



Bonsai Wire

Marin Bonsai Club

Monthly Meeting
3rd Tuesday, 7:30PM
Marin Art & Garden Center
30 Sir Francis Drake Blvd. Ross, CA

April 2009

Cherry Blossom Festival

It is Cherry Blossom time very soon and this event will be celebrated in San Francisco's Japantown the weekends of April 11-12 and April 18-19. Post Street will be blocked off and it will be filled with vendors galore including food, demonstrations, and a host of various activities.

The bonsai exhibit is scheduled for the weekend of April 18-19. The Marin Bonsai Club has been asked to participate again. The location of the bonsai exhibit has been moved from the hotel to the lower level of the Miyako Mall. Unfortunately, the space is very limited and participating clubs will each have just a few tables to display trees. We also have been asked to provide raffle items—tree, pot, etc.

If you are interested in being a docent for the morning or afternoon on either day, or if you have a raffle item, please contact Jeanette Arnold (883-2651). This is a fun show. There will be lots of people coming through asking all kinds of questions. And, you'll have an opportunity to check out the many shops, markets, and restaurants in Japantown.

Weeding at The Garden

It was that time of the year again when the Marin Bonsai Club volunteered to clear as much of those nasty weeds at The Bonsai Garden at Lake Merritt. Alison Seaman, Roger Lion, Marlene Philley, Michael Jaffe and Jeanette Arnold all were armed with gloves, weeding tools, buckets, knee pads, antihistamines, and a determined attitude. D. Drowley was active being a docent for the morning. Frances Noles provided support and encouragement

for the crew while also assisting Kathy Shaner. This was the weekend before the Mammoth Auction and Sale and we wanted The Garden to look good. We filled several huge boxes and Kathy was extremely pleased and appreciative of our efforts. By the end of the day, The Garden was cleared of weeds and indeed looked more inviting and pristine. Thank you to all for a job well done!

- Jeanette Arnold

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED ON MAY 2 TO STAFF CLUB TABLE

The Marin Art and Garden Center (MAGC) is having a Spring Garden Festival on May 2 and our club is part of it. All of the groups that are part of MAGC will be participating. There will be food, demos, auctions, activities for children, and things for sale. MAGC wants this to be a big success and is doing a lot of advertising and outreach to promote the day--they are hoping for a turnout of a couple of thousand people. This is a good opportunity for people in the community to get to know the Marin Bonsai Club and learn about bonsai. In addition to having a display of bonsai, we will also be selling bonsai and explaining how to do bonsai, as well as telling them about our club.

The program runs from 10am to 5pm. We will have 3 shifts, and need at least 2 people and preferably 3 on each shift. The shifts will be 9:30am-12pm, 12-2:30pm, and 2:30-5 pm. The table and chairs should already be set up, and we don't have to take them down.

I will be taking signups at the meeting on April 21, or you can call me at 924-5134.

If you have bonsai you would like to sell, or are caring for any of the club's stock bonsai material, plan to bring that before 10am. Also, if you have any bonsai you would like to have on display (not for sale), bring them before 10am. Let me know what you will be bringing.

Parking is very limited and they are requesting everyone park at College of Marin, where there will be shuttle buses. There will be a charge for admission, but not for people who are working.

Roger Lion
MAGC Representative

Field Trip to Placerville

Please join us on our annual (well, we go *almost* every year) field trip to Placerville on Saturday, May 16. We usually have about ten people (but would welcome more) and we carpool. We leave Marin about 8am and get up there about 10ish.

We plan to go to Lotus Bonsai which has a wonderful selection of a wide variety of trees, El Dorado (now known as Enchanted Gardens Nursery), and the plantation of Greg McDonald (Jay's brother) - which will be a new and exciting addition to our trip as Jay is the only one who has ever visited this secret plantation - I understand he has a lot of collected material. We bring our own lunches and have a couple of great possibilities for our picnic lunch.

We may stop at Muriyama Nursery in Sacramento depending on our time. He has a nice selection of trees and also sells brown lava for top dressing by the bucket. We usually get back to Marin about 5-6pm after a fun filled day of bonsai shopping.

Please call Michael at 945-9930 with questions. The signup list will be out at both the April and May workshops as well as the April meeting.

- Michael Jaffe



*Chris Ross seems blissfully unaware he is about to be swallowed by a giant shari.
High altitude juniper in Yosemite National Park, hillside across from Tenaya Lake on the Tioga Pass Road.*

If you're not already viewing this picture online, check it out in living color in the online version of the newsletter http://www.marinbonsai.org/images/pdf/Apr2009_MBC_Newsletter.pdf



No. Neither of these were the demo tree. Due to a camera malfunction, there are no pics of Bob's demo. But, in keeping with the redwood theme, you'll see club member Jay MacDonald's mighty redwood above and Craig Thompson's beauty below.



