



# Bonsai Society of Dallas

Monthly newsletter

March 2008

## Message from the President

By Sylvia Smith

### BSD CALENDAR:

- Elm Forest Planting Demo  
*March program by John Miller*  
9:00 AM Saturday, March 1<sup>st</sup>  
at North Haven Gardens
- BSD Club Spring Show  
*Sat/Sun, March 8 – 9, 2008*  
at the Dallas Arboretum  
(Call Sylvia and ask how YOU can help!)

### IN THIS ISSUE:

- Message from the President
- March Program
- March in Bonsai
- February Club Recap
- Events of Interest
- My Trip to Kokufu 2008

### BSD BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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John Miller, *President Emeritus*  
[bonsaimiller@aol.com](mailto:bonsaimiller@aol.com)

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Would you like to get this newsletter via e-mail? Has your address changed? Comments? E-mail [amy.james@gte.net](mailto:amy.james@gte.net).

Well, this is it. Hope everyone has gotten their membership in as well as their survey (the cut-off is March 1<sup>st</sup>). We will draw the winner at the next meeting for those who participated in the survey so you can still bring this to the next meeting and make the drawing. Also, remember that this will be your last newsletter if you do not renew your membership. We are working on making the current newsletter exclusive to current member's only so don't delay.

If you all remember, Dave Schleser gave a very informative and interesting talk on Forest and Group plantings last December. This month John Miller will take you to the next step and show you how to put a forest planting together.

The club spring show will be this month (see this newsletter for more information) and we are very excited about this one as we have new backdrops and linens to accent all of our beautiful member trees! As we move to April, we will continue to do some "Bonsai Shopping" at local and not well known bonsai shops. Those who participated in January got some really great deals and a good time was had by all. Start saving your pennies and don't miss these great "member only" opportunities!

Not much else to say this month as I'm up to my earlobes in repotting work to be done. Maybe I should remind myself of some of the following:

To enjoy your bonsai:

- Never take more trees than you can handle.
- It is better to have quality than quantity.
- Know everything there is to know about the species of bonsai that you have (if you can't, then you have too many trees). Your collection should improve year after year (if it doesn't, you have too many trees)
- Always keep an open mind, you're never too experienced to learn more!

Happy Spring Repotting!

Sylvia



"My Trip to Kokufu" (see pg. 2)  
Photo courtesy of Howard Smith

## Bonsai Society of Dallas 2008 Spring Show

By Sylvia Smith

Our show is slated for the weekend of March 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>. We will once again display our trees at Rosine Hall on the opening weekend of "Blooms".



Photo courtesy of Dallas Bonsai Society

Thanks to everyone who has signed up to help. The show flows easily when all of our club members are able to give just a little help. The same cannot be said of the alternative so please sign up to help or show your trees.

Also, I would like to encourage ALL members to attend the show not necessarily as participants but just to enjoy the show. This is the best time to share thoughts with other club members, get some great inspiration for your own collection or study the trees that some of our more seasoned members have worked on over the years.

As always, we will have the *People's Choice Award* and this year we are planning on adding a *Club Member's Choice Award*. We will be setting up our show on Friday, March 7, between 5:00pm and 9:00pm. All trees for show must arrive between 5:00pm and 7:00pm, the earlier the better. Year after year our show gets better and better. Thanks to Tom Mozden who has built us several beautiful display backdrops. Thanks to Boon Manakitivipart who has donated all of the new linens used at our last convention. Our show has received many nice compliments on the internet forums and we have been told by Arboretum employees, "is the best show the Arboretum has all year"!

Hope to see all of you there!

## March Program

Elm Forest Planting Demonstration

Conducted by: John Miller  
Place: North Haven Gardens

Time: 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM  
Date: Saturday, March 1<sup>st</sup>



Photo courtesy of Dallas Bonsai Society

Our March program features a lecture and demonstration by President Emeritus John Miller as he puts together an elm forest planting. John will share tips and techniques on positioning, space and flow while avoiding the pitfalls that can keep a planting from being its best.

