



The Tree Shrinker

Volume XXXX, No. 10

A MONTHLY BULLETIN

Annual Show:	October 13-14, 2012
October Meeting:	October 10, 2012 CANCELED

President's Note

October begins EBBS's 51st year as a bonsai club. *Congratulations*, Ron Reed! You have held the longest participating membership for 41 years. Can EBBS survive another 50 years? Several Northern California bonsai clubs have failed in the past few years due to attrition of membership. As I mentioned last month, surviving clubs are distinguished by a generous and energetic membership and active leadership. This year the Board of EBBS has no vice president to take over in January, nor are there any nominations for a new vice president or president for the upcoming year. East Bay has survived this leadership vacuum in the past, being lead by a committee of the Board itself. I would be willing to continue as president another year if there is a vice president appointed. With three months to resolve this crisis, I trust the membership will step up to the plate.

John N.

September Meeting

The September meeting featured presentations by five members of EBBS, centered on how to prepare your trees for the show and how to display them.

Dennis Hawkins focused on preparation of the tree. The most important thing is to look critically at your tree. This will illuminate problem areas that need attention. Dennis mentioned that excess wire should be removed as well as dead leaves and yellow or brown leaves on trees not in fall color. The pot should be cleaned. Dennis uses a Brillo pad moistened with either alcohol or paint thinner to scrub the pot. He then rubs the pot with a rag dampened with walnut oil. He takes care to wipe excess oil off by a final buffing with a clean rag.

Dennis offered a couple of noteworthy comments. First, if you are planning to enter a Juniper in the show, delay trimming the foliage until a couple of days before the show since the trimmed ends can turn yellow over time. Secondly, if your show tree has an ant problem, move the tree to the other end of the bench because the ants are not smart enough to follow the tree.



Bob Gould discussed top dressing the soil. The basic reason for top dressing is to provide a transition of color between the edge of the pot and the trunk of the tree. Dark trunks require a dark top dressing which is usually finely screened dark lava with some fine akadama to adjust the color. Prior to applying the top dressing, the soil is brushed to remove the relatively large particles. Bob uses a flat trowel to tamp and smooth the applied top dressing. Once the top dressed tree is watered, some large particles in the soil can emerge and should be removed. After the show the top dressing can be left on the tree since it is mostly inert lava.

Moss can also be used as a top dressing, especially on a tree with a dense canopy which provides shade under the tree. Moss can either be applied as a flat sheet, or as many small quarter-sized pieces wadded up. The latter method gives an uneven surface to the moss which can be attractive. In both cases, the moss is tamped into the soil to give good contact for the moss to grow.

A mixture of moss and top dressing can also be used.

Polly Gould brought in a variety of accent plants. Polly and Virginia Callaham are two real stars of EBBS shows with the many fine accent plants they provide. Many of the plants Polly brought were potted in very colorful pots. Before our show, Polly cleans the pots with olive oil spray which is then buffed to remove the excess.

A great deal of effort is made to match the accent plant with the tree. Matching is done on several levels. First is location. Ferns do not grow where junipers grow and hence would not be as good a choice of accent plant for a juniper as a succulent. Second is time of year. A brown grass is fine for a fall tree but not for a spring tree in bloom. Lastly is style of plant growth. A blooming plant nicely complements a tree in the spring.

Polly showed a mud ball in which soil is surrounded by a layer of muck and the whole thing is covered with moss held on by green string. Plants are planted in the ball and over time the ball acquires a very natural look.

Inge Woelfel is very fond of shohin trees and has spent a great deal of time studying how to display them. She showed two possible compositions for exhibiting

shohin trees. Each composition involved two trees, an accent plant and a scroll.

Due to the small size of the trees, display of shohin is a bit different from the normal tokonoma display which usually involves a single tree, an accent plant and a scroll. For shohin display the two trees faced each other at opposite ends of the display and the accent plant and the scroll were placed in the middle between them. It was a rare opportunity to see how shohin display is constructed.

EBBS is very fortunate to have Inge who will be in charge of assembling the shohin display for our show. Do spend a little time at the show to see how she places the trees.

