



# Bonsai Wire

## Marin Bonsai Club

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

January 2009

### Treasurer's Report

We began and ended the year with money in the bank, and because of that we've had an event filled year. We started the New Year by welcoming back old members and a few new members, successfully exhibited our members' better trees at the annual Marin County Fair in July, had another successful auction in August at which time we contributed to the Golden State Bonsai Federation's Trust Fund. And, of course, our Stand-Out Event was the Fall Show. Our trees were beautiful with brilliant fall color and displayed in an elegant and graceful manner. Our year ended with a Christmas Party that was well attended, had good eats, gifts and kudos given, and was enjoyed by all.

- Frances Noles

### Fall Bonsai Show

Wow! We did it again. The collective will and energy of the club came together in a magical way to produce our biggest and best Fall Bonsai Show ever for the club's 50th anniversary celebration. Once again Jay McDonald and his able crew pulled members' trees together in an artful and dramatic presentation impressing all who attended.

Frances Noles, Jeanette Arnold and their helpers organized the elegant setting for the Friday evening dinner. Marlene Philley, Emma Kong and their helpers kept the delicious lasagna from Ambrosia, salads and desserts coming until the 100 plus guests were totally content and ready to settle down to watch an entertaining and enlightening

demonstration by special guest Marco Invernizzi. The beautiful Japanese Black Pine Marco styled was won by REBS member Michael Murtaugh who we know will take very good care of it and we hope to see it in a REBS show soon.

Saturday we were in for more thrills as Marco led two informal critique sessions of the show which proved immensely informative as he explained how even the best trees in the show could be improved. Marco's demonstration on a hinoki cypress for Saturday was a terrific illustration of not only Marco's styling genius, but also his quick hand at wiring. (The demo tree was won by old/new MBC member Calvin Donley who has the perfect setting for these shade loving trees. Congratulations Calvin!) Our first ever tree sale at the show, ably personed by John Doig and Jeanette, actually made some money not only for the club, but for participating members as well. The weather was perfect, the MAGC gardens sparkling with fall color and we drew visitors from all over the Bay Area and even Sacramento. The word has gotten out that this is a show not to miss and it was gratifying to see so many members of the larger bonsai community showing such interest in what our little club is doing.

The Svengali behind all this magic was our brilliant show coordinator, Alison Seaman. Her help in getting everyone organized, motivated and always working behind the scenes to smooth out the inevitable little glitches was invaluable.

Many people put in long hours, good creative energy and their hearts and souls into the Fall Bonsai Show to make it a success for the club and a significant



*Marco Invernizzi has a captive audience as he critiques Jay McDonald's Emperor Maple (left)*

*Marco works his magic on Calvin Donley's Hinoki Cypress (below)*

event for the bonsai community. A special thanks to our new vendor members who helped us out by having items to sell: Jim Gremel with bonsai tools, plants and more, Amy Wada of Ami's Oriental Art with large and small bonsai scrolls, and David Newcomer with books on Japanese-styled gardens. Thank you Michael Jaffe for the great effort in publicity to get the word out, Frances for trying to keep us on budget, Carolyn Robbins for the beautiful display commemorating the club's 50 years in the bonsai community, Peter Miller, David Stern, Craig Thompson, Jeanette (again) and Merle Ongaro for the late nights and early mornings to get the display room set up, and all the other members who sold raffle tickets, donated raffle prizes and sale trees, greeted visitors, poured wine, pitched in wherever they were needed, helped clean up the kitchen and the facilities after the show . . . Whew! It really does take a village or a really great club to pull it all off.

Thank you everyone! And to those who couldn't attend, you missed a good time and a great show so don't let it happen next year!



## Golden State Bonsai Federation Convention 2008 –

*Report from an Intrepid Power of One attendee*

If you've never been before to a GSBF event, prepare to feel like a kid let loose in a very large candy store – and since I'm slightly older than a kid, and a novice Bonsaist to boot, the excitement of seeing so many interesting demonstrations, the tree exhibition, numerous, really informative and interactive classes by renowned masters, the extensive sales areas, all in the space of 3 days – plus the kicker of enormous raffle events on steroids – you can imagine how I felt. Yes, a little overwhelmed but really inspired to new bonsai heights, which is a really great feeling.

Each day I rushed to the convention when it started at 8 a.m. bright and ready for the day's excitement. The only daily panic was whether I had chosen the right session to match my ability and whether the other parallel-running sessions were possibly the ones I should have been attending. Honestly, the content and quality of all the classes (i.e., workshops, demos, seminars, tree critiques, and styling competitions) was excellent, and fortunately, as I had full registration, I could also flit between all the activities to check – a very handy, reassuring bonus.

