



The Tree Shrinker

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A MONTHLY BULLETIN

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East Bay Bonsai Society
November Meeting: November 13, 2013

President's Note

The wheel of time relentlessly turns, and here we are close to the end of the year already. With a successful show behind, we look forward to the changes of the new year. For EBBS that always means some rotation of our Board's composition as terms expire on alternate years. This January will welcome Linda Soliven as the new president of the Board. Michael Hylton has been nominated as new vice president. Bob Gould and Tom Colby have been nominated to continue as Board trustees for two more years. A position is open for a board trustee to replace Michael as he steps up to vice-president. The nominations will stay open until our November meeting when any others can be made from the floor, or by contacting me prior to the meeting.

At our December Holiday potluck, the only business to be conducted will be the election for these nominations. East Bay's survival and success is largely due to this Board's dedication to keeping the art of bonsai vital to the artist and hobbyist. Individually, these members deserve our gratitude for the time and thought they give to this end. I cannot thank them enough for the support and guidance they provided me this past year.

This October's club show may have been our best yet, though I can confess to some biases. Thank you club members who went the full 9 yards to make it occur. The Board will review the show to see how we can even tweak it to a higher level next year. It is not too early to think now about which trees you want to train for next year. Again, your feed back is important information. Please contact Linda Soliven or Michael Hylton if you experienced something in setup or take down that we can improve for next year.

John

November Meeting

You are cordially invited to the second annual Juniper Jubilee which will be held at the regular November meeting. The Jubilee is a celebration in honor of the humble juniper which more often than not is the first tree that beginners start with. The reason for

this is that the juniper is an accommodating subject that readily survives all kinds of abuse that is inadvertently heaped upon it by well intentioned growers. As one becomes more confident in the fine art of bonsai, attention frequently turns to magnificent collected junipers, so junipers are never far from your bonsai scene.

Leading the celebration this year will be Rick Trumm who is a highly skilled bonsai artist. Those of you who attended the August potluck enjoyed the opportunity to see Rick and Janet Nelson's superb collection of Junipers. Rick will tell us how junipers grow, how to care for them and how to make them into bonsai. Deadwood is an essential part of juniper culture and Rick will tell us how and where to incorporate deadwood into our trees. This is a meeting that should not be missed.

There was no formal signup for refreshments for this meeting. It is your turn to bring something if you have enjoyed the refreshments in past meetings and have not contributed recently.

Show



The show this year was one of the best in recent years. There were several things which set the show apart from past shows in addition to the fine bonsai displayed.

First was the welcome participation of newer members of the club. Without new members the club will wither and die as older members drop out. The presence of so many new members active in the show bodes well for the future of the club.



There were two new features of the show. The silent auction was introduced last year as a onetime event, but it was so successful that it was repeated this year. It appears that it will be a regular part of future shows.

The bonsai doctor was new this year and involved an experienced member being available for consultation on the care and feeding of bonsai. This was especially popular with newcomers to the show who purchased plants from the sales table.



Thanks are in order to all the many people who volunteered to help with the show. "It couldn't have happened without you" may be a bit trite, but none the less, it is certainly true. Willing help is what makes it all go. Special thanks are in order to all of the committee

chairs who had the job of organizing help to carry out their mission.



Thanks are in order for the efforts of three people who worked behind the scenes. Michael Hylton approached newspapers for publicity. In the past this has been unsuccessful, but Michael made it happen. Long suffering Bob Gould made sure that there were sufficient tables for the show. This required dealing with the city which necessitates nerves of steel. John Nackley was again able to secure donations from commercial nurseries.

The show headliner is expected to be the star of the show and Peter Tea delivered in spades. His demonstration was so good that hardly any one left during his presentation. He contributed two of his own trees to the raffle.



There was much discussion among members of how much they had learned from the critique of the show lead by Peter. Peter also was a vendor at the show, selling

pots. Hopefully everyone had looked at his merchandise which represented the ultimate in fine pots. Thanks Peter for all your efforts which were above and beyond just what were needed to make our show a success.



The show chair was Linda Soliven who brought superb organization to the show. Her description of duties to the show chairs made it clear what each should do. Linda was particularly active in involving new members into the fabric of the show, and she documented it all which should make the job easier for the show chair next year. Thanks Linda for all your hard work.



Missing Bonsai Stand

Carl Osterholm is missing a bonsai stand which was in our show. It's a rectangular dark brown stand, approximately 8" x 10" x 2", with legs. His initials, "CLO", are on the bottom of the stand. He wasn't able to pick up the stand on Sunday, so if you picked it up for him, please let Carl know (925-274-1574 or cloverinwc@gmail.com).

December Meeting

The December meeting will be our annual potluck holiday dinner. The club will supply the main course

and beverages and the members will supply salads, side dishes and desserts. Adding to the pleasure of the evening, members bring bonsai trees decorated for the holidays which serve as table center pieces. Entertainment will be a slide show of trees in our recent show as well as other pictures of the club in action. It is always an evening of fun and fellowship.

