



November 2011 Newsletter

Notes from the President:

The weather was nice but the crowds were light at the Japanese Fall Festival this last weekend. Four of our regular members could not make it but still managed to contribute trees for the exhibit area. We ended up with 15 trees total and filled out the tables nicely. We had lots of compliments from the public.



*At the October meeting, Lance Williamson, on left, receives the "Members' Choice" Award from President Mark Bynum for the 2011 Exhibition.
Photo by Bill Jacobson*

Calendar of Events:

- Nov. 3: 1st Thursday, 6:30 pm
3rd Club Artist Workshop
- Dec. 8: 2nd Thursday, 6:30 pm
Club Christmas Party
- Jan. 12: 2nd Thursday, 7 pm
Club Juniper styling workshop
- Jan. 26: 4th Thursday, 7 pm
Club Juniper styling workshop
- Feb. 9: 2nd Thursday, 7 pm
4th Club Artist Workshop
- Feb. 23: 4th Thursday, 7 pm
Annual Business Meeting
- April 27-29: LSBF/BSD Convention
Dallas, Texas

Special thanks goes to Joe Andrews for delivering trees and handling the exhibit area 100% of the time. Also, special thanks to Bill Weber and Ted Tyler for handling the sales area. Carmen Rivera and Sam Francis made a special delivery of plants early Saturday morning. Thanks to all the other members that came out and participated: Dan, Brooke, Harold, Bruce, Bill, William, and Mike.

All members need to take a look at our revamped website. It has been 'modernized' a bit thanks to our new webmaster, Bill Jacobson. We will be adding a Members' Gallery very soon. The Calendar of Events will be a permanent feature on the website so you can always find out what is coming up next. You can see slides now of the Fall Festival, Erik Wigert's lecture, and our Club Exhibition trees. We even have places where you can enter comments! fwbonsai.com

A reminder to you that the November Club Artist Workshop meeting is on the first Thursday, November 3. We will have dinner at the meeting beginning at 6:30pm. in our regular meeting room. Bring your two trees and have some bonsai fun & fellowship! Newcomers are Welcome!

Happy styling, Mark

- A financially successful Corpus Christi convention.
- Details of the upcoming Dallas Convention.
- Some possible changes in frequency of Conventions and the Visiting Artist Tour.
- Possible Awards at Conventions for outstanding Exhibit Trees.
- 2012 LSBF Visiting Artist Tour
- Bill Jacobson from FWBS will be the new State Newsletter editor for the next year.
- New Officers for 2012-13:
Pres: Jay Nolen, San Antonio
VP: Versie Marks, Corpus C.
Treas: Steven Hendricks, FWBS

November Program Notes:

Club Artist Workshop #3 1st Thursday, November 3rd, 6:30 pm

Howard and Sylvia Smith are back to help you with your trees. Bring the same two you have been bringing for best results over this 2 year program. Photos from the last workshop will be ready for you to pick up. Dinner is at 6:30 pm in our regular meeting room. Doors open at 6 pm. Remember, this is all free to members!

LSBF Board Meeting Report

by Steven Hendricks

A Board Meeting was held in Austin on Saturday, Oct. 8, 2011. The topics discussed included:



*Erik Wigert critiques a bougainvillea
Photo by Bill Jacobson*

October Program Review

On Thursday, October 6, FWBS welcomed Erik Wigert from Florida to our meeting. Erik presented a slide show about bougainvilleas and case studies of 3. One of the case studies was the winning tropical of the 1st National Exhibit. After the show, Erik gave us some tips on bougainvilleas using trees that the members had brought in.

A raffle was held after the program for two "Helen Johnson" bougainvilleas from Erik's nursery. Erik

generously donated a \$25 Gift Certificate to his Nursery for the raffle.



Erik Wigert instructs us about techniques to take and grow cuttings from a 'Pink Pixie' bougainvillea.
Photo by Bill Jacobson

NOVEMBER BONSAI Tips

by John Miller

You may need to reconsider your preparations for taking your bonsai into winter this year. If they were damaged with the high temperatures they may be growing new roots or the new foliage may not get sufficiently hardy. If you had damage I would suggest you work on the safe side and give those trees a little more protection and care. New roots would require closer attention to watering.

Have your winter quarters clean and ready so that you can put your trees there quickly in the event a freeze is forecast. But don't put them there too soon as they are easier to care for up on the bench. Some use an unheated garage. I prefer to set the pots on a gravel area on the ground. This utilizes the ground heat to keep the roots from freezing as hard. The pots can then be covered with a loose mulch for insulation. Do not cover

the ground with plastic, it will hold puddles of water.

