



## Bonsai Wire Marin Bonsai Club

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

February 2014

### From the President...

Hello Tree Shepherds and welcome back.

What a great time we had at our first repotting workshop of the season and with four more scheduled, the future is thriving.

As mentioned last month, workshops are free for members whom have paid there 2014 dues!!!! What a deal!!!! For the late payment group the workshops are \$10.00. It is still a fair price.

As for the soil, the club has received a donation of lava and pumas from yours truly, akadama was purchased by the club, and Chris and John have sifted and mixed on their own precious time. As a result of free workshops and high grade soil, we are forced to charge a \$5.00 fee for small and medium sized trees and a \$10.00 fee for large. The majority of members just need a bit of soil and we, as the board, felt it was an overkill to have a member with just one tree purchase enough soil to toil a football field. If you have a large collection and need a surplus of soil, let me know and I can source it for you.

The club has been working tirelessly with the Marin Society of Artists to help land us in their building on the Marin Art and Garden grounds, and a deal has been reached. We will be meeting in their building on the third Tuesday of each month, but not until March. In the meantime, we will be in the multipurpose room for the repotting season. If you know where we met last year and last month then you know where we will be for the next month and a half.

Last year, we asked members what they would like to see in the club and some hopes for Jonas Dupuich to return were vocalized as well as more raffle trees at our third Tuesday demonstrations. Well, we are currently booking Jonas for the 3rd of June and 21st of October. Also, Jay McDonald has the stage the third Tuesday of March and he has another spectacular rock planting to demonstrate and raffle, a night you don't want to miss.

We have a couple other things already planned for the coming year but David and Candace would be out to get me if I let the cat out of the bag for them, so keep reading this newsletter for upcoming events.

We have also in the past had a 20% fee or a one time \$45.00 fee for members who want to sell bonsai related items at meetings and workshops. This is still in effect. I have noticed members aren't always clear where they can purchase trees, tools, pots etc. Many of our members have great material for sale or a depth of knowledge on pricing and locations, just ask and we will try to help.

The club is only as good as we ourselves make it, so keep your requests, donations and team work coming and we will make 2014 the greatest year to date.

Get Wired

Tim Burke

## From the VP of Programs...

The repotting season is certainly off to a great start. I counted at least 11 different repottings going on at the January 21<sup>st</sup> workshop, plus the potting of a successful Trident Maple air layering, done rather swiftly by Allen Voigt. For the curious: the main reason for Allen's just-above-the-soil air layering was that he was not happy with his nebari. Apparently, many of the tree's original roots had died off, leaving knuckle-like knobs around at least half of the base of his trunk. So now he gets to take another shot at more plentiful and hopefully more aesthetically pleasing radial roots.

The repotting workshops continue throughout the month of February, both the 4<sup>th</sup> and the 18<sup>th</sup>. Any non-members reading this are welcome to bring trees to repot, using our soil and wire, for \$15. Fully paid up members are asked to pay a nominal fee of \$5 per small to medium tree this year, a little more if you're undertaking something larger. This is because the gang went all out to make a particularly good soil blend this time around. Even if you don't want to use any of our supplies, or don't even have any repotting to do (lucky you!), come on down and check out the work going on. There's no charge for just showing up. I promise you cannot walk once around the room without learning something. And if you are an experienced bonsai artist with a particularly interesting repot, consider doing it at one of the workshops so others can learn from your techniques. If you're paid up, there's no charge for working alongside us with your own supplies.

The board had a productive meeting in January. Among other things, we've almost mapped out the entire year's activities. In March, after a regular, non-repotting workshop on the 4<sup>th</sup>, Jay McDonald will be reprising his very popular P'en Jing demonstration from last year. That will be on March 18<sup>th</sup>. P'en Jing is the art of creating abstract quasi-landscapes on interesting rocks. They're fun because you get to use a lot of different materials, including moss and even things like ferns that are usually frowned upon in regular bonsai. They're also tricky

because you have to find creative ways to wire your trees in place and you have to choose trees that can withstand the heavy root pruning and minimal-soil conditions of growing on a rock. Jay has a lot of experience creating these enchanting works of art and will show you how it's done, with the inevitably beautiful fruits of his labor being raffled off at the end, of course.

