



The Tree Shrinker

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A MONTHLY BULLETIN

<http://www.eastbaybonsai.org>



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East Bay Bonsai Society

August Potluck Picnic: August 20, 2016 @ 3:00 pm – sunset
Nelson-Trumm Property – see below for location and directions

(No regular meeting in August)

President's Note

What a great level of member support (and bidding) at our annual auction. It was a great event, and even though I wasn't the high bidder on several trees, I still came away from the auction happy that we had a lively set of bidders, and those who either donated or consigned items for the auction.

Next month is our potluck on August 20th at Janet and Rick's property. It's always a fun time and great conversation. If you haven't been there the treat is to see their vast collection of trees.

Again, thanks to all of the volunteers who made the auction possible.

Michael

Survey

Now is the time for your voice to be heard. As announced in the last newsletter, the board of directors wants to hear from you about how the club is doing in fulfilling your needs. What are they doing right and what could be improved? What new activities would you like to see the club become involved in? As a way of expressing your view of what the society should be, a survey has been posted on the web site <http://bit.ly/EBBS2016>. If you have already responded, thank you and be assured that your comments are valued. If you have not yet responded, please take a moment to do so. This is your chance to help make the society what you want it to be. If you receive the newsletter as a printed copy, the survey was attached to the July issue. The completed form can be mailed to our club secretary, Lisa Harper at 157 Kimberlin Heights Dr., Oakland, California, 94619.



August Meeting

The August meeting is our annual potluck picnic which will be held on Saturday, August 20, from 3:00 pm until sunset. Usually the picnic is held at Rick and Janet's home, but since their house is under construction, the event will be held across the street from their house at 5716 Balmoral Drive in Oakland. We will set up tables for food and dining under the trees, croquet in the meadow, and ice chests for chilling food and beverages. There's no oven/stove in the meadow, so do not bring a potluck dish that requires heating. Also, early arrivers would be helpful for set-up.



This is one of the social highlights of the year and should not be missed. Janet and Rick have a large collection of spectacular bonsai which they are happy to show off. The chance to see and enjoy their beautiful bonsai is alone worth your visit. Best of all, the picnic is a chance for members to socialize on an informal basis. The meal is potluck and the food assignments are as follows:

- Appetizer-Last name S-Z
- Entrée-Last name A-G
- Side dish or salad-Last name H-L
- Dessert-Last name M-R

Be sure to bring utensils required for serving your contribution. The club will provide wine and soft drinks.

The Oakland hills can occasionally be a bit cool and breezy so dress in layers. Hats and sun screen are also a good idea.

Directions are as follows: If coming from the north or east, take Highway 24, or if coming from the south take

Highway 580 to Highway 13 (the Warren Freeway). From either direction proceed to the Redwood Road exit and go east (up the hill) on Redwood road. Take a right at Skyline Blvd which is at the summit. Proceed to Balmoral Drive (at the stoplight) and make a left turn on to Balmoral and find #5716. If lost or you need more information, call 510-482-8428.

September Meeting

The September meeting will feature a presentation on oaks by John Thompson. This is a timely program because oaks are somewhat underused as bonsai. John has a special passion for oaks and he will open our eyes to their potentials. He has been a program presenter for EBBS many times in the past, each time giving a program that was well received. We look forward to his comments on oaks.



Auction

The July auction is a major fund raising event for the society and this year it was a great success. The final accounting is complete and it is clear that our treasury benefited from all the efforts of the many club members who helped to organize and stage the event, as well as those who bought and sold plants. Many thanks are due to many people, but perhaps most specifically to Suzanne Muller for coordinating the event. All her hard work resulted in a very smooth operation.

The success of any auction rests squarely on the skill of the auctioneers. EBBS is fortunate to have Michael Hylton and Mike Pistello who were stellar auctioneers and who kept the action going at a fast pace. Thanks to both of them. They were real pros.



Thanks are due to the people who logged sales and to the cashiers. Both of these tasks require people who can function well during occasionally hectic times, a skill that not all us have.

EBBS owes a debt of gratitude to those members who furnished items for sale at the auction, and especially to those who donated items which meant the entire proceeds of the sale went to the club. Your generosity will be repaid by the club being able to fund outstanding speakers in the future.

If you missed out on selling your plants at the auction or if you have items worth less than ten dollars, take heart. EBBS has a sales table at our show in October and all plants, and especially inexpensive plants, are welcome with the usual twenty percent of the selling price going to the club.

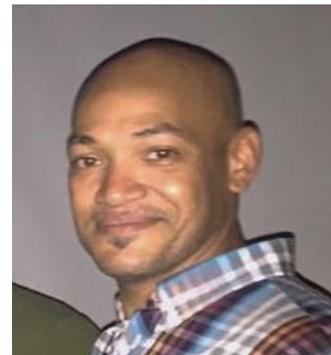
Show

Show time is coming. Our show is in October which seems like a long time in the future but it will be upon us before we know it. Now is the time to start thinking about what trees you would like to show and what needs to be done to make them show ready. You need to show the trees on stands, and now is the time to be sure that the stands you have will make your trees sparkle.