For Day 1 I chose Kathy Shaner's day-long seminar which focused on evaluating raw tree material (both deciduous and coniferous). We were to learn techniques for developing the tree while being flexible with potential growth plans. Kathy made us think hard about what external and internal factors affect tree growth, how you might style a tree to overcome its weaker points, and how to accentuate its strengths and enable graceful aging all within a relatively short growing period. The key was to make the tree look as natural as possible by replicating what you'd see in nature.

Sample tree problems included:

- Broken-limbed/rooted trees (fixing limbs, developing new limbs and roots, encouraging foliage/root growth where needed, and some advanced grafting techniques including thread grafts)
- Very tall trees with little taper and gaps in lower branch growth (using height to accentuate form or sectioning the trunk into smaller trees)
- A "log" Juniper (through an in-depth study of tree grain, rip/tear and splitting methods to create a beauty)

- Very old deciduous trees with incorrectly placed rigid branches (moving the branches without breaking them by lots of massage which seemed to me to involve a form of Rolwing, stretched wire, and a lot of experience!)

For Day 2 I viewed several classes, including Peter Adams', where we focused on soils, more techniques for developing back budding and growth in areas where you need it on the tree, watering and fertilizer materials and methods. By the afternoon I had persuaded myself I was ready to attend a basic styling class on Morris boxwoods – an awesome deal for \$25 as it included basic tuition, a really nice five year old tree, training pot, pruning shears, trays and cloths. Demonstrations of styling a pitch pine plus a District styling competition on *Ulmus parvifolia* trees completed the day's activities and I retired to the Presidential Suite GSBF party before the action-packed and very entertaining convention dinner, competition evaluation and raffles. I actually won something in the grand raffle to round off the evening!

By Day 3 my own stride was in total synchronization with all the activities. My bank balance had also become a little lighter due to some purchases of 'must have' trees, viewing stones and a few one-of-a-kind pots, along with the heavily touted raffle tickets. A particularly interesting class by Mel Ikeda on developing the five major tree styles with tips, tricks and plenty of demonstrations by class members provided the most memorable experience. The whole room was overrun by participants who were sharing anecdotes on best techniques – really interesting to hear the sorts of challenges and successes people have with their own local growing environments. Water quality was a big theme – I had no idea how lucky we are that we don't need to treat our water before using it. Central and southern Californians are not so lucky. And, I think we can virtually grow any plant we choose in Marin.

Everyone was so helpful and friendly. The convention certainly met its goals for information exchange, a great opportunity to meet up with friends, form new acquaintances and purchase unique bonsai items. Oh yes, and being an Intrepid Power of One\* designate for the convention (actually a lucky winner of the raffle that was held at our November demonstration with Valerie Monroe) I want to thank the club very much for enabling my full registration. I know I gained so much and hope that the club will continue to make it possible for a

member to attend each year. Better still, consider attending the 2009 GSBF convention (named a Southwest Bonsai Journey) yourself – it's being held in Riverside, southern California Nov 5 – Nov 8. I've already carved out some time to attend!

\*Power of One is a concept designed by GSBF to encourage each California bonsai club to sponsor one of their members to attend the conference and bring back their knowledge to share with other members – a sort of “spread the word and train the trainer (for the more experienced enthusiast)”. I'm happy to share my notes with anyone who's interested, as well as talk about those precious gems of information at workshops. One of the best tips from the Convention 2008 was that gentle irritation of tree bark through pressing/bending can cause micro-abrasion and budding where you may/may not need it. Food for thought when wiring... And that if you have a tree that needs much sun, consider using aluminum instead of copper to avoid burning the bark. Finally, cut wood creates scar tissue which tends to go brittle and so try to avoid multiple pruning cuts very close together.

- Alison Seaman

### Do you have something to add?

Send newsletter submissions to: Sharon Bone, sbone27@comcast.net. Deadline for inclusion in the February 2009 issue is January 21.

