

# Bonsai Wire

## Marin Bonsai Club



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

September 2014

### From the President...

Say hey gang,

Thanks for the team work at the auction, it was a great success.

Moving forward, I'm as giddy as a school girl about Peter Tea coming in three weeks. Get your notebooks out 'cause the learnin' starts soon.

Other news...

Thanks to some fantastic attention and planning, spearheaded by our own David Eichorn, the beginner workshop is packed. Way to go gang.

Our little club is solid financially and prepared for the future.

We are always listening for new ideas and suggestions. There's no such thing as a stupid question, we are all here to help.

That's all for now.

Get wired,

Tim Burke

### From the VP of Programs...

Congratulations are in order once again as our Auction night was well attended and greatly enjoyed by everybody. Those involved thanked one another via e-mail, but some honorable mentions are in order, to be sprinkled throughout this recap. But first, a special thank you to Candace Key, who took charge and made everything work smoothly. Candace was among the first to show up at the Marin Society of Artists (MSA) building to get the auction machinery going. Tim Burke was also there early to help move some of the MSA displays around.

Fairly sure that I was arriving on time at 5:00, I entered the MSA building to find the setup crew already in motion. John Doig was taking stock of the new purchase holding area in the raised room, Tim was coordinating the layout of the main auction area, directing myself, Alan Voight, TJ Williams, Craig Thompson, and Daniel Olson, while Daniel Keller took over the small kitchen, started the coffee, washed fruit, started salad, and countless other food prep chores. Others helping Candace with sales and auction details were Michael Jaffe, Alison Seaman, Jessica Wasserman, Art Wasserman, Frances Nolles, and Jeanette Arnold.

The time went quickly and before we knew it 7:00 had arrived, along with a veritable throng of people to take part in the auction. By then, more volunteers had also arrived, such as Roger Lion and Scott Piatanesi, both of whom

## From the VP of Programs Continued...

served as runners during the auction, in addition to helping with the final setup. Marlene Philley joined Daniel in the kitchen to help get the food to the volunteers before 7:00 and to serve the refreshments for the audience throughout the event. Thank you to everyone who brought food. The cookies and Tim Kong's devilled eggs were particularly popular.

The main attraction, the auction itself, was smooth-running and entertaining thanks to the expert and delightfully unique auctioneer stylings of Jay McDonald and Adam Petras. Thank you both for keeping it interesting and informative, as always.

Everybody seemed to enjoy the new venue. There was ample room for the 50 chairs we had, and the extra tables we rented really paid off when we were able to line up all the auction items alongside the audience. Thank you everybody who brought items for auction and for sale. I particularly like to see a loaded sale table because it gives people stuff to look at and purchase when they're not interested in a particular item up for auction. They also make nice additional conversation pieces. And I believe nearly all the items on the sales tables were snatched up.

My favorite moment of the night: overhearing a brief snippet of a conversation wherein someone was telling someone else that the club has been experiencing an upswing lately. I couldn't agree more! I didn't hear any more of the conversation, so I don't know if they were talking specifically about membership, participation, or the sheer value of being a member, but I think it's safe to say that all of those things qualify as areas where we have been growing lately.

For example, as I write this, the first day of the Beginners' Workshop has just passed and though it encountered some procedural wrinkles getting started, I understand it went very well overall. And the class is 100% full! We were a couple short just before the auction, but the auction got those last two people pumped up enough to commit. I'm sure all of those who participated are already glad they took the plunge. Thank you to Chris Ross and John Doig who always spearhead this important and valuable learning experience, and also to everybody who helped teach. I don't actually know everybody who did that, but Roger Lion, Daniel Keller, and Candace Key were committed at the time of this writing.

And there's plenty more going on! This month, after our usual workshop on the 2<sup>nd</sup>, we have our first installment with Peter Tea on the 16<sup>th</sup>. More on this excellent learning opportunity in another section of this newsletter. Looking ahead to October, we will be hosting Jonas Dupich for more discussion of pines on the 21<sup>st</sup> and Peter Tea will be back in early November.

At the risk of making an already long submission way too long, I have to put in one more honorable mention from the auction: Major kudos to Daniel Keller for selling his Oregon Ash ("cow bonsai") from our February 2013 Woodacre collection outing. \$60 was it? It was a nice looking tree, too. It was a multi-trunk tree, splayed out like a fan, with some good shape to the trunks and reasonably small leaves and short internodes.

## VP Programs Continued...

Less than two years field to auction with a species that most everybody else has agreed is not particularly conducive to bonsai, way to go Daniel!

See you at an event real soon . . .

David Eichhorn

## Marin Bonsai Auction

It was another great auction for the club and we have many people to thank for this successful effort. The auction team is well honed by now, but the challenge of a new venue at the Marin Society of Artists building tested our meddle. From the early reports we received, visitors enjoyed the new space and the arrangement worked well for showing off the trees and pots. We had visitors from the northern hinterlands, across the Bay and down the peninsula and we greatly appreciate the support shown by the Bay Area bonsai community.

