



February 2007 Newsletter

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Membership Renewal

It's that time of the year again to renew your membership. So far Helen reports that only 29 of us have renewed—that's less than half! So no more excuses and no more putting this off. Please get your money and your updated information to Helen. We'd like to get a roster out over the next month or two, and would like to have everything current. Monthly membership changes are going to be published only in the e-mails of the newsletter; I will send a different text for posting on the web site and make sure that all personal information is removed; without secure areas, we're having problems with spammers and search engines obtaining data via crawling.

Jim Easterbrook

From the President

Here are some tips to overcome the winter blues and get ready for spring.

I can't wait till spring arrives so that my hands get dirty with Bonsai soil and tree sap. However, there is a lot that you can do in this winter downtime. Right now is the time to plan for repotting, and matching trees with their future pots; this may include finding some new pots (Marianne keeps reminding me that I have enough pots even though I say one can never have enough). Then of course you need to have enough bonsai soil, which can still be ordered through Keith Smith. Also do not forget to have the right wire, screen, etc. available when you need it. I have reorganized my bonsai room to become more efficient and streamlined so that I have everything within reach. With all the leaves off the trees it is also a good time to look at the design of you trees and decide on changes you will make during the growing season. Of course, when spring comes, you want your tools in tip-top shape, so now is the time to clean and sharpen them. As far as your bonsai benches are concerned you may want to wait a little longer before you clean them with a water/bleach solution to kill the fungus and any over wintering insects.

I bought a couple of bonsai books recently: one about Azaleas and another on collecting trees from the wild (yamadori). The latter book got me especially excited, and I'm spending as much time as possible in the woods marking trees for potential collection in March. By the way, when you do stroll through the woods, also look for fresh sphagnum moss in the wet areas since there is nothing better then fresh sphagnum moss to ensure success during repotting and collecting (yes, we do have sphagnum in North Carolina). Then of course as I drive around in my car I'm constantly looking for potential material in peoples yards; I'm really surprised that I have not had an accident yet. Often, winter is a

good time to check out nurseries for what is still available in the back someplace at very attractive prices.

As far as our club is concerned, we will have our first board meeting of the year at the end of January when we will discuss plans for our Asheville show and the State Fair. Of course I'm looking forward to our February meeting to see what goodies Steve Cratty will bring us from Plant City Bonsai in Georgia. Also I would like to express a special thanks to Steve Zeisel for teaching us how to make organic bonsai fertilizer, as well as all those that helped in giving advice during the BYOT in January.

Looking forward to see you all in a few weeks,

Ed Lauer

TBS Meetings February 4th and 25th

TBS members have a great February scheduled; two programs that cover a wide spectrum of bonsai.

Sunday, February 4th TBS welcomes back Steve and Cherie Cratty from Plant City Bonsai. They will bring a truck-load of pre-bonsai, bonsai, and as Steve calls them, "Killer Bonsai." There will be plant material for members just beginning and trees for those who have been at it for a while. You just don't want to miss the opportunity to purchase trees you won't find anywhere close to the Triangle. Steve will also bring akadama, pots, and tools. If you are looking for a particular species, please go to the Plant City website or phone Steve to discuss what you would like him to bring. Remember, if you don't like what he brings, you are not obligated to purchase, though folks are seldom disappointed.

Following Steve's presentation of what he brought, while some are purchasing from him, others can work on their trees (yes, including trees you purchased that day from Steve) with the help of the experienced members. This is a bring-your-own-tree and tools session so don't miss the opportunity to further develop your trees. You need to be preparing your trees for either the President's Award or for the New Talent Award.

The meeting on the 4th will have you warmed up for the return of one of America's premier bonsai teachers (if not international), Bill Valavanis. Bill's program will begin with a talk, slide show, and demo on the formal upright style of bonsai. It will be an informative presentation for any level of experience.

Immediately following the general meeting, those who have signed up for the workshop will stay and use what they've just learned to design and create their own formal upright bonsai. While the formal upright appears to be the simplest and easiest bonsai style to create, the challenge is to find plant material that lends itself to the style. Bill is bringing Tansu Cryptomeria which are ideal. The trees are well established in ceramic bonsai containers and have an average trunk diameter of $\frac{3}{4}$ inch and height of 14 inches. Photos of a before and immediately after styling are attached to the e-mail, and will be posted on the web page. The styled example is courtesy of David Keller from the 2007 Asheville workshop.

May your twigs ramify and your trunks grow stout.

Harold Johnson

Points of Interest

- The 2007 ABS meeting will be held in Virginia Beach June 21-24, 2007. Start making plans now for what will be a premiere event. Visit the ABS website, or click on <http://freeplone2.openia.com/abs/abs-seminars>

Member Update!

New Members: none

Changes: Hope Sylvain's phone number has changed.

2007 Upcoming TBS Events

Mar 11	BYOT and initial selection of Expo trees
Mar 31	Workshops (2) with Ted Matson
Apr 1	Lecture/Demo with Ted Matson
May 6	Picnic; member sale and TBS auction
May 19	TBS Display at NC Botanical Gardens
Jun 2	Workshops with Jim VanLandingham
Jun 3	Lecture/Demo with Jim VanLandingham
Jul 8	Novice Focus
Aug 5	Final selection of Expo trees
Sep 9	Expo display setup
Oct 7	BYOT and new talent
Oct 13-14	2007 Asheville bonsai expo
Nov 4	Workshop followed by lecture/demo with Arthur Joura
Dec 2	Holiday Party and auction

Jim Easterbrook