

Bonsai Wire

Marin Bonsai Club

Monthly Meeting
3rd Tuesday, 7:30PM
Marin Art & Garden Center
30 Sir Francis Drake Blvd. Ross, CA

March 2011

Message from the President...

This month's theme is about retaining the best and most healthy trees in your collection. Before you do anything to a tree (repotting/pruning/wiring), please consider its overall health, and check that your planned action won't cause a valuable specimen to die needlessly. Check the leaves, roots and overall soil condition for signs of unwanted pests, drainage issues or poor growth, then plan what to do in order to rectify the problem.

We have a lot of experienced members within the club to help you work out when and what to do, as well as a reference library to consult. And why not try out a search through the many bonsai websites? You'd be amazed at how many detailed questions have been covered with really great articles for this area. Learning what the plant needs and when can be very rewarding, and means, when the time has come, that you can trade the tree for something even more exciting via upcoming auctions and sales. Hopefully you visited the February 26, 27 Mammoth Fundraiser Sale at the Bonsai Garden at Lake Merritt to do just that!

Keeping to a regime and bonsai maintenance calendar is also a great way of continuing healthy trees. Knowing when and how to fertilize, water and locate trees in your growing environment will pay dividends when it comes to optimizing growth. Check out the Taskmaster section in our monthly newsletters for some really great and timely advice. Think about making worksheets for each tree and creating individual health plans and notes handy for reference.

As part of our club offerings to members, we like to focus on tree enhancement techniques along with care and development. More information about enhancing your trees will be coming over the next month. One of the important things about making our trees look older and more interesting is the art of creating "old" wood that looks like it has been ravaged by insects, wind, fire and other adverse conditions. Our sensei Tim Kong, member of the "Electric Termites", is presenting some wonderful wood carving techniques on March 15. I can assure you that you'll learn some useful tricks.

As always, in the Bay Area, there are many bonsai club activities. I'd like to draw your attention to a not-to-be missed event at the Bonsai Society of San Francisco's March 10 meeting (see the Bay Area Events Calendar), where you'll see the much vaunted bonsai master Ryan Neal, who served a 5 year apprenticeship under Masahiko Kamura in Japan. I've seen his work at the GSBF 2010 convention, and it's really inspiring. A special raffle (\$5 a ticket) will ensure the lucky winner gets a beautiful bonsai to take home.

Another not-to-be-missed item I'd like to promote is our friend and great master, Ted Matson, is coming to our club to do both a demo (April 19) and hold a Saturday workshop on April 23 for members. Please talk to Candace who can provide more details on the workshop. Ted is a great teacher and paces his help according to your experience. Don't miss this rewarding opportunity!

- Alison Seaman

BONSAI INSPIRATIONS

The Giant Sequoia (*Sequoiadendron giganteum*)



- A really big Giant Sequoia

As California residents and tree lovers, we are quite lucky. Within the span of a few hundred miles we have the **tallest** (Coast Redwood), the **oldest** (Bristlecone Pine) and the **largest** (Giant Sequoia) trees in the world. Imagine that! And all three are great inspirations to us as bonsai artists.

Even without the Giant Sequoia, the coniferous forest of the Sierra Nevada would be one of the most magnificent in the world, but the presence of this great tree erases all doubt. When these trees were first reported to the world in the mid 1800's, the news was met with skepticism. How could any living thing possibly be so big? Even when a 20 foot cross section was sent back east it was called a "California hoax".

But loggers believed it and were quickly on their way to the high Sierra. In just a few years many groves of sequoias were leveled and were gone forever. In not too much more time there would be no more Giant Sequoias. Then in came the great environmental hero, John Muir. He and a few others were able to convince the government to set aside groves of these great trees in new national parks and forests.

There are now 75 Giant Sequoia groves, all in California, covering just over 35,000 acres and scattered along a 260 mile stretch in the Sierra Nevada at elevations of between 5000 and 7000 feet. They inhabit moist sites that have annual precipitation of between 45 and 60 inches, most of it coming from winter snows from November through April.



