



Bonsai Society of Dallas

Monthly Member Newsletter

May 2013

Message from the President

In This Issue

- **Message from the President**
- **May Program**
- **Upcoming Events**
- **LSBF Convention in Review**
- **May Bonsai – Tips and Advice**
- **April Meeting in Review**
- **May's To-Do List**
- **Link of the Month**

Board of Directors

Sylvia Smith, *President*
slysmith@tx.rr.com

Paul Muraida, *Vice President, Program Chair*
anast1925@aol.com

Chuck Talley, *Treasurer*
chuck_talley@tandybrands.com

Diane Lowe, *Secretary*
diane_lowe@live.com

Jerry Riley, *Member Relations*
jafa625@gmail.com

John Miller, *President Emeritus*
bonsaimiller@aol.com

Les Porter, *Newsletter Editor*
lesliep@baylorheath.edu

Mary Polk, *Member at Large*
doggiedigs2@att.net

Hiram Quinones, *Member at Large*
hiramaquinones@yahoo.com

We had a really nice turn out from Dallas, including joint Dallas/Fort Worth members, during April's LSBF Convention. This was my first convention where the event was held at a convention center instead of the usual hotel environment. I have to say that I'm still torn between the two. The camaraderie and educational components are still there, but I did miss the occasional breaks to run your purchases up to your room and the quick access to after-hours gatherings at the hotel lobby or bar. Speaking of bars, I think a few cocktails before an auction are a must for some of us to wind down and change the mood into a more social gathering! Nonetheless, I had a FANTASTIC time in New Braunfels!

Next year's convention will be hosted by the Houston Bonsai Society at the Marriott Westchase in Houston, on April 10-13, 2014 so mark your calendars now. At our May meeting I'd like to briefly discuss the possibility of joining forces with the Fort Worth Bonsai Society and considering a joint convention. I'd like to take few minutes to get some feedback from the membership about their thoughts on this.

Our May meeting is the brain child of our Program Chair, Paul Muraida. It's a blend of "show and tell" and "before and after" by members who have been in bonsai long enough to develop a few show ready trees. Judging from the pictures and trees I've seen thus far, you will not want to miss this. It's a great way to share ideas and see the results of cool techniques, a little patience, time, and how they can totally change our bonsai collection. You don't have to be a professional to have good bonsai in your collection. You just have to learn some basic technical and horticultural techniques. You will be amazed at some of the transformations.

Looking forward to it!

Sylvia

April Program From Rough Stock to Beautiful Bonsai

9:00 AM to Noon
North Haven Gardens

Trying to learn bonsai is a never ending process. I remember that the first time I got to see bonsai artists at work was at the LSBF Bonsai Convention back in 2007 when it was held across from Love Field. Even then the artists and their trees were intimidating. Afraid to actually take one of the guest artist's workshops, I just milled around looking at the trees for hours.

Eventually I began to try my hand at growing trees in pots. One led to ten then to twenty. If you're like me, you have had your share of 'rough stock' and dead trees. So has every other member of our club. The one thing that becomes more and more apparent in my bonsai journey is that learning from other members' experiences helps to make my own a bit easier.

It's through these individual members' trees that one can learn some valuable lessons in the art of bonsai. Our upcoming program will give us all the chance to see and hear about other member's bonsai journeys as well. Not to mention seeing some beautiful trees which were once just 'rough stock.' So be sure to join us for this informal but informative session and get ready to enjoy seeing the room filled is lots of different trees. ✍



These photos show both a 'rough stock' and 'beautiful bonsai' view of the same European Beech, *Fagus sylvatica* over a 17 year period.



Photos are from Walter Pall's collection posted at www.walter-pall.de.