March Meeting with Bob Shimon

We had as our guest at the March meeting Bob Shimon talking about and giving a demonstration on redwoods as bonsai. Bob is well known to most members since we see him regularly at bonsai shows throughout the area as a vendor and past president of the Redwood Empire Bonsai Club.

Bob and his son Zack have made quite a name for themselves in the past 10 years as purveyors of fine redwood material they collect from properties throughout Northern California, but particularly their neck of the woods which is the Point Arena area on the coast. This puts them in prime position to go digging for the redwood stumps and trees left over from road making and logging when opportunity knocks.

Some of us were surprised to learn that when they dig them up and bring them to their growing fields they have little if any foliage on them. Redwoods being such prolific growers however, quickly recover their vigor. Bob and Zack look for trees with a great base when collecting. Branches can be quickly grown and easily trained with redwoods, but if you don't have a good base, with elegantly flaring nebari, or, as in the case with Bob's demo material, some terrific dead wood and hollowed out effect, then you will always end up with a boring tree.

As he worked at branch selection and trimming those branches he chose to keep Bob passed along some tips for keeping your redwood bonsai happy and healthy:

- Redwoods prefer a cool climate. They can't take hot, direct sun.
- They are also not cold tolerant, so keep them protected when the thermometer drops.
- Feed with fertilizer low in nutrients in the growing season, like 6-4-2. Feed them 0-10-10 in the winter.
- March is a good time for repotting redwoods, just when they are starting to show active growth. Bob doesn't use organic material in the soil mixture, but sand is good.
- The best time to cut back is in the spring or fall when the growth is strong.

Bob left more branches on his demonstration tree than he will ultimately need with the intent of eliminating the ones which are not as strong or vigorous later as he watches the growth.

Although Bob at first modestly insisted he was not an expert on redwood bonsai, with further prodding, (or was that heckling?), he admitted he knew more than most people. It was great to have Bob visit the club to share some of his expertise, bring in a few trees and tools for sale and give us such a fine demo on a seriously promising collected specimen.

That lucky Roger Lion, (he won the big raffle at the Mammoth Sale too!) took home the prize so we will be checking to see if Roger learned his lessons well.

In addition to talking about redwoods, Bob introduced us to a variety of tree new to many in the club. The Mendocino Pygmy Cypress grows very slowly because of the extremely hostile soil it lives in, which keeps the branches and internodes compact making them excellent bonsai material, if you can keep them alive. The trick there Bob told us is to not mess with the soil they grow in for a few years. Keep them in the soil collected with the tree for at least 3 years and up to 5. Slowly remove about a quarter of the soil mass every couple of years, but never remove it all, even for repotting to a bonsai pot. A quick change will shock the tree and kill it. Bob described a 10 year process of getting a collected pygmy cypress into a bonsai pot, but the evidence we saw was well worth the effort.

One of the trees he brought to show, but not to sell, was a highly unusual tree with a trunk thin as a ribbon and curved and twisted like a sculpture. It was a real gem and the hope is it survives the transplanting process over the years and we see it in a future REBS show.

Thank you Bob for making the long drive and sharing your expertise and love of bonsai.

- Candace Key

Keeping up to date with bonsai activities

In addition to additional workshops being carried out at the Marin Bonsai Club (check with Michaele, John Doig, or Chris for dates), the following seminars and demonstrations are available.

Lone Pine Gardens is hosting a series of informal monthly demonstrations and discussions at their nursery in Sebastopol. On Saturday, April 25, from 10 am -12noon, the topic will be succulent plants/grove. The discussion and demonstration will focus on choosing suitable plants to put together, soil and containers. Also, the feeding, light and temperature requirements will be discussed. All attendees receive a 10% discount on their purchases. Topics for future monthly discussions/demonstrations can be found at www.lonepinegardens.com

On the following day, Sunday, April 26, the **Bonsai Garden at Lake Merritt** has also scheduled a demonstration. From 1-3 pm, they will present pinching techniques on Cedars and Spruces, and repotting techniques on either a Cedar or Spruce or both. Each month's tentative schedule can be found at <http://web.mac.com/ltferzoco/GSBF/Demos.html> or ph# 1-510-763-8409.

Newer club members will benefit from these types of discussions and demonstrations, and long time bonsai enthusiasts will enjoy refreshers. Check them out.

- Frances Noles

Do you have something to contribute to the newsletter?

Send newsletter submissions (articles, notices, photos, whatever) to:
Sharon Bone, sbone27@comcast.net
Deadline for inclusion in the May 2009 issue is April 22.

