



Oct 23 Meeting — Style-Off by Yannick Kiggen & Bjorn Bjornholm

7:00PM—9:00 (Garden Center) by Steve Iwaki

For our October meeting, we are very excited to host a combined event with Kusamura Bonsai Club. Together we are bringing two world-renown bonsai artists, Yannick Kiggen and Bjorn Bjornholm. It will truly be an unforgettable night, with each working simultaneously on Japanese Black Pines. At the completion of the styling and a flip of a coin toss, one tree will be raffled off and the other to be auctioned. Here is a bit of background on our two bonsai artists:

YANNICK KIGGEN

Yannick got interested in bonsai at the age of 10 in Belgium. He began his journey two years later working with European bonsai artists, Pius Notter, Francois Jeker, Mario Komstra, as well as Japanese artists that include Kunio Kobayashi, Takeo Kawabe, and Hotsumi Terakawa. In 2011 he founded Yama Bonsai Studio, sharing his knowledge and skills from beginner to advanced people sharing his passion.



BJORN BJORNHOLM

After being an apprentice and working with Keiichi Fujii-kawa from Osaka for over 9 years, Bjorn returned to the US and established Eisei-en Bonsai Garden in Tennessee. He has a YouTube channel, which has over a 150 thousand followers. In addition to his YouTube instructional online classes, he has been the headliner for various bonsai clubs and conventions throughout the world. Earlier this year, he has moved back to Japan, opening Eisei-en in Kyoto.

SBBK Calendar

Nov 5 **First Tuesday Workshop:** Val San Mateo Garden Center 7-9 pm

Local Events Notice

Midori 61st Annual Show: "Fall in Love with Bonsai"

Oct 19 Sat 10:00 AM - 5:00 PM

Quinlan Community Center,
10185 N Stelling Rd, Cupertino

2024 Pacific Bonsai Expo:

Oct 26-27, Henry J. Kaiser Center for the Arts,
10 10th St, Oakland.

pacificbonsaieexpo.org for more details

PBE Tickets are on sale online now



Bonsai Garden at Lake Merritt 25 year Celebration

Nov 09 Sat 1:00 PM – 3:30 PM

Bonsai Garden at Lake Merritt
650 Bellevue Ave, Oakland



Kusamura Bonsai Club: Jerry Braswell - Viewing Stones

Nov 15 Fri 7:00 PM – 9:30 PM

Parish Hall of St. Mark's Episcopal Church
600 Colorado, Ave, Palo Alto



Photo credit: Eisei-en Bonsai (Bonsai Network Podcast)

Also In This Issue:

President's Message

September Meeting Recap: Green Elephant

SBBK Helps A Bonsai Master

Honoring Gerry Fields

September SBBK BBQ

October Seasonal Guidance

President's Message

By Jerry Carpenter



The bonsai world is gifted with many with great artists, consultants, mentors, and friends. There are those artists who make a great impression on young developing bonsai practitioners. When they leave us, we grieve and remember the stories and lessons learned and do our best to carry on with the information they provided. We have had our losses this past month. I have lost my tropical bonsai reference and mentor, Jerry Meislik. I have his books, often conferred with him on species and have written to him many times. We share in the loss of our longtime member Gerry Fields. So there are more losses than I can say at this time. Cherish your time with the talent around you.

On the bright side, this month we have two wonderful artist before us in Bjorn and Yannick. Learn from them and apply their techniques to your own work. I always ask members at events like this to take notes, actively listen and incorporate the teaching. Opportunities like this do not

happen often. We are also co-sponsoring the evening with our friends from Kusamura Bonsai Club. It is always great to see our sister club members under one roof for events. Bjorn and Yannick know each other so I am looking forward to some interesting banter along with the information. There will be two pines worked on by these guys, one will be raffled off and the other will be auctioned off.

Thanks to everyone who made it out to the BBQ in September. Most of all, thanks to Gordon and Kamrin for hosting us. I hear everyone had a great time and the cleanup was not too bad either.

Our November business meeting will take place on Nov 25 along with a wonderful presentation on pots by Val & Josh.