Upcoming Events



Saturday, May 4th, 9 – Noon
From Rough Stock to Beautiful Bonsai

Saturday, June 1st, 9 - Noon
Bonsai Study Group with the Bonsai Smiths "Summer Bonsai Care"

Saturday, July 6th, 9 – Noon
Wiring Techniques / Workshop, followed by Bonsai 101

Saturday, August 3rd, 9 – Noon
Guest Artist – Peter Tea

Events Elsewhere



May 3rd – 5th
Shohin St. Louis III
Collinsville, IL

May 11th
World Bonsai Day Open House at the National Arboretum
Washington, DC

May 18th - 19th
Atlanta Bonsai Society Spring Show at Botanical Gardens
Atlanta, GA

May 24th – 26th
Brussels Annual Rendezvous
Olive Branch, MS

June 1st
Puget Sound Bonsai Association Annual Auction
Federal Way, WA

June 6th – 9th
International Bonsai Colloquium
Rochester, NY

October 4th – 6th
Artisan Cup of Portland
Portland, OR

April 10th – 13th, 2014
LSBF State Convention
Houston, TX

LSBF Convention in Retrospect

By Les Porter

As the Lone Star Bonsai Federation (LSBF) state convention approached on April 11th, there were numerous concurrent emotions across the state. I think there is always a sense of excitement from attendees at the opportunity to: see what other students are doing (as we are all students), learn from the experts and masters to improve what we are attempting, and to develop a stronger appreciation and understanding of the art.

But other sets of emotions were also present. The emotions of the organizers consisting of anxiety that borders on panic (what have we forgotten?) and those of the organizers from the last convention (Dallas). There is the euphoria of “it’s not us this time, let’s PARTY”.

That said, the Austin and San Antonio clubs organized and ran a tremendous event in New Braunfels April 11-14. Bonsai Society of Dallas was well represented throughout the event, from participation in the emerging talent competition by Diane, multiple members participating in the workshops and Dallas members who displayed trees.

The primary theme of the convention was to focus on native material which was featured in almost all of the workshops. There was also a large representation of native material in the exhibit area as well. This offered all of the attendees the opportunity to better appreciate the true depth of material that we have available to us in Texas as well as showcase this diversity to the guest artists, Colin Lewis, Dan Robinson, and Erik Wigert.

The secondary theme of the convention really and truly was the use of carving power tools. All of the artists have done extensive carving work in their careers, none more creatively than Dan Robinson. His original tool of choice was a chainsaw, but he now prefers a grinder fitted with a router bit that allows him to remove material at a relatively fast rate and achieve the contours he desires. Erik Wigert carved extensively on the massive Mustang grape material from his workshop, as did Colin Lewis on some large collected Cedar Elms. Dan Robinson

communicated repeatedly that the idea of carving, particularly when it is drastic, is to reflect the tree’s reaction to the effects of a natural disaster or cataclysmic event. Trees can recover from all kinds of events that Mother Nature can throw at it; we can recreate that feeling by becoming better at carving.

Again this year, our state convention included a bonsai exhibit area, but this year it also included a large group of suiseki as well. There were over 40 trees featured in a variety of display styles. Our very own Howard Smith won the coveted Best in Show award, selected by the guest artists. His tree was a beautiful Rocky Mountain Juniper. It also won the Best Conifer award too. The Smiths seem to have a way with conifers. His wife Sylvia won those same two awards last year, didn’t she? I guess it runs in the family.

Another of our club members came away with honors as well. Steven Hendricks won Best Texas Native Tree with a slanting style Cedar Elm. Steven also previously won our drawing for a free convention registration at our April meeting so he really came away a winner. Congratulations to both Howard and Steven. Please see the list of all the winners below.

The facility was in a convention center that offered some advantages and disadvantages and was a good experience with valuable lessons for us to apply to future events that we organize. The only sad note of the event is concerning the Pub Investigation Committee. It is safe to say that they will have a very difficult time identifying any other venue that has the quality or diversity of beer (really, really good beer) anywhere else in Texas. This by itself may be enough reason to hope that the Austin and San Antonio clubs decide to return to New Braunfels for their convention in the future.