Bill Castellon

Bill is one of the leaders of the workshops at Merritt College, and if you have not yet met him, it is time to do so. Bill held workshops directly in conjunction with EBBS for many years before serving at Merritt College. He has been active in bonsai for many years and has a great knowledge of all aspects of bonsai. His particular interest is the cultivation of pines, and he has given a number of demonstrations on pines to EBBS.

Shohin bonsai are particularly difficult to grow because there is little margin for error in cultivation. The small root system can rapidly dry out, and if that should happen, the tree will then die. Bill grows superb shohin bonsai which is a tribute to his skill at managing bonsai. Many of the fine shohin bonsai exhibited in our recent show belonged to Bill.

As a workshop leader Bill delights in passing his knowledge on to his students. He is a very patient teacher. In his professional life, Bill designs and constructs Japanese style gardens complete with large stones. He learned in Japan how to move and position large stones without the use of big mechanical equipment such as cranes. If you have not attended a workshop at Merritt College you really should consider doing so. Bill will be happy to see you.

Repotting

In past years demonstrations were somewhat more dramatic than they are now. The demonstrator approached a large bush, typically in a five gallon container, and working quickly, pruned large branches, reduced the root ball so it would fit into a bonsai pot, wired the remaining branches and made jins and sharis as needed. He said that the tree should then be placed in the sun and fertilized, and it would be fine. All this was in front of our amazed and delighted eyes. It was bush to bonsai in a couple of hours. It was truly high drama, but most of the audience did not see the grand finale a couple of months later when the tree frequently died a lingering death that would do justice to the scene where the fat lady dies at the end of a grand opera.

So what went wrong? Each of the operations in the demonstration stressed the tree. Most importantly, the severe root pruning required to squish the root ball into a bonsai pot deprived the tree of feeder roots which are the very fine roots that supply the tree with water and nutrients. The loss of feeder roots can occur even when the tree is gently repotted. A normal part of the repotting process is to trim the outer roots and this is where the feeder roots are located. The lost feeder roots will regrow fairly quickly if the tree is healthy, but while they are being replaced, the tree is not able to easily recover from the stress of heavy pruning and wiring.

Most demonstrations now involve pruning and wiring, but not repotting which is deferred to a somewhat later date when the tree has recovered.

If the tree is placed in the sun, the leaves lose more water than can be replaced by the remaining feeder roots, so the tree becomes dehydrated. Fertilizer induces growth that cannot be supported by the small number of feeder roots left, so the new growth withers.

These factors tell us why trees are normally repotted in the winter months when the weather is cool, growth has slowed and the trees are usually not fertilized. These conditions allow the tree time to rebuild a healthy feeder root system before the onrush of spring growth.

Heavy pruning and wiring the tree a short time after repotting can physically destroy the very delicate newly emerging feeder roots, and so should be deferred for a few weeks.

So how in the world do we manage to repot, prune and wire trees without killing them? First is to recognize that each major operation on our trees is stressful and the tree needs time to recover from each operation. When properly managed, healthy trees survive repotting, pruning and wiring just fine. If your tree is not healthy to begin with, postpone whatever you have in mind until it is healthy. The only exception to this is the unlikely case where emergency repotting is needed because the potting soil no longer drains well and root rot is on the near horizon.

Repotting always involves the loss of at least some of the feeder roots, so treat your tree kindly after repotting. Place the tree in the shade for a couple of weeks. After you water your tree, part of the water remaining in the soil simply evaporates and part is taken up by the tree. Since the feeder roots are lost, the tree will take up less water indicating that you should check carefully that the soil is not excessively wet. Use either no fertilizer or very little for a month after repotting. Remember that your tree really wants to grow for you and just needs a bit of help and encouragement.

New Members

Karen and Eric Blanpied have joined our club. The bonsais they now have came from Karen's grandfather who started his collection about 50 years ago. Please update your roster with their phone number: 510-528-6946, and e-mail addresses: karen@blanpied.net and eric@blanpied.net.

We also have another new member, Lynn Hollander. She is looking for a local source of #3 Lapis Sand. Lynn shared that she really enjoyed the set-up for the show. Her phone is 510-653-3652. Her e-mail address is caerwydyr@sbcglobal.net.

Our newest member is Mario Santi. He doesn't know a whole lot about bonsai but finds it interesting and likes it. He's the youngest member of our club at 16. Mario is Carl Osterholm's good friend. Carl is teaching him a lot and he has a few trees started. Mario says he is happy he can be a part of our community.

His phone number is 925-953-3583. His e-mail address is supermariosanti@gmail.com.

Welcome all of you to the East Bay Bonsai Society!

Who is This Man!



Most of you will recognize Tom Colby, mild mannered reporter for the Tree Shrinker. His words of wisdom delivered with wit and strong insights have helped us learn a lot about bonsai and related topics. People often thank me for the wonderful articles that appear in the Tree Shrinker. Tom Colby is responsible for most of them. He has been in bonsai for many years, and what he doesn't know, he researches. The result is that he has become a fountain of knowledge. His writing is entertaining as well as informative.