Refreshment Volunteers

The club provides refreshments only for the 2nd meeting of the month. We keep coffee and such accoutrements as tea, splenda, etc. on hand in the shed, along with two coffee machines. The hot water pot is on the shelf above one of the sinks.

Earliest club members may start the decaf, caffeinated coffee, and hot water.

The refreshment team brings cookies, veggie tray, crackers, juice, etc. You can make it as simple as you like.

Earl Minagawa and David Stern are providing refreshments for our April 21 meeting.

Upcoming Months:

May 19 - Emily Shibata and Roger Lion

June 16 - Peggy Kelley and Frances Noles.

(These two have already served once this year, so replacement volunteers are welcome to apply.)

- Marlene Philley

Golden State Bonsai Federation is looking for Demo Teachers

As part of their mission to educate the public about bonsai, GSBF gives free bonsai demonstrations and low cost workshops. They are asking for volunteers to teach at one of this year's monthly demos. The demos are held most months on the fourth Sunday of the month, from 1-3 pm.

Please consider helping.

Demo info:

<http://web.me.com/ltferzoco/GSBF/Demos.html>

Contact Linda Ferzoco at gbscnorth@gmail.com for more details.

Taka Mori's Workshop Schedule at Lotus Bonsai Nursery

Lotus Bonsai Nursery is finalizing Takahiro "Taka" Mori's scheduled visit to the U.S. this spring. Here is a chance to get your Bonsai taken to the next level by a very talented Bonsai artist from Japan on his fourth visit to the U.S. and the nursery.

The fee for these workshops is \$75 for each day, and will be limited to six (6) people, first come first served. Wire and soil are included in the price of the workshop. Students may bring two trees to work on. Bring your own lunch and tools. Classes are from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

The available workshop dates at Lotus Bonsai Nursery are:

April 18 and 26 and May 1, 7, and 8

Please let Lotus know as soon as possible if you are interested in booking a seat for any or all of these days. Workshops will occur, rain or shine. This is a great opportunity to work on your trees with a gifted Bonsai artist from Japan at a reasonable cost.

Lotus Bonsai Nursery & Gardens

1435 Lower Lake Drive, Placerville, CA 95667

(530) 622-9681 Phone, (530) 622-9396 Fax

BAY AREA BONSAI EVENTS

April 4 **San Francisco, CA**

Bonsai Society San Francisco will hold a sale following its annual show at the San Francisco Flower and Garden Show. The sale will take place in the Garden Club room at the Hall of Flowers (aka the County Fair Building) next to the Strybing Arboretum. Ninth Avenue and Lincoln Way. 10am-2pm. Bonsai and related plants, bonsai pots for sale by club members.

April 4-5 **Sacramento, CA**

Bonsai Sekiyu Kai: 32nd Annual Bonsai Show at the Sacramento Betsuin Buddhist Church, 2401 Riverside Boulevard, Saturday, 12:00PM to 5:00PM, and Sunday, 10:00AM to 3:30PM. Demonstrations both days at 2:00PM by Bonsai Master John Uchida. Refreshments, door prizes, raffles, plants and bonsai tool sales. Ron Krause (916) 481-4792.

April 4-5 **San Mateo, CA**

Sei Boku Bonsai Kai: 26th Annual Show will be held at the San Mateo Garden Center, 605 Parkside Wy. from 10AM-4PM both days. Demonstrations will be at 1PM each day. (Steve Jang on Saturday and Valerie Monroe on Sunday.) "Dr Bonsai" will be there to answer all your bonsai questions. Trees, pots and other bonsai-related items will be for sale. khaley57@gmail.com

April 18-19 **Palo Alto, CA**

Kusamura Bonsai Club: 49th Annual Bonsai Show and Sale at the Mitchell Park Community Center, 3800 Middlefield Road. Show hours are Saturday, 12Noon-5PM and Sunday, 10AM-5PM. Featured guest (TBA). Bonsai plant sale, and a show of both established and educational work in progress trees.

April 25-26 **Eureka, CA**

Humboldt Bonsai Society: Annual show in conjunction with the American Rhododendron Society at Saint Bernard Elementary School, 115 Henderson. Hours are 10AM- 4 PM. Demonstrations and benefit drawings both days. Free admission. Contact information, Bill Hegy, 707-499-3459.

April 26 **Napa, CA**

Napa Valley Bonsai Club: 31st annual Bonsai show and sale. Napa Senior Center Building, 1500 Jefferson Street. 11am-5pm Sunday. Demo by Jim Gremel 1:30pm. Bonsai trees, tools, books for sale. Silent auction, raffle. Free admission.