Soon there will be signup sheets available for staffing all the many tasks that are needed to make the show a success. Roger Brady is our show chair and he is already in the planning stage for a great show. Be ready to volunteer your time at the show. Roger will need your help.

Spotlight

This month the glare of the spotlight is on Khary Dvorak-Ewell. First let's look at a bit of background. A number of years ago EBBS was experiencing a severe drop in membership. A survey of the membership was conducted to reveal what could be done to improve satisfaction. Somewhat later, the board conducted a retreat which focused on a wide ranging discussion about what the society was doing well and what could be improved. Both the survey and the retreat lead to changes in the society to make membership a friendlier and satisfying experience.



The board is currently planning a second retreat to provide an in depth discussion of where the society is going and what it should be doing. As a preliminary to the retreat, the society is again surveying the membership. The survey will be one of the topics of discussion at the retreat.

A survey is difficult to construct to be sure that all the right information is collected and in a form that can be evaluated. Khary stepped forward to spearhead the survey as well as evaluation of the results. It was a big undertaking and the board appreciates Khary's hard and careful work. Thanks, Khary.

Bugs



We are fortunate that our bonsai are usually not heavily bothered by bugs. Generally, they are free of bugs, but what do we do when we find that our prized bonsai is covered with them?

It is important to examine your trees frequently. If you find that there is evidence of bugs, the first thing to do is to ask whether the bug was just passing through, or the bug has called in the whole family to set up housekeeping. If, for example, the problem was caused by a grasshopper who stopped by your place for lunch on his way to Hollywood to become a movie star, the best thing to do is nothing. Chalk up the couple of munched leaves up to the cost of growing your bonsai outdoors. Beyond encouraging them to leave, the occasional caterpillar or snail can be treated the same way.

If you find that the bugs have set permanent headquarters, then you need to act quickly because the insect infestation can grow rapidly, and the worse the infestation, the more difficult it will be to treat.



The obvious solution to the bug problem is to make them go away, so the first choice is to simply hose them off. This approach works well for aphids.



When we do have bug problems, the frequent cause is not aphids but some species of scale, and these look like little white puffs of cotton. Unfortunately, hosing does not work because the little varmints stick tightly to the

foliage. This brings us to the use of insecticides.

We have our choice of two different types of insecticides based on how they work. The first group consists of various soaps and horticultural oils. This group works on the outside of the bug by clogging the pores the bug uses to breathe, and so the insect dies from lack of oxygen. People, kids and pets do not breathe using this kind of pores, so this group of insecticides really doesn't affect us much unless we happen to fall into a vat of the product. While anything can be toxic when taken the wrong way, this group is labeled nontoxic and you are pretty much able to use them any way you wish.

The second group of insecticides is labeled as harsh chemicals by the Master Gardener program and consists of products which act inside the bug. Most in this group act by jamming the place where nerves join muscles, and since impulse transmission is blocked,

the bug dies of paralysis. Unfortunately, we have the same kind of muscle-nerve junctions, and if we are not careful with the product, we can have problems, too. This kind of product, which is available over the counter at local nurseries, has modest toxicity and can be safely handled with a minimum of care. Rubber gloves and a cloth mask will see you safely through a spraying. Malathion is an example of this group.

So we now have a bonsai with bugs and two choices of insecticide types. Which should we use? Each has strengths and weaknesses. The nontoxic group is safe for kids and pets but works by directly contacting the bug. Many bugs, and particularly scale, hide under the foliage and are missed by only one spraying. Further, the bugs may have laid eggs that hatch after you spray. You may need to spray several times weekly to totally eradicate the bugs.

The harsh chemicals leave a residue on the foliage and any bugs you missed by directly contacting them with the spray will be done in when they crawl across the leaf. Because of this, these products are more effective in dealing with a severely infested plant. The residue eventually gets washed off when you water your tree.

On the down side, the products must be used carefully because of their toxic properties. It is frequently noted that the harsh chemicals cause a lot of collateral damage by also doing in the "good" bugs as well as the "bad" bugs, and this is a justified claim.



"Bad" bugs eat your plants and "good" bugs eat the bad bugs. When there are enough hungry "good" bugs in your plants they will solve the problem of insect control for you. It should be noted that the nontoxic group will also do in the "good" bugs if they get contacted with spray. If you choose to use a harsh chemical, the most environmentally friendly way is to spray only infested trees.



The use of insecticides can be a very emotional subject, but with a bit of care in the use and a bit of understanding in how they work, they are effective products. Severe bug infestations can be life threatening for your tree, so insect control is an important part of the culture of bonsai.

