



Bonsai Society of Dallas

Monthly newsletter

December 2007

Message from the President

By Sylvia Smith

Here we are in November and it feels like we skipped fall and just jumped into early winter! Make sure that your trees are being protected from the cold as the temperatures in Dallas can jump from 60 degrees to 28 degrees at the drop of a hat. This is the time of year to clean, thin and wire your pines and junipers if they are strong and healthy. Freshly wired conifers should be protected from freezes and the leaves on your deciduous trees should be removed just after 50% of the foliage has changed color. This will help your tree spend its remaining energy putting out new dormant bud growth for next year instead of wasting its pre-dormant vigor drying out old leaves. Pull those annoying weeds out of your pots with as many (weed) roots as possible and try replacing the top 1/2" of soil with fresh bonsai soil. This is called "soji" and can be done on any tree that is not going to be repotted in the spring. Do not clear the soil on those trees that will be repotted as you can just wait for spring.

The BSD board met on the 27th of November to discuss ways to increase member participation. We have decided to ask each of you to give us some feedback about what you would like to see or do at our meetings. This will help the board determine the best way to utilize the club's funds to meet the needs of its members. We will have a questionnaire in next month's newsletter and we can really use your input on this. As an added bonus, all those who participate will have their name added to a drawing for a great prize to be given away in March. Dave will be giving a really interesting talk on different ways to view, enjoy and pot multiple tree plantings. Don't miss out on this one because it will be a precursor to our meeting in March!

We are planning a Holiday Party after the Meeting this Saturday. Lunch provided by the club and we will have a quick gift exchange (average price range of \$15). This will take place at the Smith's home at 12:30pm so I hope that you all can make it. We will try to bring back the Holiday Party on a yearly basis as we did in the past, and in addition try to add more interest to some our meetings as well as more club digs and even some cool bonsai shopping trips! We are planning for a great calendar year in 2008 so, **DON'T FORGET TO SEND IN YOUR DUES!**

December Program

The Forest for the Trees

Conducted by: Dave Schlessner
Place: North Haven Gardens

Time: 8:30 AM - 12 PM
Date: Saturday, Dec 1st

Dave Schlessner will be discussing the nuances of forest plantings and other group plantings. Come ready to learn!

BSD CALENDAR:

- The Forest for the Trees
December program by Dave Schlessner
8:30 AM Saturday, Dec 1st
North Haven Gardens
- The Artistic Side of Bonsai
January program by Andy Rutledge
8:30 AM Saturday, Jan 5th
North Haven Gardens

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Would you like to get this newsletter via email? Has your address changed? Comments? E-mail amy.james@gte.net.



December Bonsai

By John Miller

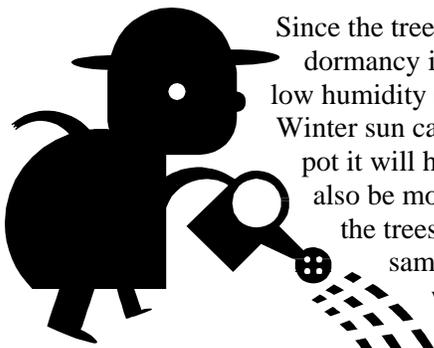
The program last month fleshed out words with actual hands-on application with demos on maple, elm, pine, and juniper. You got to see what the words meant to do. An excellent winter program.

The needle plucking on pines is not such a mysterious operation, it closely follows what happens with deciduous trees. All evergreens replace their foliage on a regular basis just as the deciduous trees do. Some, like the live oaks, do it just as the new foliage is coming out. Others on a longer schedule. The needles of the pine do almost all their work the first year but hang on for a year or two longer. Removing the older needles accomplishes a couple of things. First, it improves the overall look of the tree by getting rid of the ratty fading foliage. More important, it opens the interior of the tree to the sunlight which stimulates growth of dormant buds. These dormant buds are what you need to replace branches that are too large or too long later on.

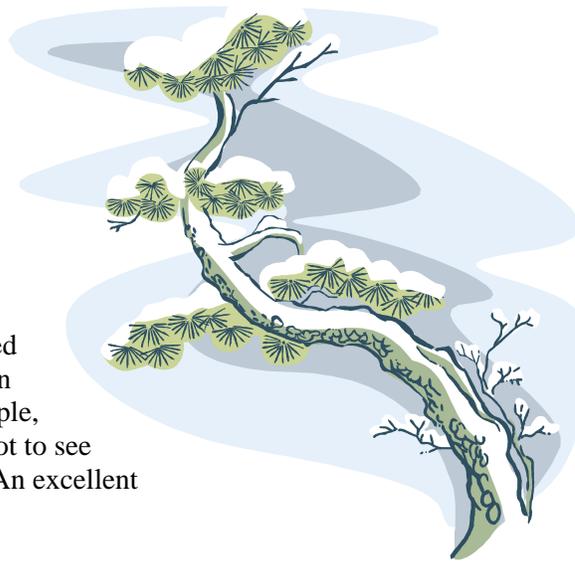
After opening up the pine, late fall or early winter is the proper time to do pruning and/or styling. That also applies to junipers. I prefer to do broadleaf evergreens closer to their growing season.

