



Alabama Bonsai Society Newsletter March 2011 Edition



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Alabama Bonsai Society

March 2011

President's Notes For March

We had 26 members at the Saturday workshop helping with the deciduous Pavilion trees. We got a lot done and still had time to help members with their own trees. Many thanks to the mentors, Bill, Paul, Gerry and Jim. The mentors provide the basic help and guidance and they are greatly appreciated. It is fun to be around a group of people working on bonsai.

SALES TREES SPECIAL WORKSHOP SATURDAY MARCH 12

We will have over 200 sales trees that need to be styled and repotted in time for the BBG spring sales April 14-17. So I am asking everyone to come to a special workshop at the potting shed March 12 the Saturday before the meeting. We will get started at 8:00 and need the help of as many people as we can get. There will be work for everyone including newer members. This will provide extra time in case we need to also use some of the regular Saturday workshop following the March meeting.

SPRING SHOW NEEDS

1. Jane has suggested we hang curtains to cover the ugly doors during the show. Wal-Mart has some inexpensive plain curtains that are not very expensive if there are no other suggestions. The problem is how to hang them. The metal door jams leave no place for hangers. The

door closing units at the top of the doors could be wired to hold a curtain rod or we could make PVC stands that could be disassembled and stored for the next show. We need some input from some skilled folks at the next meeting.

2. Oscar has 2 kimonos that could be hung in front of the curtains in two of the doors. The Bham Museum of Art displays their kimonos with a horizontal bar through the sleeves. So in addition to the curtain rods (which could be flat black painted PVC) we would need some way to hang the kimono bars. So at the meeting we will need the help of some of you ingenious folks to problem solve.

3. It has been suggested to rent or buy skirts for the display tables. Brian has some sources but with the PVC risers our tables are no longer at a standard height. So we need some ingenious folks to discuss this and come up with some solutions.

PAVILLION TREE STANDS

The tree stands in the Pavilion are rotting, ugly and falling apart. Oscar suggested using the plastic 5/4 decking boards which would make attractive permanent stands. Some of our wood working folks could take the measurements and put them together at home or these skilled folks plus 7-8 others

could get together on a weekend day and assemble the stands at the Pavilion. Some folks could measure and cut and others could assemble with stainless decking screws and a few others could place them in the cages. So we need some willing and able volunteers. Please contact me if you can help. We will need to make the measurements so we will know how much decking to buy. After we get the estimate of the amount of decking required we can set a work day.

MY DEFINITION OF BONSAI

Bonsai the art of living sculpture involves creative designing and patient guiding of the growth of the tree to produce something captivatingly beautiful that the world didn't even know it was missing.

Jack

ABS Officers

Jack Pierce
President

Brian Van Fleet
Vice President

Belinda Waldo
Treasurer

Marge Wirth
Recording Secretary

Marty Bostick
Corresponding Sec.

Directors:

John Walker
2011 – 2013

Sandra Haynes
2009 – 2011

Brian Van Fleet
2010—2012

Upcoming Events

March 12th Special Workshop

March 14th Meeting

**Monthly Workshop
March 19th**

March Meeting—March 14th

6:00-7:00 Work on Pavilion trees and any trees members bring

7:00-7:10 President's announcements

7:10- 7:15 2011 Calendar of events: Jane: Spring Show, Plant Sale, Brian: Joe Day and Peter Warren Workshops

7:16- 7:30 Evening Tree Show

7:30-8:00 Program: Repotting time is here in Birmingham! Join us for a great presentation chronicling the development of a Japanese Maple's root system, followed by a demonstration on repotting the tree itself. We'll cover:

- Removing the tree from a pot
- Combing out the roots and old soil
- Pruning roots
- Improving nebari
- Securing the tree
- Working in new soil

Joining us this month for the demonstration is visiting bonsai artist, Ron Heinen. Ron is an avid bonsai enthusiast, active in the Iowa Bonsai Association, and life-long artist and art teacher. Ron maintains a large collection of trees in Ames, IA, with many Yews, Shimpaku, and Ficus, and has a passion for carving. Be sure to come with plenty of questions; we'll take all the mystery and anxiety out of this critical part of bonsai!

