



The Tree Shrinker

Volume XXXXI, No. 3

A MONTHLY BULLETIN

East Bay Bonsai Society

February Meeting: March 13, 2013 @ 7:30 p.m.

President's Note

In a neighboring bonsai club's newsletter I recently read: "Now is time to pick the trees you want to display in the October show". Their foresight inspired me to think about planning our next big event, our July auction, which is EBBS's major fundraiser. Some of the local bonsai clubs in the Bay Area are financially fortunate in that their large number of membership provides larger revenue from dues and the generosity of their members. But for EBBS, the situation is different. For us it can be said: "No funds, no fun, and no club!" Indeed, we rely on a substantial return for our effort in this fundraiser to meet our annual budget expenses.

Over the years, our club members have tended to put their better trees in the earlier Mammoth auction, instead of our July event. There are obvious reasons why someone would do so. With the Mammoth occurring just months before, the July auction is often left with lesser trees. But there are compelling reasons to support your own club too. In order to encourage a better auction, the Board has developed these recommendations:

1. Items under \$10 value will be deferred to the Oct. plant sale to encourage a higher value bonsai material in the auction. Clearly delineating that we want better quality items, will push lesser ones to the plant sale. The effect of this limit on the auction and plant sales will be reviewed later for deciding future shifts in cutoff value.

2. Encourage more donated bonsai versus consigned ones in the auction. EBBS makes only 20% of the final auction value in consignment versus a 100% of donated plants. Donated trees are a true contribution to our registered 501-©-3 nonprofit organization. After the auction, members will be mailed a list of their donated items which may be used for tax purposes.

3. Continue to create EBBS as a member *oriented and run club whose primary goal is to meet its member's needs*. The Board must keep the members' interest foremost in order for members to donate to the club's success.

Please give your Board feedback on these changes by button holding any of us at the meetings, by phone or by email.

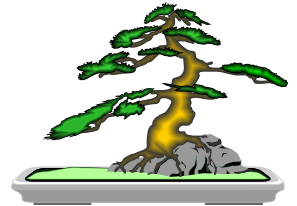
Yes, I agree that now is the time to be thinking of which trees we should start preening for October's show. But for EBBS, now is the time also to plan which trees or bonsai articles can be culled for our July auction. Success is not that complicated when we work at it.

John N.

February Meeting

The February meeting was a presentation by Val Monroe on how to choose a pot for your tree. Her presentation was divided into three parts. The first part was a discussion of how pots could compliment trees. The second part was directed to answering specific questions from members who had brought in pots for critique. Last was an exercise on matching pots to trees.

The three critical variables for choosing a pot are shape, color and proportion. Trees which have a direction are best shown in pots which have direction such as either rectangular or oval shapes. Round or circular pots compliment cascades or trees without direction such as bunjin trees.



Early in the life of a bonsai tree generic pots are satisfactory, but as the styling of the tree becomes more refined, the choice of a specific pot for the tree becomes easier. Val illustrated her points by showing pairs of pictures of two similar trees with quite different pots, and asked the audience which pot worked best for the trees and why. Seeing and discussing specific examples made for active involvement by all.

Val next reviewed the color wheel which is a circle of the three basic colors, red, blue and yellow as well as the intermediate colors, purple, green and orange. The wheel is useful when glazed pots are selected. Colors opposite from each other on the wheel such as green and red gives high impact and colors adjacent on the wheel such as green and yellow blend. Proper choice of a colored pot is very important and is complicated by the fact that the dominate color of the tree may change during the season. For example, a maple is green when leafed out in spring and summer but might become bright red in fall color. The choice of pot color for this tree is dictated by when you want to show the tree. Again Val illustrated the effect of color by showing paired

pictures of tree-pot combinations. One can avoid the problems of glaze color by choosing an unglazed pot which generally works well with all trees, although it does not have the visual impact that a glazed pot might produce.

Two guidelines for the proportions of the pot were presented. The height of the pot should be equal to about the width of the trunk of the tree at the base. The width of the pot should be about two thirds to three quarters of the height of the tree. Val showed examples of trees which did not adhere to these guidelines and the results were pleasing, which indicated that these guidelines are not always rigidly observed. None the less, they are a great and safe place to start when choosing a pot for your tree.