Of course we would not have been able to put on such a successful event without the help, support and wisdom of so many club members. It is a terrific team effort and always makes my heart swell with pride to see how everyone pulls together, working through the kinks, and keeps the show rolling. A big thank you to all who put in efforts large and small to support the club in this important fundraiser.

Candace Key



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## Peter Tea Bonsai Development Classes

Tuesday September 16 is the beginning of an important new educational initiative for Marin Bonsai Club. We will sponsor a series of four classes over the next year with bonsai professional Peter Tea to instruct us on bonsai development. This is a gross oversimplification of the breadth and depth of what we will be studying with Peter. Some club members have attended Peter's demonstrations or workshops and know the wealth of knowledge he brings to the art and science of bonsai. Along with that knowledge is his ability to clearly and succinctly explain what he is talking about, often with illustrations, and other times by simply explaining things in a way that makes lightbulbs go on.

For the first class Peter will talk about his goals for the program and his approach to bonsai development. He'll talk about the basics of creating bonsai, using drawings to define the different stages of development. Of course it is not productive to try to develop trees that aren't strong enough or healthy enough to withstand the rigors of training, so Peter will also talk about tree health, how to determine problem areas in our trees and what to do about them.

Please note, these are classes, not workshops and Peter will not have time to talk with members individually about their trees, although it may be helpful in future classes to bring in trees of your own to study as Peter talks about development of that specific type of tree. He will be focusing his instruction on junipers and deciduous trees. Because of the lack of time Peter will not take on the discussion of Japanese Black Pine development in this first year of the program, but never fear, we have Jonas Dupuich coming up for the October meeting and he will continue his fine presentations on the development of these important bonsai species.

Looking ahead to our November meeting with Peter, he will begin by discussing the final cutting of deciduous trees before winter, including the very important internode vs. non-internode issues. In preparation for repotting season which will be about to begin at that time, he will talk about understanding soil components and how water content affects plant growth. He will also touch on when a tree needs to be repotted - hint, it is not every year, which many of us have been told over the years. Finally, for November, Peter will talk about concepts on choosing a front for your tree.

We are very excited to be presenting this first of its kind program with Peter. Although some of you have been doing bonsai for many years, we can promise that everyone, regardless of their level of experience, will learn much from Peter's comprehensive program. We have all had good instructors over the years, but with Peter Tea we have a professional educator with a well thought out system for developing healthy trees and stunning bonsai. We hope you will join us for this exciting series of classes.

Candace Key

## Bonsai School to Support Garden

The best way to sustain our Bonsai Garden is to have a strong team of dedicated and educated volunteers. To achieve this goal we are creating the Bonsai Garden at Lake Merritt. Initial funding was approved by the Golden State Bonsai Federation (GSBF) at its recent Board of Trustees meeting.

The School will commence in January 2015 with five or six students chosen from among the applicants who present the best qualifications. The School is seeking applicants who have demonstrated an interest in bonsai education, a dedication to improving the bonsai community and the temperament to be good bonsai students, teachers and role models.

The School is designed to provide a complete bonsai education from mastering bonsai basics through intermediate and advanced skills and culminating in a year of independent research designed to advance bonsai knowledge about specific species. The School is based upon the Oxford University model of teacher and student interacting in a roundtable setting. The School is not meant to compete but rather compliment the current workshop programs that exist throughout the Bonsai community.

If you are interested in learning more about the BSBF Bonsai School at Lake Merritt, you can read about it on our new BGML website by following this link <http://gsbf-lakemerrit.org/>. Potential students who wish to receive the Syllabus and perhaps apply should send an email to [bonsailakemerrit@gmail.com](mailto:bonsailakemerrit@gmail.com) and place the words "Bonsai School Information" in the subject field. If you wish to make comments or ask questions about the School, please do so on our blog site, <http://gsbf-lakemerrit.org/>.

Thanks for supporting the future of your Bonsai Garden.

Regards,

Joe Byrd, Chairman  
Bonsai Garden Lake Merritt.

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## The Taskmaster, September 2014

Autumn is in the air! Can you feel it? The leaves beginning to turn, the crisp mornings, the scent of season's change? Whoops, that ain't California, baby, that's someplace else altogether! Here in the Northern Bay Area mediterranean microclimates we got Summer, man. Most of California is due for some more long hot afternoons, more drying winds, more dry days and nights.

