



The Tree Shrinker

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A MONTHLY BULLETIN

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East Bay Bonsai Society
Monthly Meeting: May 11, 2022 7:30 PM
In Person and On line

May Meeting

As the weather begins to warm, our thoughts turn to the more tropical bonsai trees. What a perfect time to engage with a tropical expert. We are thrilled to have Jerry Carpenter as our speaker for the May meeting. Jerry is a well-known bonsai enthusiast that is an expert on tropical bonsai.



Jerry has been doing bonsai since the late 1980s as a way to enjoy being in nature. He began his bonsai study/work on the East Coast working with tropical trees purely as a hobby through self-study and visits to the National Bonsai and Penjing Museum. Upon moving to the West Coast in 2000, he looked for a club which teaches in this more formal style. He started at Kusamura Bonsai Club. There Jerry studied the Japanese formal styles and have gone on to work with

great teachers, work in bonsai gardens, teach beginner classes, and lead workshops. He worked for 8 years at Filoli Estates with the Kusamura Bonsai Club team.

Currently, Jerry volunteers at the Bonsai Garden at Lake Merritt as an Assistant Curator of Oaks, Olives, and sub-tropical species. He is a member of Sei Boku Bonsai Kai in San Mateo. He has taken instruction from several masters including Kathy Shaner, and actively takes classes online with Ryan Neil and Bjorn Bjorholm. He has clients around the bay area where he works on all species of trees in private collections. Jerry continues his education through reading quality material and subscribing to instructional magazines such as Bonsai Focus. He also watches instructional videos by the masters. He believes that applying all you learn with your own trees is essential to advancing your art.

Since we will be learning about care for Tropical bonsais, feel free to bring in one of yours to share with the club. Also, if you have questions about a tree, feel free to bring it in and ask questions during the Show and Tell segment of the meeting.

We will once again be having a Benefit Drawing at the end of the meeting which will include the demo tree.

April Meeting

At our meeting in April, we were pleasantly surprised with a slight change in the expected topic, from defoliation to deciduous. Mike Pistello, a past EBBS member and our evening presenter, brought in a young 2-year-old grove of Japanese maple. The trees were derived from cuttings he made from his own tree in his

own front yard. Mike then proceeded to give insight and recommendations on deciduous trees and especially on maples based on his own experience. Mike has been involved in bonsai since he was first introduced by his grandfather at the age of 13. Since that time, he has studied with many artists and developed award winning trees.



With every topic we touched upon, we were reminded that the answer is “it all depends”. It depends on the age of the tree, the health of the tree, the stage of development... you get the idea. From pinching on refined trees to cutting back on the young trees, it always “depends”. The normal process for deciduous is to let the branches grow out and then cut back. But on refined trees, pinching off new leaves is preferred to create ramification on trees.

Mike uses 100% Akadama when planting his maples. The theory is that the leaves mimic the roots, a finer soil will allow for finer roots and leaves. Akadama will also hold more water during the hot windy months found in the warmer regions of the East Bay.

Potting should be done in the spring when the buds start to swell. Repotting when the trees are fully dormant can cause irreparable damage to the trees. If the buds are not opening, water cannot get to them.

There are 3 ways to propagate maples: seed (may take 20 – 30 years for maturity), cuttings and air layering. Air layering is the easiest and Mike has his own method of using a plastic pot on the air layer so removing it is easier and less damaging to the new tree.

He also uses heat pads under repotted trees and newly planted trees that help to grow the trees more rapidly. Heat should be above 42 degrees F.

Other interesting comments were:

Deciduous trees keep their energy in the vascular system allowing them to be bare-rooted as opposed to junipers which keep their energy in their leaves and conifers whose strength is in their roots.

Defoliation is necessary for ramification and shortening of the internodes.

When replanting a forest, do not take apart the individual trees, rather replant the entire root-ball as if it were a single tree.

And finally, cut paste is necessary to heal all wounds and should always be used, regardless of the wound size.



Thanks Mike, for an interesting and enlightening presentation.