April 26 **Watsonville, CA**

Watsonville Bonsai Club: 35th Annual Bonsai Show at the Watsonville Buddhist Temple, 423 Bridge Street. Show hours are 10AM-4PM. Demonstration at 2PM by Katsumi Kinoshita of Monterey. Plenty of parking for group attendance. Raffle and plant sales. For more information call Don White 831-724-9283, or Iwao Yamashita 831-724-5332.

May 16-17 **Hanford, CA**

The Clark Center for Japanese Art and Culture presents its annual Spring Festival Saturday, May 16 10am to 5pm. A full day of bonsai art, tea presentations, garden tours, lecture/seminars, art sales bazaar and food.

Above is in conjunction with the KAZARI Bonsai Display Competition held May 16 (10am-5pm) and May 17 (10am-3pm). This is a national competition on the art of displaying bonsai in a tokonoma alcove.

Admission to the Spring Festival and KAZARI is \$5 per person for non-members in advance, \$7 at the door. For further information, contact Clark Center at bonsai@ccjac.org. 15770 Tenth Avenue, Hanford, CA. Phone 559-582-4915. www.ccjac.org

Taskmaster - April 2009

Ah, Spring! April in North San Francisco Bay area micro-climates is a time of bloom, of discovery, of rapid change. And a whole new world of bugs. Aphids and soft scales are first, then leaf chewers and green worm. Then adelgid and hard scale. Man it's hard to keep up. Malthion™, Orthenex™, or other in rotation, one per week, evening spray.

And anything that can bloom in the spring has bloomed, is blooming or is about to. So get out your camera and immortalize those little beauties. You can use the pictures later to remind you of why it's all worthwhile.

Don't repot the things that are leafing out. You will either kill, retard or weaken them. Pot anything deciduous that's still just budding, repot any evergreens that don't drain well, and start a pinching program to promote ramification. Maples especially, this month, will push leaves out so fast that if you don't get to them quickly a great opportunity is lost. Pinch out the second set of leaves as soon as they appear, and twigs will result. If the branch in question needs to be longer, wait for the third set and pinch that out. If you miss this process, your internodes will be long and you'll end up cutting back later on, and then you'll be starting over, possibly with a branch that has gotten too thick. Elm and Zelkovas and other trees with alternate leaf set patterns all get pinched back to 2 leaves and they're tricky, hiding that third new leaf underneath the second one. Pinch back the tips on junipers as they bud to prevent elongation and promote denser growth.

Hold off on fertilizer for deciduous trees until mid-May. 0-10-10 is fine. Evergreens can get full fertilizer this month. Frequent diluted foliar feeding on lower branches of cascades helps balance the growing power with the tops.

Does it seem too busy? Does it seem too hard? Does it seem to take too much concentration, organization, attention, planning, scheduling, remembering, carefulness, determination? No, it doesn't. These comprise the discipline that make you a bonsai disciple, the core of activity that draws more of your inner being into the art. These are the preparatory payments that make the great symphony of nature play a more harmonious concert in your garden. This is the great tuning of the instrument that may someday pluck at your heartstrings and make you resonate to the cycle of life.

- The Taskmaster



MARIN BONSAI CLUB EVENTS

April 7, 2009: Workshop

Tuesday, 7pm Livermore Room
Our monthly bring-your-own-tree workshop with Tim Kong and Jay McDonald. Fee is \$10 for members, \$15 for non-members.

April 21, 2009: Demonstration

Tuesday, 7:30pm Livermore Room
Jim Gremel will work on a juniper, which will be raffled.

May 5, 2009: Workshop

Tuesday, 7pm Livermore Room
Our monthly bring-your-own-tree workshop with Tim Kong and Jay McDonald. Fee is \$10 for members, \$15 for non-members.

May 19, 2009: Demonstration

Tuesday, 7:30pm Livermore Room
Bob Gould demo on azaleas.

For a list of currently scheduled MBC events for the remainder of the year, see <http://www.marinbonsai.org/events/index.php>.



2008 Marin Bonsai Club Officers:

Past President	Candace Key	415-491-1989
VP Programs	Craig Thompson	415-472-6685
VP Shows	Jay McDonald	415-847-8909
Secretary	Michael Jaffe	415-945-9930
Treasurer	Frances Noles	415-461-0437
Historian	Carolyn Robbins	415-460-0339
News Editor	Sharon Bone	415-898-9618
Librarian	Tim Burke	415-259-7372
Hospitality	Marlene Philley	415-924-5134
Docent Coord	Jeanette Arnold	415-883-2651

Marin Bonsai Club

PO Box 437
Ross, CA 94957

www.marinbonsai.org

Address Correction Requested
Please Forward



Bonsai Wire

April 2009