



Seasonal Oak Maintenance

“John “JT” Thompson is an officer for the Midori Bonsai Club and a longtime member of SBBK. He is considered a subject matter expert on Oaks as bonsai. We look forward to his presentation on seasonal oak work this month. Members are encouraged to bring in their oaks for questions; JT will help to answer those and talk about their trees as time permits.

Our club meetings are currently being held face-to-face. The meeting is scheduled for the 4th Wednesday of each month, except for November & December. The meeting starts at 7:00 pm and ends around 9:00 pm. at the San Mateo Garden Center is at 605 Parkside Way, San Mateo, CA right off the Alameda de las Pulgas near Hillsdale Mall.



GSBF Golden Zoom with Mike Lane

Jan 22, Mon 6:30pm-9pm, Clip & Grow technique, including proportion and wound closure. The zoom-link will be emailed to members.



Events Notice

Annual Mammoth Auction & Sale Fundraiser:

Feb 17-18, Sat noon-4pm, Sun 9am-3pm. Lakeside Park Garden Center, 666 Bellevue Ave, Oakland, CA
Annual fundraiser for the GSBF Bonsai Garden at Lake Merritt. bonsailakemerritt.com

2024 Pacific Bonsai Expo: Oct 26-27, Henry J. Kaiser Center for the Arts, Oakland.

Call for entries: Submission Feb 1 - Apr 30

pacificbonsaiexpo.org for more information



2024 Dues are Now Due

With all these programs and activities this year, comes a cost to the club, which in turn, at this time of year, we are asking for membership dues.

Dues: \$45 (single member); \$55 (family member).

If you've been a member for 10 years and are 72 or older, individual membership is \$25 and family is \$35.

Editors Special Note:

Consider sharing your projects or best seasonal trees with the club by submitting some photos and captions for the Snippet. Please send your entries to mwei2cre8@msn.com.

Also In This Issue:

President's Message

Calendar

Winter Garden Activities & Inspirations

2024 Calendar of Events

SBBK Membership

President's Message

By Jerry Carpenter

I flipped the calendar and was surprised to see 2024 already. Here comes a new year with lots of interesting meetings, people, and happenings. We welcome our new club officers and board of directors as well as to say thank you to those who served this past year. There are so many hands that make this club work. All of you have a part to play to make our meetings both fun and informative.

This coming year, I want to focus on skills. Sometimes I think we get comfortable with sitting back and watching presentations. I think we need to help educate and concentrate on the skills of bonsai. I would like to bring more interactive learning content for newer club members. As we grow with new members we must invest in them to gain improved skills for the art of bonsai. That includes workshops on wiring, species specific workshops, and a bit more on the horticulture of our trees. I hope you find those opportunities helpful and informative. We have so many new members in our club that need a solid foundation and even we long term members need a refresher or an update to new information.

We will have some very special guests this coming year. We are hoping to get Adam Toth as our June show presenter.



In August we will welcome Andres Bicozza from Europe. He is a wood-carving master who started in Argentina and moved to Portugal. His skills are amazing.



continued

SBBK is a wonderful group of knowledgeable bonsai artists. We are also a family of friends who gather to share our art.

I really want more participation from our membership. Members should feel comfortable participating in demonstrations, workshops, and events.

Calendar (see page 4 for our proposed 2024 calendar)

- Jan 24 — Meeting: "JT" Thompson on Seasonal Oak Work
- Feb 6 — *First Tuesday Workshop*: Val & Gordon San Mateo Garden Center 7-9 pm
- Feb 28 — Meeting: Repotting:—Gordon Deeg
- Mar 2 — Repotting Party at Gordon's garden: bring a tree and potting material (pot, soil, wire, etc) and also to help repot some of Gordon's trees. 10:30 start (Details to follow by email)
- Mar 27 — Eric W Schrader – Shohin & Mame Also SBBK Birthday

Refreshment Rotation

Jan Mtg	Feb Mtg	Mar Mtg
Richard Dobson	Dustin Ho	SBBK Board
Jerry Carpenter	Steve Iwaki	Birthday celebration

Please find a replacement if you are unable to bring refreshments as scheduled.

Asking for Board Positions

- SBBK needs your help. If you are interested in helping your club as an officers, we need a Secretary who has the obligation of attending our board meetings and doing some basic recording. Mike Rosenthal has a template can be followed to assist with the process. Our meetings will be efficiently run and not require too much time.
- We are also looking for a Corresponding Secretary who has the responsibility of emailing the club, maintaining a roster of email, sending some special correspondence. The position is essential to the club and not a heavy lift. If you are interested in becoming an officer on our board, please chat me anytime.
- We are searching for an assistant to our Treasurer.

Jerry Carpenter

Post-Dated: The Schooling of an Irreverent Bonsai Monk, by Michael Hagedorn

Inspiring excerpts—book recommendation to share or own.