Two Workshops In March (12th and 19th)

The regular March workshop on March 19 will be held but it is also the same day as the Cherry Blossom Festival in the Japanese Gardens. We have done the grooming on most of the Pavillion trees but many need repotting and then be placed in the Pavillion for the festival.

We need the help of all mentors if they can possibly make it and all regular members there to help.

The 60 sales trees we have ordered for the spring sale and the spring bonsai show are also in and will require some styling and potting. So some mentors and members will repot Pavillion trees and some mentors will guide members in styling and repotting sales trees.

The club makes some money off the trees sold at the spring show. However, we need to provide bonsai for the BBG Spring Sales....this is part of our responsibility for being able to use the BBG auditorium for meetings and the show and use the potting shed for workshops. This is an obligation on part of the ABS in order to use the BBG facilities. Potting soil and wire will be provided but we will need some screens for the soil mix. It is time for everyone to step up and do their share.

We will have to move the trees back to the Pavillion when repotted so we will need the help of a few trucks and vans.

Judging Of Trees In This Year's Show

To add a friendly element of competition, and to encourage the best trees Alabama has to show, we've decided to include an optional competition to this year's Spring Show. It will be judged by our bonsai friends Lee and Carol Bates. This is strictly optional, and the Spring show entry form will have a section to identify if you wish to have your tree(s) entered in the exhibition or the Competition. Aside from a small mark on the placard for the judges, there will be no difference. Start looking over your best trees now, and consider joining the competition!

Judging Rules

1. Contestants may enter a maximum of 2 trees in the competition, and they must have been in the owner's possession for a minimum of 2 years. We are judging trees and their pots only, but do present them with your best stands and companions.
2. Trees will be judged by the included form, and awards will only be made in a category if trees meet the threshold score. This keeps the competition about quality, not quantity in any particular category.
3. The competition will be judged by category of tree, by species, and a Best of Show will be selected from the best-in-category.

Judging Categories

Categories will be used as judging criteria in the following areas:

- Needled Evergreen/Conifer
- Broadleaf Evergreen
- Deciduous
- Tropical
- Best of Show

Judging Scoresheet

Species _____

Location _____

Category _____

Criteria

Health

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Is the specimen in apparent good health? Well foliated.
 Are there dead or partially dead leaves, fungus spots, yellowing, brown edges?
 uniform leaf color free of algae, mildew and mold with no evidence of pests

Wiring

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

If wire is present, does it show good technique?
 Is the wire biting in, or, is there evidence of wire scars?

Trunk / Nebari

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Root form, Trunk taper, Bark uniformity
 Appropriateness to style

Branching

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Placement, taper, size appropriate to position
 Ramification, character and movement short internodes.

Potting

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Color balance with tree, Placement within the pot
 Soil level and surface treatment

Design

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Apex, silhouette, and suitability for Species
 Uninterrupted flow Uniformity of design or theme.

Overall Impression

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Impression of Age, Naturalness, overall composition
 Dynamic quality or movement.

Total Score

/ 35

Upcoming Workshops

By now, our theme is clear: It's all about the trees!

Nothing helps us hone our bonsai skills better than working on trees... unless it's working on trees with the Pros! The ABS is proud to announce our two spring workshops with Joe Day and Peter Warren!

**Signup sheets
for these
workshops are
available at the
Club meeting**



Joe Day: March 26 and 27, 2011

Joe Day is making an encore performance at the ABS. He's been working with bonsai for 30 years, and resides near Mobile, Alabama. A great bio written by Dale Cochoy is here. Some of Joe's expertise includes large trident maples, slab plantings, and some of his slabs are featured at the National Bonsai and Penjing Museum.

Registration will be available at the March meeting.

Image source: <http://www.lcbsbonsai.org/Gallery.htm>

Peter Warren: April 9 and 10, 2011

**We have 2 Joe
Day slots left
on Sat
morning**

**3 slots on Sat
afternoon**

**5 slots on
Sunday AM**

**6 slots on
Sunday PM**

**Each slot is 25
dollars.**

Peter is a well-traveled bonsai artist who studied under Master Kunio Kobayashi for 6 years in Japan. Peter is based in both Japan and the UK, and makes frequent visits to the US as well. This will be Peter's first appearance with the ABS. The workshops are full, but come by to see his styling demo on Saturday morning! Peter's bio is here.