Tom Colby concluded the program with a brief discussion on stands. He showed three stands that were very different in style, and commented that if possible, the stand selected for each tree should complement the tree. For example, a very low stand would be used for a tall tree, and a very tall stand might be used for a short, twiggy yamadori juniper where the height of the stand would elevate the tree so the fine details of the tree could be seen and enjoyed.

Tom then talked about sources for stands. From time to time stands become available at sales such as the mammoth fund raiser held by the Bonsai Garden Lake Merritt in the winter. The criteria for a good stand is a clean and simple design and, when available at a reasonable price, should be purchased.

Stands can be borrowed with care taken to use felt dots (available from Ace Hardware) on the bottom of the legs of the pots to prevent scratching the stand.

Very simple stands can be made from short sections of hardwood available from McBeath Hardwood in Berkeley. Slabs of sections of tree trunks can be used, but must be thin so as not to dominate the tree. Three boards in a staggered formation can be used and is particularly useful for a very large pot.

Lastly, bamboo mats are frequently used as an informal summer display in Japan and are available here in import stores.

Show Time is Here

Our annual show will be on Saturday October 13 and Sunday 14 at the Lakeside Garden Center. Show hours are 10: p.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Saturday and 10:00 pm to 4:30 p.m. on Sunday.

The headliner for the show is John (JT) Thompson who is a well known and respected local teacher. JT has studied with Japanese masters and has been an accomplished bonsai artist for many years. EBBS is fortunate to have him as our headliner.

You may have thought of bonsai shows as exhibits of trees, a place to greet friends from the bonsai community and a place to work together with your fellow club members to make it all happen. You may have missed the most important aspect of the show



which is that it can be a superb learning experience for us all.

Start by watching Janice as she places trees during the show setup on Friday night. Each tree compliments its neighbor and all the trees will form a single composition. See if you can see why she selects the order of the trees that she uses. A well staged show takes great skill and we are fortunate that we have Janice as a stager.

JT will conduct a workshop on Saturday in which participants will work on their own tree under his guidance. The workshop is always open to silent observers who can watch the work progress. This is a wonderful opportunity to learn about how to style trees and should be taken advantage of by all of us.

On Sunday, JT will conduct a critique of the trees exhibited in the show. Critiques are always the high point of our shows where the headliner points out how the trees could be improved, as well as good qualities in the trees.

Finally on Sunday JT will do a demonstration on a juniper where you get to see the transformation of a bush into a bonsai.

With all these possibilities to learn more, if you have not gained a bit more wisdom about the art and craft of bonsai it is your own fault. The possibilities for learning are there.

Show Schedule

Friday Night -10/12/12

- 6:00 p.m. Set-up starts
- 7:30 p.m. About time pizza arrives
- 9:45 p.m. Set-up should be finished
- 10:00 p.m. Garden Center is locked

Saturday – 10/13/12

- 9:00 a.m. Hall is opened
- 9:30 a.m. Pastries and coffee are provided
- 10:00 a.m. Show and sale open to public
- 11:30 a.m. Hospitality room opens for lunch
- 1:30 p.m. Hospitality room closes
- 2:00 p.m. JT leads workshop in Ebell Room
- 1:30 p.m. Hospitality room closes
- 4:00 p.m. Workshop ends
- 5:00 p.m. Show and sale close to public

Sunday – 10/14/12

- 9:00 a.m. Hall is opened
- 9:00 a.m. Pastries and coffee are provided
- 9:00 a.m. JT's critique of the show starts
- 10:00 a.m. Show and sale open to public
- 11:30 a.m. Hospitality room opens for lunch
- 1:00 p.m. Demonstration begins in Ebell room
- 1:30 p.m. Hospitality room closes
- 3:30 p.m. Benefit drawing begins
- 4:30 p.m. Plant sale closes
- 4:30 p.m. Show closes to public and Teardown commences

Show Set-up – Friday Evening

All members please plan to help with set-up. There is a lot of work involved in setting up tables, skirting them, adding backdrops in the exhibit room, and moving stands and trees. We also need to set-up tables and chairs in the dining room, set-up tables and a few chairs for the plant sale and reception near the front door, and set-up tables and chairs for the workshop and our vendor in the demonstration room.