The last part of the presentation gave us a chance to practice what we learned. The attendees were divided into three groups. Each was presented with pictures of pots and pictures of trees. The task was to select the best pot for the trees. The choices of pots for the trees led to lively discussion on the part of the participants. Finally each group presented their conclusions and these also led to more lively discussion.

The presentation by Val was not only informative but also a lot of fun. The illustrations drove home the points that Val made. All who attended the meeting came away with a better understanding of how to choose a pot for a specific tree.

The board of EBBS would like to make the show and tell portion of the regular meeting a more important feature of the evening as a means of promoting member involvement in the society. As a result, the show and tell portion of the meeting was changed to be the first event of the evening.

Alex Clark brought in a maple tree that he has grown for 35 years and had a question about the choice of pot. Janice Dillbeck showed two pots and asked Val for advice on what type of trees would be best suited for them. John Nackley had questions for Val about what style of pot would compliment his quince tree. Inge Woefel showed two shohin trees planted in very high quality Japanese pots.

The fact that all the show and tell items were directly related to the presentation of the evening made the show and tell portion of the evening particularly meaningful. Thanks to those who brought in items for show and tell and also for selecting items which reflected the presentation of the evening.

March Meeting

Tim Kong is our featured speaker for the March meeting. His presentation is the *War of the Bonsai Chefs*, and is loosely based on the popular Japanese television program entitled the Iron Chefs. Our "chefs" will be Rick Trumm, Randall Lee and Bob Gould. Holy Cow! What is Tim up to this time? He has given many programs in the past for EBBS and they all have been a lot of fun. He is sneaky in that along with the fun, there is always a lot of solid information about bonsai painlessly inserted into his talk. Tim is an irrepressible



speaker, but this presentation may be over the top. Knowing Tim, it will certainly be an interesting evening and one that should not be missed.

Thanks in advance to Janice Dilbeck and Karen Nackley for providing refreshments. We still do not have a regular barista for the meetings. The job is not hard and involves heating some water and bringing out the necessities for tea and coffee. If you regularly enjoy coffee or tea at the meetings, how about offering to be our barista?

April Meeting

The April meeting will feature a program by Michael Hagedorn. Details of the program are being finalized, but a critique of members' trees is a likely subject. Michael has an interesting back ground. He initially was a potter specializing in pots for bonsai. He became interested in creating bonsai trees. This interest led him first to a membership in the local Bay Island Bonsai, and then to an extended stay in Japan as an apprentice to a Japanese master. It will be a pleasure to have such a well-qualified speaker at EBBS.

The cost of the program will be partially funded by a grant from the Golden State Bonsai Federation. These grants are intended to make exceptional programs available and affordable to local societies.

Wire

On a bright sunny day about 8000 years ago a man was out hunting a nice fat wooly mammoth (or whatever one hunted 8000 years ago) to take home to his wife and kids for dinner. He found a lump of metal which he knew was copper since copper is one of the very few metals that can occasionally be found in a pure state rather than as an ore. He also immediately recognized that although the piece that he found was in the shape of a lump, it had a highly regular face centered cubic crystal structure, and this would make the metal too soft to be of any use to him. He reasoned that if he could disrupt the highly ordered crystal structure, the metal would become significantly harder. Bending the lump would probably do this, but the lump was too thick to bend. Just about everything in his life could be disrupted by pounding on it with a rock, so he set about pounding on his lump with a rock. To his delight, the metal became harder just as he had expected. Pounding with the rock was a lot of hard work, so he called the process work hardening.



Now with the possibility of making hard metal, he hoped that he could fashion a point for his spear which would be more effective than the stone point he had been using. The only problem was that as he continued to pound it, the metal became too hard to shape before his spear point was completed. He knew how to solve this problem. If he could reestablish the highly regular

face centered cubic crystal structure, then the metal would become soft enough that he could complete making the spear point before it became work hardened again.