- Craig Thompson at the base of a Giant Sequoia

Why do these trees live so long? The oldest recorded age is 3500 years (although this one was figured out by counting the rings on a stump). The oldest living Giant Sequoia is the General Sherman in Sequoia National Park, at 2800 years old. This is also the largest tree in the world. Giant Sequoias are very well adapted to their environment. Fire doesn't kill them, as they have very thick bark and chemical tannins that protect the live wood underneath. Just look at almost any large, old sequoia. They usually have fire scars and many have hollowed out trunks in which you can stand in. These hollows have been carved out by many, many fires. But the tree lives on.



- Example of hollowed out Sequoia

Surprisingly, Giant Sequoias are very fast growers. They usually reach their highest point when they are just 500 years old. At this point, water in the tree can't be drawn up any higher so they just start growing outward. As opposed to the Coast Redwoods, which are tall and thin, the Giant Sequoia is tall and fat! Some of their branches are thicker than most very old trees. There is a branch on the Grizzly Giant in Yosemite that is over 6 feet thick!

Giant Sequoias, it seems, could probably live forever except that over the millenniums, fire and winter storms take their toll. Giant sequoias have a shallow root system and the big older trees often topple after heavy spring rains or wet snows make the ground soggy.

One such tree is the famous "Tunnel Tree" in the Wawona Grove in Yosemite National Park. I remember, as a kid, driving through this tree with our car. Then in the winter of 1969 it came down after a particularly heavy snowfall. It still lies there today looking like it just fell last year.



- Jay McDonald's Coast Redwood bonsai



- Craig Thompson's Coast Redwood bonsai

As far as bonsais are concerned, the Giant Sequoia is generally not a great species. The Coast Redwood lends itself much better to bonsai. But as a model to base our bonsai on, Giant Sequoias are a great inspiration.

Anyone seeing a Giant Sequoia for the first time (or multiple times, for that matter) has had their breath taken away by their sheer size, age and grandeur. After all, it was John Muir who said, *"I was talking the other day with a duchess & was struck with the grand bow with which she bade me goodbye & thanked me for the glaciers I gave her. But this forenoon King Sequoia bowed to me down in the grove as I stood gazing & the highbred gestures of the lady seemed rude by contrast."*

- Craig Thompson



- David Stern's Giant Sequoia bonsai

TASKMASTER – March 2011

The weather picture for February-to-March in the Northern California Bay Area microclimates for the average bonsai practitioner reminds me of a Buddhist-like observation: Your experience of current reality will be totally unique in all the universe from every other person's. Really. It's cold or warm or breezy or still or dry or wet or sunny or not on and off all the time. This is what early to mid Spring means around here. Do not be deceived into planting seeds and hothouse seedlings in your garden on the nice days. But nice or nasty, it's time to get finished with repotting before all those leaf nodes and buds start opening. That's Nature's alarm clock signaling 'Time's Up'.

Maples, elms, zelkova and beech first, then all the fruiting and flowering trees; then spruce, cypress, and fir. Soon after that it's camellia and pines, and on into the junipers. Big rewards on this. Most of those trees will burst forth with enough vigor within two or three weeks to keep you busy trying to stay ahead of the growth rate.

So that means put them all in full sun for power and health.

And that means it's a bad idea to do much wiring right now, because wire is very likely to bind quickly and scar badly on fast growers.

And it's a good idea to dose the trees with fish emulsion or other jump starters mid-to-late March (three to four weeks after repotting) and then in three or four weeks follow with cottonseed/bone meal (70%/30%) for the glide toward Summer.

And it's a bad idea to put any of this off.

And it's a good idea to do all this stuff with a glad heart, an open mind, an artistic approach, a generous hand, a designer's eye, a loving touch, a superior method, a thorough execution, and maybe, eventually, a state of if not bliss, then something very like it.

- The Taskmaster

March Meeting

Please join us at our meeting March 15 for a very special program by our esteemed sensei, Mr. Tim Kong. The topic of his discussion will be creating deadwood effects in bonsai. These can take the form of jin and shari and Tim will explain not only how to create convincing effects that add age, dignity and interest to our trees, but also when it is appropriate and when it isn't. Tim will be demonstrating on trees from his collection and encouraging audience participation.