Doors of Lakeside Garden Center will be open for work to start at 6:00 p.m. You need not go home for dinner before helping with set-up because EBBS will provide pizza and cold beverages for all workers. Come and join in the camaraderie of setting up the show.

All trees and accent and companion plants are to be delivered to the central hallway before 7:00 p.m. Trees are to be placed in the central hallway along the wall next to the large kitchen. Companion and accent plants are to be placed on that wall toward the entrance doors. Materials for the tokonoma displays are to be placed either on their carts or on tables near the beverage dispensers.

In our show room, Janice Dilbeck will arrange the display of trees, and Polly Gould and Virginia Callahan will arrange companion and accent plants. Inge Woelfel will arrange the shohin display.

Bob Gould will be responsible for assigning particular tokonoma tables for displays by individual members. Each individual member is responsible for arrangement of his or her tokonoma.

Tree Labels

Something new this year, we are collecting a list of the trees that you may display so that we can create tags for the trees prior to the show. Please fill out the form attached to this newsletter and return it to Janice Dilbeck at 2176 Mendocino Drive, Bay Point, 94565, or e-mail your list to janicedilbeck@comcast.net no later than October 8. Then when you bring your trees to the show, find your labels and put them with your trees. If you miss the deadline, we will have a few labels for the more common tree types and some blank labels.

All types of trees are welcome in the show. But since this is a fall show, we'd especially like to see deciduous trees in fall color and trees with fruits or berries.

Saturday Afternoon Workshop

There will be a workshop on Saturday afternoon starting at 1:00. Here, participants will work on their own trees under JT's direction. Participants will come away with not only a fine tree, but a little better understanding of the mechanics of bonsai creation. The cost to participate is \$50. Participants will provide their own trees, tools and wire. If you want to reserve a space in the workshop, call Janet Nelson (510) 482-8428. There are still several places available. Silent observers are welcome, so this is a learning experience available for us all.

Sunday Morning Critique

A critique of the trees in the show will be conducted by JT on Sunday morning starting at 9:00. This is a splendid learning experience for each of us and is by far the most valuable part of the show. No matter where your tree is in its development, he can point out changes to make it a better tree.

Sunday Demonstration

As his grand finale at our show, JT will style an old juniper. You will want to attend his demo Sunday, starting at 1:00 p.m. to hear his explanations as he styles a special tree.

You must be present on Sunday at the conclusion of the demonstration to win JT's demo tree. Buy your tickets at any time, and drop your tickets in the bucket for the benefit drawing. Be present Sunday afternoon or leave your ticket stubs with someone who will attend the benefit drawing that follows the demonstration.

Teardown of Show, Sunday Evening

Our show will be dismantled promptly at 4:30 p.m. on Sunday, October 14. At the end of the show all of us are tired and want to grab the trees we exhibited and go home. This is perfectly understandable but it leaves tear down of the tables and general clean up of the show area to a very few hardy souls. Do plan to spend at least a little time with the cleanup before you depart the scene. Those few hardy souls will appreciate your help.

Something New

We plan to have a silent auction on both Saturday and Sunday. Ron Reed will be in charge of the auction.



Donate quality bonsai items to this fund raising activity, and bid, bid, bid!

Hospitality Room Depends Upon Your Food!

Our hospitality lunches return after a year hiatus when the garden room was not available. EBBS offers lunches both on Saturday and Sunday to EBBS members and honored guests. Style is pot luck with augmentation by the club. Each day, both Saturday and Sunday, you bring one dish to feed 8 to 10 people. If you will not attend one of the days, you may bring food the night before and place it in the refrigerator. Assignments are as follows:

- Side dish or salad Last name: O-Z
- Entrée Last name: A-I
- Dessert Last name J-N

Remember to bring a serving utensil (spoon, ladle, etc.) if your food requires it. Be sure to put your name on any containers or utensils that you expect to have returned to you after use.

No Mid-Show Dinner

We will not have the mid-show dinner on Saturday night since there will be a *Friends of the Gardens* event at the Garden Center.