I hope that we will have a strong representation of members at the convention in Houston next year too. There is always a lot to learn! ✍

Convention Exhibit Winners



Rocky Mountain Juniper
- **Best in Show**
- **Best Conifer Tree**
Owner: Howard Smith



Cedar Elm
- **Best Texas Native**
Owner: Steven Hendricks



Brazilian Rain Tree
- **People's Choice**
- **Best Tropical Tree**
Owner: Chuck Ware

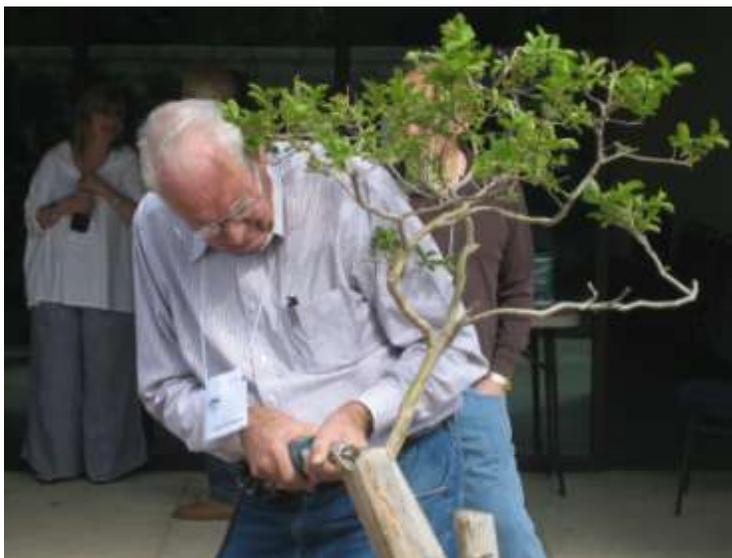


Dwarf Yaupon Holly (Shohin)
- **Best Broadleaf Tree**
Owner: Delores Plaisted

Convention Photos



Lance gets a lesson in carving with Leon looking on



Lance gives it a try at his BYOT workshop on his Crape Myrtle



Dan Robinson taught his technique to create contours in his jin, creating a feeling of age



Hurley Johnson and John Miller



Above: Bill gives the grinder a try on his Bald Cypress

Left: Les enjoying his workshop



Colin Lewis admires Howard's wiring skills

April Program in Review

Guest Artist – Ray Hernandez

We had the pleasure of seeing Ray transform what appeared to be an overgrown shrub into the beginning of a beautiful bonsai. The material was an *Elaeagnus* ‘Silverberry’ that he collected many years ago from someone’s yard. It is a very hardy tree in our area and has responded well to his care, as do most trees he has at his nursery.

As you can see in the pictures, it was quite a transformation. Not only did he style it, but he downsized the pot and put it into a lightweight Styrofoam container layered with lava rock and organic material (llama poop). He cut the lower half of the root ball away to reveal healthy roots. This will give the roots a good start on re-growth and insulation from both the summer heat and winter cold. The tree can withstand that loss of roots because so much was taken off the top as well. One of his final steps was to cut all the remaining leaves in half to promote new smaller leaves to emerge.

Along the way we were entertained by his lovely wife Maria who was his able assistant while he worked. She charmed us with stories of how Ray discovers new things about plants, leaves, and berries. “Here honey, try this,” would lead you to believe he had already tasted it, right? So now we know just a little more about our friend Ray. Maria even did all the clean-up after the demo, so on behalf of everyone in the club, thanks Ray and Maria for a great program.

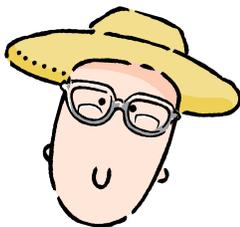


By the way, the tree was won in the raffle by Steve Flynn, a relatively new member who seems to have the luck of the Irish. He also won the raffle last October when our guest artist Mike Feduccia styled a beautiful juniper. Congratulations Steve and be sure to take photos as your trees progress. ✍



May Bonsai Tips and Advice

by John Miller



May is the time to continue work on most species of bonsai, do leaf pruning if necessary, debud azaleas if too many buds, start repotting tropicals, plan for summer protection, and treat for spider mites again.

