



SNIPS 'N CLIPS

A Publication of The San Antonio Bonsai Society, Inc.

<http://bonsai-satx.org>

APRIL 2014

VOLUME 39 NUMBER 4

BONSAI CALENDAR

All meetings are held on the second Thursday, 7 pm, at Lions Field Adult Community Center, Broadway at Mulberry St., SA, TX. 78209

NEW...Each month will have a "mini-show" of bonsai that anyone can bring in to talk about

MARCH 29: Lecture/Demo at SHADES OF GREEN NURSERY WITH A BONSAI DISPLAY.

APRIL 10: BYOT, repotting night
HOST: Ryan O

APRIL 12: SABS Bonsai show at the SA Botanical Gardens.

APRIL 10-13: East meets West, LSBF convention, Houston Bonsai Society hosting the 2014 bonsai convention. www.houstonbonsai.com

May 23rd – May 26th, Brussels's Rendezvous, Olive Branch, Mississippi, see their website for registration, workshops are filling up quickly. <http://www.brusselsbonsai.com/annual-rendezvous.cfm>

JUNE 7: SABS Lecture/Demo at RAINBOW GARDENS NURSERY (2 locations) Bandera rd. At 10 am & at Thousand Oaks, 1 pm.

President's Message

By Ryan O

bonsaiode@gmail.com

IT'S CONVENTION TIME!!!!!! If you are going to the Houston convention in a few days are your trees looking nice? Did you dress the pot by cleaning it and applying a layer of lava? Remember to bring tools and a little more top dressing in case you hit a nasty bump on the way and need to touch up your display. In addition, and more importantly, don't forget your toothbrush and clean underwear!!! To all that are going have a great time, learn a lot in the workshops, buy a lot to support your local Bonaire's, and bring back great photos and memories.

For those of us not going to the convention, we will have a normal meeting on April 10th. As David points out below, April's meeting will be a hands-on meeting with the repotting of trees. I will be your host for food and beverages.

On Saturday April 12th, I am displaying several members trees at the Botanical Garden. The show is from 10 am to 2 pm, but I will be there at 8 am to set up. If you are bored come and see me!!!!

On Sunday March 23rd, Donna and I were accompanied by Byron B to a small winery in Victoria. There we dug up 10 grape vines that have been growing for the last 31 years. These vines were unique in that they showed their age through dead wood, hollowed trunks, large amounts of twists and turns, and large diameter trunks. The couple owning the winery wants to remove about 100 trees to reduce their work load. I am happy to say that the three of us convinced the couple to trunk-chop the trees at 36 inches high and save them for us to dig. We reserved November 9th and 16th to return to dig up as many more as we can. I will rent a trailer if we can get a large group to go down so mark your calendars.

PROGRAM CORNER

David W

redhawk1yo@aol.com

.We adjusted our monthly schedule in order to accommodate Sylvia's lecture. The yearbook shows April is supposed to be follow up to March's Texas Natives. So the plan is "Bring Your Own Texas Natives" or any other tree that is ready for repotting for April's meeting with the follow up tips & techniques in May. Remember that bonsai is an ongoing art form that are continuously evolving, wire here, clip there and re-pot all during the right time. April is when everything is surely awake and ready for the new growing season.



Houston Bonsai Society
LSBF 32nd Annual Exhibit
& Convention 2014
April 10-13

East meets West

CURRENT MEMBERSHIP DUES FOR
THE SAN ANTONIO BONSAI
SOCIETY

\$30 individual
\$50 family
\$25 senior
\$40 senior family

APRIL MONTHLY TIPS

By David W

redhawkbonsi.com

Well you can sure tell that the growing season is here, I've had to do a lot of pruning and pinching, it's a challenge to up keep up. Everything is awake and growing! If you haven't already started semi-tropicals (Ficus and figs) you might want to wait a couple of more weeks. If you have started, you want to protect them from any cold fronts that come rolling in. It's been an unusual winter this year and it's safest to wait until **ALL** the cold fronts come through our area. **A safe rule to remember**, when root pruning/repotting semi-tropical and South Texas natives, is to wait until the lowest temperature of the night stays above 65 degrees. I and others have had success repotting at earlier dates in the season, but when we do, we have to give it all the things it needs like the correct high and low temperatures every 24 hours, the correct light and humidity. It's the same way you treat an "indoor bonsai" during the winter.... Well on second thought we might as well wait until that "65 degrees" to be safe. I try not to take too many risks. I really don't like to lose a loved tree. We just need to be patient. ***It's too early in the season to repot your tropicals.*** Tropicals need to be repotted in mid-summer (Fukien tea, Bahamas Black Olive, Buttonwood, Wrightia and Neea Buxofolia). When repotting, be sure to wire the tree securely in the pot to give it good stability against the winds. Putting large rocks on top of the soil for a few days can also help brace the tree against the seasonal winds.

