



## Bonsai Wire Marin Bonsai Club

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

April 2014

### From the President...

Hello Gang,

Welcome to another exciting edition of the Marin Bonsai Newsletter.

This month's topic, wait for it, drum roll.....SPRING TIME. It's my favorite time of year, March Madness, the NBA playoffs, NHL playoffs, the start of a new Baseball season and fresh new growth on my trees.

The spring announces the circle of life in everything. The new buds on my Maples, the gin berries on my junipers and new shoots emerging throughout the bark of my redwoods. If things aren't budding for you, be patient; and if they still don't bud, then it's the other half of the circle of life, condolences.

Membership is climbing but we are not at full capacity yet, wear those bonsai shirts in public settings and generate some gossip.

My thanks to Jay McDonald for a great demonstration on seikai. It was very entertaining and not bad on the pocket book.

Next month's topic is tropics, David will tell you all about it.

Members please volunteer for a docent duty at the garden at Lake Merritt Oakland. It's easy, fun and educational not to mention we are required to fill a Saturday each month. Talk to Roger Lion or me at the next meeting and help us fulfill our obligations. Let's remember that

this is a volunteer organization so all the flash that comes from the Marin Bonsai Club, the workshop assistance, bonsai advice, booking demonstrators, legal tax filing, our web site additions, this newsletter and the editing that goes into it, all that we do, is volunteered. Let's not have the same people who give so much continue to be carrying the load. This is a task that anyone can do and everyone should do. Docent at the Garden.

Our next gathering is a workshop, bring your trees for bud pinching, branch cut back and wiring. No working on Pines right now but everything else is ok. We will see you at 7:00

Peter Tea, a renowned bonsai artist, has many study groups in the bay area. They meet once a month, and as I understand, are extremely educational and fun. I don't know the cost or Peter's availability but Morris was an alternate for a group that never needed an alternate and he would like to form a group of his own. Look for Morris or me at club functions and we will see if something can be done.

Get Wired  
Tim Burke

## From the VP of Programs...

Happy Spring, everybody! It's always been my favorite time of year, but ever since I got into bonsai, I enjoy it all the more as I watch my deciduous beauties awaken from their Winter slumber. Swelling leaf buds with the promise of new growth, young flowering trees begging the question: will this be the year they flower for the first time? And the sap flowing in all the trees as they greet the longer days with renewed vigor. It's a great time for a great hobby.

Speaking of a great time for bonsai, I know many of you enjoyed this year's Mammoth auction and sale at Lake Merritt back in February. There's always so much to see and so many ways to enlarge one's collection, to say nothing of the ready availability of tools and other supplies. This was only my second time attending, but I've already grown to anticipate one of my favorite features, Kathy Shaner's demonstration. Last year I recounted one of her many pearls of wisdom, regarding the constant learning enjoyed by even the most veteran of bonsai experts when enthusiasts of all levels get together and share our experiences. It must be one of her favorite points to make, because she made it again this year. She added another facet to the idea, though, that I found intriguing, highly educational, and worth imparting to you all.

Kathy pointed out that while it is great to enjoy and learn from the many perspectives afforded by having so many great bonsai artists in our community, when it comes to having professionals work on your trees, too many "cooks" can often spoil your goods. That is, once you have a professional work on your tree, with his or her own unique perspective on what is best for that tree, taking it to another professional, who will undoubtedly have a different perspective, can have undesirable results as the work done by the first professional is often distorted or even undone by the next. That's not to say

that different perspectives on your tree are a bad thing, but when it comes to the work actually done to the tree, once you go down certain roads, changing direction without good reason can be disastrous. On a humorous side note, little over a week later I caught a glimpse of this phenomenon when I brought my Trident Maple to the workshop and sought the opinions of every skilled artist there. That tree got chopped so many different ways, I went away feeling like it was completely mutilated. I must stress that such was NOT the case; the tree truly needed a lot of work and it got far better treatment than it would have from me alone and I am grateful to everybody who helped me with it. But the experience underscored the *potential* for the type of overworking to which Kathy referred. Just something to think about.

On to club business: Our program of events for the year is shaping up rather nicely. The latest development: Tim Burke has secured the services of Master Boon Manakitivipart for our May meeting. I think his reputation is well known, but if you don't know who I'm talking about, feel free to visit his homepage at [bonsaiboon.com](http://bonsaiboon.com) to get a taste. More details on what is likely to be a demonstration by Boon as they develop.