Watch the weather so you can protect tender and semi-hardy plants. I prefer to keep them outside as long as possible but you should remember that frost, which can damage tender leaves, can occur at temps in the upper thirties. I watch the dew point temp which is when the moisture condenses out of the air. Clear nights with no wind along with that low dew point really spell trouble.

Most important in winter is to keep the soil moisture at a proper level. This sometimes is hard to do because the trees do not use as much water as when they are growing. However the cold winds will dry out the tops quickly. I believe that most winter damage in Texas is due to lack of water rather than to low temperatures. Mulch helps keep the roots warm and retards evaporation but it makes for difficulty in seeing if the soil is damp enough. Most soils with enough organic material to keep the tree happy in the summer will be too wet if watered daily in the winter and wet cold means root rot. Try to position them so you can check the soil. If you are not watching the soil in their pots you may either get root rot fungus or it dries out, either way--you have a finished (for you beginners that reads dead) bonsai. It is easier to care for if you have them under roof, that way you know you need to tend to watering.

Fall is an important time in controlling pathogens. Try to get any eggs, overwintering insects, and fungal spores. A horticultural oil spray should be applied (but not on buttonwoods) during the winter to control scale. It will also get any overwintering insects or eggs. This purpose is what lime-sulphur was first used for, and some Japanese still use it, but the oil is safer on bonsai and may be

used on evergreens where the lime-sulphur should not be used. Again, do not use oil based spray on buttonwoods.

After moving the bonsai, it would be a good idea to spray the benches with a stronger lime-sulfur to kill insect eggs and mold spores. If you will be putting the trees back under them for the winter, move the trees away and spray them. It would be good to have enough cold to stop the insect activity on the trees so you will not re-infest the area when the trees go back to await to cold weather.

By this time any tropicals you have should be under cover. Most do not like the temp below 50 degrees. All tropicals should be checked and treated for any insect problems since any insects will multiply fast when they get into warmer quarters. Spider mites and scale can be especially damaging if the plant is moved in the house where the humidity is low.

The semi-tropical plants like crape myrtle pomegranate and pyracantha need to go dormant to stay healthy over a long time but they cannot take much cold on the roots. They will be killed by temps somewhere between 25 and 30 degrees. These I set down on the ground and mulch for light freezes and then bring into a protected area for the colder winter. Sometimes I will let them go dormant for a month and then take them and some shohin into the greenhouse to start early and I can enjoy their new foliage in January.

The general wisdom is that dormant trees need no fertilizer. However, as long as the soil is not frozen there will be some root activity. I do not add any fertilizer to dormant trees but I will leave the organic fertilizer cakes on until spring in case they happen to get some good out of them. The organics will not

break down much in cold weather anyway. Evergreen types (e.g. pines, junipers, yaupons, and live oaks) however continue some activity and therefore can use a small amount of low nitrogen fertilizer

BIG NOTE: If you have a tree that is weak and unhealthy you should not attempt to style it in any way, just get it happy by adjusting its soil, feeding, and getting rid of any parasites. Styling just adds to its stress and problems.

Fall and winter is the proper time to do wiring, styling, and plucking work on pines. Repotting is saved until growth starts in the spring and candle pruning in summer. Other conifers may also be worked on.

When trees go dormant which indicates a reduced sap flow they may be pruned, that is have major limbs removed. Trimming may also be done while the leaves are off the trees and you can see what you are doing. Evergreen types will probably still be active. Pruning them should be held until later.

Take advantage of the slowdown in bonsai care to determine your repotting needs. Do you need a different pot? Do you need to get more soil components? How about mixing some potting soils for your needs? (Be sure to label the use of each type of mix so you won't forget what is what).

Fort Worth Bonsai Society

Board of Directors:

President: Mark Bynum

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Vice President, Programs: Bill Weber

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Treasurer: Steven Hendricks

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Secretary: Ladd Kelley

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Immediate Past President:

Mike Prachyl

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Other Positions:

LSBF Representative: Steven Hendricks

Alternate: Gail Williams

Webmaster: Bill Jacobson

The **Fort Worth Bonsai Society** meets most months on the 2nd

Thursday at 7 pm. at the Deborah Beggs Moncrief Garden Center, 3220 Botanic Garden Drive, Fort Worth, TX. This is the building where the large conservatory greenhouse is located. Please check our website at www.fwbonsai.com for meeting dates and special events.

To join or ask questions, contact:

Mark Bynum, president, at 817-436-8936 (cell) or email to mark.bynum@tx.rr.com