Bonsai Instruction at Merritt College

The bonsai workshops at Merritt College will resume on Monday, August 22 and will continue on the fourth Monday of each month that the college is in session. They are a splendid opportunity to learn how to develop your trees into first class bonsai. You will work on your own trees under the guidance of an experienced bonsai artist. The workshops are open to all experience levels.

The workshops are held at 7:00 pm in the Landscape Horticulture Building at Merritt College which is located in the Oakland hills off Redwood Road. Leading the workshops are two outstanding bonsai artists who are also members of EBBS, Bill Castellon and Randall Lee. The workshops are free (except for a small parking fee) and are a wonderful learning experience. All you need to take advantage of them is to just show up with your tree. For more information, contact Bill at 510-569-8003 or Randall at 510-846-0841.

want to come early and miss the traffic. (lots of good options in downtown San Rafael)

It's always a fun time and there are sure to be lots of bargains. Hope to see you August 16.

Your friends at the Marin Bonsai Club

Roster Update

Don Meeker's new email address is dmeeker@astound.net.

Events by Others

GSBF's Bonsai and Suiseki Garden: open Tues. - Fri. 11:00 am – 3:00 pm, Sat. 10:00 am – 4:00 pm, Sun. 12:00 noon – 4:00 pm Enter at gate across from Boat House.

August 6 – 7, San Francisco, San Francisco Suiseki Kai: 35th Annual Suiseki Exhibit at the Union Bank Community Room, Japan Center, 1675 Post Street. Show hours are 10 AM – 5 PM Saturday and 11 AM – 5 PM Sunday. Show coincides with the 43rd annual Nihonmachi Street Fair, so come early and enjoy your day in San Francisco's historic Japantown. Suiseki and stone sales. For more information about our club, contact sfsuisekikai@gmail.com or visit <http://sfsuisekikai.wordpress.com>.

August 20 – 21, Santa Rosa, Redwood Empire Bonsai Society (REBS): 33rd Annual show at the Santa Rosa Veterans Memorial Building, 1351 Maple Avenue. Show hours are 10 AM to 5 PM on Saturday and 10 AM to 4 PM on Sunday with demonstration by Bonsai Master Artist Kathy Shaner from 1 to 3 PM both days. Demo trees will be raffled. See the largest bonsai exhibition. Large bonsai vendor and member sales. Exciting silent auctions or "buy it now". Free refreshments by the Bonsai café. Free admission and parking. For more information visit our website www.rebsbonsai.org or contact Bob Shimon at (707) 884-4126 or shimon@mcn.org.

Bonsai Calendar

- Watering – Water regularly. Don't over-water defoliated trees.
- Fertilizing – Continue regular feeding, but stop fertilizing decandled pines.
- Repotting – Not recommended at this time except for tropical and semi-tropical trees.
- Styling/Pruning – Avoid drastic pruning. Wire uprising branches on quince, ume, oaks, etc. Prune excessive growth on trees.
- Insect and disease control – Maintain defensive treatments for fungus. Watch for and treat insect infestations.

Refer to the EBBS Bonsai Calendar for more details on seasonal care.

Marin Bonsai Club Auction

The Marin Bonsai Club is pleased and excited to announce they have a new venue for their yearly Auction. The location is 750 Lindaro Street, near Highway 101 in downtown San Rafael. The space is large and well lighted, with free parking right in front of the building.

Bonsai pots, stands, pre-bonsai, tools and other related items fill out the offering, and there will be a sales area and refreshments as usual. Preview starts at 6:45 with the auction commencing at 7:30 sharp. Payment is by cash or check with local ID and phone number.

Any non-MBC parties wishing to sell items at the auction are encouraged to contact us through our website at marinbonsai.org for more information. Directions to the Corporate Center can also be found there along with restaurant suggestions for those who



Wanted to Buy (or for free)

Each membership household, free of charge, may place a five-line ad related to bonsai in two newsletters each year. Send a copy of ads to your editor by the fourth Monday of the month to appear in the next publication. To place an add call (925) 458-3845.

East Bay Bonsai Society—Schedule for 2016
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Regular Meetings: Second Wednesday, every month (except August and October) @ 7:30 pm

Place: Lakeside Garden Center, 666 Bellevue Avenue, Oakland.

Visitors welcome.

Website for Bonsai Garden Lake Merritt: www.gsbf-lakemerritt.org/

Meeting Program

Aug 28 BGLM Introduction to Bonsai – John Nackley

Sept 14 Oaks - John Thompson

Sept 25 BGLM Introduction to Bonsai – Janet Nelson

Oct 23 BGLM Introduction to Bonsai – Don Meeker

Nov 9 Juniper Jubilee - Mike Pistello

Nov 27 BGLM Introduction to Bonsai – Tom Colby

Dec 14 Holiday Party

Special Events

Aug 20 Potluck

Oct 8-9 Show