## My Trip to Kokufu 2008

by Howard Smith



Since this article is very detailed and includes several pictures, we decided to post it to our website, enjoy!

[www.bonsaismiths.net/japantrip.htm](http://www.bonsaismiths.net/japantrip.htm)



Photo courtesy of Howard Smith

## Events of Interest



- **BSD March meeting**  
Saturday, March 1<sup>st</sup>  
Elm forest planting demo
- **Ft. Worth Club Dig**  
Glen Rose, Texas  
Saturday, March 1<sup>st</sup>
- **BSD club Spring Show**  
March 8 – 9, 2008  
Dallas Arboretum
- **24<sup>th</sup> Annual Dallas Blooms**  
March 8 – April 13, 2008  
Dallas Arboretum  
[www.dallasarboretum.org](http://www.dallasarboretum.org)
- **Butterflies in the Garden**  
March 1 – 30, 2008  
Ft. Worth Botanic Garden  
[www.fwb.org](http://www.fwb.org)
- **Spring Festival in the Japanese Garden**  
April 5 – 6, 2008  
[www.fwb.org](http://www.fwb.org)

## March Bonsai

By John Miller

Why is the subject of soil in your bonsai pot so important? Well you are trying to convince your plant that the world only extends a few inches out and a couple of inches deep, and that it should produce short fibrous roots instead of its natural long ones. But you keep telling it that it should be happy in this unnatural world and look like its giant kinfolk. So you need to give it the best subsurface environment you can.

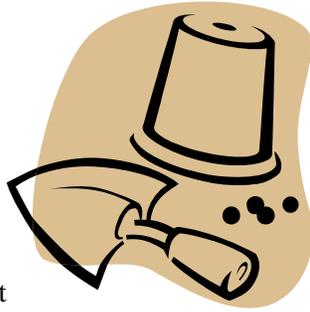
If your area is subject to late freezes, check the forecasts and be sure to take precautions. Newly developing roots in either freshly repotted trees or in established pots can be tender to freezes. Trees with new sap flow will also be more tender. And of course the new foliage will not take as much cold or the strong winds that dry it and cause leaf burn. On a clear night you can get frost on the leaves even though the temperature is above 32. Any overhead covering—patio, evergreen trees or a light cloth—will prevent that frost.

As the weather warms up the insects will surely make their appearance. Use the foliar spray (1 tablespoon each of fish emulsion, liquid kelp, molasses and apple cider vinegar per gallon of water) weekly to control aphids, mites, etc. Spring usually means wet weather so watch 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 (1 part of 3% h.p. and 2 parts water) for fungal problems. However, I have damaged young growth on elms with it so I do not use it until after leaves mature a bit.

If you have been doing a good organic program the ladybugs will keep the aphids and other soft bodied insects in check. The praying mantis comes along later on when the weather is warmer. I am seeing a lot of mantis egg clusters since I don't use chemical sprays.

Use chemical fertilizers sparingly at this time. Most contain a healthy supply of nitrogen which causes too much lanky growth. Organic fertilizer balls and the foliar spray are better because organics need warmer weather to break down into plant soluble nutrients and therefore are not as stimulating in this weather. They are also more consistent in feeding the tree each time you water.

Now you should get your tweezers and shears ready for the real job ahead. In order 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 the 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.



## Club Dig Recap

By James Bonney

Mark Bynum's well-presented lecture at the February meeting provided the spark to get the membership looking forward to the club dig at George's farm out in Whitesboro a couple of weeks ago. Several first-timers participated, showing that good knowledge and pre-dig preparation can help turn digging wannabes into collecting vets.



Photo courtesy of J. Bonney

George had us all ready for the dig, providing needed sustenance in the form of several dozen donuts and coffee.

George led us to a different spot on the farm this year and there were lots of stands from which to pick potential stock. The best prospects were elms and junipers, although Ted did dig a lovely little oak he's going to see what he can do with. Several members collected elms with some pretty substantial trunks.



Photo courtesy of J. Bonney

*Continued on pg. 4*

Essentially there are two kinds of growing habits on deciduous trees, those with alternate growing leaves 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 4 or 5 new leaves and cut it back to 2 or 3, 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.

