



# Bonsai Society of Dallas

Monthly Member Newsletter

Jan 2021

## Message from the President

### In This Issue

- Message from President
- January Program
- January Bonsai – Tips and Advice
- December Program Review
- Beginner Bulletin Board
- Upcoming Events
- Tip of the Month
- January To Do List

### Board of Directors

President: *Joshuah Murphree*  
[president@bonsaisocietyofdallas.com](mailto:president@bonsaisocietyofdallas.com)

1<sup>st</sup> Vice President: *Brian Myers*  
[bc.myers@outlook.com](mailto:bc.myers@outlook.com)

2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President: *Luis Lebron*  
[luislebron78@gmail.com](mailto:luislebron78@gmail.com)

Secretary: *Ben Karlson*  
[bkarlson@gmail.com](mailto:bkarlson@gmail.com)

Treasurer: *Emily White*  
[treasurer@bonsaisocietyofdallas.com](mailto:treasurer@bonsaisocietyofdallas.com)

LSBF Delegate: *Howard Smith*  
[bonsaismiths@tx.rr.com](mailto:bonsaismiths@tx.rr.com)

Membership Chair: *Jerry Riley*  
[jafa625@gmail.com](mailto:jafa625@gmail.com)

Webmaster and Social Media Chairs:  
*Scott Ferguson*  
[elvisisdead1212@yahoo.com](mailto:elvisisdead1212@yahoo.com)  
*Rodrigo Aguilar*  
[rigoap93@gmail.com](mailto:rigoap93@gmail.com)

**Media/technical support:** *Chandra Vemulapalli*, [csvemula@gmail.com](mailto:csvemula@gmail.com)

Members-at-Large: *Bill Muto*  
[bmuto@aol.com](mailto:bmuto@aol.com)

Newsletter Editor: *Haiying Huang*  
[Haiying\\_huang@yahoo.com](mailto:Haiying_huang@yahoo.com)

Past President: *Sylvia Smith*  
[sylvia3smith@gmail.com](mailto:sylvia3smith@gmail.com)

President Emeritus: *John Miller*

A new year, a new outlook, maybe some New Year's resolutions, let us all collectively hope for a great 2021! Due to some wonderful work on behalf of the board, and special shout outs to Brian Myers, we have most of 2021 filled out with amazing artists and events.

Not the least of which to start off with, Mauro Stemberger from Italy! Peep his announcement below. We have been focusing on artists outside of North America while we are still dealing with Covid so that when we can all get back together; we still have some wonderful local artists that we might actually get to shake hands with.

North Haven Gardens is up and running but still working on their classroom and display building. I am hanging my hat on the timing of everything working itself out in everyone's favor. With all this being the case, we are forming special work committees to help navigate the club into the digital age. These committees will be a "Membership & Online Payment Working Group" and a "Social Media Optimization Group". If any of you have expertise in these areas, we would love to hear from you or provide you a spot to help spread our love of Bonsai in Texas to the world.

Several of our members prefer in person experiences, and as we hope for that to happen again soon, we are striving to enhance our online presence, access to media/information, and streamline membership processes. To all members who might need it, if you will notice the offer under Chandra Vemulapalli's name just to the left of this message, he has graciously offered to help anyone with some tips or assistance interacting with BSD digitally.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year everyone, and with a raise of the glass, cheers to 2021!!

***Joshuah Murphree***

# January Program

## Italian Elm Styling Demonstration with Mauro Stemberger

**9:00am January 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2021 (zoom meeting)**

Our guest artists for our January Zoom meeting will be the renowned Mauro Stemberger.

Mauro started his bonsai journey at age 14 in Italy with the Bonsai Club Feltre in his hometown.

While studying architecture at IUAV University in Venice from 2002-06, he had opportunity to improve his bonsai techniques with several European bonsai masters. In 2005 he founded the Italian Bonsai Dream workshop with a group of fellow enthusiasts. He has authored articles for publication in Bonsai Focus, UBI Bonsai, and BCI Bonsai. In 2008 he was recognized as a BCI Bonsai Instructor. He has served as President of UBI (Italian Bonsai Society), and director of UBI Bonsai Magazine. For the last 7 years he has traveled the world performing bonsai demonstrations and workshops.