It's **NOT** recommended to re-pot any deciduous trees that you need to root prune that have broke dormancy. When the tree has pushed its buds open that's the sign it is too late, they should be root pruned before this happens. If you must re-pot due to problems with a tree, change the pot or repot it in larger container with fresh soil. **DO NOT** prune any of the roots. Deciduous trees have very tender roots during the growing season.

April can be windy month for us, watch the soils every day so they do not dry out. As the heat increases so will the water needs. Inspect the bonsai from top to bottom, also inspect the drain holes. Inspect for ANY and all insects and treat accordingly. If you discover an infestation treat according to the label of the pesticide. I try to spray with insecticide and apply fungicide at least once every 4 weeks.

Pretty much everybody's back yards are growing pretty vigorously by now, so do not forget to prune, pinch and also fertilize. When pinching back on most trees (**except junipers**) you want to pinch back to the second or third node of leaves to reduce leaf size and node length. Elm trees have alternating leaves and should be pinched down to the 2nd or 3rd leaf so it will grow back in the direction you'd want the branch to grow. Be sure to alternate the direction you pinch on different branches so all the branches don't end up growing into each other. Maples have opposing leaves and should be pinched to the second node. As the two buds emerge, pinch back the one you don't want or is growing in the wrong direction. The sooner you pinch the young tender emerging leaves, the shorter the nodes will be,

I've used tweezers to get the very tiny leaves. I read that the Japanese also use a magnifying glass to see the emerging leaves.

Flowering trees are either setting buds or are already starting to bloom. Feed them regularly with a good blooming fertilizer one that has a high phosphorus number (like Super Bloom). Feed others with 20-20-20 or a good time released fertilizer. Fertilize all others with their appropriate type. You can mix your fertilizers with fungicide when you are applying.

Have fun with your trees, a little work everyday makes the tasks easier and you will not get overwhelmed.



David W and Ryan O
Your two hosts for April while some of the members attend the LSBF Convention in Houston.



A famous Bonsai displayed at the *National Arboretum* in Washington, D.C.
"Goshen" created by John Naka, father of American Bonsai

A Work of Art of Natural Beauty

By: Sae Won Kim ~ Seoul, Korea

The purpose of bonsai art is to plant a normal tree from nature, to cultivate it in a tray or shallow earthenware pot, and to create, by applying various trimming and positioning techniques, a miniature of ideal beauty found in old and large trees in nature.

In terms of techniques for maintaining it, reproducing it, and protecting it from disease, **bonsai** shares many similarities with the fundamentals of flowering, woody ornamental, and foliage plants. On the other hand, **bonsai** principals for containers, pruning and forming techniques, are very different. While floriculture emphasizes care and appreciation of various parts of a plant such as its flowers, fruits, and leaf shapes and patterns, **bonsai** aims to recreate miniature beauty and atmospheric effects modeled after normal sized trees.

Bonsai is a living art of plasticity that requires through horticultural knowledge and techniques, and artistic sensibility. The ancients said that man can save himself only by looking at mountains and streams, by exposing nature in songs, poetry, sculpture, and painting, and by letting nature feed his inspiration to create artistic beauty.

The expression of beauty is viewed as a blessing for our existence and aspirations, and inherent in all of us. In this context, **bonsai** should be regarded as neither a minor nor an elite hobby, but as an artistic and a passionate horticultural activity.

Bonsai Requires a knowledge of natural beauty absent from the ideal beauty in floriculture. Techniques of pruning and forming a **bonsai**, which the cultivator undertakes over a period of many years, expressing the principles of nature.

This is an excerpt from an article in **Bonsai Clubs International newsletter** 2014. Enjoy and find more interesting news at: <http://bonsai-bci.com>

About Sae Won Kim:

Sae Won Kim studied horticultural science at Seoul City University and the Korean University Graduate School. He is the second generation owner and operator of **Sun You Won Bonsai Nursery and**

Garden, located near Seoul.

He was the winner of the Gold Prize at the **Aalsmeer International Flower Fair**, in the Netherlands. He was also selected to win the Bonsai Spotlight Award from **Bonsai Online Magazine** in November of 2001. He is the first Korean exporter of Bonsai to the USA and is active in promoting the art of Bonsai in the America and Europe. He lectures on Bonsai at **Kangwon National University** and **Ansung Industrial University**, in Korea. He is constantly lecturing in Germany, Great Britain and the USA. He came to **Wildwood Gardens**, in Chardon, Ohio, USA in June of 2002, giving lectures and demonstrations.

*Excerpts from the Toronto Bonsai Society:
Journal*

Styling your new tree

By Arthur Skolnik

Many years ago I watched John Naka styling a tree during a convention. Just after removing yet another large branch, someone in the audience gasped. John looked up and said, "Don't worry, trees want to live too." What he meant was, not only is light pruning necessary in the creation of good bonsai, but sometimes being a severe severer is just as important: pruning won't kill the tree.