The evening ended with our customary Benefit Raffle which included many trees and bonsai objects. The winner of the demo tree was Addison Galambos. Congratulations to Addison and all the winners.



Mark the New Auction Date!

The Annual Auction is moving to June 8th! We normally have our annual auction in July, but this year the board decided to have it one month closer to spring, and June it is! So, get your trees, pots and other bonsai related items ready to auction and tell all your friends to not miss this important date! The auction will be held at our usual meeting place, the Lakeside Garden Center, and set up for the event will start at 6:00 pm. Sale items should be onsite by 7:00 pm. Tree tags (make sure you fill out all three tags) and seller log sheets are attached to this newsletter and will also be available the evening of the auction and the May meeting. To avoid duplicate tag numbers, please use three initials on the tags to identify your auction items. The auction will start promptly at 7:30, so be sure that by this time you have checked in your auction items. You should have also surveyed what is available for sale, have your bidding paddle and be ready to participate in the furious bidding in the auction.

Hopefully you have reviewed your collection and have selected those plants that do not quite meet your expectations. You may want to pass these on to more loving home at the auction as well as any surplus bonsai related items such as scrolls, pots, pot stands and tools. As a matter of fact, anything in good taste can be offered in the auction. Note that this excludes husbands, wives, past significant others, kids and the family dog, but just about everything else is welcome.



The minimum projected selling price for all items is \$10 so save the little seedlings in a Dixie cup for our show in the fall. Here very inexpensive items sell quickly. There is a limit of 10 items that can be entered in the auction. Items can be bundled as, for example, a box of several pots sold as a group counts as one item. As usual, the club keeps a percentage of the selling price and you get the rest to hopefully use to buy more stuff at the auction. This year the percentage will be 25%. Of course, you can also donate your item to the auction where the club gets the total selling price. Donations are a great way for supporting your club.

The auction provides a wonderful opportunity to practice your merchandising skills. If you want to sell a tree, anything that you can do to it that allows the potential

customer to more easily visualize the tree as a finished bonsai will lead to a higher selling price. The most obvious step is to remove any weeds growing in the pot. It may surprise you to know that once in a while, trees have shown up complete with weeds in past auctions. As you might imagine, they did not sell for much. Trees in bonsai pots sell better than trees in plastic nursery cans. Branches that are not clearly of value to the finished bonsai design can be trimmed off. Wiring of at least a major branch or two also helps the buyer to see the potential of the tree. If you are selling a pot, scrub out the residual dirt. Stands can always use a bit of furniture polish to spiff them up. Old English Scratch Remover (available at Safeway at a nominal price) works well for this.



There are always fine things to be found at the auction to upgrade your collection and generally at most affordable prices. The auction is not only a lot of fun but also is a very important fundraiser for the club. It deserves your support in providing items for sale, buying lots of stuff and helping out with the many tasks required to make it all run smoothly. Suzanne Muller is in charge of the auction, and you may receive a phone call asking for your help with set up and during with the actual auction. Be sure you are comfortable with what you are assigned, and have fun with it. It takes a whole club to make the auction a success.

There will be flyers at the May meeting for distribution at local nurseries, etc. Feel free to pick up a few to pass around.

Tokonomas

By: Tom Colby

Most bonsai show's feature tokonomas which are displays placed on a single eight-foot-long table. They include not only a tree but also other items such as a suiseki stone, an accent plant or a scroll. Have you ever wondered where the idea came from?

The concept of a tokonoma is actually very old. Up until about 1300 CE the Japanese rulers were hereditary, that is the emperor's son became the next emperor. These rulers lived in palaces that were a series of rather small buildings interconnected by covered walkways. In about 1300 CE the military took over. The military were deeply into Zen Buddhism and built palaces which were heavily influenced by temple architecture. Temples were single large buildings which stood alone. Head abbots in the temples had small areas in their living quarters where items were placed for meditation. The military rulers also incorporated these areas from the very start into their new palaces and these became known as tokonomas. Originally ceramic pots and candleholders were featured in the tokonomas, but in a short time flower arrangements became popular. Only much later were bonsai trees used in tokonomas. The flower arrangements led to the Japanese art of ikebana which is now very much alive in Japan and has many schools teaching the art. As a matter of fact, today in Japan many more tokonomas feature flower arrangements rather than bonsai.