For this Zoom Demo, Mauro, direct from his shop in Italy, will completely transform a fantastic yamadori European Elm from raw material with a full styling including deadwood work. I hope you'll join us for what I am sure will be a very entertaining and educational demo with this incredible artist.

### Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/2262333815>

Meeting ID: 226 233 3815

One tap mobile

+13462487799,,2262333815# US (Houston)

+16699009128,,2262333815# US (San Jose)

Dial by your location

+1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)

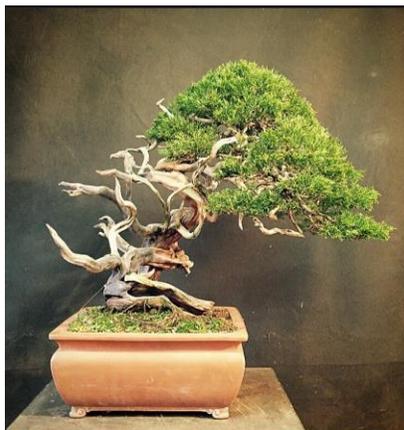
+1 669 900 9128 US (San Jose)

+1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma)

+1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

+1 646 558 8656 US (New York)

+1 301 715 8592 US (Washington D.C) Meeting ID: 226 233 3815 Find your local number: <https://zoom.us/u/aAGYadEKh>



### Upcoming Events



- Jan. 2 Deadwood and restyle Elm Mauro Stemberger
- Feb. 6 Repotting Bonanza with Bonsai Smiths
- Mar. 6 Styling Demo Elsa Boudouri
- Apr. 3 Styling a Mugo or Scot Pine Pavel Slovak
- May 1 Bonsai Pots Lecture Michael Ryan Bell
- Jun. 5 Bonsai workshop with Bonsai Smith
- Jul. 10 Demo and BYOT Workshop Boon Manakativipart

### Events Elsewhere



Feb. 20-21, 2021, Trophy the online edition, Bonsai Association Belgium,

<https://bonsaiassociation.be/trophy/>

Apr. 5<sup>th</sup>, 2021, Tour of the Bonsai Pavilion and Bonsai care Demonstration, Meadowlark Botanical Garden, Vienna VA, USA

Apr. 20-21, 2021, Bonsai Convention, Mistral Bonsai, <https://www.mistralbonsai.com/en/evento/bonsai-conference-17th-and-18th-april-2021/>

Jul. 9-11, 2021, the British International Bonsai Show, <https://sussexbonsaigroup.wordpress.com/2020/07/03/the-british-international-bonsai-show-9th-11th-july-2021/>

Sept. 11-12, 2021, 7th US National Bonsai Exhibition, East Rochester, New York, USA

# January Bonsai

## Tips and Advice

By John Miller



On New Year's Day many people make resolutions as to what they want to do or not do or what to change etc. I do not care to do this as such, but I like to take the time when a project slows down to review its progress and to check and see if it is still a viable option or does its direction need to be altered. In bonsai we need to evaluate both our trees and ourselves. Wintertime gives us a good opportunity to do so, especially for the bare deciduous trees.

The coldest nights usually come the last two weeks in January, but don't bet the farm on it. Just watch the forecasts and check the lows (ignore the highs, they are for people not plants). Have some plans in mind in case we have some extreme weather.

Your primary job in cold weather is to be sure your trees are well watered before going into a deep freeze. They will be losing water to evaporation but will not be able to replenish it if the soil is frozen. Protection from high winds is also necessary so the tops will not dry 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 soil and that could make the tree come out of dormancy too early.

Tender or tropical trees that are kept indoors 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 low humidity and the lack of foliage spraying. Scale can be an easily overlooked source of trouble. The flat green kind can be hard to spot on the underside of leaves or tight against the stem. Indoor trees need to be fertilized regularly and will require periodic trimming as they continue to grow through the winter. Be careful that plants in a sunny window do not get their leaves scalded.

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 organic foliar spray all winter.