If you have trees with good jin and shari please bring them along for display. If you have trees on which you want to develop these effects, bring them too and hopefully Tim will have a chance to do some critiquing during the demonstration.

It has been many years since the club has presented a program on creating and appreciating deadwood in bonsai and this will be an important meeting for everyone who hopes to continually improve their bonsai.

See you there!



Ted is coming! Ted is coming!

. . . that would be Saturday, April 23 for his hands on workshop and Tuesday, April 19 for the presentation at our meeting.

Don't delay reserving your space in the workshop. It will be opened to members of other Bay Area clubs at the end of March, so make sure you don't miss out on this invaluable opportunity to study with one of bonsai's best.

Also, rumor has it that a beautiful bunjin style shimpaku juniper has been secured for Ted's demo which will provide boundless opportunities for Ted to thrill and delight us with his knowledge and expertise in styling.

Mark your calendars and be sure to attend.

Iron Bonsai Rematch???

The Redwood Empire Bonsai Club has challenged the Marin Bonsai Club to a rematch of the bonsai styling competition at their meeting Tuesday, March 22. While they are calling their program a "Throw Down" and the rules may not be exactly the same, we think they are looking for redemption from their near miss of a first place finish at the Marin Iron Bonsai in January. Our club will field 3 teams and we encourage all members to come up to Santa Rosa, cheer our club to victory and bid on the trees to take home with your raffle tickets.

And who are they trying to unseat? The victorious team of Jay McDonald and Peter Miller! Jay twisted and torqued their tree into the winning silhouette as pictured. Candace Key, the very fortunate winner of the raffle, will be paying close attention to Tim Kong's demo on deadwood to further develop the jin Peter and Jay began on this young tree.

Don't miss this historic rematch. Carpooling is possible and encouraged so please let Candace know if you would like a ride.

- Candace Key



BAY AREA BONSAI EVENTS

March 10 **San Francisco, CA**
Bonsai Society of San Francisco. General meeting with demo by Ryan Neil. Raffle. 7:30pm Hall of Flowers (Strybing Arboretum) at the corner of Ninth Ave and Lincoln Way.

March 12-13 **Oakland, CA**
Bay Area Bonsai Associates: *29th Annual Show* at the Lakeside Park Garden Center, 666 Bellevue Avenue. Show hours are Saturday: 5-9PM and Sunday: 10AM-4PM. There will be a 6:30PM, Saturday demonstration by Ryan Neil, who apprenticed with Masahiko Kimura and is noted for his teaching excellence, followed by a raffle of the demonstration tree and general prizes. A plant sale during exhibit hours both days will include pre-bonsai, bonsai, pots, tools, soils, wire, literature and other bonsai related materials. Admission is free, and parking is free after 5PM. For more information contact John Roehl at bigbluemoon@comcast.net or at 707-827-3206.

March 19-20 **Palo Alto, CA**
Kusamura Bonsai Club: 51st Annual Show at the Lucie Stern Community Center, 1305 Middlefield Road. Admission is free. Show hours are Saturday: 12-Noon to 5PM, and Sunday: 10AM-5PM. There will be demonstrations, raffles, and club member tree sales both days. Jim Gremel will be the guest demonstrator. For more information, contact Jerry Carpenter at 408-557-0166; 408-823-9525 or jcsf1090@comcast.net

March 22 **Santa Rosa, CA**
MBC has been invited up to Redwood Empire Bonsai Society (REBS) for another Iron Man Bonsai tabled as an MBC Throw Down event! Veteran's Memorial Building, 1351 Maple Avenue. 7:30pm.

