, 10am, Persimmon Hill Bonsai, Austin
- Oct 22 LSBF meeting 1PM Zilker Park, Austin

# February Bonsai

By John Miller

Have you been enjoying the landscape this month? There is much styling info to learn if you look at the landscape while driving around. With all the leaves gone you can see the branch structure, what pleases you and what is not so good. Notice the different ramifications for the various species of trees. Also it is just plain beautiful (if you ignore the trash on the ground). It's not all gray. There are many shades of gray involved. Some trunks are black. The exfoliating bark on the sycamores leave the limbs stark white, looking like bleached bones hanging in the forest. And the twigs have various hues, willows are red or golden, ash has a greenish hue. The evergreens give splashes of green and the possum hawk decorates the landscape with its red berries. A great time of the year.



February is the start of the active cycle for bonsai, first the repotting when new growth is first evident, then the refinement process starts as soon as the green comes, all the while tending to the tasks of watering, feeding, and watching for insects.

Spring is a long, drawn out affair and each species has its own time table in dealing with it. To be really successful in bonsai, you must know what each species you have will need and how it responds to YOUR OWN backyard climate. If you have kept your trees from freezing, they will want to start growing much earlier than those kept outside all winter. Typically in my collection, which stays outside, the elms will be first, foliage showing about the end of February or the first of March depending on the winter, along with the earliest maples. Then, later in March, the rest of the maples and most of the others. The deciduous oaks will come out around April 1. Out here in the country I am 2 or 3 weeks later than I was in town, 30 miles away. The timetable has to be your own, set by watching the trees themselves. All bonsai functions should be done when your tree tells you that the timing is right.

Repotting 'can' be done at any time during the dormancy but new roots are susceptible to freezing, so you have to have some place to protect them after repotting. The best time to repot the deciduous temperate zone trees is when the buds are just beginning to swell but before green is showing. Generally this will be before the last of the freezing weather. Trees that leaf out early, maples and elms, can withstand a few degrees of frost but if repotted you should protect the newly growing roots. Sometimes this just means setting them on the ground. Some species such as the oaks and willows are naturally programmed to wait much later so that there is very little chance to get nipped.

The newer wisdom on azaleas is that you also repot them at this time. The roots will be reestablished by blooming time. This is much easier on the tree than waiting until after bloom when the temperature will be hot. Before blooming starts you will be removing a lot of excess buds anyway which will reduce the stress on the tree at that time. Remove enough buds to allow the remaining flowers to have room to fully open. This should be done in late February or early March on the early blooming species (Karume) but may go later in March for the Satsuki types.

Refinement is the process that makes a well styled tree look great developing fine ramification and obtaining smaller leaves. Part of the refinement starts as soon as new growth appears. Keep it pinched so you keep the internodes short and develop a compact set of twigs with small leaves on the branches. On alternate leaved species (e.g. elms) pinch when the shoot gets 4 or 5 leaves. Fingernails or shears can be used. If the twig gets too long, it will be tough and you have to use shears. On opposite leaved trees (maples), pinch the central shoot as soon as it can be distinguished from the two leaves. To do this really right you need to use tweezers with a dull point.

Spring flowering plants will have their buds set on last year's growth so pruning them will remove some flowers. Those that bloom later in the year will generally bloom on this year's growth. Pruning them will reduce the amount of flowers. In some cases such as crepe myrtle, tip pruning of the branch will result in no flowers at all. In these cases you must decide which is most important, ramification or flowers. A compromise would be to prune the branch shorter than you normally would and then let it bloom on new growth which will at the proper length, at least for the first flowering of the season.

When the growth starts, the tree will need fertilizer. However, use one that has a small amount of nitrogen (the first number). The tree is naturally programmed to grow rapidly at this time so you don't need to encourage it further. Feed lightly to maintain a healthy green foliage. Ideally use an organic fertilizer which provides nutrients more slowly when the weather is cool. Trace minerals should be added to help with both the foliage color and the color of blooms.

If you have not used an horticultural oil, the time is fast running out. The oil would be used to kill scale and overwintering mites and other boog-ers. When new growth starts, oil might damage the tender foliage. When new growth starts, the problems to look for are the above mentioned mites but especially aphids and mealy bugs. These can be controlled as well as giving the plants the required fertilizer by using an organic spray. (1 tablespoon each of liquid kelp, liquid fish emulsion, apple cider vinegar (5%), and molasses in one gallon of water. Or use a commercial mix like Garrett Juice. All these are available in any organic nursery. If leaf spot, mildew or any other fungal problems appear, use a baking soda spray or a commercial fungicide.