Looking even farther ahead, in April we will be having a demonstration on tropical trees, focusing on ficus, from Craig Thompson, along with a special guest. Perhaps that will be the first demo in the new location . . . ? The Iron Bonsai competition has also been discussed and we definitely want to do it again this year, but will probably put it off until September. More details to come in future newsletters. Stay tuned!

I'd love to write more, but I have some trees to repot! Oh, but one more thing: look for the article about our Fall Show in the next issue of Golden Statements!

David Eichhorn



## MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

It's time to renew your annual membership. The dues are: \$65 family, \$45 single; and \$25 student. A membership form is included in this month's newsletter. Copies of the form will also be available at our monthly workshops.

Please submit your dues promptly; and remember, the workshops are free for paid up members and \$10.00 each for non-members. Checks are payable to the "Marin Bonsai Club" and must include your name, address and telephone number. Either give your dues to Art Wasserman at the monthly workshop, or mail to Marin Bonsai Club, PO Box 437, Ross, CA 94957.

Thanks to all of you,

Marin Bonsai Club

## From our Treasurer

Thank all of you members for paying your Dues- so far 18 single memberships and 5 family. Far more paid members than last January- Good start to the new year.

Welcome new members:

Dennis Plaut, Greg Robbins and Jean Dakota, Donald Greenfield, Andrew La Frenz, Ben Wasserman, Barry Crotty.

Art Wasserman

## Repotting-palooza

We are in the thick of repotting season and here are a few suggestions for good bonsai repotting etiquette:

- Be sure to label all your tools and supplies. With so much activity going on chances are good they will be misplaced at some point. Identification on them helps you get them back.
- Please ask to borrow someone's tools. Even if you think they belong to the club, be sure to ask.
- Some members are bringing their own potting soil to workshops. Make sure you know which is the club soil before you start scooping.
- If someone prefers not to lend you tools or soil, or anything don't be offended. We all have our idiosyncratic ways and chances are no offense is meant.
- Bring plastic, a drop cloth or bin for old soil and the mess of repotting. This will make clean up so much faster. The club has some blue tarps, but if possible bring your own protection as well.
- There were some tools lost at the first repotting workshop. Please check your supplies and see if you have an extra pair of red handled scissors or wire cutters. These are expensive tools and need to get back to their rightful owners.

Thank you!

Candace Key

## Ten Reasons it is a joy to spend time at the Bonsai Gardens at Lake Merritt in Oakland

- It is a peaceful place where you will be surrounded by some of the most outstanding bonsai in the United States.
- It is fun greeting visitors and introducing them to the art of bonsai.
- It has long been held that the way to learn a subject is to teach. Talking about bonsai with others only increases your knowledge and understanding of the art.
- There is much to learn studying the trees in the garden throughout the year - noting the seasonal changes and how the garden staff manages the trees' health.
- The BGLM curator, Kathy Shaner, is often at the gardens and much bonsai knowledge can be gained simply by being in her presence.
- Kathy is generous with her time and often gives short lectures or classes on various advanced bonsai techniques to docents and workers at the gardens.
- Even when Kathy isn't there, chances are some senior member of the bonsai community will be, presenting opportunities to make connections, friends and learn something new.
- Trees are constantly in development at BGLM. By studying techniques used there you may learn new ways to work with your own bonsai.
- If you become a regular at the gardens you may be given the opportunity to work on world class bonsai, under the very watchful eye of Bonsai Master Kathy Shaner.
- BGLM is a wonderful place to spend time with your significant other or a friend. It

gives them a chance to appreciate in a relaxed setting the art that takes so much of your time. Lake Merritt is also a wonderful place to walk and people-watch. Whatever your companion chooses to do they will be grateful to you for bringing them to such a beautiful place.