But did you know that Tom jumps into a phone booth once a month, turning into Super-Board-Man? Although we usually don't see Tom in blue tights and a red cape, his presence on the Board is one of truth and justice.

You have a very energetic and committed Board, and sometimes we can digress, get overly excited, or become bewildered. Tom brings calm and wisdom to the Board meetings, keeping us on track and helping us stay focused and effective.

Thank you, Tom, for making East Bay Bonsai Society a stronger and better organization.

Look! Up in the sky! It's a bird! It's a plane! It's ...Tom Colby!



Invitation to the Marin Bonsai Club Show

The Marin Bonsai Club would like to invite you to their annual Fall Bonsai Show November 8 and 9 at the Marin Art and Garden Center in Ross.

We start at 5:00 and hope you all can attend the dinner Friday night starting at 6 featuring the delicious lasagna from Ambrosia Restaurant. The demo at 7:00 will be by special guest Bonsai Artist Peter Tea. Raffle prizes, silent auction and raffle of the demo tree on tap for entertainment.

There will be a \$10.00 charge this year for dinner. Please RSVP for this event by calling 415-888-3756 or emailing david@doceichhorn.com to help us plan for enough food.

If you can't make it Friday night we will be there all day Saturday too from 10-4. Jim Gremel will be our featured vendor and he will be doing a critique of show trees at 11:00. There will be raffle prizes and a bonsai style-a-thon at 1:00. We are expecting another colorful show this year and we love showing off for our bonsai friends, so we hope to see you there.

The address is 30 Sir Francis Drake Blvd, Ross, CA, easy to find off the exit from 101.

Bonsai Calendar

- Sunlight - Review exposure of trees as sun moves southward; move deciduous trees into full sun.
- Water - Adjust automatic watering systems for winter.
- Food - Fertilize for the last time. Never feed a dormant tree unless fertilizer is low in nitrogen.
- Repotting – May be done with plants that are dormant.
- Black pines – Remove old needles, reduce new growth, wire.
- Deciduous trees - Once leaves have dropped, improve overall design by removing undesirable branches.

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

Bonsai Instruction at Merritt College

How would you like to have an opportunity to work on your own tree under the guidance of fine teachers? How would you like to have a place where you could get answers to your specific questions about the care and maintenance of your trees? Look no further than the workshops at Merritt College. Clearly they are the best deal in town for increasing your knowledge about the fine art of bonsai. These workshops are open to all EBBS members. Leading the workshops are two distinguished artists who are also EBBS members, Bill Castellon and Randall Lee.

The meetings are held every fourth Monday except when the college is not in session and start at 7:00 pm at the Landscape Horticulture Building. The college is located in the Oakland hills off Redwood

Road. Questions about the workshops may be addressed to either Bill at 510-569-8003 or Randall at 510-864-08741.

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.

November 8-9, Ross, Marin Bonsai Society: Fall Bonsai Show, Marin Art and Garden Center. See invitation in this newsletter for more details.

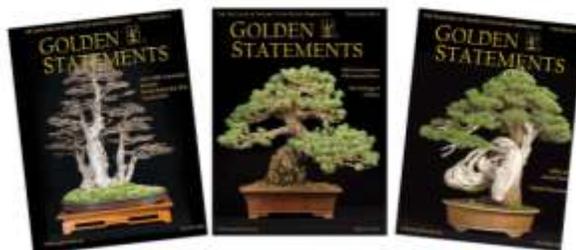
December 7, Fresno, Fresno Bonsai Society: 5th Annual Bonsai Yard Sale, 736 West Browning Avenue. Hours: 9 AM – 2 PM. Pre-bonsai, bonsai, pots, accent plants, stones, books and all things bonsai. Anyone is welcome to buy or sell. Contact Ralph Schroeder for more information at ralSch@sbcglobal.net.

Articles or Services for Sale (or give-away)

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.

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East Bay Bonsai Society—Schedule for 2013-2014

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

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

Meeting Program

2013

Nov 13 Juniper Jubilee – Rick Trumm
Nov 24 BGLM Introduction to Bonsai – Tom Colby
Dec 11 Holiday Dinner

2014

Jan 8 Repotting – Gordon Deeg
Jan 26 BGLM Introduction to Bonsai – Bob Gould
Feb 12 Oaks – John Thompson
Mar 12 Pines – Bill Castellon
Mar 23 BGLM Introduction to Bonsai – Dennis Hawkins
Apr 9 TBD – Jay McDonald
Apr 27 BGLM Introduction to Bonsai – J D Lin
May 14 Penjing – Tim Kong
May 25 BGLM Introduction to Bonsai – John Nackley
June 11 Frolic in the Garden
June 22 BGLM Introduction to Bonsai – Janet Nelson
