



# Bonsai Society of Dallas

January 2006

## It's Member- ship Renewal Time!

**The Bonsai Society of Dallas depends on your membership fees for continued operation and to bring you quality bonsai artists! Please fill out the enclosed membership form and send it in with your membership fee as soon as possible! Thank you so much!**

## Message from the President:

By George Straw

I hope that everyone had their trees ready for the very cold snap that we had a couple of weeks ago! It was a real struggle to keep my greenhouse warm. I was watching during the day and saw my greenhouse temperature had dropped to 43 in the greenhouse and it was not dark yet. So I decided that everything would probably be fine except the buttonwood so I went out to bring the big buttonwood in the house. When I went in the greenhouse it was drooping and looked very bad. I brought it in but I am afraid that it is not going to make it. It has lost all leaves and some of the smaller branching on it is already brittle. Warning, do not let the buttonwood go below 50 or they may not come back.

Enough bad news for this time! At least everything else in the greenhouse looks great and make it okay.

I have checked with Mike Smoller and he has made arrangement for another club dig on Feb 11 at his friend's place. I will also plan on a club dig at my farm on January 28. So please mark your calendar for these two dates. We will also have the tips and tools list in the newsletter that Dave Schelser made up for the club.

So far we have some great meetings coming up with Howard and Sylvia Smith, Craig Coussins from Scotland, and John Miller. Be sure to not miss any of these!

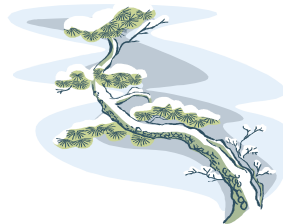
The board has been working

on the Convention 2007 and hope to have a place locked in by the end of January. As soon as we know more, we will update the club.

As you know, I have taken over the Vice President position also and Sylvia has offered to help me out on that.

I hope everyone had a great Holiday and I will see you in January!

George



## January Program

Date: January 5, 2006  
Time: 6:30 PM  
Place: North Haven Gardens  
7700 Northaven  
Dallas, TX

Howard and Sylvia Smith will be discussing deciduous bonsai care and refinement. This will be a very interactive meeting, so people are welcome to bring a deciduous tree for discussion, but we will likely not be doing any actual work on

the trees during the meeting since it is not the appropriate time for this type of work. Deciduous bonsai care is many nuances apart from coniferous bonsai, and these differences will be highlighted. Howard and Sylvia have both graduated from Boon Manakitivipart's three year Bonsai Intensive course, and have been owners of a the bonsai nursery "BonsaiSmiths" since 1996. They have both

served on the BSD board and have done many talks for the club.

Please be sure to join us for this great information!



## BSD Calendar

- Jan. 5 - Howard & Sylvia Smith - Deciduous Bonsai
- Jan. 28 - Club Dig at George Straw's farm
- Feb. 2 - Craig Coussins - Juniper
- Feb. 4 - Craig Coussins - Joint Workshop with the Fort Worth Bonsai Club
- Feb. 11 - Club Dig - TBA
- Mar. 2 - John Miller - TBA

# January Bonsai

By John Miller



Saying winter is here now is a bit of overkill. I had a temperature on the coldest day of 9 degrees. Since then it's been back up to 70. That's the kind of swings that are bad for bonsai. Try to select locations to temporize the lows and highs by utilizing ground heat and artificial shade.

Be sure your trees are well watered before going through a deep freeze. They will be losing water to evaporation, but will not be able to replenish it if the soil in the pot is frozen. Protection from high winds is necessary so they will not dry the tops out. Sunlight is not necessary on deciduous trees when they have lost their leaves. In fact, it can be bad for the tree because it will heat up the trunk and could make the tree come out of dormancy too early.

I advocate placing the trees on a well drained ground bed in a protected shady area. Then cover the pots with a shallow layer of mulch. This will give the roots several degrees of protection. You should know which trees have a greater need for water. If you put these trees together it will be easier to check your need for watering while they are in the bed.

I would treat the evergreens in a similar manner but put them where they can get some sun.