Tweezers are almost a necessity in working on maples. The opposite growing leaves clasp the new growing tip and will be extending from the old 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 have to repeat the tip plucking.

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 effect, causes the needle to lie along the twig while you are holding it.

Now is the proper time to decide on your show trees and then give them plenty of TLC and grooming to be at their best at show time. ✂

### *Club Dig (Continued. from pg. 3)*

The morning was concluded by heading over to the local catfish buffet, where everyone chowed down on some delicious food and a few even drove away with homemade pies. After lunch, several people returned to the farm to collect more material.

Another successful collecting trip is now in the books. If you get the chance to head out to the Ft. Worth club's dig in Glen Rose (rescheduled to March 1<sup>st</sup>), it'd be the only reasonable excuse for missing this month's meeting!



Photo courtesy of J. Bonney

A little more of Howard's trip to whet your appetite...

See more beautiful photos and a great story at the Bonsai Smiths Web site: [www.bonsaismiths.net/japantrip.htm](http://www.bonsaismiths.net/japantrip.htm)



Photos courtesy of Howard Smith

# YOUR NATIONAL BONSAI & PENJING MUSEUM NEEDS YOUR HELP!

By Felix B. Laughlin, President, National Bonsai Foundation Inc.

The President's Budget for FY 2009 proposes to “downsize” the U.S. National Arboretum – which could cripple the ongoing operations of your National Bonsai & Penjing Museum.

## THE FACTS

In 1927, Congress established the National Arboretum “for research and education concerning tree and plant life.” The Agricultural Research Service, which operates the Arboretum, is ignoring this Congressional mandate and proposes to eliminate the “Education” part of the Arboretum’s mission. ARS would do this by cutting 40 percent of the Arboretum’s budget for its Gardens Unit and Education & Visitor Services Unit, which would result in a possibly fatal loss of staff and services. The National Bonsai & Penjing Museum is part of the Gardens Unit and it is dependent on the Education Unit for many services.

As you probably know, the National Bonsai & Penjing Museum is the first and finest museum of its kind anywhere in the world. It was created in 1976 with the construction of the Japanese Pavilion on the grounds of the National Arboretum to display the bonsai given by the people of Japan to the American people to celebrate our country’s Bicentennial.

In 1982 the National Bonsai Foundation was incorporated and since that time, with your help, we have raised millions of dollars for this Museum. In collaboration with the Arboretum we have made the tree and stone collections among the best in the world. Together we built more than 10 structures within the Museum complex and are in the process of completing a courtyard project that will make the Museum totally accessible to every visitor. With generous contributions from across the nation, some of the facilities that we have built include: the John Y. Naka North American Pavilion, the Yee-sun Wu Chinese Pavilion, the Haruo Kaneshiro Tropical Conservatory, the Mary E. Mrose International Pavilion, the Yuji Yoshimura Visitor’s Center, the Maria Vanzant Upper Courtyard, the H. William Merritt Entrance Gate, the Kato Family Stroll Garden, the Melba Tucker Demonstration Arbor, and the Rose Family Garden surrounding the Lower Courtyard.

If Congress approves these cuts in the Arboretum budget it will mean that the staff of the Museum will be cut, programs will be curtailed and pavilions will be closed. We cannot allow this to happen.

## ACTION NEEDED

Please send a letter asking Congress to reject this short-sighted and harmful budget proposal and restore the funds needed to maintain the National Bonsai & Penjing Museum. Your letter might include the following points:

- 1) You are a strong supporter of this Museum and its mission to educate the public about bonsai and penjing;
- 2) It is a unique treasure that must be preserved; and
- 3) It is part of our national legacy.

You should mail your letter to the Chairs of the Senate and House Agriculture Appropriations Subcommittees as follows:

The Honorable Herbert H. Kohl, Chairman  
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture  
119 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, D. C. 20510

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro, Chair  
House Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture  
2362A Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

*Continued from pg. 5*

If you contact your own Representative and/or Senator in Congress, please ask him or her to contact the Chairs of the Senate and House Agriculture Appropriations Subcommittees shown above.