March 23-27 **San Mateo, CA**
Bonsai Society of San Francisco: *Annual Bonsai Exhibit* located in the San Francisco Flower and Garden Show at the San Mateo County Event Center, 1346 Saratoga Drive. General admission to the show is \$20.00. The hours are: Wednesday-Saturday 10AM-7PM and Sunday 10AM-6PM. For more information visit our website www.bssf.org. For general information on the Flower and Garden Show visit: www.sfgardenshow.com

March 26-27 **Fresno, CA**
The Fresno Bonsai Society: *38th Annual Spring Bonsai Exhibit* in the Shinzen Gardens at Woodward Park, located at the corner of Friant and Audubon Roads. Hours are 10AM-4PM both days. The bonsai exhibit will be displayed in a beautiful outdoor setting. It is a part of the Spring Blossom Festival and Japanese cultural events, which will be on Saturday only. At 1PM both days a demonstration of basic bonsai techniques will be provided by Ray Thieme and Richard Ramirez, and a bonsai raffle and large plant sale will also be available both days. There is a small entrance fee to the park. For more information contact Dwayne Berrett, 559 284 3549.

March 26-27 **Scotts Valley, CA**
Santa Cruz Bonsai Kai: *22 Annual Bonsai Exhibit and Show* at the Scotts Valley Community Center, 360 Kings Village Road from 10:30AM-4:30PM both days. Demonstration by Mr. Katsumi Kinoshita will be at 2PM each day. Plant Sales, door prizes, raffle and much, much more. For more information call 831-469-0688 or e-mail edinbonnydoon@sbcglobal.net

April 2 **San Francisco, CA**
Bonsai Society of San Francisco Bonsai: *Special Sales Event* in the Recreation Room of the San Francisco County Fair Building, Ninth Avenue and Lincoln Way in Golden Gate Park. Bonsai and related items will be on sale by club members. Hours are 9AM-3PM. This sale is an addendum to the club's show of March 23-27 at the San Francisco Flower & Garden Show. Free admission; some parking available behind the building. For more information visit our website: www.bssf.org

April 2-3 **Sacramento, CA**
Bonsai Sekiyu Kai of Sacramento: *34th Annual Bonsai Show* at the Sacramento Betsuin Buddhist Church, 2401 Riverside Blvd. Hours are: Saturday, 12-Noon-5:00PM, and Sunday, 10AM-3:30PM.

Demonstrations at 2PM, both days by Bonsai Master John Uchida. Amenities include refreshments, light snacks, door prizes, raffles, and a Silent Auction. Plant and bonsai tool sales will also be available. For more information contact Ron Krause at 916-481-4792 or rkrause@surewest.net

April 8-10 **San Jose, CA**
San Jose Betsuin Bonsai Club: *41st Anniversary Exhibition* at the San Jose Buddhist Church Betsuin, 640 N. 5th Street. Hours are Saturday, Noon-5PM, and Sunday, 11AM-4PM. A demonstration featuring Harry Hirao, 'Mr. California Juniper' will be at 1PM, both days. The demonstration trees will be raffled at the conclusion of each demonstration. Plants and bonsai material will be available for sale. Free admission. For more information, contact Ken Azuma, 408-730-4506 or kennethazuma@sbcglobal.net

April 9-10 **Sacramento, CA**
American Bonsai Association: *52nd Annual Show and Sale* at the Shepard Garden and Arts Center, 3330 McKinley Blvd. Hours are Saturday, 10AM-5:00PM, and Sunday, 10AM-4:00PM. Demonstration at 2PM both days by Bonsai Master Bob Shimon. Beginner workshops available, and intermediate and advanced workshops taught by Bob Shimon. Large member and vendor sales areas; raffles and door prizes. Free admission and ample parking. For more information contact Greg McDonald at Gregandlee@comcast.net or by phone 530-642-2521

April 24 **Watsonville, CA**
Watsonville Bonsai Club: *Annual Bonsai Exhibit* at the Watsonville Buddhist Temple, 423 Bridge Street. Hours are 11AM-4PM, with a demonstration at 1:30PM by Katsumi Kinoshita. Vendor plant sales and plenty of free parking. For more information contact Don White, 831-724-9283 or whitesib@aol.com

April 30-May1 **Modesto, CA**
Modesto Bonsai Club: *30th Annual Spring Show & Sale* at the Modesto Centre Plaza, 11th & K Streets. Hours are: Saturday 10AM-5PM, and Sunday 11AM-4PM. Bonsai exhibit, demonstrations, auctions, raffles and sales both days. Free Admission. For more information visit us at www.modestobonsai.com or call Peter Camarena at 209-529-1759.