Work on the deciduous trees is much easier when they are devoid of leaves. You can readily see crossing branches, branches that have gotten too heavy, vertical growing twigs, and even if the tree really needs a different style. There will be no sap flow to contend with.

Not too much has to be done outside right now. That is if you prepared last month and you have no tropicals inside to care for. The big thing is to know what temperatures your trees can withstand and to remember that water is important in the winter time.



Since the trees are not using as much water during dormancy it is easy to overlook checking on them. The low humidity usually found during winter helps dry the soil. Winter sun can be pretty hot and if it shines directly on the pot it will hasten the drying process. Winter will usually also be more windy. Therefore, however you bed down the trees, you need to check the dryness often. The same trees that needed more water last summer will also need to be checked more often during the winter. I think that more trees are lost during the winter to having the soil dry out than from the actual cold.



TTSBE Scores Some Air-Time for Bonsai

Mike Hansen, TTSBE Chairman and owner of MBP Bonsai Studio, talks about bonsai and the TTSBE's recent "putting down of roots" with Cecilia Nasti of *Growing Concerns* on KUT FM radio in Austin, Texas.

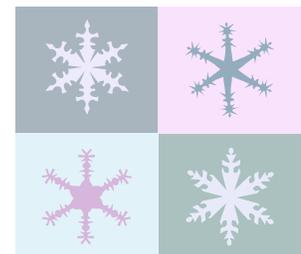
Listen to the first of two interviews at:

www.kut.org/items/show/10508

Join the Pioneer Society!

Between now and the end of 2007, individual, family and corporate gifts to The Texas State Bonsai Exhibit equaling or exceeding \$100 will receive special recognition as members of the Pioneer Society when the Exhibit is completed. Funds received from the Pioneers will primarily be used for Land purchase debt retirement infrastructure construction, architect, city and engineering fees and start up costs related to the site and fundraising efforts.

Find out how you can become a member at <http://www.ttsbe.org/>.



Deciduous trees should not be placed where they receive winter sun. After a period of dormancy, the heating of the tree could possibly cause it to break dormancy prematurely. If that happened you would need to keep it above freezing the rest of the winter. After they go dormant they have no need for any sunshine.

Evergreen types especially and deciduous trees to a lesser extend should not have the root ball subjected to alternate freezing and thawing. That process tends to tear and damage the roots. Placing the trees on the ground and using a mulch will minimize this problem.

Plants have different degrees of hardiness for their top growth and their roots. The reason being that the ground acts a large reservoir of heat and here in Texas the soil seldom freezes more than an inch or two down. Therefore, plants like the pomegranate and crepe myrtle which are at the northern extent of their range outside will not be hardy to freezing in pots. Any plant that you are unsure of should be protected from freezing. This can be a problem because if they are not kept cool after they go dormant they will break dormancy and start to grow too soon. Growing without sufficient light will cause long spindly growth which you cannot control. My best solution for this when I lived in town was to have a long platform with two wheels that I pulled into the garage on nights where freezing was forecast and kept outside at all other times.

The cold weather will keep any insect problems under control outside. In winter you should use a dormant oil spray to kill over-wintering insects and their eggs. You can also use lime-sulfur in a dormant spray solution which will also help with fungal problems. Be sure to follow the label directions when mixing and using the lime sulfur. It can be dangerous stuff if misused. You should watch for damage from rodent types, rabbits, squirrels and rats. They will prune branches and strip bark rather quickly.

Bonsai in greenhouses or indoor bonsai will need to be watched for the normal indoor problems. Low humidity, spider mites and scale are the biggest problems here. Aphids can also show up. Try to keep the humidity up by placing you trees on a humidity tray but do not let the pot touch the water. That can possibly give you some soil problems, root rot or some other fungal disease. I use the same insect controls in the greenhouse that I use outside all year.

You can take advantage of the winter slowdown by spending your time getting pots ready for spring, clean and sharpen your tools, study what changes you would like to make on your trees and so forth. ✍



Events of Interest



- **Holiday at the Arboretum**
Sunday, Nov. 23rd – Jan. 6th
www.dallasarboretum.org/
- **Dallas Bonsai Club
December meeting**
Saturday, Dec. 1st
- **Bird's Christmas Tree**
Ft. Worth Botanic Gardens
Saturday, Dec. 1st
www.fwbg.org/
- **A Christmas Carol**
Arts District Theater
Charles Dickens' classic
Christmas tale.
(214) 522-8499
- **Neiman Marcus Adolphus
Children's Christmas Parade**
Downtown Dallas
A seasonal parade for all ages. A
televised event benefiting
Children's Medical Center of
Dallas. (214) 456-8383
- **Candlelight at Dallas Heritage
Village**
Dallas Heritage Village
This event captures the magic of
the holidays past, when the village
is decorated in turn-of-the-century
style.
(214) 421-5141
- **Run the Rock - White Rock
Marathon**
American Airlines Center
Internationally recognized as a
premier marathon, route extends
from Downtown Dallas to White
Rock Lake area.
(214) 372-2068

A Day at Garvan Woodland Gardens

By James Bonney

When John Powell spoke about Japanese-style gardens in August, he talked briefly about Garvan Woodland Gardens in Hot Springs, Arkansas. What intrigued me about this garden was that John mentioned that a portion was remade into a Japanese-style garden, complete with a budding bonsai collection. My wife and I were in that area recently and decided to make a day of it at the gardens.