Supporting the Show

Every member is asked to work at least one shift of two to three hours, either Saturday or Sunday. If you haven't already signed up, you can do so Friday night at set-up, or call the chairperson of the committee you wish to assist.

Please assist these responsible persons:

- **Show Chair** EBBS Board
- **Hospitality (food service)** Bet Neary, 510-531-3141
- **Docent and Security (in show hall)** Ron Reed, 510-533-5372
- **Sales (of consigned and donated bonsai items)** Dennis Hawkins, 510-657-8229
- **Workshop** Janet Nelson, 510-482-8428
- **Demonstration** Rick Trumm, 510-482-8428
- **Benefit Drawing** Alex Clarke, 707-746-1325
- **Silent Auction** Ron Reed, 510-533-5372
- **Publicity** Michael Hylton, 510-219-6453
- **Show set-up** Bob Gould 925-935-1914
- **Exhibit** Janice Dilbeck 925-458-3845
 - **Tokonoma** – Bob Gould
 - **Accents** – Polly Gould, Virginia Callaham
 - **Shohin** – Inge Woelfel
 - **Labels** – Janice Dilbeck

Gremel Vending at Show

Jim Gremel, long time member of EBBS, will be selling his wire, pots, and tools in the Ebell Room during our show. This would be a good opportunity to stock up on your supplies.

Donate Your Bonsai Items

John Nackley asks members to continue their tradition of generously donating quality bonsai-related items. Each item donated, whether for the benefit drawing, the sale area or silent auction, qualifies as a contribution if you itemize your tax deductions. Proceeds from the benefit drawing, sales and auction are our primary means of recouping the substantial cost to EBBS for the demonstration.

Your donated items should be brought to Lakeside Garden Center Friday evening or Saturday before 11:00 a.m. Mark each item as a donation and, if you so

desire, with your name. Leave your donations on the tables near the water fountain.

Sell Your Bonsai Items at the Show

As usual, there will be a sale by members at the show. Any and all bonsai materials are welcome as well as associated items such as pots. Last year every item brought in sold with a couple of exceptions. Potential customers range all the way from talented bonsai artists from other clubs who are interested in show quality trees to curious passersbys who wandered in to see what the show was all about. Many of these people do not know a bonsai tree from a banana tree, but are thrilled with the idea of taking a little seedling in a pot home as a memento of the occasion. The usual fine print applies. Twenty percent of the selling price goes to the club. Be sure that you plants are healthy and free of weeds and pests.



Chairman of the committee responsible for our sale of bonsai-related items is Dennis Hawkins. Sale items will be accepted Friday night, about 7:30 p.m., after the show room is set up, or early Saturday morning. Here are rules for sales at our shows:

1. Items that may be sold: healthy plants, clean pots, stands, tools, publications, saikei, and suiseki.
2. Dennis has the authority and responsibility to limit items from members that exceed the capacity of his limited space.
3. Seller must complete an inventory form, listing and describing every item and showing selling price. A completed tag must be attached to each item sold. If you reduce your price during the show, you must amend the inventory form. Dennis will have forms and tags.
4. Each seller's earnings will be calculated at 80 percent of the "selling" price (except for donated items)
5. Owners must claim unsold items by 4:30 p.m. on Sunday.
6. Treasurer's checks to sellers will occur within 30 days.

Peter Tea

Peter is an emerging super star of the bonsai world and is currently in his second year of a five year apprenticeship in Japan. He gave two fine demonstrations to EBBS a couple of years ago just before he left for his training. He is currently issuing periodical blogs of his life as an apprentice which include descriptions of trees he has worked on. If you have not been following his blogs, you have been missing a fine introduction to bonsai as practiced in Japan. His web site is www.peterateabonsai.wordpress.com

A Special Request

GSBF is sponsoring a competition for the best member club web site. EBBS happens to think that our web site is the very best ever due to the efforts of Jeff Clarkson. One of the criteria in the competition is that the web site be seen and used by club members as well as the community at large and the measure of this is the number of responses posted on the web site. Next time you visit the web site (<http://www.eastbaybonsai.org>) post a comment about the site. We all know that Jeff is a superb webmaster and we want the rest of the world to also recognize his work.