He reasoned that the best way to do this was to heat the metal very hot which would allow the crystal structure to reform. He did this by placing the partially formed spear point in the campfire he had used to cook his lunch, and indeed, the metal became softer again once it had cooled. He called this process annealing, probably because he could use this very technical sounding word on his friends. Using this technology, he was able to make a splendidly shaped spear point which also was hard. We will never know whether he bagged a nice fat woolly mammoth as dinner for his wife and kids, but all the rest is history.

When we buy copper wire for our bonsai, we make use of the technology our hunter discovered 8000 years ago. The wire is relatively soft because it has been annealed by heating it under very carefully controlled conditions of time and temperature. Sometimes the wire comes with a flakey black residue on the surface. This is copper oxide which was formed in the heat treating process. Annealed copper quickly becomes work hardened by simply bending it. As we wire our trees the wire hardens by bending it around the branches. The resulting increase in rigidity of the wire makes positioning the branch easier, and holds the branch in place until the branch has grown strong enough to hold the position without the help of wire.



Aluminum wire can also be annealed as well as work hardened, although each occurs to a far lesser extent than copper wire.

Does annealed copper wire have a shelf life? The answer is yes, but we will leave that discussion for another day.

Your Last Chance

If you have not yet paid your annual dues, your last chance to do so is rapidly approaching. Members who have not paid their dues by the end of March will be dropped from membership and, sadly, will no longer receive the outstanding EBBS newsletter either by email or land mail. The annual dues are \$30 for single membership and \$40 for couples. If you prefer a hard copy of the newsletter by land mail there is an additional charge of \$5. Our treasurer, Pat Cahill will be delighted to receive your check at the next regular meeting. Dues also may be mailed to: EBBS Treasurer, 4933 Cochrane, Oakland, CA, 94618-2701

October Show Vendors

Jim Gremel, Peter Tea, and Jerry Braswell will be vendors at our fall show.

Jerry Braswell makes bonsai stands and suggests that if you want a custom stand for the show, now is the time to put in your order. You may reach him at 209-

295-1717. You may also contact him via his website, www.artofthedaiza.com.

Bonsai Instruction

Bonsai workshops are held at Merritt College and are available to all EBBS members. These workshops are an opportunity to work on your own trees under the guidance of fine teachers. Clearly they are the best deal in town for increasing your knowledge about the fine art of bonsai. Leading the workshops are two distinguished artists who are also members of EBBS, Bill Castelon and Randall Lee. The meetings are every fourth Monday except when the college is not in session. Meetings start at 7:00 pm at the Landscape Horticulture Building. The college is located off Redwood Road in the Oakland hills. Questions about the workshops may be addressed to either Bill at 510-569-8003 or Randall at 510-864-0841.

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.

March 9-10, Oakland: Bay Area Bonsai Associates 32nd Annual Bonsai Exhibition at the Lakeside Park (Lake Merritt) Garden Center, 666 Bellevue Avenue. Show hours are Saturday, 5-9 PM and Sunday, 10 AM – 4 PM. A demonstration by Juan Cruz starts at 6:30 PM on Saturday. There will be bonsai related items for sale both days. For more information, contact John Roehl at bigbluemoon@comcast.net or 707-827-3206.

March 20 – 24, San Mateo: 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. General admission to the Flower and Garden Show is \$20.00. For general information about Flower and Garden show visit: www.sfgardenshow.com. For more information about club visit our website: www.bssf.org

March 23 & 24, Santa Cruz: Santa Cruz Bonsai Kai 25th Annual Show at the Museum of Art and History, 705 Front Street. Hours: Saturday & Sunday 10 AM – 5 PM. Featured demo Saturday, 2 – 4 PM, Ryan Neil. Featured demo Sunday, 2 – 4 PM, Sensei Katsumi Kinoshita. Contact Ron Anderson, 877-610-9038. For more details about club visit our website. <http://www.gsbf-bonsai.org/santacruzbonsaikai/>.

March 23 – 24, San Marino: California Bonsai Society Annual Show at The Huntington Library, 1151 Oxford Road, Mauro Stemberger two-day workshop located in the Teaching Greenhouse. Bring your tree half-day and full-day sessions are available. Silent observers encouraged. For details contact Michael Jonas, 818-776-0813 or mjonas48@hotmail.com.