Could there really be a more pleasurable way for a lover of bonsai to spend a few hours than in the presence of the finest bonsai in the country? Knowing you are also supporting the bonsai community that has nurtured your interest and growth is just the icing on the cake.

Please sign up for docent duty with (for now) coordinator Roger Lion. And don't forget . . .

### Marin Bonsai Club Work Day at BGLM

Every year the Marin Bonsai Club gathers at the Bonsai Gardens at Lake Merritt in Oakland for a day of service. We usually weed the landscape and rake leaves, but this year our duties will expand under the guidance of Curator and Bonsai Master Kathy Shaner. We will gather on Saturday, February 15 at 10:00 to be directed in numerous tasks to help ready the gardens for an influx of visitors the following weekend when the Mammoth Auction and Sales events take place at the nearby Garden Center. Some tasks will be working in the landscape and some may involve spiffing up bonsai trees. There will be a job for everyone regardless of physical limitations or preference. If you are new to bonsai or the Bonsai Gardens this would be a great introduction. Carpools can be arranged. We hope to have a good sized group to show our support of the gardens and our love of bonsai. Please sign up with Roger Lion and let us know if you would like to carpool. Don't forget your gloves!

Candace Key

## Bonsai Garden at Lake Merritt and Our Club's Role

The Bonsai Garden at Lake Merritt (BGLM) in Oakland, arguably one of the five best public bonsai gardens in the country, is a joint project by the Golden State Bonsai Federation (GSBF) and the City of Oakland Parks and Recreation Department. It is one of only two public bonsai gardens in the West-- the other being the GSBF South garden at Huntington Gardens near Pasadena.

BGLM was completed in November 1999 with mainly volunteer labor and donations, making it a great source of pride in the local bonsai community. The gardens contain some of the finest bonsai on the west coast, including the oldest bonsai in cultivation in the U.S. More than 250 trees, which have been donated or loaned by individuals or estates are in the total collection, with a rotating public display of 50-100 in a naturalistic Japanese garden setting.

BGLM is open Tuesday through Sunday throughout the year and is run entirely by volunteers who act as docents, greeting and informing visitors, work on collection trees with the guidance of the Curator, and perform myriad functions necessary to keep the collection first class. Fundraisers like the Mammoth Auction and Sale on the last weekend of February each year and donations from bonsai clubs and individuals pay for the many needs of the gardens.

Kathy Shaner, the only Japanese-certified bonsai master in the U.S., is the Curator of the collection. Assistant curators (including MBC members Frances Noles and Jeanette Arnold), directed by Kathy work on specific categories of trees, and other volunteers are assigned responsibility for care of individual trees. Additional volunteers help maintain the landscape and grounds.

As you can see, there is much work that needs to be done to maintain this valuable collection and to care for all these trees. BGLM serves an important function in developing the public's understanding of bonsai, and getting new people interested in joining a bonsai club. For their part Marin Bonsai Club has committed to providing the docents for the morning shift (10-1) on the 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday of every month, a function critical to the smooth workings of the gardens, but also fulfilling an obligation the gardens have to the City of Oakland.

The Marin Bonsai Club, with the exception of just a handful of people, has not done its fair share to help out. Working a 3-hour docent shift is easy and fun, and BGLM is only 30 minutes from Marin, located in a safe and attractive part of Oakland. Parking is \$5, and you can remain in the park for the rest of the day enjoying the other public gardens or walking about Lake Merritt.

Saturday, February 15 will be our club's yearly work party to help get the gardens ready for the Mammoth Fundraiser in February. This would make an excellent introduction to the gardens if you haven't been there or if it has been a while since you visited. Please do your part and volunteer for it and for the critical docent positions that the club is obligated to fill.