The gardens are tucked several miles away from the Interstate, so even the drive into the preserve is beautiful. At the information center, we received a map and some background on the gardens. The bonsai garden itself has been in existence for about three years. Some of the original trees were donated by the Weyerhaeuser Foundation, and indeed, the dedicated area is named the Weyerhaeuser Bonsai Garden. The school is currently having a small pavilion built to accommodate more displays, house some of the bonsai for winter, and for educational programs.



The bonsai garden is one of the first attractions along the path. The defining feature of this area are the massive sandstone slabs that serve as the backdrop for the bonsai on display. The pedestals are native stone and are set to a height that favors viewing while sitting.

There are several quality bonsai on display. There are also a few obviously in training, a testament to the fact that this bonsai collection is still a young one. We saw elms, bald cypress, ginkgo, ficus, azalea, juniper and others.

The entire area is beautifully landscaped with Japanese maples, hawthorns, azaleas, pines, ferns and other greenery. A brook with several lovely waterfalls

Minutes of Meeting Nov. 3, 2007 as reported by John Miller

President Sylvia Smith called the meeting to order about 9:03am.

Sylvia reported on the spring show to be held at the Arboretum on March 22 and 23 next year [*Sylvia has since told the board that the date has been changed to the weekend BEFORE Easter, i.e., the 15th & 16th —Ed.*]. Work to have your tree(s) in good shape.

Sylvia also reminded that membership dues will be coming up in January.

LSBF news—John reported that for the LSBF state convention in San Antonio next year the ABS co-sponsor has dropped the requirement to be a member of the ABS to attend. Just write Bonsai Society of Dallas on the line for ABS membership and enter 0 in the cost column.

Information on the convention may be found online at www.absbonsai.org or you may pick up the form from John at any meeting. This convention will be in the seminar format used by the ABS for the last two years. For your entry fee, you will select four sessions (classes or workshop), one each on Fri AM, Fri PM, Sat AM, Sat PM. Workshops may carry an addition fee depending on materials selected.

After the business meeting closed, Sylvia presented a program on bonsai care at this time of the year. She used several trees to discuss how and what should be done. She also answered a broad range questions from the audience such as doing air and ground layering to obtain some trees like those she brought.

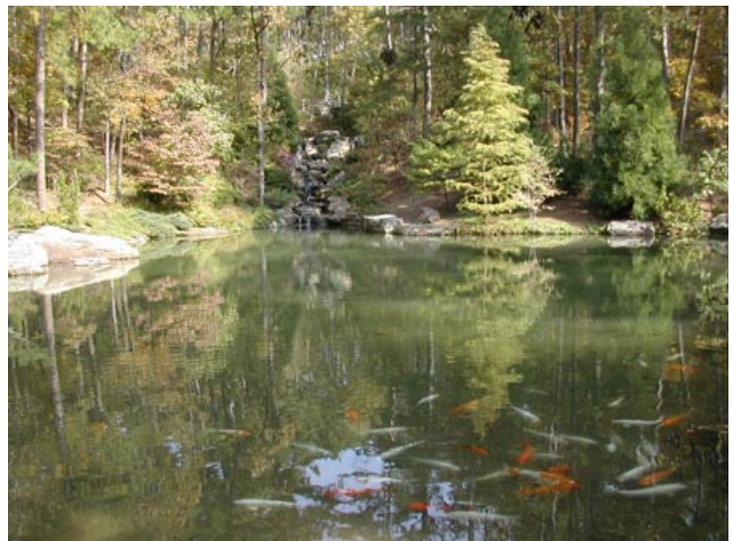
The material covered included maple, elm, juniper, and pine.

cascades down from the bonsai area into a large pond filled with koi at the bottom of the Asian garden. There are several quite spectacular views to be found along the shores. One view we especially liked was from across the pond looking back toward the Asian garden with a stand of large conifers (sorry guys, I don't know my trees as well as I'd like) standing like sentinels on the opposite shore.

While walking the area, we came across several volunteers stringing row after row of Christmas lights into the maples. One of the extremely friendly volunteers explained that although the park normally closes at 5pm during the winter months, that from November 17th through December 31st, the garden stays open until 9pm for their "Holiday Lights Hours."

I wish we had been able to go a few weeks later when the autumn colors would really be coming out and the holiday lights would be on in the evenings, but all in all, it was a very nice trip.

To learn more about Garvan Woodland Gardens, visit www.garvangardens.org.





Howard and Sylvia Smith

www.BonsaiSmiths.net • Cultivators of fine trees
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Present your BSD membership card at the following participating businesses for a 10% discount on merchandise:

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- 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 or James Bonney at amy.james@gte.net.

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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 Club Meeting

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

Time: 9:00 AM

Place: North Haven Garden Center

7700 Northaven

Dallas, TX

Date: _____

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: _____