In general, May is the time you do leaf pruning if you have to do it. If you have kept the new growth pinched properly, you have been getting the ramification usually attributed to leaf pruning. The only good reason for leaf pruning is to replace foliage that has been damaged by wind or insects. On some individual plants that have large foliage, the new foliage will sometimes be smaller. Leaf pruning should be done after the spring foliage has matured and supplied the tree with enough nutrients to produce a good crop of new foliage. It must be done well before the summer heat causes the plant growth to slow or stop. I consider the very latest time in this area to be Memorial Day. Leaf pruning is done only on very **healthy** trees and never on the atropurpeum type of Japanese maple (Bloodgood is one). The tree should be fertilized 7 - 10 days before the operation. Cut the stems of those leaves that have them (maples) or cut across the leaf about 1/16 inch from the twig if leaves are attached direction on the twig (elms). It will not need as much water until the new foliage has developed.

I like to remove extra buds on azaleas so that the flowers have room to open fully. When the azaleas finish blooming remove all seed pods and do any reshaping that is necessary. You have 2-2 1/2 months (that is until mid-July) to work on them. They will start setting buds for next year's flowers at that time.

When the nighttime temp stays above 60 degrees it is time to start repotting the tropical material. Since there are so many different requirements for tropicals I will not try to cover their individual needs here. But in general, I like to put them in shade and mist them until the new growth starts.

Warm humid days are favorable for fungal growth. Watch for mildew, black leaf spot on elms and yaupons, among other. As an organic control you can use baking soda (sodium bicarbonate) or better to use potassium bicarbonate that you can get at a nursery. Hydrogen peroxide in a 1% solution (mix 1 part of the normal 3% commercial product with 2 parts water) can be used on mature foliage. It may burn tender foliage but its only by-product is water.

If you have insect problems you will need to apply your control, whatever you use, several times. For example, spider mites may go thru the cycle from egg to adult to egg in as little as 5 days. Therefore you should spray 4 times 5 days apart. Other insects will have a different cycle but that schedule should take care of almost everything.

Aphids, spider mites, and scale continue to be the most prevalent insects. Chemical controls may be used if you desire. A systemic type will be best for scale. Always follow the label directions explicitly. Do not use an oil based spray on buttonwood.

I use the foliar spray of fish emulsion, liquid kelp, molasses, and apple cider vinegar (1 tablespoon each per gallon of water). Scale is the most difficult because it is usually covered with a waxy coating. You may need to use horticultural oil mixed as directed on the label. Be sure that the direction you read is for summer use as some have two dosages given, one for dormancy (usually the first and strongest) and one for summer. Always check to see if your plant is included on the label. **Please note:** the commercial organic spray sold as Garret Juice does not do the same as the above mixture. Use it as a fertilizer only.

Start checking your pots to see if the sun is heating them up. Our summer sun shining on dark pots can make the soil temperature soar and kill the roots. Try putting your hand on the pot. Roots are living organisms and cannot take high temperatures any more than you can. Heating also dries out the soil making you water more often. Any number of ways of keeping the pots

(Continued on next page)

May Bonsai (continued)

cool will work, the requirement being to prevent the sun from getting to them. An inch or more of air space around the pot is desirable. I do not care for the aluminum foil methods because I don't care to have the light reflected into my eyes. A simple cloth with a slit to go around the trunk works fine, weighted down with a rock.

Remember all the work that you did in the spring? Keep the new growth trimmed so that you haven't wasted your time. While trimming or watering check the wiring periodically and remove it before it damages the branch. If the branch springs back rewire it again, preferably with the wire in a different location.

If you are not on a regular organic foliar/drench feed schedule be sure to use fertilizer cakes with supplemental feeding with a good liquid fertilizer,

one that includes the minor elements. Most bonsai I see are malnourished. The liquid water soluble fertilizer gets washed out with the next watering and the tree starves until the next infrequent feeding. There are a number of fertilizers in pellet or cake form on the market or you can make your own.