Roger Lion  
Docent Coordinator

## The Taskmaster, February 2014

February in the Northern Bay Area microclimates of Northern California is Springtime, and don't make any mistake about it, because the bonsai trees won't. If you lay around thinking it's still Winter, they'll go all Spring on you and it'll be too late to do some essential jobs in the garden.

Essential jobs like repotting. Here's the thing about repotting. It's the most stressful thing we do to the trees on purpose, and the most dangerous. But it's also the basis for all the vigorous new growth, the opportunity to reposition, restyle, and renew the tree. So here's the scoop. Repot any tree that doesn't drain well, any tree that didn't thrive, any tree that did well but slowed down noticeably from the previous year, any tree you think you'd like to show off but are unsure about the angle, the front, or the pot, any tree you acquired from anywhere because you just never know. Repot young trees every year or two, older trees every three or four, and don't put it off, because pruning the roots, trimming the canopies to match, cutting out deadwood, crossing branches, unnecessary branches and twigs will jumpstart the trees into exuberant growth. Put just a bit of bone meal into the lower levels of the new soil as it is very high in calcium and phosphate and the tree will use it for strong root growth. Set them out in the full sun when you're done, they can't burn this time of year. Then watch out for the occasional cold snap and tuck them to safety under their benches or under the eaves next to the house or something for a day or two.

Here's the order of biz. First comes any tree whose buds are already swelling, because after the buds break open the risk goes up, way up. Next come the apricots cherries, and all early flowering trees, then the maples, elms, wisteria, zelkova, and all the other deciduous trees. Then the broadleaf evergreens, then the conifers, junipers, and finally the pines.

If the buds haven't opened yet, you can still do a last dormant spray. Every nursery has these sprays, and they all work well. Read the labels, as some of them can damage certain types of foliage. Cover the soil, spray very early in the morning to avoid burn. Calm days are best so you don't overspray or breathe that stuff. One very useful dormant treatment, and the very best one for scale bugs of all types, is Volk oil, or horticultural oil, which can be used all year in weaker or stronger solution mixes depending on the weather, the temperature, and the nature of the problem. The warning they sometimes don't list is that you should not water the trees the day before, the day of, and if possible the day after an oil spray, because it briefly slows or stops transpiration. It should be noted that some gardeners use weak solutions of oil spray to smother aphids and other infesting insects instead of using poisons.

February is a good time to do detail wiring, especially on evergreens and junipers, so you can keep busy. Not a great time to wire trees that have buds because they are fragile. Use a denture brush soaked in alcohol to brush moss off of trunks, exposed roots and even branches to prevent bark rot.

There must be some other things you need to do out in the garden, but this is a pretty good list. Do it now, do it right, and take a break. Seek advice, give love, practice patience, show humility, demonstrate tolerance, and you can sleep the sleep of peace.

The Taskmaster

February Haiku:  
All through the Winter,  
Small trees patiently waiting.  
Soon, a miracle!

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## Upcoming Northern California Bonsai Events

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February 22-23, 2014, Oakland, California  
GSBF Bonsai Garden at Lake Merritt: Mammoth Fundraiser – 2014 at the Lakeside Garden Center, 666 Bellevue Avenue. Saturday (Feb 22): Auction of fabulous bonsai 1PM-4PM with preview at 12 Noon. Sunday (Feb 23): Mammoth Plant Sale and a huge gathering of Vendors, 9AM-4PM. Round Robin Demonstrations noon to 3PM by Collection Curator, Kathy Shaner and Team. For general information email: [www.bonsailakemerritt@gmail.com](mailto:www.bonsailakemerritt@gmail.com), website: [www.gsbfbonsai.org/lake-merritt/NewHome.htm](http://www.gsbfbonsai.org/lake-merritt/NewHome.htm) or phone: Randi Keppeler 650-598-0127.