An important job which many neglect saying they are not going to show any trees is to (using an apt automobile term) detail their trees. This makes them look their best and that helps give you incentive to follow other good practices. Start by checking the branches. Prune any out of place or too long twigs. Remove any unnecessary wire, that is wire on limbs that have set in place. Treat any jin and shari that needs it. Then move down to the pot. Be sure it is clean and all lime deposits are removed. Steel wool works great to clean pots. A coating with a very light wax polish such as leaf shine will make the pot look good and help keep the mineral deposits from forming. Then check the soil. It should cover the outer roots. The surface of the soil must be clean of any fallen leaves or other debris. Now it looks so good you might as well take it to a show.

# Membership Renewal

If you have not already done so, please renew your membership in BSD today! If you have renewed your membership, please pass this on to a friend. Your membership dues allow BSD to continue to bring quality bonsai artists to our meetings for lectures and demonstrations. Please fill out the membership form below and mail with payment to:

Bonsai Society of Dallas  
P.O. Box 836922  
Richardson, TX 75083-6922

## BONSAI SOCIETY OF DALLAS

[www.bonsaisocietyofdallas.com](http://www.bonsaisocietyofdallas.com)

### MEMBERSHIP FORM

**Bonsai Society of Dallas meets on the first (1<sup>st</sup>) Thursday of each month.**

**Time: 6:30 PM**

**Place: North Haven Garden Center  
7700 Northaven, Dallas, TX**

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Individual Membership: \$25.00

Joint Membership: \$30.00

\_\_\_\_\_  
Renewal

\_\_\_\_\_  
New Membership

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**Do Not Cut: For Treasurer Use Only**

Member Receipt:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Amount Paid: \_\_\_\_\_ Membership Year: \_\_\_\_\_

### **BSD Board of Directors**

President—George Straw, [GSTRA@aol.com](mailto:GSTRA@aol.com), (214) 357-3048

Vice President—Daryl Le, [troioi\\_98@yahoo.com](mailto:troioi_98@yahoo.com), (214) 995-0693

Treasurer—Jennifer Triptow, [jtriptow@hotmail.com](mailto:jtriptow@hotmail.com), (972) 437-1930

Secretary—Sandi McFarland, [potter@pegasuspottery.com](mailto:potter@pegasuspottery.com), (972) 438-9782

## **BSD Showtime!**

By Sylvia Smith

It's almost time for our annual spring show at the arboretum. This year we are set for the weekend of **March 5th and 6th**. We had a great turn out last year as well as an over abundance of trees. I've never had to send trees back home before or have them placed under the tables! Therefore, this year I would like to ask everyone to please limit your tree selection to one or two trees per person. I encourage more of you to play with the idea of bringing companions for your trees as well as stands. This is one of the reasons that we are setting up displays and "practicing" at every bonsai meeting. I'd like to see this turning into a fun and educational event for all. Remember that the only requirement for your tree is that it be healthy (no rough material please), in an appropriate size bonsai container (no plastic please), and if needed with minimal wiring. The show will be set up as a semi-formal display.

This year I would like more people to participate, especially those in the advanced bonsai group. We will be having a special section for the advanced members to show their trees. Most of these members are more experienced and have been associated with BSD longer and therefore should be recognized. We will have a raffle like we did last year with proceeds going to the club and a donated tree plus a one year free membership to be given away each day. This year I have also coordinated with the arboretum to give a bonsai lecture on the same weekend as the show to help maximize interest. Next year I hope to schedule our show in Feb. so that we can show off our flowering trees as well. Please remember to sign up to help set up and clean up. This is a great way to participate if you are new and unsure what to bring to a show. It is very important to have all of the trees arrive on Friday evening for set up, so please keep

this in mind and maybe make arrangements at work if needed. The area has an alarm and will be locked, plus there is security available. If you are bringing a tree, please contact me ASAP and let me have the following information on your tree:

1. species name or common name
2. approximate age
3. how long in training
4. how it was obtained (nursery stock, collected, etc.)

