



The Tree Shrinker

Volume LX, No.1

A MONTHLY BULLETIN

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East Bay Bonsai Society Monthly Meeting: January 13, 2020 7:30 PM **On-Line**

Happy New Year EBBS Members!

Just a wild guess, but I think we are all ready for a better year in 2021. Like you, I have really missed our in-person gatherings and I am longing to return to regular meetings, workshops, and especially the wonderful companionship of all of you- my fellow bonsai enthusiasts and friends.

We only had two in-person meetings in 2020 (January and February). However, with the help of our two new board members Addison Galambos and Andrea Callegari, we were able to start up our virtual programs in April (thank you Janet and Rick!) I want to thank all of you for learning to be flexible and forgiving of our technological glitches. While we had a full slate of in-person speakers for 2020, many of these cancelled and we had to scramble for speakers willing to go online. Thank you very much to the EBBS Board for making this happen. We have some great speakers lined up for virtual meetings in the first half of 2021. And when we are safe to meet again in person, we will have more great demos- and even raffle off trees again! That's something to look forward to. Here's a toast to great bonsai friends, great trees and COVID-19 vaccines for all!

Lisa

January Meeting

We're going to be starting out the year with a Bang! Your EBBS Board is diligently working to bring you entertaining professional bonsai artists from all over the world. First up, is Andrew Robson of Portland, Oregon. Andrew is an extraordinary deciduous bonsai artist; he will be presenting a study of bonsai in silhouette.

"Andrew Robson is an emerging deciduous artist in the American bonsai community. He recently completed a

3-year apprenticeship with Michael Hagedorn, after graduating from Yale University. Andrew is the President of the Bonsai Society of Portland, the largest bonsai club in the United States. Additionally, he serves as a member of the Portland Bonsai Village, and has previously served as a board member of the American Bonsai Society.

He regularly exhibits work at the Portland Japanese Garden, and lectures at the garden's Japanese Arts Learning Center. Andrew and his family are currently building a deciduous-focused bonsai garden, school and nursery; RAKUYO-en, in Portland, Oregon. While some conifers hang around RAKUYO, the overwhelming focus is on deciduous bonsai."



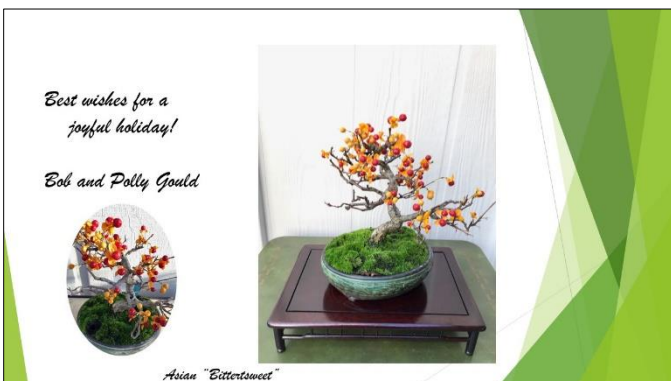
Be sure to get an early seat, we will start promptly at 7:30.

December Meeting

What a fun time we had last month at our annual Holiday Party! Kathy Shaner graced us with a presentation on trimming to allow sunlight into your trees during the winter season and added a couple of tricks if it gets too cold for our little friends. She demo'd on two trees; a Hinoki Cypress and a Kingsville Boxwood. A big thank you to Kathy Shaner and Gordon Deeg as they bared the cold on Gordon's patio.

After Kathy's demo we revisited our meetings for 2020 with Michael Hylton's annual archive of events. It was great to see all the show trees again that our society members dressed up and remember all of the presenters last year.

We ended the meeting with the following Holiday cards.



*Peace and
Goodwill for All*

Rich Trumm



Otsuki Azalea



Shimpaku Juniper

Wishing you a very
Happy Holiday!

Janet Nelson



*Best Wishes
for All Seasons*

John & Karen Mackley



Calliopea (Beauty Berry)



Happy Holidays!

*Stephen Lysaght
&
Gary Anderson*



Tillandsia



Merry Christmas!

From Brian Conway



*Wishing You a Very Merry
Holiday Season!*

Tom Fedor



Happy Hanukkah!

From: Michael Hyton



Trident Maple



Seasons Greetings!

Alice Lacosse-Offeman



EBBS Membership Dues are Due!!

It's that time again! Dues are needed to insure we can continue to obtain a high level of bonsai artists for our meetings and to meet our regular expenses. Even though we do not pay rent on the hall while we are complying with the stay-at-home orders, there are still on-going expenses that need to be paid. For instance: each year our website leasing is due as well as newsletter costs. There are also tree maintenance costs for two trees that are being stabled for events when we meet socially again. Bonsai artists can typically cost anywhere from \$100 - \$300 for a regular monthly meeting. Without plant sales or auctions all income will be coming from dues and donations.

Dues costs for 2021 are the same as 2020

Single person/newsletter delivered via e-mail	\$30.
Single person/newsletter delivered via USPS	\$40.
Family/newsletter delivered via e-mail	\$40.
Family/newsletter delivered via USPS	\$50.

Checks or money orders should be made out to **EBBS**.

Please send them to:
East Bay Bonsai Society
Attn: Pat Cahill
4933 Cochrane Ave.
Oakland, CA. 94618

The board is looking into using PayPal and Square to accept dues, but we are not set up at this time. When we do, there will be a surcharge per payment to cover the processing. This normally amounts to approximately 3% of the charge.

For new members that have joined EBBS after October 1st of 2020, there is no payment due, membership is automatic in 2021.

Dues will be collected starting January 1st and end on March 31st. At that time the club roster will be updated and sent out to all members.