May 7-8 **Sacramento, CA**
Sacramento Bonsai Club: *64th Annual Bonsai and Suiseki Show* at the Sacramento Buddhist Church, 2401 Riverside Boulevard. Show hours are Saturday, 12-Noon-5PM, and Sunday, 10AM-5PM. Demonstration by Boon Manakitivipart at 2PM both days; raffle will follow. Plants and bonsai related items for sale. Free admission. For further information contact Gary Judd, 916-630-1340.

May 21-22 **Sacramento, CA**
Satsuki Aikokai of Sacramento: *40th Annual Show* at the Shepard Garden and Arts Center, 3330 McKinley Boulevard. Show hours are Saturday, 10AM-5PM and Sunday, 10AM-4PM. Demonstration at 1:30PM both days, followed by benefit drawings. Member and vendor sales also available. Free admission. For more information visit Satsukiaikokaisac@sbcglobal.net or contact Ronn Pigram, 916-428-8505

NOTE: The Lotus Bonsai Nursery workshops scheduled for March 12 and 13, and April 9 and 10 are cancelled. The new 'Work on Students Bonsai' workshops are Saturday and Sunday, April 16 and 17, 2011. \$45 workshop fee. Please contact Bolet if you'd like to reserve a space.

Bolet Salvador, Lotus Bonsai Nursery & Gardens
1435 Lower Lake Drive, Placerville, CA 95667
(530) 622-9681 Phone, (530) 957-3969 Cell
www.lotusbonsai.com

Edu-Fun II
Featuring Yasuo Mitsuya
April 29-May 8 **Oakland, CA**

Yasuo Mitsuya, Bonsai Master from Japan and Kathy Shaner, Bonsai Master and Curator for the Bonsai Garden at Lake Merritt, share their knowledge and artistic skills as well as practical and specialized techniques of bonsai and bonsai-related topics.

For details on registration and seminar schedule: <http://www.gsbf-bonsai.org/lake-merritt/Mitsuya>Returns2011.htm>.

MARIN BONSAI CLUB EVENTS

March 1, 2011: Repotting Workshop Livermore Pavilion, 7pm

Bring your tree in and work on it with Tim Kong and Jay McDonald. Fee is \$10 for members, \$20 for non-members.

March 15, 2011: Monthly Meeting Marin Society of Artists, 7:30pm

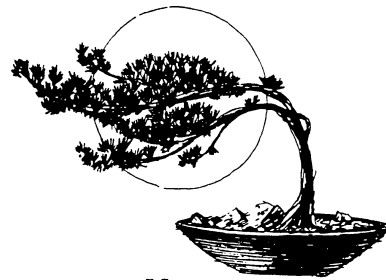
Tim Kong will be giving a demo on carving! Come see how this is done by a long standing member of the "Electric Termites".

April 5, 2011: Workshop Livermore Pavilion, 7pm

Bring your tree in and work on it with Tim Kong and Jay McDonald. Fee is \$10 for members, \$20 for non-members.

April 19, 2011: Monthly Meeting Marin Society of Artists, 7:30pm

You don't want to miss this one. The one and only Ted Matson will be here to give one of his great demos. This is sure to be one of the best events of the year!



Marin Bonsai Club

2010 Marin Bonsai Club Officers:

President	Alison Seaman	415-789-1167
VP Programs	Candace Key	415-491-1989
VP Shows	Jay McDonald	415-847-8909
Secretary	Jeanette Arnold	415-883-2651
Treasurer	Frances Noles	415-461-0437
Historian	Carolyn Robbins	415-460-0339
Librarian	Roger Lion	415-924-5134
News Editor	Sharon Bone	415-898-9618
Hospitality	Marlene Philley	415-924-5134
Docent Coord	Roger Lion	415-924-5134

Marin Bonsai Club

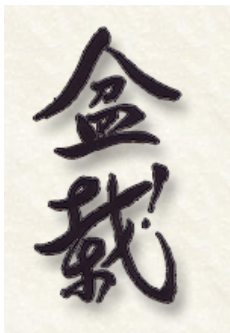
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