More immediately, for this month's meeting, we have Craig Thompson's discussion of tropical trees, complete with a demonstration on a ficus that will raffled at the end of the evening. Craig also will be joined by Jim Gremel. Craig is encouraging us to bring our own tropicals for show-and-tell and guidance. Please note that this will be the first demonstration in our new location, the Marin Society of Artists Building, also on the Marin Art & Garden Center grounds in Ross. The building is not hard to find and it has its own parking lot that we can use. The Marin Society of Artists Building is approximately 150 yards directly south from the Multipurpose Room we've been using for the past several years. I hope to see you there on April 15<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 pm.

## VP of Programs Continued...

Please also take careful note that this month's workshop is the very first day of the month. That's right, it's an April Fool's workshop. Read into that however you like, but for my part I'll say that you'd be a fool to miss this educational opportunity. In addition to doing whatever you like with your own trees, with highly experienced club members on hand to assist you, Tim has promised to discuss defoliation and other topics relevant to the season.

Stay vigilant, your trees are growing faster than you think!

## Jay's P'en Jing Demo



David Eichhorn



## The Taskmaster, April 2014

April in the Northern California Bay Area microclimates is a puzzle for the bonsai crowd. The days can be as warm and still as Summer and the nights can be as chilly as late Autumn. The occasional quick frost is still possible, and a dry breeze can brown the edges of tender leaves now and then. It means that watering by hand is ideal, so that you can check each pot and make sure day by different day that it's not too much and not too little water. Scratch with a stick and make sure that it's dry well below the surface before you give it a drink, because too damp too often makes internodes that are too long and leaves that are too big. Speaking of which, nitrogen fertilizers will do the same thing so keep on with the 0-10-10 fertilizers until mid May, when the first push of the year's growth slows down some. At the end of April is a good time to scratch in a tablespoon of cottonseed/bone meal in a 70%-30% ratio, and maybe add a little blood meal or follow with some fish emulsion. It takes the organics a while to break down and become available to the roots, so that timing is very good. Pines and junipers and other conifers get fully fed right on through.

Hand watering lets you examine the trees more closely for evidence of the onslaught of fungus, mildew, trunk-climbing moss, and especially bugs of all sorts that come in waves this time of year. Using three-quarter strength sprays of different insecticides and fungicides in ten day rotations, using safer soaps and homemade soap solutions, and spraying strong streams of water among the foliage is the way to go. Remember that spores, mites, and larvae are frequently too small to see and you can't undo the damage they do. They're harder to control once they are established. Be vigilant and proactive now.

Any deciduous tree not fully leafed out can still be repotted. Just don't be aggressive with the roots this time of year. Leave the root ball intact as much as possible, especially the mass of fine tips, even if you have to use a larger pot than you wanted. Repot evergreens and

junipers that need it. Everything can go into full sun, but watch out for the occasional really hot afternoon or drying wind that can burn leaf edges and the tenderest growth tips. Wind effects on a dry day are worse than sun effects this season. Later, in June, the sun is the villain.

Fruiting and especially flowering trees can be trimmed and repotted after flowers are spent. Just don't trim many roots, leave as many fine hairs and their tips as possible, and remember to put them in filtered sun or bright shade to help prevent fruit drop.

Pinch out the second or third set of leaves on maples as soon as they appear to encourage the side growth of new twigs that then have to be monitored and pinched in the same way. Branches on any tree that need to be fatter should be allowed to run untouched until fat enough, then cut back. Elms should get pinched back to two leaves. Pinching on all trees prevents long internodes and promotes ramification. But pinching on cedars, larches, junipers, and other conifers should be a careful removal of the singular center growing tip only, and only to promote back budding and denser growth.

Azaleas and pines get addressed in May and June, so let them go for now. You should read up on pines, and the book, *Pines*, printed by Stone Lantern Press is a great collection of knowledge to get you started.

There's more, lots more, but it's all fascinating and a wonderful way to stay connected with the earth, the seasons, each other, and your own thoughts and feelings.

The Taskmaster

Haiku for April

Afternoons are warm.  
New green among the branches,  
New songs in my heart.

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## Upcoming Northern California Bonsai Events

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April 5 – 6, 2014 Sacramento, California.  
Bonsai Sekiyu Kai: 37th Annual Bonsai Show at the Sacramento Betsuin Buddhist Church, 2401 Riverside Blvd. Show hours are Saturday Noon – 5 PM and Sunday 10 AM – 4 PM. Demonstrations at 2 PM on both days. Amenities include refreshments, light snacks, door prizes, raffles, and a silent auction. Member and vendor sales of plants and bonsai-related items will also be available. For more information go to [bonsaisekiyukai.wordpress.com](http://bonsaisekiyukai.wordpress.com).