Back to the outdoor trees; 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. Check trunks and branches for tiny scales. 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 Feb 1 and not at all if any green is showing. Just be careful with the lime sulfur; follow label directions closely.

In January I would not recommend any feeding of outdoor trees. Any feeding might cause them to start spring activity before the end of the bad weather.

After tending to the daily needs of your trees, take time to study one or two thoroughly each day. January is an excellent time to start any remodeling projects that may be necessary. While the trees are dormant you have a 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? Any long straight branches need wiring to give them motion? Does the tree really need a drastic redesign? Also trim the twigs back while you have them there.

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.

*[If you have any questions about what has been discussed here or a specific issue you're having, post your question at our Facebook page.] ✍*

# December Program Review

## Fall/Winter Deciduous Work with Andrew Robson

Our guest artist for our December virtual program was Todd Schlafer from Colorado. Todd worked on styling a Piñon Pine and answered our questions regarding various aspects of proper work to perform during winter. There were informative discussions about collecting pines and junipers from the Rockies and the process of transforming yamadori into beautiful bonsai. Many thanks to Todd for sharing his bonsai knowledge with us!

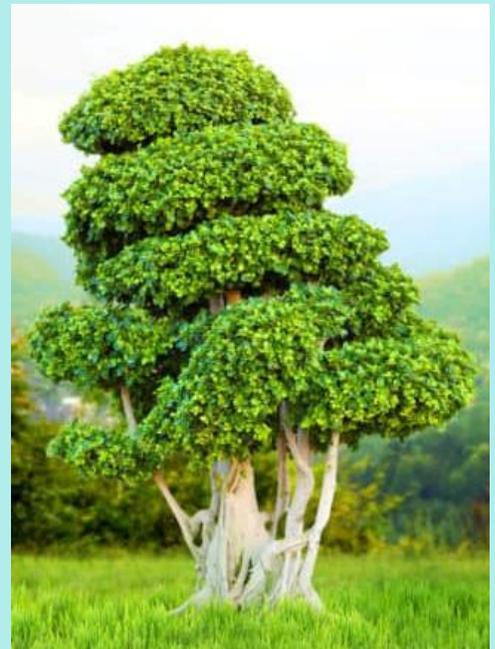


## Beginner's Bulletin Board

There are no 'dumb' questions when you are a beginner at any new endeavor. However sometimes beginners are reluctant to ask a question in a monthly meeting. Got a question? Send it to Haiying at [haiying\\_huang@yahoo.com](mailto:haiying_huang@yahoo.com) for an individual response. Your question may also appear anonymously here in a future issue so that others can learn.

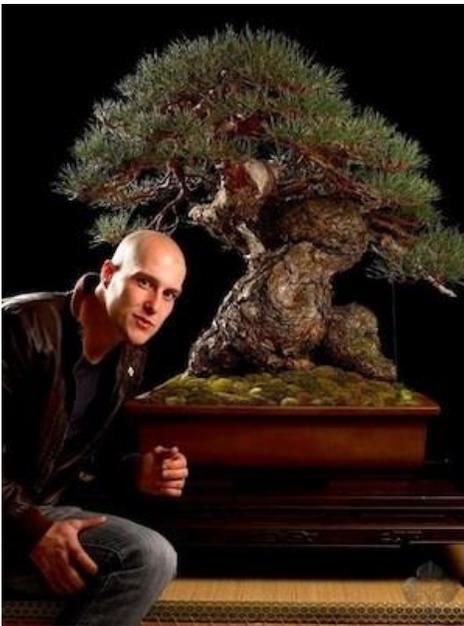
**Question:** I have some landscape plants that I plan to dig up as starter bonsais one year from now. What kind of preparation work can I do this winter while they are still in the ground?