Image source: <http://www.artofbonsai.org/forum/viewtopic.php?t=1550>

**Be Sure To
Participate In
Our Workshops
Whenever
Possible In
Order To Help
Us Help The
Gardens By
Logging Hours
Worked**

It's Show Time!

Well, it's only two months until our spring Bonsai Show. May 13 & 14 are right around the corner.

Sandra and I are so excited. We have been working with our board and other members planning a few new things.

This year, Oscar and Charlotte will display their beautiful Kimonos. We are also going to set up a Japanese Tokonoma (an alcove in a Japanese room used for displaying bonsai).

Bobby has consented to bring some of his paintings to display for the show. Donna and Don will be bringing their Viewing Stones. Several people will be bringing accents for the show.

If you would like to be a vendor this year, please fill out the Vendor Request Form attached and bring it to the meeting March 14 (deadline). There is also an Exhibition Registration Form attached. Please register your trees on these forms and turn them in at the May 9th meeting. These will also be available at the meeting.

We will also have Committee sheets to hand out.

One last thing - attached is the Bonsai Show Flier - run a few out and pass them around.

Jane and Sandra - Co Chairs 2011 Bonsai Show

March Care Calendar “Finally Lamb Or Lion, I’ll Take It!”

It has been a COLD winter, but the trees finally come out of exile this month and it’s time to work! Hopefully we’ve all found a few warm days this winter to sift soil ingredients and scrub pots because the third week of March is prime-time for repotting. Repotting is different than typical bonsai styling because the amount of time one gets to see and work on roots is so short and infrequent; quite unlike the rest of the tree that we contemplate each day.

However, root work will make or break a bonsai. For that reason, and the fact that I have a horrible memory, I make it a point to photograph my bonsai as I work on the roots. This allows me to make a plan, and (more importantly) helps me remember that plan during the next repotting session!

Here is a Japanese Maple that has the foundation necessary to become a great bonsai; but the nebari needs further development and ramification. Here are a couple photos taken as I worked to shorten the circled root.



This was in 2008. Notice the radial spread of the smaller roots. Keeping them combed out like this will make future transplantings easier, and keep branches growing outward predictably from the trunk.



This is the same tree in 2009. I hadn’t planned to repot this year, but it had grown so much, that a minor trimming was necessary. It will be thoroughly worked over this spring, like the 2008 transplanting, and the root will be shortened again to a root closer to the trunk.

After transplanting, pay close attention to watering and temperature for the next several weeks.

Trees whose roots have been greatly shortened have a diminished “reach” within the pot. While the soil may not seem dry, water within the pot isn’t accessible unless it comes into contact with the roots. Shredded sphagnum moss slows evaporation and may buy an extra day between watering.

Freezes are bad for recently-transplanted trees; watch the temperatures and prepare to move trees if a late freeze is predicted.

Time to get those hands dirty! Spring is here...will it be in like a lamb or lion?

Brian Van Fleet

**Check Our
Website Often
For Updates
And Details On
Club Events**

Look For A Facelift Online Soon

It's been an adventure in getting our website where it is today. In doing so, I have taken in ideas and contributions from all of our club members to come up with some changes that will turn the website into "Your Website". It belongs to the club and should reflect the knowledge, wisdom and creativity that all of you have learned over the years.

Over the next month or so, I will be taking on the task of performing a complete facelift of our website to best expose the elements of Bonsai, while enabling you to benefit from all the content we have put together over the last year. There will be videos, FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions) and quality articles that provide care of your trees all year long.

I will also be integrating all of the Social Networks with our website, such as Facebook, Twitter and RSS (Rich Syndicated Content) from other Bonsai Enthusiasts across the world.

I welcome your feedback and inspiration as we undergo this upgrade.

Marty Bostick—Corresponding Secretary/Webmaster

March 2011

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12 Special Workshop
13	14 Monthly Meeting	15	16	17	18	19 Cherry Blossom Festival Workshop
20	21	22	23	24	25	26 Joe Day Workshop
27 Joe Day Workshop	28	29	30	31		