And that means more vigilance in the old bonsai garden. Make sure that cascades get a day or so in a deep water bath every week or so. Make sure that wisteria and tamarisk stay in their deep water baths for another month or so. Make sure that each pot needs the water you intend to give it by scratching the soil and looking closely, because trees that are slowing down drink less, and trees that get too hot transpire less. In each case they may be getting too wet if you don't watch it. The roots could rot or get fungus, and molds and mildews love the too-moist and warm combo. Make sure that small pots get dappled shade or morning exposure only because the hottest part of the day is later in the afternoon than you would think it is. Spray all the foliage with water often, or better yet, use Eleanor's VF-11 to increase vigor and resistance to the damage that hot and dry can do. Make sure to brush off mosses growing up the trunks and along exposed roots before it damages the bark. Make sure to check carefully for mold, mildew, scale, mealybugs, spittlebugs, and spider mites because this is their prime time and they know it. One of the effective ways to deal with most if not all of these nuisances is to spray with a dilute horticultural oil solution every two or three weeks or so, like Volk oil for instance. It should smother most of them.

Now is not a great time to repot things in general in this part of the country. Too much chance of a lot of dry heat coming in for the kill while the trees are struggling with the shock. Better to wait for November. But Summer growth that has hardened off can be safely wired and positioned, and the slower late-year growth rates make it more likely that the wire can stay on longer without cutting into the bark. Check all wiring done earlier because growth may have been more vigorous than you think and cuts form quickly in the Summer.

Some people like to fertilize in September through October to promote formation of buds for next Spring. Low Nitrogen is best, otherwise you may get tender growth spurts that are too easily damaged by both the heat and then the coming chilly nights. A 70%-30% mix of cottonseed meal/bone meal is ideal, sprinkled around the outside third of the pot every two weeks through October and chopped in with a chopstick, about two tablespoons per twelve inch pot as a general rule that can be adjusted up or down as size varies. After the Fall feedings, an 0-10-10 type fertilizer will be needed for Winter months. Redwood appreciate good feeding right now, and will put out vigorous growth. Full sun makes heavier growth, shade makes smaller, more compact growth, and you can (must) pinch or cut back to new buds frequently.

All in all, Fall's a ball. That's my call. Here's to trees that are small.

Good luck to you all.

The Taskmaster

## Upcoming Northern California Bonsai Events

September 11, 2014: San Francisco, California: Bonsai Society San Francisco (BSSF) Annual Auction, 7:30 pm, at Hall of Flowers (Strybing Arboretum) at the corner of Ninth Ave and Lincoln Way. Enter through the parking lot at Tenth Ave and Lincoln and walk along the south side of the building to the club room. Pre-Bonsai, Bonsai, and Pots will be for sale. Or, just stop by and visit with our old friend Tim Kong. For more information, please contact Robert Smith at [rwsmithtbn@earthlink.net](mailto:rwsmithtbn@earthlink.net).

October 4, 2014, San Jose, California  
Midori Bonsai Club: 53rd annual show at the Northside Community Center, 488 6th St. Hours are 10 AM – 5 PM with demonstration at 1 PM by Juan Cruz (tree will be raffled off). Beginner's workshop from 10 AM – 1 PM. Advice from Dr. Bonsai for trees brought in. Large plant sale by club members along with many vendors with bonsai supplies and trees. Free admission and parking. For more information contact John Thompson at [jtbonsai@gmail.com](mailto:jtbonsai@gmail.com)

October 18 – 19, 2014, Union City, California Yamato Bonsai Kai: 43rd Annual Bonsai Exhibition at Southern Alameda County Buddhist Church, 32975 Alvarado-Niles Road. Hours: Noon – 6 PM Saturday & 10 AM – 5 PM Sunday. Demonstration each day at 2 PM featuring Johnny Uchida working with advanced Black Pine material to create bonsai. Don't miss this special event. Benefit raffle drawing each day after the demo; raffle includes the demo tree. Large vendor and plant sales area; free admission and parking. Doctor Bonsai support will be available. For more information call Tony Hayworth at 510-289-5731 or [bonsaicho@comcast.net](mailto:bonsaicho@comcast.net) or visit our club website [www.yamatobonsai.org](http://www.yamatobonsai.org).



<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>.

### 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)

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## Marin Bonsai Club Events

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September 2, 2014: Monthly Workshop, Multipurpose Room, 7 PM. Free for members. \$10 for non-members.

September 16, 2014: Monthly Meeting, Multipurpose Room, 7:30 PM. Peter Tea lecturing on Bonsai Development.

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

October 21, 2014: Monthly Meeting, Multipurpose Room, 7:30 PM. Jonas Dupuich on Black Pine Development.



### 2014 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
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Webmaster	Sharon Bone	415-898-9618
Newsletter	Scott Piatanesi	415-456-6848
Hospitality	Marlene Philley	415-924-5134
Docent Coord	Vacant	

Marin Bonsai Club  
PO Box 437  
Ross, CA 94957  
[www.marinbonsai.org](http://www.marinbonsai.org)  
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