



Shreveport  
Bonsai  
Society

July 10, 2007

**Hi Folks:**

Time for our monthly meeting again, we will meet Saturday at 1 pm at the Barnwell Center. This month Charles Canfield will be giving a demo on training of an Alberta dwarf spruce. They are kind of “iffy” around here, but Charles has had this tree for a few years now and it is doing fine.

Well last month was certainly a terrific meeting. Jeff gave a terrific workshop on broom style training on some small Zelkova. Look for his comments on the workshop below. Thanks to enthusiastic new members, Charles and I were kept busy working on a variety of new member's trees.

Charles and I attended the LABS (Louisiana Association of Bonsai Societies) annual meeting in New Iberia and had a terrific time. The guest artists were Joe Day from Mobile, AL and Guy Guidry from Covington. Both gave great talks and there were three commercial vendors to tempt us with their wares. It was great to see old friends again. An old hackberry won the Vaughn Banting award for best in show. Many of our trees from the SBS would have competed very successfully. Next year the meeting will be in the Covington area and in 2009, we will be hosting the meeting again.

For the August meeting, I have lined up a local potter, Kathy Broadnax, who will help us make pinch pots and kusomono pots. Many of you have asked for this, so this should be a terrific opportunity for all. The price hasn't been determined yet, but it will be modest.

**Zelkova update:** For the members that took the broom style Zelkova class.... There's good news and bad news The good news is that my tree appears very healthy and has put out lots of new growth. The bad news is none of the new growth is at the top of the trunk where I need it. I removed the tape to see if maybe some shoots will appear near the top of the trunk. I'm snipping off any other shoots that come out further down the trunk in an attempt to force energy out the top. If your tree has put out shoots at the top leave the tape on. Once my tree has new growth at the top I will wrap it up again to prevent swelling but this time I may use raffia. Bring your trees to the next meeting and we'll see how we're doing.

## MEMBERSHIP DRIVE:

We continue to pick up new members since the last full newsletter, so please help welcome:

Vivienne Denholm  
David Kempf

Several others have expressed an interest, so things are going pretty well. Still, we are always looking for more members so tell your friends and anyone who shows an interest. Dues for the year are only \$20 for either an individual or family membership. This is a real bargain. Remember that it is time to renew for 2007-2008. My thanks to those who passed me a check last month for their dues.

## Website:

News about <http://shreveportbonsai.org/>

## Web site modifications/improvements:

The web site has been dramatically overhauled. I invite all of you to visit the new site (same address) and I will ask Jeff to give us an update at the upcoming meeting.

## Collecting trips:

Charles has been working hard on sites for the fall. We hopefully have a site for cypress and water elms lined up, more about this at the meeting.

## SBS Officers:

Last month we had election of new officers for the upcoming year. The officers are listed below. Don't hesitate to call upon us with your questions and ideas. Thanks for your confidence for another year.

Bob Specian 227-0744  
President [rspecian@comcast.net](mailto:rspecian@comcast.net)  
Treasurer  
BCI Representative

Jeff White 219-9618  
Vice President [jt\\_white@bellsouth.net](mailto:jt_white@bellsouth.net)  
Web Master

Robert Frost 747-5915 ext 1516  
Vice President in charge of Marketing  
Raffle Chairman [frost@aquariagroup.com](mailto:frost@aquariagroup.com)

Charles Canfield 798-7748  
Show Chairman [cscanfield@bellsouth.net](mailto:cscanfield@bellsouth.net)

## Contributed Article:

Many thanks to Abe Rudnick.

# How to Make an Automatic Watering System

## For less than \$100

By Abe Rudnick

### Why an automatic watering system?

Have you ever had to go on a trip and depend on others to water your plants properly? It can be an "iffy" situation. Not only do you have concerns about the caregiver remembering you must also hope they don't water them too little or too much. You are the best judge of how and how much to water your plants. Of course, you should still have a responsible person look in on your plants regularly, just as a backup.

Secondly, have you ever forgotten to water your plants yourself? I know I have. Situations come up and it's easy to become distracted or sidetracked. With an automatic system you know your plants will receive the appropriate amount of water dispensed consistently in a suitable way at a specified time of day.

### **What is an automatic watering system?**

#### **Electronic Water Timer**

The heart of an automatic watering system is the controller or electronic water timer. I have had success with the LR Nelson model 5920. I purchased mine from Home Depot for less than \$30.00. It is user friendly and has a simple dial, which can be set on any of several settings. I like to set mine to 6 am every other day for 15 minutes when not hot and every day when hot. It has settings up to 60 minutes, twice per day. Follow the instructions. For example, insert new batteries and test your system before going on your trip. You will be setting the current time. If you don't like the times of day on the automatic settings, you can easily change the current time accordingly. For example, I like to have my timer start watering at 8am instead of six so I set the current time two hours early and put it on a 6am setting. Also, you will need to remember to detach the timer from the hose during freezing weather. This would rule out its use if there were a chance of freeze. There may be a way to insulate the timer to prevent damage to the timer, however.

#### **Two Spray Nozzles and Hoses**

Spare no expense for your two nozzles. The best nozzles will sell for \$10-\$15 each. They should have a lever, which can be set to the desired spray. The spout should also turn to provide a further adjustment once the lever is set. You should have a fine, even spray, which does not disperse or upset the soil while evenly

spraying the foliage to allow for good transpiration through the leaves.