### 10% Discount at Sunnyside Nursery!

Our friends at Sunnyside are offering a ten percent discount on anything in the nursery for members showing their Marin Bonsai Club pin. Be sure to stop in and check out their selection of bonsai tools and trees (and regular plants too!). 130 Sir Francis Drake Blvd, San Anselmo, CA. Phone: 415-453-2701. www.sunnysideofmarin.com. Hours: 8:30am-5:30pm M-F, 8:30am-5pm Sat-Sun

## BAY AREA BONSAI EVENTS

**January 17-18**

**Hayward, CA**

Bay Island Bonsai: 10th Anniversary of “An Exhibit of Fine Bonsai” at Centennial Hall, 22292 Foothill Blvd. Hours 10AM-4PM both days. Admission fee: \$5 for both days and all events. Saturday: High quality auction from 1PM-3PM; Preview will be at 12PM. Sunday: Silent auction from 10AM-1PM; Demonstration at 1PM. Vendors will be available both days. For more information at (510) 865-1008 or visit [www.bonsaiboon.com](http://www.bonsaiboon.com)

**January 31-February 1**

**Oakland, CA**

Bay Area Bonsai Associates: 25th Annual Bonsai Exhibition at the Lakeside Park Garden Center, 666 Bellevue Avenue. Hours are Saturday, 4:30 PM-8:00PM and Sunday, 10:00 AM-4:00PM. Demonstration by Boon Manakitivipart Saturday at 5:30PM, followed by a raffle of the demonstration tree as well as numerous other bonsai items. Sales area is open all hours (except during the demonstration) and will include bonsai, pre-bonsai, pots, books and magazines, tools and wire. Admission is free.

**February 28-March 1**

**Oakland, CA**

GSBF Bonsai Garden at Lake Merritt: 18th Annual Mammoth Fundraiser at the Lakeside Garden Center, 666 Bellevue Avenue. Saturday (Feb 28) Auction 1PM-4PM with preview 12Noon-1PM. Sunday (Mar 1) Mammoth Fundraiser 10AM-5PM. Demonstration and critiques by Kathy Shaner, Curator. Vendors, benefit drawings, raffles and large consignment sale of bonsai and bonsai related items.

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*Welcome to our newest members!*

Brian McDonald - Kentfield, CA  
Gerald J. Bourguignon - Mill Valley, CA

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## Ron Kelley



Ron Kelley was one of the first people I met when I become involved in bonsai. With his signature moustache and curly hair he stood out physically and, very soon, personally. His open, friendly personality drew me into the bonsai fold as he educated me about the tools of the trade, brought new books to my attention and offered styling and growing advice. Over the few years I knew him I came to realize Ron was a wealth of knowledge on so many aspects of both bonsai and suiseki.

Ron was a great supporter of Marin Bonsai too. He liked our little club and was a member although he was also a founding member of the larger REBS club in Santa Rosa. He came down to most of our meetings as long as his health allowed to offer bonsai supplies for sale. For some members this was the easiest and best way to stock up and Ron was always good for that wire you had just run out of or a new tool you decided you couldn't live without.

We will miss our good friend who passed away on November 4th, 2008. Ron was a special man and a good friend to all who knew him. We offer Maggie, his wife of 55 years, our deepest sympathy. Our hearts and prayers go out to her and the Kelley family.

- Candace Key

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### **It's that time again ... Join the Club (or Renew)**

Included with this newsletter is the application/renewal form for Marin Bonsai Club membership. Please take the time to give us your thoughts as to what would make our club even better.

## January Meeting

Valerie Monroe (who was a big hit in October with her bonsai pot demo) will be back to do a tree demo for us. At press time, we haven't heard what type tree she will be working on so come and be surprised (perhaps Craig will update our website when he gets all the details for those who don't like surprises!).

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### **Don't worry, be happy...**

*If you need to leave your bonsai trees or garden, don't worry - I can water or just check on your plants while you are away!*

#### **Peggy Kelly**

415-456-7093 Home  
415-342-2663 Cell

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### **And it's this time again too... Repotting Season**

January begins the essential and messy season of repotting our bonsai trees. Please be sure to bring plastic or some protective covering for the tables at MAGC. A pair of latex or flexible garden gloves is very helpful as well. The club will provide wire, soil and expert assistance to make sure your trees are anchored well and properly oriented in the pot to thrive in the coming years.

**MARIN BONSAI CLUB EVENTS**

**January 6, 2009 - Workshop**

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

**January 20, 2009 – Demonstration**

Tuesday, 7:30pm Livermore Room  
Valerie Monroe will be doing a demo on a tree TBA.

**February 3, 2009 - Workshop**

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

Sylvia Drowley and Candace Key are in charge of refreshments for the January meeting.



Marin Bonsai Club

**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
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Editor	Sharon Bone	415-898-9618
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**Marin Bonsai Club**

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[www.marinbonsai.org](http://www.marinbonsai.org)

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