Bonsai Instruction at Merritt College

These workshops are a splendid opportunity to learn about how to develop your trees into first class bonsai. In the workshops you work on your own trees under the guidance of an experienced bonsai artist. The classes are open to all and to all experience levels.

The workshops are held at 7:00pm on the fourth Monday of each month in the Landscape Building at Merritt College, which is located off Redwood Road in Oakland. Leading the workshops are two members of EBBS, Bill Castellon and Randall Lee. Interested parties can contact Bill at 510-569-8003 or Randall at 510-864-0841 for further information. The workshops are a wonderful experience and all you need to take advantage of them is to just go and bring your trees. Don't pass them up!

Newsletters by E-mail

The cost of mailing a newsletter to a household is about \$7.00 per year. When a goodly number of members desire a paper copy the cost to the club becomes significant. If you would like to try receiving the newsletter by email, contact Janice Dilbeck either in person or at Janicedilbeck@comcast.net. If you find that an emailed copy does not meet you requirements you can always switch back to a paper copy.

Events by Others

GSBF's Bonsai and Suiseki Garden: open Wed., Thurs., Fri. 11:00 a.m.–3:00 p.m., Sat. 10:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m., Sun. 12:00 noon–4:00 p.m. Enter at gate across from Boat House.

October 6, San Jose, Midori Bonsai Club: 51st Annual Show at Northside Community Center, 488 North 6th Street. Hours 10 AM-5 PM. Display of fine bonsai, bonsai plant sale & bonsai vendors. Headliners: Kathy Shaner and John Thompson

dueling Bonsai Demonstration starts at 1 PM, trees will be raffled. Beginners workshop 10 AM - 1 PM create your own bonsai for a small fee. Local parking is available. For more information see www.midoribonsai.org

October 20-21, Union City, Yamato Bonsai Kai: 41st Annual Bonsai Exhibition and Demonstration featuring Johnny Uchida with Mike Baker and Tony Hayworth. Location: Southern Alameda County Buddhist Church, 32975 Alvarado-Niles Road. Admission of \$5.00 includes entry to the exhibit and sales area, viewing of the demonstration and a raffle entry for the demo tree. Saturday hours: 1-9 PM with demonstration at 6:30 PM. Yamato members will serve dinner from 5-6 PM; donations accepted. Sunday hours: 10 AM to 4 PM with demonstration at 1 PM. Visit www.yamatobonsaikai.org for club information.

October 25-28, Sacramento, GSBF 2012 Convention XXXV "California Dreaming" at the Doubletree Hotel, 2001 Point West Way. Reservations for hotel 916-929-8855. Headliners include Kevin Willson from Spain, David Nguy and Ryan Neil. Demonstrations, seminars, critiques, workshops, excursions, benefit drawings, vendors, and much more. First ever totally California Native Tree bonsai exhibit and first ever judged bonsai competition for cash awards. More information available at www.gsbconvention.org.

November 9-10, Ross, Marin Bonsai Club: Fall Show at the Marin Art & Garden Center, Livermore Pavilion, 30 Sir Francis Drake Blvd. Friday hours are 5:30-9:30 PM, demonstration by Bob Hilvers, silent auction, raffles, sale. Saturday hours are 10 AM - 4 PM, with several demos, vendor and club sales, show critique and raffles. Admission free. More information at www.marinbonsai.org or Alison Seaman, 415-789-1167.

Articles or Services for Sale (or give-away)

Wanted to Buy (or for free)

SOMETHING you need or want? Call or write to place an ad.

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 2012
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Regular Meetings: Second Wednesday, every month (except August and October) @ 7:30 p.m.

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

Visitors welcome—for more information: call: (925) 431-0452

Visit EBBS' web site: <http://www.eastbaybonsai.org>.