2021 EBBS Board Members

Our new EBBS Board of Directors for 2021

Lisa Harper – President
Tom Fedor – Vice President
Pat Cahill – Treasurer
Stephen Lysaght – Secretary
Andrea Callegari - Director
Tom Colby – Director
Addison Galambos – Director
Michael Jensen-Akula – Director
Beverly Martinez – Director

A Day in the Life of a Tree

By: Tom Colby

We spend a lot of time twisting branches or cutting them off and then stuff the poor tree into a tiny pot, all in the name of creating something really cool. But think about what the tree wants to do. Let's put ourselves in the position of the tree. It knows that somewhere down the road in the future it will be overcome by bugs, drought, rot or bad weather overloading it with snow. In short, it has a limited life even though it might be very long. The primary goal of the tree is to generate little trees that will perpetuate itself. It can only do this through seeds. But seeds face a tough life. Many are eaten by birds or other animals and many of the rest do not land in a place where they can grow, like for instance in a river. Some seeds can survive and start to grow but the little tree is eaten by a deer or other animal. The tree copes with the vanishingly small number of seeds that survive and grow into trees by making as many seeds as it can. It needs to do this by growing as big as it possibly can. So how does it do this?

A big tree needs a lot of wood to hold up the top of the tree. Wood is generated by the marvelous process of photosynthesis where water and carbon dioxide in the air are made by the action of sunlight into chemicals which are the building blocks of wood. The product of photosynthesis is frequently referred to as energy for the tree, but it has nothing to do with energy. It is wood that is the sole fate of these products.

The key catalyst of this process is chlorophyll, a chemical which is green. All the green leaves that you see on any plant is due to the presence of chlorophyll. Chlorophyll is a big molecule that is composed of 6.2 % nitrogen and 2.7% magnesium. We feed our trees with a nitrogen rich fertilizer which we hope can lead to ever more chlorophyll available to the tree, but we usually don't think about magnesium which is a necessary component of chlorophyll. Our trees grow splendidly without adding magnesium to our fertilizer. That is because it is present in tap water, clay or water that has spent time flowing over rocks. According to East Bay Municipal water, their analysis shows that tap water contains typically 1 to 15 ppm magnesium. The higher numbers come from water stored in clay lined reservoirs which suggests that clay is a source of magnesium. Although we do not think of akadama, a component of many currently popular soil mixes, as a fertilizer it would appear that it is a source of magnesium. Also, both lava and pumice are potential sources of magnesium. Our soils mixtures can supply all of an essential element for a tree without our really knowing it.

The tree has a big problem. It wants to grow as big as possible but if all the buds on all the branches grow at

the same time, the tree turns into a big ball of leaves which limits growth because most of the leaves in the ball do not see any sunlight so photosynthesis can't take place. The tree knows that long branches expose all the leaves to sunlight so it can maximize the production of needed wood. It must be able to manage where growth takes place, and it does this by making a chemical called auxin which is a growth hormone. It is mainly produced at the very tips of growing branches and from there it moves throughout the plant. Auxin does not promote growth as you might think but it inhibits growth. The little buds along the branch will not grow in the presence of auxin so the branch can grow very long so the presence of sunlight on the leaves can be maximized. If you want a bushy tree, you remove the source of auxin by pinching the ends of the branches. With the source of auxin gone, the little buds can now grow. Some trees produce more auxin than others which is why some trees are naturally bushier than others.

The tree knows that growing long branches requires an ever-thickening trunk to hold up increasing size of the canopy of the tree. Here is where auxin plays a different role. Auxin produced by the growing branch tips travel to the trunk and settle in the outer edge of the trunk which is where trunk expansion takes place. Here the auxin promotes the growth of the edge and the trunk gets bigger. We often hear that planting a potential bonsai tree in the ground leads to a fatter trunk. What really happens is that when in the ground, we let the tree grow and with many tips of branches all producing more auxin and this is what makes the trunk get fatter. When we pinch and prune our trees to make them into presentable bonsai, we remove the source of the auxin at the growing branch tips which allows the back buds to grow but carries an unintended consequence that the tree trunk does not grow fatter.

When we work on our trees, we frequently take them for granted. They usually do more or less what we want them to do which delights us. There is a lot more going on that meets our eye. They are truly fascinating subjects if we get to know them.

Bonsai Calendar

- Sun – Move all trees into full sun.
- Watering – Adjust watering for winter.
- Fertilizing – Use low or zero nitrogen fertilizers.
- Repotting – Generally, not the time for repotting.
- Styling/Pruning – Trimming should be minimal. OK to wire, but be careful of brittle foliage.
- Insect and disease control – Remove dead plant material. Apply dormant spray. Watch for and treat insect infestations.

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

Member 'for sale' items

Each membership household, free of charge, may place a five-line ad related to bonsai in two newsletters each year. Please submit your ad by the preceding Monday of the month to appear in the next publication. Send your ad to EBBS_Distribution@yahoo.com.

Newsletter Editor: Beverly Martinez
 Contributors: Tom Colby, Lisa Harper
 Newsletter Photographers: various members

East Bay Bonsai Society—Schedule for 2021

Regular Meetings: Second Wednesday, every month (except July, August and October) @ 7:30 pm
 Place: Lakeside Garden Center, 666 Bellevue Avenue, Oakland. Visitors welcome.
 Website for Bonsai Garden Lake Merritt: www.gsbflakemerritt.org/

<u>Meeting</u>	<u>Program</u>
Jan 4	EBBS Board Meeting
Jan 13	Andrew Robson – Winter Silhouettes
Feb 1	EBBS Board Meeting
Feb 10	Aarin Packard-WWII Bonsai and West Coast Beginnings
Mar 1	EBBS Board Meeting