- “From [age] twenty to thirty, study. From thirty to forty, create resources and realize your path. And from forty on, give back to others.”—Mr. Shinji Suzuki.
- “The first and most important aesthetic skill is the ability to accurately assess a tree’s worthiness for bonsai. It is common in the bonsai community to say “tree” when talking about bonsai. Frequently it is the essential quality of the tree that is being talked about, its promise as a bonsai. A good bonsai and a good tree are not the same. A “good tree” has a good trunk. This is all it means. It may be sick, diseased, in poor form, poor balance, and in a wrong pot, but still be a good tree. If it has all those problems it is only a bad bonsai. But a tree with a poor trunk will never be a good bonsai. The trunk of the tree is its essence, its essential character or spirit, and a good trunk that is engaging to look at and full of interest is something that will not change.... In other words, the work done on a tree such as wiring its branches to move them does not affect the essential quality of the tree, but it is the work that will help create a good bonsai.”
- “While the wires used in bonsai are made from soft metals, they are still hard enough to crush the living tissue of a branch. Because wire is hard, apprentices must train their hands to be soft. Wiring should be as soft as a showfall. And yet snow, when there is enough of it, can be a very persuasive force. Ideally, wiring is gentle, yet firm.”



Trident Group, 24 yr development, Steve Iwaki

Winter Activity: Waiting For Spring

Each member’s collection & climate differs, but a few shared some insight on their plans or activities for consideration.

Bill McDonald

- Over the course of the Spring and Summer I mark my trees that will need repotting with a small bit of blue painter tape. This year I have sifted my soil into a slightly smaller size and use the larger size as a bottom covering. In the late Fall I gather my trees for repotting into a staging area and set up a repotting station nearby.
- New this year, I am following Peter Tea’s advice* to repot most of my trees in development (most of them) in December. As of this date I am on track to accomplish this task. Peter feels that an early repot makes the tree grow faster and more vigorously. For trees in refinement an early repot is not advised as longer internodes and more vigorous foliage is not desirable.
- This potting season I am sprinkling mycorrhiza on the roots of all the trees I repot.
- In addition I am trying to better document on “Bonsai Album” what and when I do significant things, such as repot or take cuttings from specific trees.

Jerry Carpenter

- This is a somewhat quiet time. The rains have slowed my normal work. I will be finishing the repotting of some fruiting trees. What some people do these days is prepare pots and make soil. Luckily for me I purchase a pre-mix soil but I augment with akadama to make the mix fit my trees needs. I keep a close eye on how much water the trees get with all this rain and ensure they drain well.
- If this will be a new normal warm winter then the trees can start budding in late January to early February.
- In terms of any “watch-outs or precautions for heavy rains, winds, or cold”—Ensure trees are draining. Tilt some pots to one side to help with draining. Be sure to alternate sides so as to not drown one side or the other. Tropical trees cannot go below 40 degrees unsheltered. When temps drop below 40, some of my trees will move inside for a few days until the freeze or frost temps pass. This is a constant effort to check the weather and move in and out trees. Be careful not to shock the trees, temps cannot be any more than 10 degrees different from indoors and outdoor temps. That is always fun.

***Peter Tea: January Blog (and Repotting Notes)**

Visit www.ptbonsai.com/january for Peter’s latest guidance for January and repotting considerations. Please note that plant species and your local climate may vary—follow with discretion.

2024 Calendar of Events

Please note updates in each Snippet edition as details, presenters or topics may change.

- Jan 24 Seasonal Oak Maintenance - JT
- Feb 28 Repotting – Gordon and team
- Mar 2 Repotting Party at Gordon’s garden
- Mar 27 Eric W Schrader – Shohin & Mame
Also SBBK Birthday
- Apr 24 Show Readiness – Marsha M.
- May 22 Raw Material or What do I do with this? – Multi
Table Workshop
- Jun 1 & 2 SBBK Show – Special Guest to be confirmed
- Jun 26 Bonsai Challenge – multi-club
- Jul 24 Multi-Species Tables – various table hosts
- Aug 28 Deadwood Presentation – Special guest Andres
Bicocca (Portugal)
- Sep 21 SBBK BBQ
- Sep 25 Green Elephant (auction fund-raiser)
- Oct 23 Special guests Yannick Kiggen and Bjorn Bjorholm
Style-off
- Nov 25 What Makes a Good Pot? – Val and Josh
- Dec 8 Holiday Event

SBBK Membership

Looking back at 2023 we are happy to have welcomed 18 new and 4 returning members. We hope you have all found SBBK membership, meetings, workshops, resources and community to have been valued. Invite a friend, and if not yet a member please consider this in 2024.

While meeting in San Mateo, membership reaches gardens near and far. To appreciate the distances some take to follow us or meet in person, here are some examples: Atherton, Belmont, Burlingame, Campbell, Daly City, East Amherst (NY), El Granada, Foster City, Fremont, Georgetown (PA), Gilroy, Half Moon Bay, Hayward, Los Altos Hills, Menlo Park, Millbrae, Morgan Hill, Moss Beach, Mountain View, Pacifica, Palo Alto, Petaluma, Redwood City, San Anselmo, San Bruno, San Carlos, San Francisco, San Jose, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Saratoga, South San Francisco, Stanford, Stockton, Sunnyvale, Texas, Union City, and Woodside.

Visit us on the web at <http://seibokubonsai.org/>
or at <https://facebook.com/seibokubonsai>
or at <https://instagram.com/seibokubonsai>



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