**Answer from Diane:** You don't mention the species so in general terms, the thing to be aware of is that your priority should be to achieve a thickening of the lower trunk (the first few inches). That occurs as the plant/tree puts on healthy growth of its apex. During this last year it is in the ground, let the apex of the main trunk grow freely. Thickening of the upper trunk occurs from the branches growing on the sides. We don't typically want thickening of the upper trunk because we want a taper of the trunk, so if you feel the need to contain the amount of growth, think about cutting back side branches. The energy that the plant would put into supporting those side branches will then be available for more apical growth. However, be mindful that a side branch might need to become your new apical leader once you begin the design of the tree, so if you feel the need to prune, avoid any branches that will be important to the overall design. Other than that, you might consider doing any work necessary to make digging it out easier. If you have been on a dig before, you know access to the tree from all sides is very important



# 2021 Programs

MONTH	ARTIST	TOPIC	STATUS
January 2	Mauro Stemberger	Italian Elm Styling	Confirmed
February 6	The Bonsai Smiths	Repotting Bonanza	Confirmed
March 6	Elsa Boudouri	Styling Demonstration	Confirmed
April 3	Pavel Slovak	Styling a Mugo or Scots Pine	Confirmed
May 1	Michael Ryan Bell	Talk on Bonsai Pots	Confirmed
June 5	The Bonsai Smiths	TBD – BYOT & Celebration??	Proposed
July 10	Boon Manakativipart	Demo & BYOT Workshop	Confirmed
August 7	NA	CLUB SHOW at Texas Discovery Gardens	Proposed
September 4	TBD		
October 2	NA	CLUB AUCTION	Proposed
November 6	The Bonsai Smiths	Working with Pines and Others	Proposed
December 4	Jennifer Price	TBD	Proposed



Mauro Stemberger



Elsa Boudouri



Pavel Slovak



Michael Ryan Bell



Boon Manakativipart



# Grown from a Cutting

by Diane Lowe

Do you know those people? You know; the ones who seem to be able to just stick a cutting into the ground and it roots? We weren't all born with a 'green thumb', but perhaps we can acquire it with a little practice. A lot of beautiful bonsai are developed from cuttings so I thought it might be good to do a bit of research and apply traditional horticultural propagation techniques related to cuttings as a means of starting new bonsai. Starting from a cutting is economical and allows you to create movement in the future trunk from the very beginning. It will also give you genetically matched seedlings for thread or root grafting onto an existing tree. So let's take a look at ways to increase our success rate.

In doing research on this topic I found an interesting article on propagation from Brie Arthur, a professional horticulturist, propagator and garden industry communicator. She studied horticulture and landscape design at Purdue University and upon graduation went to work as a full time propagator at a commercial nursery. She has been at it 15 years and shared her knowledge on a recent episode of *Growing a Greener World* (PBS). I also gained information from several publications, including *Botany for Bonsai*, by Enrique Castano de la Serna. The topic of propagation goes well beyond cuttings, so I have adapted and narrowed the information to apply to cuttings of those trees we tend to use for bonsai in our area.

## General Information

Propagating woody cuttings is all about balancing the rate of respiration and transpiration. Transpiration is the process through which plants lose water, and respiration is the way they acquire energy; both are vital functions in plants. In simple terms, you are trying to create an environment that allows the plant to "sweat" at a rate that does not drain its stored energy. This is why nurseries have developed propagation or mist houses. In these chambers un-rooted cuttings are placed in an environment with periodic mist of water to help reduce temperatures and compensate for water lost through transpiration. The rate of the mist changes seasonally, depending on several factors: temperature, day length, airflow, shade to sun ratio and the plant material being produced. Ideally a mist house will have a 40% shade cloth, allowing for bright but filtered, indirect exposure.



We can't all have a mist house, but you might be able to recreate those conditions using a few different techniques. On a very small scale, you can use one of the readily available clear plastic salad boxes to create your own small mist house. By setting pots in the box and placing the lid on top, you create a mini-mist house. As you can see in the picture to the left, 12 juniper cuttings were started at the same time. Six were placed in the 'mini-greenhouse' and the other six were not. They were both watered and misted as needed. The color of the foliage would indicate much healthier cutting on those that were enclosed. Time will tell which ones root but I'd bet on the ones on the left.