Tokonomas reflect the origins in religious meditation which places a high value on nature. All of the items in a tokonoma are related to nature and are intended to be a single composition which denotes a particular time and place. The accent plant should be from the same habitat as the tree. For example, California junipers grow in harsh and arid environments and ferns which grow in moist shady areas and should not be used as accent plants for these trees.

The time of season is important particularly in choice of scroll if one is used. A scroll showing a fall scene such as migrating birds shown against a stormy sky would clash with a flowering plum tree which is a sign of spring. An accent plant in flower does not do justice to a leafless tree displayed as a winter silhouette. In short, tokonomas are tradition that is nearly 700 years old. A well-crafted tokonoma display requires considerable thought to be successful. Next time you go to a bonsai show that features tokonomas, spend a moment in front of each display and see whether it represents a single time and place. If it does, admire the skill of the artist that assembled it.



Show and Tell

Several folks brought in trees to share with us.



Jeremy Stevermer - Ficus



Michael Hylton – Dwarf Boxwoods



Stephen Lysaght - Oak



Bob Gould - Azalea

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.

Wanting to Buy:

Used tools, pots, moss, Pre/bonsai/cutting: Royal Poinciana, Ficus Elastica, (rubber) w/aerial roots. Monkey Pod tree, other tropicals; a yamadori guide.

Contact: Vidit Joy (650) 666-7951

Events by Others

May 12, San Francisco

Bonsai Society of San Francisco Annual Auction After a two-year hiatus, the Bonsai Society of San Francisco will be holding its annual club auction on **Thursday, May 12, 2022** at the Recreation Room of the **San Francisco County Fair Building** from **7PM - 9PM**.

This auction is **open to the public**. Bonsai, pre-bonsai, ceramics, tools, print publications, and all other items bonsai-related will be up for auction. All proceeds for the auction will go to funding the club's operations.

If you would like to donate any items for the auction, please plan to arrive by 6.30PM on the day of the auction, and let us know ahead of time by sending an email to contact@bssf.org.

May 21, 2022 Modesto, California

Modesto Bonsai Club: Annual Spring Show located at the Stanislaus Agricultural Center, 3800 Cornucopia Way, Modesto. Show hours are Saturday, 10:00a.m. – 4:00 p.m., with a demonstration by club Sensei Sam Adina at 1:30 p.m. Admission and parking will be free. The show will include both Bonsai Trees and Suiseki. There will be a club member sales area with a good selection of bonsai and bonsai related items for purchase. For additional information visit our Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/Modesto-Bonsai-Club-421910751256491/> or contact our Club President, Peter Camarena by email: pete.camarena@sbcglobal.net.

Bonsai Calendar - May

- Protect tender leaves from strong winds
- Rotate trees twice a month
- Start regular feeding of standard fertilizer to deciduous trees
- Watch for wire biting-in as trees grow quickly at this time
- Water regularly to keep root balls moist
- Watch for insects and powdery mildew as warm weather causes insects to become active

Refer to the EBBS Bonsai Seasonal guide for more information on care

May 21 & 22, 2022 Oakland, California

Bay Area Satsuki Aikokai (BASA) 25th Annual Satsuki Azalea Bonsai Show, featuring azalea bonsai in full bloom. Join us on May 21 & 22, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturday and 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Sunday, at 666 Bellevue Ave., Lakeside Park Garden Center, Lake Merritt, for the display of beautiful flowering bonsai. Featuring large member sale and imported Satsuki azalea from Japan. Demonstration from 1 – 3 p.m., Saturday with raffle of the demo tree. Vendor area. Free admission. Public parking available. For information, contact Darren Wong at sohjuen@aol.com or visit our website at <http://satsukiazaleabonsai.org>.