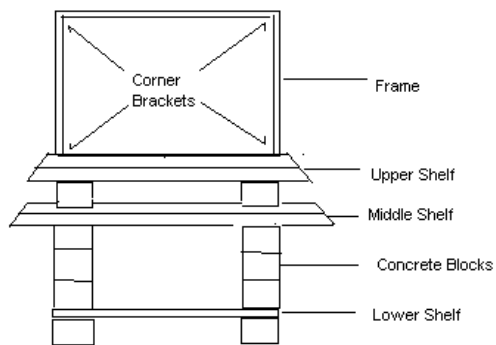
The nozzles are attached to two hoses, which are wired to the back of the frame. A "Y" connector joins them so you have one hose attached to the timer. The "Y" connector should have two valves so each side may be adjusted. I have planted some climbing Jasmine on each side of the frame to attractively hide the hoses and frame from view (see rear view of frame).

#### **The Bonsai Stand**

An automatic system for watering your bonsai trees can be easily made. Assembly should be self explanatory from the diagrams shown below. I will not include measurements, as these will depend on the number and size of your bonsai plants your stand needs to accommodate. You will note from the side view, the upper shelf is about half as narrow as the middle shelf. This is designed so that the spray will easily reach the ground at a good angle so you can put extra plants for automatic watering when you go on a trip. I have added a brick floor in front of the stand. Lastly, the nozzles should be elevated from the upper shelf by at least 3 ½ feet. This will give you an even spray over a wide area.

All you will need are the following items:

1. Concrete blocks (8 full size)
2. Concrete Blocks (2 half Size)
3. Corner brackets (4)
4. Wooden slats for frame(3)
5. Wooden boards for shelves (6)
6. Nozzles (2)
7. Hoses 15-25' (3)
8. "Y" hose connector
9. Sprinkler Controller or timer



**Bonsai Stand Front View**



*Close up of sprinkler heads*



*Completed work stand*



*Completed work stand*

## **Upcoming Local Event Calendar:**

### **August 11, 2007**

Regular meeting at the Barnwell Center at 1 pm. Workshop on making pots for accessory plantings. Guest artist Kathy Broadnax. Cost TBA. Bring a tree to work on.

### **September 8, 2007**

Regular meeting at the Barnwell Center at 1 pm. The study group topic to be determined later. Bring a tree to work on.

### **October 13, 2007**

Regular meeting at the Barnwell Center at 1 pm. The study group topic to be determined later. Bring a tree to work on.

### **November 10, 2007**

Regular meeting at the Barnwell Center at 1 pm. The study group topic to be determined later. Bring a tree to work on.

### **December 8, 2007**

Regular meeting at the Barnwell Center at 1 pm. The study group topic to be determined later. Bring a tree to work on.

## **Upcoming Regional, National and International Events**

**August 7, 2007 – Longview Bonsai Society, Longview, TX Fourth Annual Club Auction** - Club donated trees and bonsai related materials auctioned off to the highest bidder. This is a club fund raiser and an easy and fun way to add to your bonsai collection. Contact Robert Murray at **903-758-5425** or [\*\*BonsaiRobert@sbcglobal.net\*\*](mailto:BonsaiRobert@sbcglobal.net)

**September 6-9, 2007: Shohin Bonsai Symposium:** Hosted by International Bonsai at the Holiday Inn Airport, Rochester, NY. Featuring Julian Adams, Harvey Carapella, Dale Cochoy, Jim Doyle, Doris Froning, Paul Goff, Michael Hagedorn, Dave Kreutz, Robert Mahler, Kenji Miyata, Pedro Morales, Art Skolnik, Sean Smith, Suthin Sukosolvisit and Bill Valavanis. For information call 585-334-2595 or e-mail [\*\*wv@internationalbonsai.com\*\*](mailto:wv@internationalbonsai.com) or visit [\*\*http://www.internationalbonsai.com\*\*](http://www.internationalbonsai.com).

**September 18, 2007 – Longview Bonsai Society, Longview, TX** - Lone Star Bonsai Federation's visiting lecturer. This years artist is Pedro Morales. Contact Robert Murray at **903-758-5425** or [\*\*BonsaiRobert@sbcglobal.net\*\*](mailto:BonsaiRobert@sbcglobal.net)

**September 15-16, 2007 Ginkgo Awards** at Bonsai Center Ginkgo at Heirweg 190 (N445), 9270 Laarne, Belgium. Acclaimed by many as the premier bonsai event outside Japan, this event is held every other year. For more information visit [\*\*http://ginkgobonsai.be/index.uk.htm\*\*](http://ginkgobonsai.be/index.uk.htm)

**March 20-24, 2008: BCI 2008** at Salle du Canton-Fontvieille in Monaco featuring Masahiko Kimura and Seiji Morimae with Hideko Metazas, Pauline Muth, Rob Kempinski, Nikunj and Jyoti Parekh, Salvatore Liporaci, Sandro Segneri, Michello Andolfo, Patrizia Cappellaro, Baudouin de Lorgeril, and Chiara Padrini with a host of other talented artists. Check for details at [\*\*http://www.BCI2008.com\*\*](http://www.BCI2008.com)