February 25th, 2014, Sacramento, California  
American Bonsai Association Sacramento (ABAS): Bjorn Bjorholm will be featured speaker at ABAS' monthly meeting. Bjorn has been studying under contemporary Japanese master Keiichi Fujikawa in Osaka, Japan since 2008 and he is also the co-founder and co-instructor of the Fujikawa International School of Bonsai. ABAS welcomes the public to attend this event free of charge on Tues, Feb 25th, at 7 PM at Shepard Garden and Arts Center, 3330 McKinley Blvd. Bjorn's visit is made possible in part through a GSBF grant.

March 8 – 9, 2014 Oakland, California  
Bay Area Bonsai Associates: 33rd Annual Bonsai Exhibition at the Lakeside Park Garden Center, 666 Bellevue Avenue. Show hours are Saturday 5 – 9 PM and Sunday 10 AM – 4 PM. Demonstration by satsuki bonsai master Shuisho Nakayama from Japan (co-sponsor by North American Satsuki Bonsai Center) starts at 6:30 PM Saturday, followed by a raffle of the demonstration tree. Continuous plant sale including bonsai related items (pots, tools, soils, wires, books, etc.) both days. Admission is free. Parking fee to the Lakeside Park entrance is required during the park hours. For more information, please contact Bob Gould at (925) 935-1914.

March 19 – 23, 2014 San Mateo, California  
Bonsai Society of San Francisco: Annual Bonsai Exhibit at the San Francisco Flower and Garden Show, San Mateo County Event Center, 1346 Saratoga Drive. Hours: Wednesday – Saturday 10 AM – 7 PM, Sunday 10 AM – 6 PM. There will be demonstrations and trees for sale. For more information about the club, visit our website: [www.bssf.org](http://www.bssf.org). For group and early bird ticket information to the Flower and Garden Show, visit <http://sfgardenshow.com>.

March 22 – 23, 2014 Santa Cruz, California  
Santa Cruz Bonsai Kai: 26th Annual Show at the Museum of Art & History, 705 Front Street. 10 AM – 5 PM with a demonstration at 2 PM by John Thompson both days. Raffle drawing for demonstration tree after demo each day. Trees especially prepared, trimmed and wired by club members will be part of the raffle each day. Sales area will include both vendor and member trees, pots and other related bonsai items. Admission price includes entry to bonsai show, the Museum of Art & History and complimentary coffee, tea and cookies. For more information contact Ed Lambing at [edinbonnydoon@sbcglobal.net](mailto:edinbonnydoon@sbcglobal.net).

### 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)



**MARIN BONSAI CLUB**  
**MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION OR RENEWAL**

(PLEASE PRINT)

NAME(S) \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

Check one: Single \_\_\_\_\_ Family \_\_\_\_\_ Student (under 18) \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

HOME PHONE: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ WORK PHONE: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ CELL: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL\*\* \_\_\_\_\_ Year you joined Marin Bonsai Club \_\_\_\_\_

\*\* It has become increasingly important for us to have your email address so you can be kept up to date on last minute shows and events. Please print clearly.

**Membership Fees: Single \$45 Family \$65 Student \$25**

Make checks payable to Marin Bonsai Club. Send check and application to:  
**Marin Bonsai Club, PO Box 437, Ross, CA 94957**

Monthly Newsletter: We distribute a monthly Club newsletter—*Bonsai Wire*—to our members. It is also published on the Club website at <http://www.marinbonsai.org/newsletters.php>.

Please indicate how you would prefer to receive the newsletter:

\_\_\_\_\_ Email notification \_\_\_\_\_ USPS mail \_\_\_\_\_ No newsletter

As a member of Marin Bonsai Club, we ask that you volunteer in at least two areas where you can be helpful to the Club. You will also be asked by our Hospitality host to bring refreshments once a year. Please indicate which areas you are interested in:

Monthly Meeting / Workshop Activities

- \_\_\_\_\_ Raffle events
- \_\_\_\_\_ Field trip coordination
- \_\_\_\_\_ Publicity
- \_\_\_\_\_ Newsletter contributor
- \_\_\_\_\_ Website assistant
- \_\_\_\_\_ Photographer
- \_\_\_\_\_ Welcome Committee
- \_\_\_\_\_ Cleanup management