I can be reached at 972-392-1430 or my cell at 972-754-9883 or via E-mail at [Bonsaismiths@earthlink.net](mailto:Bonsaismiths@earthlink.net). The arboretum was really impressed with what we did last year so our goal is to just keep getting better!



## **Bonsai Display at the LSBF Convention**

The Lone Star Bonsai Federation Convention will be in Fort Worth on May 13-15, 2005. For the bonsai display at the convention this year, the convention organizers have decided to show one tree from each Texas bonsai club.

In order to choose a tree to symbolize BSD, we would like to have an unbiased panel choose from pictures sent in from BSD members of a favorite tree in their collection. If you would like to have your tree considered, please send a picture of your bonsai to Howard and Sylvia Smith by either email at [bonsaismiths@earthlink.net](mailto:bonsaismiths@earthlink.net) or by mail at 7527 Spring Valley Rd., Dallas, TX 75254.

Please have your submission in by no later than March 31, 2005.

## Your Membership at Work!

We will be distributing BSD Membership cards very soon. Present your card at the following participating businesses for a 10% discount on merchandise:

- The Bonsai Smiths
- Dream Gardens
- Ray Hernandez's Bent Tree Bonsai
- Pegasus Pottery

We are so grateful to these businesses for their generosity to BSD members! If you have a business and would like to offer a discount to club members, please contact George Straw at [GSTRA@aol.com](mailto:GSTRA@aol.com) or Sandi McFarland [potter@pegasuspottery.com](mailto:potter@pegasuspottery.com).



Howard and Sylvia Smith  
[www.BonsaiSmiths.com](http://www.BonsaiSmiths.com)  
[BonsaiSmiths@earthlink.net](mailto:BonsaiSmiths@earthlink.net)  
tel# (972) 392-1430  
fax# (972) 661-0694

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"BONSAI SMITHS" will be conducting several workshops this year. These workshops will be given by Howard and Sylvia Smith who have been in training with Boon Manakatipart for over three years. Each will be full day workshops starting at 9:00AM and are usually limited to 6 participants; lunch can be brought or purchased. The cost is \$50 per class and will cover each subject intensively, including both lecture and hands on time, plus handouts to help you review what you've learned at home. The spring classes are scheduled as follows:

### Sunday, Feb. 6

**'Repotting'** (from beginners to advanced): This is an intensive class to teach you the Japanese style of repotting. Using this technique you will learn the proven method used to grow better nebari and improve the overall health of your trees. We will also cover how to choose a pot suited for each bonsai tree's species and style.

*What to bring: bonsai tools, wire, trees, pots, wire mesh, and bonsai soil (all are available to borrow or buy if needed) \*Please do not bring more than two or three trees as we may only have enough time to repot one or two. Remember that you will be learning the technique and we will not be using the entire time to just repot. If you do not have a tree available but would like to learn the technique, you may "borrow" one of our trees to practice on.*

### Saturday, March 12

**'Japanese Black Pine'** (Spring - Session I): The first of a three part series teaching you how to work on and improve your JBP. Black pine are worked on usually only three times in a year. During the spring session you will learn about needle plucking, trimming, repotting and wiring. It is not necessary to bring your own tree but it will be helpful to bring your personal trees to learn how to work on JBP during their different stages of development. If you have brought a pine to this workshop in the past, you may want to work on the same pine in order to continue the work that was started. *What to bring: bonsai tools including bonsai tweezers and sharp bonsai scissors, copper wire and black pine bonsai (Pots, aluminum wire, mesh and bonsai soil are all optional. Supplies are available to borrow or buy if needed)*

For more information or to reserve your workshop space, please contact Howard or Sylvia Smith at 972-392-1430 or at [BonsaiSmiths@earthlink.net](mailto:BonsaiSmiths@earthlink.net)  
10% discount on merchandise except soils

## We need your help!

If you would be willing to volunteer some time to scan old newsletters and burn them to a CD for archiving, please contact George Straw at [GSTRA@aol.com](mailto:GSTRA@aol.com) or call him at (214) 357-3048.