April 12 – 13, 2014, Sacramento, California  
American Bonsai Association of Sacramento (ABAS): Annual Spring Show will be held at the Shepherd Garden and Arts Center, 3330 McKinley Blvd. Hours: Saturday 10 AM – 5 PM and Sunday 10 AM – 4 PM; demonstration both days by Kathy Shaner at 1PM. For further information email Paul Holtzen at [pbholtzen@sbcglobal.net](mailto:pbholtzen@sbcglobal.net).

April 26 – 27, 2014, Palo Alto, California  
Kusamura Bonsai Club: 54th Annual Show. Location is Lucie Stern Community Center, 1305 Middlefield Road, Palo Alto, CA 94301. Show hours are Saturday, Noon-5PM and Sunday, 11AM-5PM. Demonstration each day at 1:00PM, with special guest demonstrator Saturday. Club member sales available. For more information contact Mark O'Brien at [650.327.0450](mailto:650.327.0450), [mobrientrees@hotmail.com](mailto:mobrientrees@hotmail.com). Please see [www.kusamurabonsai.org](http://www.kusamurabonsai.org) for more details.

May 3 – 4, 2014, Sacramento, California  
Sacramento Bonsai Club: 68th Annual Bonsai Show at the Sacramento Buddhist Church, 2401 Riverside Blvd. Noon – 5 PM Saturday and 11 AM – 4 PM Sunday with demonstrations on both days at 2 PM by Sam Adina. Benefit drawings, Plant & tree sales. For more information, contact Lucy Sakaishi-Judd at [juddbonsai@att.net](mailto:juddbonsai@att.net) or visit <http://sacramentobonsaiclub.com>.

May 3 – 4, 2014, San Jose, California  
San Jose Betsuin Bonsai Club: 44th Annual Bonsai Exhibition and Demonstration at the San Jose Buddhist Church Betsuin, 640 North Fifth Street. Noon – 5 PM Saturday and 11 AM – 4 PM Sunday with demonstrations on both days at 1 PM by "Mr. California Juniper" Harry Hirao. Styled and pre-styled trees will be offered for sale on both days. For more information, contact Ken Azuma at [kennethazuma@sbcglobal.net](mailto:kennethazuma@sbcglobal.net) or visit [www.gsbfbonsai.org/sjbonsai/](http://www.gsbfbonsai.org/sjbonsai/).

May 4, 2014, Watsonville, California  
Watsonville Bonsai Club: 41st Annual Bonsai Exhibit at the Watsonville Buddhist Temple, 423 Bridge St. Over 50 outstanding bonsai, large and small, young and old, will be on display from 10 AM to 4 PM. An afternoon demonstration by Don White will be held at 1:30 PM. A raffle of bonsai items, plants and the demo tree will follow. Tea & cookies will be served. Plenty of parking for vehicles of all sizes. Even for group outings. A vendor will be available to sate your plant appetite for bonsai or otherwise. For more information please call Don White, 831-724-9283 or E-mail: [whiteslib@aol.com](mailto:whiteslib@aol.com).

### Bonsai Wire Newsletter Submissions:

The deadline for the Bonsai Wire Newsletter is the Saturday following the Club's Monthly General Meeting.

Please email any news, articles, event info, Haiku, photos etc. to: [mbcnews@marinbonsai.org](mailto:mbcnews@marinbonsai.org)



<http://www.gsbf-bonsai.org/>



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12/26/2012

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## Marin Bonsai Club Events

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April 1, 2014: Monthly Workshop,  
Multipurpose Room, 7 PM. Free for  
members. \$10 for non-members.

April 15, 2014: Monthly Meeting,  
Marin Society of Artists Building, 7:30 PM.  
Ficus Demonstration by our own Craig  
Thompson assisted by the lovely Jim  
Gremel.

May 6, 2014: Monthly Workshop,  
Multipurpose Room, 7 PM. Free for  
members. \$10 for non-members.

May 20, 2014: Monthly Meeting,  
Marin Society of Artists Building, 7:30 PM.  
Boon Manakitivipart .



### 2013 Marin Bonsai Club Officers:

President	Tim Burke	415-259-7372
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