At a convention I once watched two good artists working on black pine. Roy had the students cut all needles to 1/4 inch. Boon had them pluck all old needles and left the 1 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. ✍

Tip of the Month

Want to refresh your wood benches and keep things looking tidy?



In a standard spray bottle mix 1 part water and 1 part white vinegar. Wet your bench with water then spray with your freshly mixed solution. Allow it to soak for a minute then use a scrub brush and your water hose to clean your wood bench. When the bench has had time to dry you will clearly see if there is a need to re-spray and scrub any portion of the bench again. This is a great way to extend the life of your benches!

May's To-Do List



This is a simple monthly checklist for those enthusiasts who have the knowledge and skill required to perform the tasks listed. It is intended to tell you 'what' to do, not 'how and why' to do it. Want to know more? Send in any questions you might have or come to any monthly program to discuss further.

All Species

- Watch and treat for pests and fungal problems
- Apply routine fertilization
- Remove wire if cutting into branches

Deciduous

- Remove runners before they become too strong
- Cut back where internodes begin to elongate on branches that do not need to be thickened
- Maintain the structure of the branches
- Initial leaf pruning, if at the tertiary branch stage

Evergreen/Conifer

- Continue pruning as necessary
- Wait to rewire junipers until mid-summer
- On junipers in refined stages, only remove the shoots that grow above the silhouette of the shape of the tree. DO NOT pinch the entire tree
- Continue to fertilize black pines heavily and let new buds grow freely

Flowering/Fruit

- No more pruning until late June

Tropical

- Begin repotting
- Leaf prune if desired

Link of the Month

Our friend Michael Hagedorn, one of our featured artists at the 2012 LSBF Convention in Dallas, continues to take some great photos and share them, along with his thoughts on his blog. If you have not read it lately, check it out at www.crataegus.com. He recently visited with Jim Gremel, who was a guest artist with us in 2011 and who is also a great source for copper wire, among other things. Catch up with Mike's travels and don't forget about the Artisan Cup event coming up in Portland in October.

Upcoming Program Note

Our July program will consist of a review of effective wiring techniques, followed by a hands-on workshop. So be thinking now about what tree you might want to bring to that meeting in order to practice your wiring skills. The only way to get better is to practice so we hope this will be a fun and informal way to improve.

Plan now and be sure to purchase your wire in various sizes to accommodate your tree. If you don't have a tree, you may want to consider buying a nursery tree and getting it thinned out before the meeting so it is ready for wiring. If you have any questions, please ask any board member for help.



TIMELESS TREES
Education, Success, and Fun

Trees
Supplies
Workshops

Hurley Johnson
2707 David St
Rosenberg, Texas 77471
832-526-5962
timeless-trees.com

Hours: Wed - Sat
9:00am - 3:00pm
And by Appt.

www.timeless-trees.com



Bonsai Smiths

Howard and Sylvia Smith
www.BonsaiSmiths.net
bonsaismiths@earthlink.net
Tel# (972) 754-9883
Fax# (972) 661-0694

- Cultivators of fine trees
- Collection maintenance
- Private instruction
- Classes, lectures & demos

www.bonsaismiths.net



Cell: (469) 648-8202

BENT TREE BONSAI

wide range of quality
Indoor and Outdoor
Bonsai & preBonsai

Instruction-Tools-Pots
Supplies



Ray Hernandez-owner
By appointment only

5915 S. Cockrell Hill
Dallas, Texas 75236

www.benttreebonsai.blogspot.com

H & F IMPORT BONSAI
POTS & SUPPLIES, INC

4401 SW 92 Ave. Davie, FL 33328

Andy Shi - President
Tel: 954-472-0958
Fax: 954-472-0728
Direct: 954-668-6372



www.hfimports.com • email: bonsaipotsusa@yahoo.com

www.hfimports.com

Place Your Ad Here!

Business card size is \$5.00 per month
Half page size is \$20.00 per month
Full page size is \$35.00 per month

For more details contact:
Chuck Talley
chuck_talley@tandybrands.com