June 8, 2022 Oakland, California

East Bay Bonsai Society Annual Auction: The East Bay Bonsai Society will be having an in-person bonsai auction on Wednesday evening, June 8th at 666 Bellevue Ave., Lakeside Park Garden Center (Lake Merritt) in Oakland, California. The auction will start at 7:30 p.m. with a preview at 7:00 p.m. It will include established and starter bonsai trees, pots, tools, etc. Credit cards, checks, and cash accepted. Free admission. Parking available. Sales tax will be added to purchases. Masks are required.

July 9, 2022 Oakland, California

Bonsai Garden at Lake Merritt (BGLM): BGLM will conduct a special one-day auction and sale of bonsai trees from the personal collection donated by Dennis and Joanne Makishima, on July 9, 2022, at the Lakeside Park Garden Center, 666 Bellevue Ave., Lake Merritt, Oakland, California. Preview of auction will start at 11:00 a.m. and live auction at 12:00 p.m. Sale follows immediately after auction. This event is predicated on the largest single donation ever made to BGLM. Bonsai trees include legacy pines, cedars, maples, and more, dating back to the early 1950s and 1960s. All proceeds go to support the newly created Dennis and Joanne Makishima BGLM curator fund. For further information, contact George Haas at gwhaas@comcast.net or visit the BGLM website <http://bonsailakemerritt.com>.

June 18 - 19, 2022 Livermore, California

Valley Bonsai Society: 12th annual show at Alden Lane Nursery, [981 Alden Lane](#). Show hours are 10 AM to 4 PM with a demonstration at 1PM on both days. The finished tree will be raffled off at the end of the demonstrations. Bonsai pots, soil, etc. available for purchase. Admission is free.

November 12th & 13th, 2022 Oakland, CA

The Pacific Bonsai Expo is to be held November 12-13, 2022 in Oakland CA at the Bridge Yard. The Pacific Bonsai Expo is a juried exhibition featuring 70 outstanding bonsai displays and a selection of the community's top vendors. The Jurors, Bjorn Bjorholm, Ryan Neil, and William N. Valavanis will select the trees. For more information go to the homepage using the following link [Pacific Bonsai Expo](#).

Newsletter Editor: Beverly Martinez

Contributors: Tom Colby

East Bay Bonsai Society—Schedule for 2022
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Regular Meetings: Second Wednesday, every month (except July, August and October) @ 7:30 pm.
Place: Lakeside Garden Center, 666 Bellevue Avenue, Oakland. Visitor's welcome. Masks required.

<u>Meeting</u>	<u>Program</u>
May 11	Monthly Meeting – In person/On line – Jerry Carpenter – tropical bonsai
May 22	Bonsai for Beginners – Michael Jensen-Akula
May 31	EBBS Board Meeting
June 1	Tree Shrinker delivered
June 8	Annual Auction – no meeting
June 26	Bonsai for Beginners – John Nackley/Bob Gould
July 5	EBBS Board Meeting
July 6	Tree Shrinker delivered
July 13	Monthly Meeting - In Person/On line – Bill Castellon
July 24	Bonsai for Beginners – Addison Galambos
Aug 1	EBBS Board Meeting
Aug 3	Tree Shrinker delivered
Aug 10	No meeting
Aug 20	Annual picnic
Aug 28	Bonsai for Beginners – Tom Colby
Sep 6	EBBS Board Meeting
Sep 7	Tree Shrinker delivered
Sep 14	Monthly Meeting - In Person/On line – Gordon Deeg – Show preparation
Sep 25	Bonsai for Beginners – Janet Nelson
Sept 26	EBBS Board Meeting
Oct 1-2	Annual Show (Set up Sept 30)
Oct 5	Tree Shrinker delivered
Oct 12	No Meeting
Oct 23	Bonsai for Beginners – Michael Jensen-Akula
Nov 2	Tree Shrinker delivered
Nov 7	EBBS Board Meeting
Nov 9	Monthly Meeting – In Person /On line TBD
Nov 27	Bonsai for Beginners – John Nackley/Bob Gould