Another way is to use the space under a bench or table. Brie says that over the years she has adjusted her propagation space from the convenience of the table top to below the bench on gravel. "It seems the temperature is lower and the airflow less chaotic. I tent my space with clear plastic that is not secured to the ground, allowing it to blow in the breeze but still capture humidity." Rolls of clear plastic are available at most hardware stores and it can be attached with staples.

## Timing

The optimal time to start cuttings depends on the type of plant. Think in terms of three different seasons for starting bonsai cuttings.

- Spring (April-June) - **Softwood cuttings**, meaning the current year's growth of deciduous trees and shrubs (maples, elms, oak, hornbeam, hackberry, quince, apricot, crape myrtle, etc.)
- Mid-summer (July-September) - **Semi-hardwood cuttings**, meaning the spring growth has hardened off slightly of broadleaf evergreens (boxwood, holly, pyracantha, azaleas, etc.)
- Fall/Winter (October-December) - **Hardwood cuttings**, meaning hardened growth of the stem of most conifers, primarily junipers, yews, cedars, etc. These take the longest to root and may need to be moved

inside to avoid freezing winter temperatures. Spruce, fir and pine trees don't respond well to propagation by cuttings and are better grown from seed.

### **Media / Container**

Use a well-drained, sterile, soilless media. The goal is not to have saturated soil: remember roots grow in the air space between soil particles. You can buy this prepackaged or prepare it yourself. Brie prefers to use 3 parts ground pine bark to 1 part perlite. In general, the rooting medium should be low in fertility, drain well enough to provide oxygen, but retain enough moisture to prevent water stress. Always moisten the media before inserting cuttings, and keep it evenly moist while cuttings are rooting and forming new shoots. Use a pot that is deep and has good drainage holes. You do not need a lot of media volume, so select a pot no larger than 2" across and equally deep. Stick one cutting per pot to make transplanting easy.

### **Method**

Take cuttings with a sharp blade to reduce injury to the parent plant. Spray the blade with rubbing alcohol and burn with a lighter to prevent the spread of disease. You can also dip the cutting tool in a mixture of one part bleach to nine parts water to prevent transmitting diseases from infected plant parts to healthy ones. Remove flowers and flower buds from cuttings to allow the energy and stored carbohydrates for root and shoot formation rather than fruit and seed production.

Tip cuttings are the easiest material to select when starting cuttings. You can work from the tip down, counting back 5-6 leaves, or approximately 2 to 5 inch piece of stem, including the terminal bud. Make the cut just below a node, where a leaf comes off the stem. Remove the bottom 2-3 leaves exposing the nodes. Lightly wound semi-hardwood and hardwood cuttings, exposing the cambium layer (green interior tissue). This will absorb more rooting hormone, and is particularly important for hardwood cuttings. Dip the stem in rooting hormone and gently tap the end of the cutting to remove any excess. Make a hole in the soil media and insert the cutting deeply enough into the media to support itself, and give a slight press to ensure the media is settled around the stem. If it is too loose in the media you run the risk of the fresh cuts and wound drying out. At least one node must be below the surface; ideally 2-3 nodes will be stuck in the media to ensure vigorous root development.

If you take a cutting and are not immediately going to plant it, moisten it and use a plastic bag to transport/store it until you can plant it. Once you are ready to plant it (the sooner the better), make a fresh cut to the end, exposing new cambium tissue.

### **Rooting Hormones**

Though it is not always necessary to use them, rooting hormones promote rooting, increase the number of roots and create uniform rooting much more quickly than without, particularly with woody material. There is a wide selection of hormones available in garden centers and on line. Brie prefers to use different types depending on the type of cutting; a powder hormone, such as Rhizopon #1 for spring softwood cuttings (deciduous), a diluted liquid such as Dip N Grow for summer semi-hardwood cuttings (evergreen), and a gel formula, called Root-Gel has worked very well for her on hardwood cuttings (conifer). Store the rooting hormone in the refrigerator, as it can last up to a year (or longer). To avoid contamination of the entire supply, add a small amount to a separate container for dipping cuttings.