Personally, I keep my outside hardy trees on the benches until the temperature goes below 25. Then I set the deciduous and more tender evergreens on the ground below and between the benches until a temperature in the teens is expected. At that point I will use old carpet and quilts to cover the benches. For the rest of the winter I leave them there and lift the sides for air circulation of the deciduous trees and uncover fully the evergreens when the temperature rises. Sounds like a lot of work, but I developed a routine that fits me and it isn't as bad as watering in the summer.

Of course, the tender and semi-tender trees need protection. The semi-tender get left out for some frost but no freezing. When freezing is expected, they get put in a cool area. If they show growth again, they go to the greenhouse. It's not a big greenhouse and doesn't give optimum growing conditions, but keeps things from freezing.

Indoor trees will be using more water to offset the lower humidity. Soil will also be losing water faster through its surface. Be sure to watch the indoor trees for insect problems. Most plant insects love a controlled atmosphere like the indoors. Spider mites seem to get the most attention here because they do great in a low humidity and the lack of foliage spraying. Scale can be an easily overlooked source of trouble. There are usually more severe problems with plants that have been kept outdoors in summer than brought in without any treatment. Indoor trees need to be fertilized regularly and will require periodic trimming as they continue to grow through the winter.

Greenhouses are much the same as indoors. However, most greenhouses are kept more humid. The higher humidity is to the liking of aphids and fungal diseases. It may also result in your keeping the soil too moist with associated root problems. Use your standard insect controls that you used last summer. I use my Garrett Juice mixture.

Styling can be done at this time but no repotting unless you are going to keep the tree from freezing after that. Repotting initiates new root development which is usually not very hardy.

A better approach would be to study one or two thoroughly each day making notes on what needs to be done. January is an excellent time to start any remodeling projects that may be necessary. While the trees are dormant, you have better view of the branch structure. Do any need to be moved or removed? Do any coarse branches need to be cut back to a smaller side branch for refinement? Do any long straight branches need wiring to give them motion? Does the tree really need a drastic redesign? You can also trim the twigs back while you have them there. You can also decide if that tree will need to be repotted this spring. Is the present pot good or should you find a more appropriate pot for it?

Any long warm spells during the month could activate some of the insect problems, but as a rule there are no special needs to look for in January. Spraying with a dormant oil spray will kill adults, nymphs, and eggs of any trying to over-winter on your trees. Some dormant sprays can be used on new growth but better results overall will be obtained if you do it before Valentine's Day. A weak lime sulphur dormant spray will also get fungal spores and should be done before February 1.

If you have your summer display and growing benches cleared, you could use a stronger solution lime sulphur to disinfect that area, too. The underside of the benches should be sprayed also. That might even eliminate spider mites next year!

If you have several trees and find that you run short of time during the repotting season, you may gain a little advantage by mixing your soil this month.

I am looking forward to the week after Christmas. That is when I will start bringing my shohin elms and maples into the greenhouse to break dormancy and I get to play a couple of months earlier than I would without the greenhouse. That repotting, restyling, and the first flush of growth will be over before the big stuff thinks about growing.

# Membership Renewal

If you have not already done so, please renew your membership in BSD today! 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

Or you may turn it in to Jennifer Triptow at the next Club meeting. Thank you!

## 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: \_\_\_\_\_

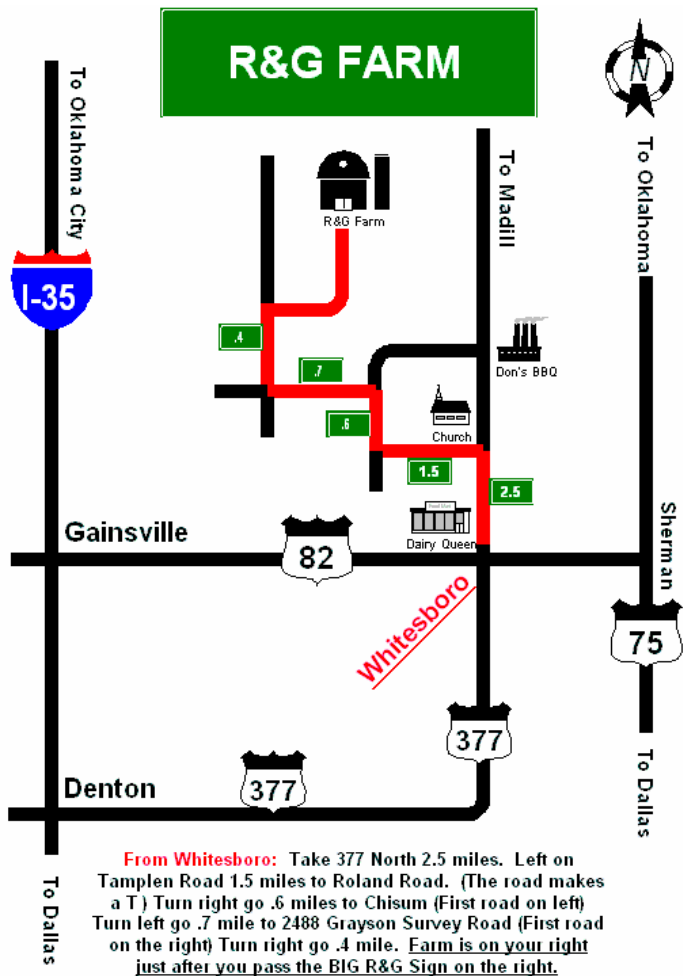
Amount Paid: \_\_\_\_\_ Membership Year: \_\_\_\_\_