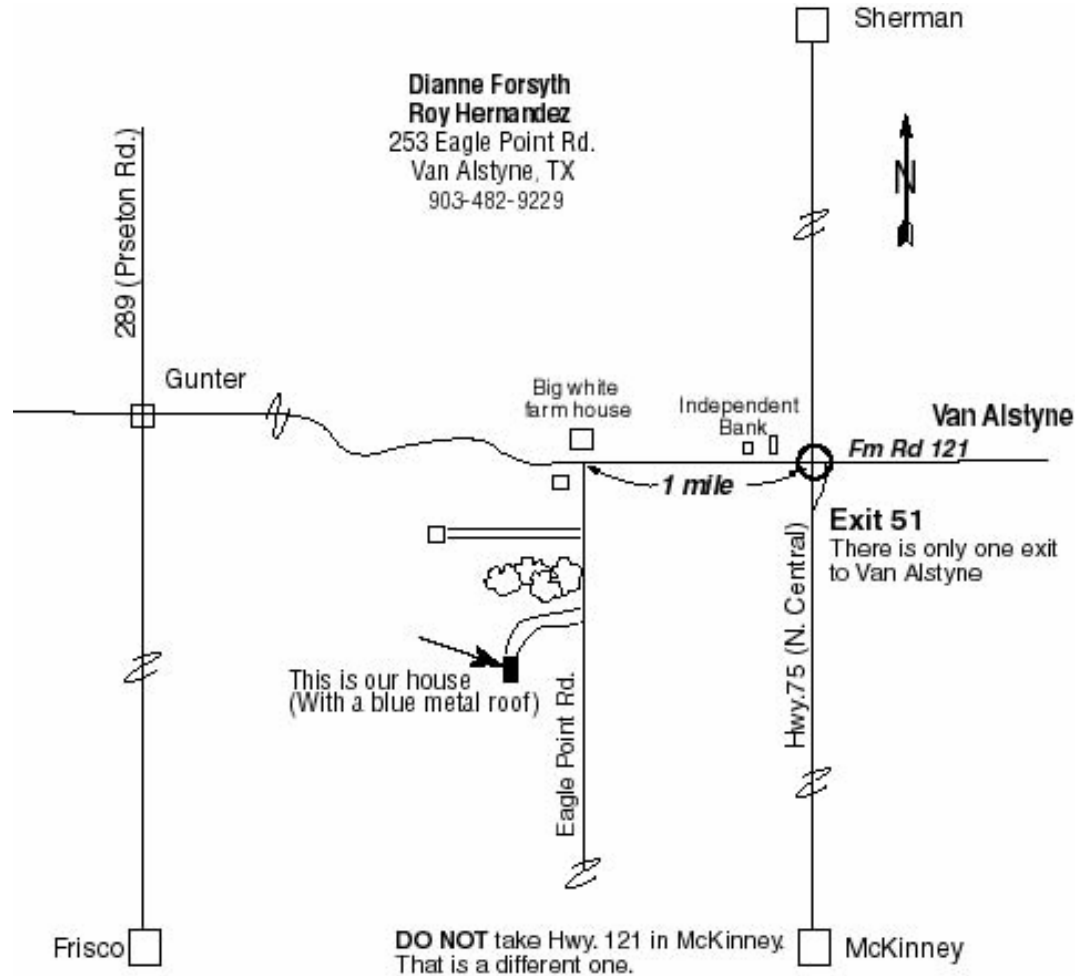
## Please Join Us for the February 12 Club Dig!

(Must be a current and paid member for 2005 to participate in the Club Dig)

Our first Club dig will be on January 29, beginning at 9:00 am and will take place at George Straw's farm. Please see the map at [www.georgestraw.com](http://www.georgestraw.com)

**February 12 we'll have our second club dig in Van Alstyne, beginning at 10:00 am. Please see map on right.** →

We look forward to seeing you at the digs!



### WHAT TO BRING TO A BONSAI DIG

By Dave Schleser

This note is primarily intended as an aid to club members who have never been on a bonsai dig before. Please try and make it and do not become intimidated about your abilities. There are always many experienced members present who are more than happy to help you select plants with good bonsai potential and will also help in the actual digging. It is an opportunity to get yourself some exceptional plant material and it is loads of fun!

The appropriate tools you will need for successful collecting of native trees for bonsai will vary somewhat according to the species of trees and the type of soil they are growing in.

As examples, most conifers do not tolerate bare-rooting and will have to be collected with a large ball of earth around the roots. This will frequently necessitate bringing burlap and string to secure the root ball. Furthermore, digging trees growing in rocky soil or hard caliche will invariably require the use of a pick-ax, mattock and small pry bar.