### **After Care**

Keep cuttings in a light shaded area and be patient. Do not tug on the cuttings or pull them from the soil to check their progress. Once roots develop, they are easily broken and can dry out quickly. Brie likes to wait until she sees roots coming out the bottom of the pot before removing them from the mist. This ensures that the plants are well established and capable of normal water absorption. Shift the newly rooted plants into a shady location and keep evenly moist. Fertilize lightly to encourage strong growth. When the plants are rooted thoroughly pot them into a larger container, one to two times the size of the original. Use a well-drained media and grow in dappled sun or shade depending on the plant material.

Hopefully this will inspire you to try your hand at propagation with root cuttings. Consider trying as many as you can at one time. You will have failures, but the more you start the better your chances of getting some to take root. Good luck! ✍

## January'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

- Water as needed and keep from freezing

### Deciduous

- Only repot trees whose leaf buds are beginning to swell; protect from freezing thereafter
- Light pruning can be done now (use sealant); delay heavy pruning until spring

### Evergreen/Conifer

- Repotting can begin now, but protect from freezing thereafter
- Delay fertilization until 4 – 6 weeks after repotting

### Flowering/Fruit

- Repotting can be done now while trees are still slightly dormant; avoid if currently in flower
- Trimming should be done after flowering (use sealant); buds can be sacrificed every other year to achieve better ramification

### Tropical

- Winter precautions still in effect – no repotting
- Boost humidity if kept indoors

## Member News

Got news to share? Let us know...

Hope you and your family are safe and healthy during this unprecedented time. There are many ways we can connect with our members while staying at home. Consider posting at our Facebook page, writing an article for the newsletter, or sending suggestions for our future virtual programs.

<https://www.facebook.com/BonsaiSocietyofDallas1>

## Link of the Month

The link below provides an excellent introduction to bonsai for beginners. Some of the points may be helpful for experienced bonsai'ers as well.

<http://www.zone10.com/growing-a-bonsai-tree-culture-of-dwarf-trees-for-beginners.html>



## Tip of the Month

### A Bonsai Wagon?

The temperature this winter seems to have large swings; we had days that are in the 70s at daytime and near freezing at night. If you are tired of moving your evergreens and tropics in and out of your garage, a "bonsai" wagon may be a good investment. Just load the wagon with your precious bonsais. When the weather is nice outside, you can "wagon" it out to get some sun and then move it back to the garage at night to protect your bonsai from the cold temperature.





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

## BonsaiMinh

**Text or call Mike - 469 422 2523**

**Payment - PayPal, Venmo, Cash & Check sorry no Credit Card**



### Premium Bonsai Soil Mix

1 Part of Super hard Japanese Akadama  
1 Part Black Lava  
1 Part Hyuga (Japanese Pumice)  
Size - ( 5/32 - 1/4) inch.  
All sifted clean and ready too used.

**5 Gal bucket - \$60.00**

Japanese Ryusen brand Super hard Akadama 14 Liter Bag (S or M) - **\$32.00**

Hyuga Japanese Pumice 18 Liter Bag (S or M) - **\$30.00**

30 lbs bag of Black Lava size (3/16) all sifted clean - **\$28.00**

Kanuma (for Azalea ) 14 Liter bag Small - **\$32.00** (Limited quantity)

GroPower (12 - 8 - 8) fertilizer 200 tablets - **\$32.00** (Limited quantity)

BioGold - 5kg bag - **\$80.00**

Copper Wire - #6 (25ft roll). #8 - #18 (50ft Roll)

Aluminum Wire - 500g Roll (size 1.2 - 7.0) - **15.00** Each

Japanese Bonsai Pot and High fire Tokoname training pot also available now.



# 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 bring to any club meeting

Bonsai Society of Dallas meets on the first (1<sup>st</sup>) Saturday of each month.  
Time: 9:00 AM

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

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

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

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

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

New Membership

Individual Membership: \$30.00

Renewal Membership

Joint Membership: \$35.00

For the convenience of our membership a roster is published for **members only** in March of each year.  
Please check the appropriate box if you do not wish to be included

Include me in the membership roster

Exclude me from the membership roster

-----  
Do Not Cut: For Treasurer Use

Member Receipt

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

Amount Paid: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Received By: \_\_\_\_\_