*Thank you so much!*

## The Club Digs are Just Around the Corner!

(Must be a current and paid member for 2006 to participate in the Club Dig)

Our first Club Dig will be on January 28, beginning at 9:00 am and will take place at George Straw's farm. Please see the map below. We will have another Club Dig on February 11 — more information will be provided in the February newsletter.



George Cell: 214-957-3205 / Farm: 940-668-8620

## TOOLS TO BRING ON A CLUB'S BONSAI DIG

David M. 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.

## TOOLS TO BRING ON A CLUB'S BONSAI DIG Continued...

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.

That's it for now; hope to see you at what is an excellent collecting area.

# LONE STAR BONSAI FEDERATION

## Convention:

The 2006 LSBF convention will be held in Corpus Christi on July 14-16. Guest artists include Johnny Uchida of California, Bruce Baker of Michigan, and Ed Trout of Florida. It will be at the Holiday Inn, 5549 Leopard St, Corpus Christi. Reserve that date on your calendar, details and reservation sheets will be available after the LSBF meeting January 21 or may be available sooner on their website at [www.corpuschristibonsaiclub.com](http://www.corpuschristibonsaiclub.com). Some of the material for workshops will be Brazilian Raintree, Natal Plum, Water Jasmine (Wrightia Religiosa), Dwarf Yaupon Holly Fiddlewood, Surinam Cherry, Kidneywood, Texas Ebony, and a mixed group of other Texas Natives.

## 2006 Tour:

The tour for this fall should be Cheryl Manning, or if she is not available, Ted Matson. These are both very excellent artists. All clubs would have liked to get Walter Pall for the tour, but we thought the expenses of the last two years indicated that we put him off until next year.

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## BSD Vice-President Position Open

The Vice President is responsible for arranging the guest speaker for each meeting. This may be a local person or someone from out of town, depending on the Club budget.

This position is also responsible for making sure that we have a meeting room (we have a standing for the first Thursday of each month at North Haven Gardens). But if we have any special event, then we would need to make arrangements for that. At the meeting, the Vice President would be responsible for introducing the guest speaker, as well as be responsible for flight arrangements and housing for the guest (this could be hotel or see if a member would like to host the guest). The Vice President is responsible for sending a bio of the guest artist and information about the program to the Newsletter Editor; and a notice about the program subject is to be sent to Tom Mozden for the Dallas newspaper (this must be done two months in advance).

The Vice President would also be expected to attend the Board meeting, this is usually about once every three months.

If you have any other questions about the position, please contact George Straw at 214-357-3048 or [gstra@aol.com](mailto:gstra@aol.com).

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## Generous Businesses Give Discount to BSG Members

Present your BSD membership 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.net](http://www.bonsaismiths.net)  
[bonsaismiths@earthlink.net](mailto:bonsaismiths@earthlink.net)  
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John Miller—President Emeritus, [bonsaimiller@aol.com](mailto:bonsaimiller@aol.com)  
Vice President—This position is open  
Asst. Vice President—Tim Phan, [phantosme@gmail.com](mailto:phantosme@gmail.com), (972) 618-7134  
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