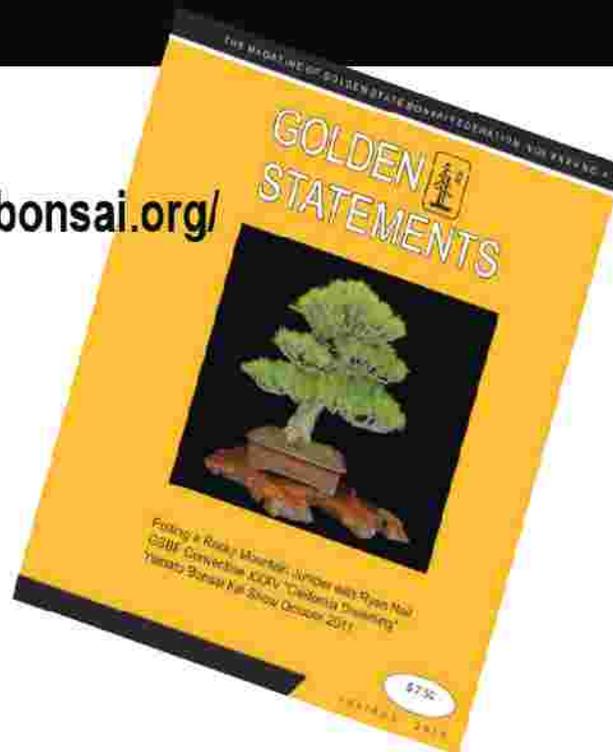
Annual Activities

- \_\_\_\_\_ Setup and takedown Marin County Fair show
- \_\_\_\_\_ Auction Committee (need lots of people)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Setup and coordination Fall Show
- \_\_\_\_\_ Summer picnic
- \_\_\_\_\_ Holiday party

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR INPUT AND YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT OF THE MARIN BONSAI CLUB**



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



Now you have more sources for where you get your bonsai information.

Go online for the new and redesigned GSBF Web homepage — <http://www.gsbf-bonsai.org/>. It's free. Be sure you subscribe to the automatic notifications via email for the absolute latest news and other posted information.

Subscribe to the bimonthly GSBF *Golden Statements* Magazine, the full featured magazine of the Golden State Bonsai Federation. To subscribe, just go online at <http://www.gsbf-bonsai.org/golden-statements/subscribe-to-gs>.

12/26/2012

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## Marin Bonsai Club Events

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February 4, 2014: Repotting Workshop,  
Multipurpose Room, 7 PM. Monthly  
Workshop. Free for members. \$10 for  
non-members.

February 18, 2014: Repotting Workshop,  
Multipurpose Room, 7 PM. Monthly  
Workshop. Free for members. \$10 for  
non-members.

March 4, 2014: Monthly Workshop,  
Multipurpose Room, 7 PM. Free for  
members. \$10 for non-members.

March 18, 2014: Monthly Meeting,  
Marin Society of Artists Building, 7:30 PM.  
Jay McDonald Demonstrating P'en Jing.



### 2013 Marin Bonsai Club Officers:

President	Tim Burke	415-259-7372
VP Programs	David Eichhorn	415-888-3756
VP Shows	Jay McDonald	415-847-8909
Secretary	Candace Key	415-491-1989
	Daniel Keller	415-453-7265
Treasurer	Art Wasserman	415-454-3077
Historian	Carolyn Robbins	415-460-0339
Librarian	Roger Lion	415-924-5134
Webmaster	Sharon Bone	415-898-9618
Newsletter	Scott Piatanesi	415-456-6848
Hospitality	Marlene Philley	415-924-5134
Docent Coord	Vacant	

Marin Bonsai Club  
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[www.marinbonsai.org](http://www.marinbonsai.org)  
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