For those who cannot 'see' the resulting pruned tree (in their mind's eye) before branches have been removed, severe pruning can be imitated by masking or covering (potentially) unwanted branches with a large sheet of paper or a towel, etc.

The spaces between the keepers (remaining branches) becomes more evident and the best combination or pattern of remaining branches, can then be seen. Suddenly a feeling of confidence rises in the pruner's heart and hand (*as the hidden design shows its self*) and even thick branches cry-out to be cut. A common temptation is to keep thick lower branches and remove thinner neighboring ones at the expense of better branch placement.



Continued from page 4.....

The position of a branch is a vastly more important criterion than whether or not its thickness is appropriate relative to its position in the branch placement hierarchy. (Thicker branches on bottom, with successively thinner ones positioned higher up.) Why? Because a thin branch in the right position can and will thicken with time but a thick branch in the wrong position will always be in the **wrong place**. 10 years from now, it will still be in the wrong place and the sinking **“I should have removed that branch years ago,”** sentiment will haunt the grower.

Greater control over shaping the tree becomes realized, albeit slowly, when arguably the simplest technique of all is employed. It is not a closely guarded secret, yet it is not commonly explained in books, or used by even long-time growers. **What is it?** Free growing branches! By allowing branches at different levels on the tree to grow freely for several years, one can vastly improve the taper of the trunk and fatten those well positioned albeit thin branches. A novice has little, or no experience watching a tree grow or seeing how time (*growth over time specifically*) and especially selective growth sights can affect the shape of the trunk, branches and bark. By letting just one back branch grow long unchecked, the thickness of the trunk from the ground up to the position of that branch will increase dramatically.

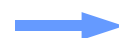
As the energy travels up the trunk and out to the increasing amount of foliage, quick thickening occurs. Ideally, a back branch is chosen to *‘run-away’*, because once the desired trunk diameter is achieved, that branch is removed or sacrificed and the scar won't be visible from the front.

The girth of a thin side (or back) branch can be increased the same way. **Don't prune it!** Pruning stimulates new growth and ramification. Once the desired thickness is achieved, remove the long (*now unneeded for design*) portion, which took several years to grow. Don't prune foliage to thicken foliage pads and expect a branch's thickness to increase at the same time.



Focus on one aspect at a time. Sometimes however, depending on the variety, the foliage migrates outward as the branch lengthens revealing a long bare area of the branch closer to the trunk. If the subject tree is a conifer, do not remove the branch to a point where no foliage remains. An intermediary step must follow chasing the foliage back. After several severe cuts to 1/3 – 1/2 of the foliage, the bare *‘keeper’* part of the branch will bud-back. Wait until the emerging buds and foliage show signs of vigor, and then remove the rest of the branch. For the novice, control over the shape of a tree is often limited to pruning and wiring. Another technique, grafting, a multifaceted, seemingly complex, and exacting technique for improving various defects or faults in trunks or branches, is demonstrated in books. It usually isn't attempted until a broad base of confidence in basic bonsai ability is built.

But creating taper and thickening-up branches is simple. Either plant the tree in the ground, or it can be kept in a container, but the key is to wait and not prune. Most people's focus is not directed at improving taper from the start. The technique is simple, but the wait isn't. In Japan, many producers of fine bonsai have small growing fields neatly planted with weird looking pre-bonsai. The trees may be 1 to 3 feet tall, but a trunk thickening run-away branch, is allowed to reach (in some cases) an astonishing 8 -10 feet in length! Each of those trees are much thinner above the point where the branch is positioned on the trunk, compared to the thickness below that point. Once the grower is satisfied with the thickness of the trunk, the sacrifice branch is sacrificed. In some cases the difference in taper between the upper and lower portion of a tree has become too exaggerated. This defect is easily fixed, using more of the same technique. Many of those trees in the ground in Japan have several sacrifice branches, positioned at different levels up the back of the tree and allowed to grow to different lengths, depending on how much trunk thickening is needed. It is not uncommon to see a pine or Ficus (in warmer climates) for example, 3 feet tall, with an 8 foot long low sacrifice branch,



a 5 foot long sacrifice branch positioned roughly at the mid-point up the trunk and perhaps a third branch, also on the back, 2 feet long. The Juniper (*procumbens nana*) in the photo (PICTURE MISSING) was a subject tree of a demo in the video, “**The Growing Art of Bonsai**”. At the time of its birth as the first branch of a bonsai, this branch was much thinner than it is now. It became thick because the branch length and foliage were allowed to run away. Now that the thickness suits its position on the tree, more than 2/3 will be removed.