Website for Bonsai Garden Lake Merritt<<http://www.gsbf-bonsai.org/lake-merritt/NewHome.html>>

Meeting **Program**

Oct 10 No club meeting due to proximity to show

Oct 28 BGLM Introduction to Bonsai with Bob Gould

Nov 14 Junipers

Nov 25 BGLM Introduction to Bonsai with Dennis Hawkins

Dec 12 Holiday Dinner

Special Event

Oct 13-14 Fall Show, John Thompson, featured artist

Preparing trees for show

This article was assembled from a variety of sources, edited and written by Bob Callahan. It was published in a past Tree Shrinker and is presented here because of its timely content. Thanks Bob

Watering

- Trees become desiccated during shows, so water your tree thoroughly on Friday morning, before you apply top dressing

Crown

- Fine wiring is the key to detailed grooming, but for a tree to be shown this fall it should have been wired in March or last fall
- Remove wire that has served its purpose; no wire should be seen crossing the trunk
- Shorten or remove elongate new shoots, so-called water sprouts
- Reshape carefully and only slightly to avoid crown having a static (symmetrical) shape; prune only coarse branching to leave fine branching; apply fine wire and move branches to appropriate positions
- Remove undergrowth on each branch; show undersides of major branches
- Cutback foliage that interferes with viewing of trunk; shorten to two leaves or remove entirely
- Pay particular attention to the apex; as a focal point it needs special attention; assure that it bows to the viewer (except on a formal-upright styled tree)
- Remove any yellowing or brown foliage
- Examine critically the trunk and branches, remove any unsightly stubs of branches, and apply cut-paste

Trunk

- When appropriate, spray trunk with water and rub with tooth (or wire) brush to remove bark flakes
- Remove white deposits of minerals from watering when present on base of trunk and exposed roots; start this process with a toothbrush; progress to a nylon brush; finally go to a soft brass metal brush

Growing mix

- Add mix to cover exposed roots up to just below their departure from the root collar; sever small exposed roots or cover them with mix
- Remove all moss and liverworts growing on either the trunk or exposed roots
- Remove debris from soil surface

Top-dressing

- Apply a very thin layer of relatively fine, uniform particles; make the layer level with pot's rim; extend it to trunk but not over exposed roots
- Consider using 1/8"–1/4" screened fir bark, 1/16"–1/8" screened expanded shale, black lava, or combinations (sources are Clarke's Rocks at Clawitter and Wilson in Hayward and American Soil Products in Richmond); press down firmly and then brush lightly for uniform texture
- Moss, if appropriate as a top-dressing under your tree, should be fresh and green; mixes or mosaics of mosses and lichens give a more natural look; moss should be patchy, not "wall-to-wall"; islands of moss in a top dressing of black lava are attractive; screened fine bark sprinkled over moss and then lightly brushed off gives a natural look

Accent and companion plants

- Plant(ing) should be about 5 in. high for an average tree or 7 in. for a very large tree. In Japan, where stands are tall, plants are not taller than top of stand
- Clean out dead and dying vegetation, except when it gives the very desirable appearance of natural growth in fall where dead and dying members bend over and touch the ground while living members stand tall
- Remove debris, moss, and liverworts, as above
- Apply moss or appropriately sized top-dressing

Pots and stands

- Remove mineral residue on pots by applying white vinegar or rubbing alcohol to a cloth and rubbing; stubborn deposits may require rubbing with a green "Scotch" scrubber; erasers for cleaning tools also are effective on pots; do not remove pot's patina and leave it shiny; pot's feet are hardest to clean but most obvious if not cleaned; Kathy Shaner recommends leaving calcium deposit and dying it with India ink
- Just before the show, wipe unglazed pots with mineral or vegetable oil on a "hard," lint-free rag (old toweling); buff with a dry lint-free rag; may spray with kitchen olive oil, rub off excess, and buff
- Apply felt pads to feet of pots to prevent scratching of stands
- Polish stands and apply scratch remover where needed

Show Trees

Common Name of Tree _____

Botanical Name _____ Estimated Age _____

Owners Name _____ Initials _____

Common Name of Tree _____

Botanical Name _____ Estimated Age _____

Owners Name _____ Initials _____

Common Name of Tree _____

Botanical Name _____ Estimated Age _____

Owners Name _____ Initials _____

Common Name of Tree _____

Botanical Name _____ Estimated Age _____

Owners Name _____ Initials _____

Common Name of Tree _____

Botanical Name _____ Estimated Age _____

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Common Name of Tree _____

Botanical Name _____ Estimated Age _____

Owners Name _____ Initials _____