**If you are not yet a member of NBF, there is no better time than now to join. We need you now more than ever before.**

Thank you for your support!

Felix B. Laughlin  
President  
National Bonsai Foundation Inc.



**Howard and Sylvia Smith**  
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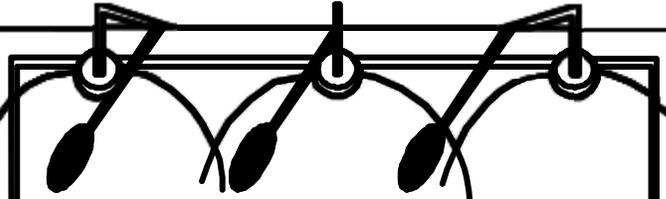
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- The Bonsai Smiths
- Ray Hernandez’s Bent Tree Bonsai
- Pegasus Pottery
- Sanderson Creek Bonsai

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 James Bonney at [amy.james@gte.net](mailto:amy.james@gte.net).



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# Dallas Bonsai Society

## 2008 Membership Survey

This survey is to help serve our members by obtaining feedback regarding programming and the booking of visiting artists. Responses are encouraged and appreciated. We want to ensure that the Dallas Bonsai Society continues to provide valuable programs for our membership. Space is provided for extra comments. Please comment freely as this information will help us better serve the club.

**Participants in this survey will be entered into a drawing for a \$50 gift certificate to Stone Lantern to be awarded at the March meeting.** (Must be a paid 2008 member, so if you haven't sent in your membership dues already, do it today!)

1. How often do you attend club meetings?

8-12 per year          6 – 8 per year          Less than 6

If you attend less than 6 meetings per year please specify why (choose as many as applies).

This is all I can schedule

The meetings do not offer enough interest

I cannot attend meetings on Saturday mornings because of work or other

I prefer evening meetings

I prefer weekday meetings

Not applicable / none of the above

2. If an artist or event is booked on any day other than our regular scheduled meeting time (Saturdays), how likely are you to attend if your schedule allows?

I would attend          Most likely          50%/50%          Unlikely          I would not attend

3. What day of the week would be best to schedule guest artists?

Sat.          Sun.          Mon.          Tues.          Wed.          Thurs.          Fri.

4. What time during the day would be best to have the program?

Mornings          Afternoons          Evenings          Other: \_\_\_\_\_

5. Where would be your preferred place to hold the event?

North Haven Gardens          Let the Board decide          Other: \_\_\_\_\_

6. How far ahead of time should we notify members prior to a guest artist event?

1 month          2 weeks          Other: \_\_\_\_\_

[More >>](#)

7. What type of material would you like to see a guest artist work on?

Deciduous      Tropical      No preference      Other: \_\_\_\_\_

8. What style of event would you like to see more of involving guest artists?

Lecture/demo      Workshop (bring a tree)      A mix is fine      Other: \_\_\_\_\_

9. Would you be available to work for the club?

No

Yes

Officer      Committee      Program      Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Comments: Please provide any comments you feel would help the club improve your experience. Feel free to suggest programs, artists, scheduling or anything you wish. Or let us know why you didn't come to a program. Criticisms are important too!

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If you wish to be eligible to claim the Stone Lantern gift certificate or you are interested in helping the club in any capacity, please fill in the information below and either hand this survey in at a monthly meeting or mail to the club at: PO Box 836922, Richardson, TX 75083.

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## Dallas Bonsai Society - 2008 Membership Survey

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

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

Contact # \_\_\_\_\_

**\*Winner required to be current 2008 BSD Member.**

# BONSAI SOCIETY OF DALLAS

www.bonsaisocietyofdallas.com

## MEMBERSHIP FORM

Please mail to:  
Bonsai Society of Dallas  
P.O. Box 836922  
Richardson, TX 75083-6922  
Or turn in at any Club Meeting

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

Time: 9:00 AM  
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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### Member Receipt:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Membership Year: \_\_\_\_\_

Amount Paid: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Dues received by: \_\_\_\_\_