It is noteworthy to mention, the foliage on the rest of the tree was kept (more or less) in check during the 4 years it took to thicken the branch. The time factor would have certainly been shortened if the tree were grown in the ground. It has been suggested the branch is now too thick in relation to the trunk. How to fix the problem and thicken the trunk? Let a back branch grow long. To the uninitiated it is possible to create instant bonsai but the process required to produce high quality trees, takes years of thoughtful planning, precise and deliberate execution as well as restraint.



The end

BONSAI CALENDAR AROUND THE WORLD

April 11-13, 2014: Lone Star Bonsai Federation Show, Marriott Houston, West chase, Houston, TX

April 25-27, 2014: Mid-Atlantic Bonsai society, East Hanover, NJ

www.freeservers.midatlanticbonsai.com

May 2-4, 2014: Potomac Bonsai Society, Washington, DC National Bonsai Arboretum

www.potomacbonsai.com

May 10-11, 2014: All Michigan Bonsai Show, Meijer Gardens, Grand Rapids, MI

May 16-18, 2014: Chicago Bonsai Society Show, Highland Park, IL www.midwestbonsai.org

May 23-26, 2014: Florida Bonsai Society, Orlando, FLA

May 31- June 1, 2014: PFM Bonsai Open House, West Charlton, NY www.pfmbonsai.com

June 14-15, 2014: Wildwood Gardens Bonsai Open House, Chardon, Ohio

(Pauline Muth Guest Artist) www.wildwoodgardens.com

July 19-20, 2014: Wildwood Gardens BBQ, Chardon, Ohio www.wildwoodgardens.com

August 15-17, 2014: Chicago Bonsai Society Show, Highland Park, IL www.midwestbonsai.org

August 22-25 2014: BCI 201: BCI will be held at Gold Coast, Queensland, Australia.

Details: <http://bonsai-bci.com>.

August 30-31, 2014: Redwood Empire Bonsai Show, Santa Rosa, California www.rebsbonsai.org

September 13-14, 2014: The 4th US NATIONAL BONSAI EXHIBITION, in Rochester, New

York. More info contact: www.Internationalbonsai.com

Oct 30- Nov 2, 2014: Golden State Bonsai Federation, Sacramento, California www.gsbf-bonsai.org

2014 REVISED SABS Calendar of Events

CUT OUT AND SAVE THIS CALENDAR

January: Joey M from Austin Bonsai Society will show us the proper way to **sharpen Bonsai tools**. He demonstrate the proper care we should be taking with the care of our tools.

February: Pond Cypress Forest Planting. David W will lead this class. The following Saturday, February 15th, David Whitaker will lead a workshop at Ryan O 's house. The workshop is limited to 11 people who will be able to purchase 5 trees to be planted in the Forest Style. Cost is \$60.00 per person, trees food and drinks will be provided. Those attending will need to bring a pot 23" x 15" x 2".

March: Visiting Artist # 1. **Lecture by Howard and Sylvia Smith** (The Bonsai Smith's). Learn about advanced techniques with your Juniper, Cedar and Pines. The following Friday, there will be a BYOT (Bring in your own Tree) workshop from 5 pm until 9 pm at Donna's Studio. This is limited to 10 attendees.

April: **BYOTN (Bring Your Own Texas Natives)** or any other tree you want to repot. We will be repotting and trimming our trees. Bring your tools and soil.

May: Tips, Tricks, and follow up techniques on your Texas Natives that we worked on last month.

June: Tropicals. Join Jay N and learn the techniques on trimming, leaf and branch refinement, styling tips and tricks.

July: Auction and club picnic at Brackenridge park on the 7th or 21st. Real picnic tables—a *real picnic celebration!!*

August: Tropical repotting. Bring your own tree, tools, wire and soil.

September: BYOT (Bring in your own Tree) Bring your tree in for styling and wiring .

October: Visiting Artist 2. Join Peter Tea, the LSBF visiting artist tonight for a lecture-demo and maybe be lucky enough to walk out with Spectacular tree! The following Friday, there will be a **BYOT (Bring in your own Tree)** workshop at Donna's Studio Friday from 5 pm till 9 pm. Space is limited to 10 participants.

November: Preparing your **bonsai for the winter** by Ryan O and **pot swap** to gather pots for repotting in the spring.

December: Christmas Party. Please bring some canned food that will be given to the SA Food Bank to help those less fortunate.



The informal upright style (Moyogi) is considered the most popular shape in all bonsai, especially suited to our native Ashe Juniper.

Our logo, represented by this informal style stands for the informal nature of the San Antonio Bonsai Society, Inc. This popular, interesting style depicts the objectives of the Society—promoting participation and enjoyment of Bonsai. The emblem was adopted as the official logo in September, 1977.

THE SAN ANTONIO BONSAI SOCIETY, INC.

<http://bonsai-satx.org>

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