March 30 – Oakland: Lakeshore Avenue Free Neighborhood Plant Exchange, 3811 Lakeshore Ave (easy parking). Want an instant new garden? Bring your own plants and pick up new ones! All types and sizes of healthy plants are welcome, from small cuttings up to full size. Saturday from 12:00 noon to 4 PM. Admission is Free. For more details, go to www.plantexchange.wordpress.com.

April 6 & 7, Sacramento: Bonsai Sekiyu Kai 36th Annual Bonsai Show at the Sacramento Betsuin Buddhist Church, 2401 Riverside Blvd. Hours are: Saturday Noon – 5 PM and Sunday 10 AM – 4 PM. Demonstration 2 PM both days by Bonsai Master Johnny Uchida. 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 contact Chris Pfeifle at mesoey@aol.com.

Articles or Services for Sale (or give-away)

Chuck Gallagher has a wide variety of trees for sale as well as pots and stands. He has some fine stones for sale which are on the cutting edge of the art of suiseki. He is also selling cactus and garden ornaments. Call Chuck at 925-937-9936 for an appointment.

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 2013

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>

Also find EBBS on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/EastBayBonsaiSociety> and on Twitter at

<http://www.twitter.com/eastbaybonsai>

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

Meeting Program

Mar	13	War of the Bonsai Chefs – Tim Kong
Mar	24	BGLM Introduction to Bonsai – Bob Gould
Apr	10	Tree Critique - Michael Hagendorn
Apr	28	BGLM Introduction to Bonsai – Janet Nelson
May	8	Bonsai Basics – Tom Colby
May	26	BGLM Introduction to Bonsai – Tom Colby
Jun	12	Organic Bonsai 101 – Jane Wirth
Jun	23	BGLM Introduction to Bonsai – John Nackley
Jul	10	Auction
Jul	28	BGLM Introduction to Bonsai – Dennis Hawkins
Aug		Potluck picnic – details tbd
Aug	25	BGLM Introduction to Bonsai – JD Lin
Sep	11	Preparing Trees for Show
Sep	22	BGLM Introduction to Bonsai – John Nackley
Oct	9	No club meeting due to proximity to show
Oct	27	BGLM Introduction to Bonsai – Janet Nelson
Nov	13	Juniper Jubilee
Nov	24	BGLM Introduction to Bonsai – Tom Colby
Dec	11	Holiday Dinner

Special Event

Oct 12-13 Fall Show – Peter Tea

Choosing a container for your bonsai

By Valerie Monroe

Keep evaluating your tree in terms of contrasts. Masculine – Feminine; Delicate and Light – Strong and Heavy. Also keep in mind the style of the tree: Formal Upright, Informal Upright, Slanting, and Cascades. Other types of plantings may include group or raft styles, bunjin, root over rock, etc. Colors in the tree can appear in the foliage, the bark of the tree, and the flowers and fruits.

Each component of the tree can be complimented by some aspect of the pot. Characteristics of pots will include: Shape – round, square, oval, rectangular, freeform; Details in pot – type of lip, angle of sides of pot; feet and shape of, bands or incised details on pot such as writing, scenes, panels. Color of clay and/or glazing. Texture of clay and/or glazing. Size. Age.

Because of the number of combinations available in both pots and trees, the actual choices can be infinite. Keeping in mind that all rules seem to get broken, there are some guidelines and thoughts for help in choosing.

The width of the container may be $\frac{2}{3}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ of the longest dimension of your tree.

The depth of the container may be the dimension of the widest part of the trunk of your tree.

Width and Depth can be minimized or augmented as long as the proportion of visual mass of the container to the tree is preserved.

Conifers typically get potted in unglazed containers.

Most every tree may be potted in an unglazed container.

Glazed containers may be used to accent a particular tree for foliage, fruit, flowers, or bark – mostly on broadleaf evergreen and deciduous trees.

Color can be used in a contrasting way and a harmonizing way. The difference will be in the feeling or mood that your tree will present.