We are very fortunate that most of the soil at George's ranch is soft and easily dug sandy loam or a soft clay/sand mix. There are some moderately rocky areas near the creeks but nothing that requires the use dynamite! In addition, the vast majority of the best trees are winged and cedar elms, oaks and 2 species of plum. All of these tolerate bare-rooting quite well as long as you do not permit the roots to dry out.

While everyone has their own must-have tools, the following is what I consider most important to bring:

1. A sharpshooter or regular round-ended garden shovel. This will be your single most important tool.
2. Loppers or pruning shears to remove superfluous branches and to cut through most roots.
3. An inexpensive Keyhole saw for cutting through taproots too large to be cut with a pruning shears. Be aware that cutting through a root imbedded in soil will quickly wear down the teeth of the saw, so bring an inexpensive or old one.
4. A trowel or bonsai root hook for the more delicate digging of roots or collecting of herbaceous plant material for use as bonsai companions (such as violets or dwarf ferns)
5. Saran Wrap or large plastic garbage bags to wrap or protect the roots. You can also use the rolls of shrink-wrap sold at Office Depot
6. A spray bottle to keep roots damp.
7. A Plastic tubs for storing and transporting your collected trees.
8. If you have a small red wagon or other small cart bring it. It can be very helpful in transporting the trees across pastures to your car.
9. I always bring a roll of florescent red flagging tape. I use it to flag trees that I am considering collecting. The tape not only makes it easy to find them again, but serves as a notice to other club members that a tree is spoken for. If you do not have tape I can always give you some. Please bring a permanent marker to put your name on the tag.
10. It is also a good idea to bring some drinks and snacks for yourself. A thermos of hot coffee might come in handy.
11. Have your soil mix ready when you get home.

## Texas LSBF 2005 Bonsai Convention

May 13-15, 2005

Holiday Inn North, 2540 Meacham Blvd., Fort Worth, TX 76106, (817) 625-9911  
Sponsored by: The Fort Worth Bonsai Society and the Lone Star Bonsai Federation

### Featured Artists:

Walter Pall, Germany; Mary Madison, Corpus Christi; John Miller, Dallas/Fort Worth;  
Estella Flather, Fort Worth; and Ray Hernandez, Dallas/Fort Worth

### Workshops:

Trident Maple, "Pokomoke" Crepe Myrtle, Root-Over-Rock Tridents, Piñon Pine, Chinese Elm Shohin,  
Bald Cypress Forest, Casuarina, and "Bring Your Own"

Lecture/Demonstrations; Tree Critique; Bonsai Exhibit, Slideshow, Vendors, Raffle

For more information visit the Fort Worth Bonsai Society website at  
[www.geocities.com/Heartland/Plains/3647/](http://www.geocities.com/Heartland/Plains/3647/)

Registration Contact: Steven Hendricks - [stevenhendricks@sbcglobal.net](mailto:stevenhendricks@sbcglobal.net)  
Vendor Contact: Estella Flather - (817) 295-0802



### Pegasus Pottery

By Sandi McFarland

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Irving, TX 75061

972-438-9782

[potter@pegasuspottery.com](mailto:potter@pegasuspottery.com)

[www.pegasuspottery.com](http://www.pegasuspottery.com)

### Calloway's Nursery has a Great Offer for You!

Donna Harris, the store manager of Calloway's Nursery on Greenville Ave. in Dallas, has invited the members of the Bonsai Society of Dallas to come by their location and pick up two free soil sample kits. Return the kits with your soil and they will send them to the Texas Plant and Soil Lab to test and call you when the results come in.

These soil tests are a \$20 value for free and when you drop off your sample of soil, you will receive coupons and special discounts good for Calloway's quality products.

Please contact Donna with any questions:

Donna Harris, Store Manager

Calloway's Nursery,

7410 N. Greenville Ave., Dallas, TX 75231

214-363-0525

## Place Your Ad Here!

Business card size—\$5 per month

Half page—\$20 per month

Full page—\$35 per month

For more information, contact Sandi McFarland at  
972-438-9782 or [potter@pegasuspottery.com](mailto:potter@pegasuspottery.com)

### My, How We Are Growing!

Our current paid membership stands at 37.

Let's see if we can make it 50 by the end of February!

If you have not yet paid your membership fee for 2005, please use the Membership form on Page 3 and either mail it in or bring in to the meeting on February 3.

Thank you!