Suddenly then, we enter December and will enjoy the close of the year at our December Holiday party. Dec 1 is the date we could secure. There will be signup sheets passed around to gather information on a potluck dish you can bring.

So now we walk into Autumn with cooler temperatures and so much to plan for during the winter. I am excited!



Sept: Green Elephant Fundraiser

By Jerry Carpenter

We want to thank John and Jeremy for being auctioneers for our Green Elephant event. We had a great crowd with some wonderful bonsai items. It was a very successful event

raising some much-needed funds. Thanks to everyone who came ! Also, want to thank everyone who helped set up and clean up after the event.



Photo credit: Giovannie Piril

SBBK Helps A Bonsai Master

by Conan Grames (as shared at the Sep Club Meeting)

It was 2:46 p.m. on March 11, 2011, in the small fishing village of Jusanhama north of Sendai, Japan, when seventy-year-old Seigo Sato, chairman of the town's fishing cooperative heard the tsunami warning siren. He immediately loaded his wife Yumiko and grandson Yoshimune in the car and took them up the mountain to be safe. Then Sato headed back down to the village to rescue a widow who could not drive. As he headed back up the mountain, he realized he had not gone high enough for his wife and grandson. After dropping off the widow on higher ground, he went back to rescue his own family, but it was too late. The tsunami which hit the village at a height of thirty feet had funneled up the canyon to a depth of over one hundred feet, picking up everything in its path and then sucking it all back out to sea as the wave receded.

Sato spent the next three days in snow and freezing temperatures frantically combing the shoreline and all the land buried by the tsunami looking for his family, but to no avail. His wife and grandson were among the 15,899 people who died and were two of the 2,529 bodies that were never recovered. Sato was overcome with grief at the loss of his dear wife and young grandson. Not only had he lost them, but he had lost his own home, all his possessions, and the ships and equipment that were the tools of survival for everyone in the village. Now he felt responsible for the livelihood of hundreds of people and wasn't sure how he could cope. He felt that perhaps he should give up and move to Sendai to be with one of his married children.

My wife Cindy and I came to know this story in an unusual way. We were serving a volunteer mission for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saint as public affairs directors of the Asia North Area, based in Tokyo. We began driving a large delivery truck back into the area to provide food and clothing to the survivors. My parents, Lloyd and JaLene Grames, belonged to the Seiboku Bonsaikai Club in San Mateo, California, and told our story to the members of the club. The members, many of whom were of Japanese



heritage, were anxious to help. The club raised five hundred dollars and asked my parents if we might be able to find someone in the disaster area who had been involved in bonsai or gardening and needed some help. In our travels, we had not seen anyone who fit this description.

We called the welfare manager in charge of the Church's humanitarian efforts up and down the northeast coast. We told him about the donation and asked if he could keep a look out for a bonsai cultivator or gardener who could use some help. A few days later, Darwin called us back and said, "I think I found your guy." It turned out to be Seigo Sato in Jusanhama. When Darwin had visited the village, he had gone to the evacuation camp where Sato was living. Sato had shown Darwin the one surviving bonsai tree out of the more than fifty he had created. It was in the house—all the others had been swept out to sea.

Sato was not only a fisherman, but in his spare time he was a superlative bonsai artist, who dug up the young red and black pine trees off the rocky coast and formed them into beautiful miniature scenes of nature. He specialized in taking trees or branches that were mostly dead and grafting the branches that were still alive into a bonsai artform called "bunjin." He had exhibited his trees in shows and had many offers to purchase his creations, but they were not for sale. These were almost like his children with whom he could not part. Darwin said to us, "I think this is someone you can help."

Cindy drove the truck while I navigated to Jusanhama on one of our trips, and we found Sato, who almost reluctantly received the donation from the bonsai club. We sat in his two-room prefab shelter and shed tears as we listened to the details of the March 11 tragedy and what he had lost. But there were also smiles. With the help from the Church, the fishermen were back at work; they were bringing in the harvest; and those in the village who survived had hope again. Sato had stayed to lead this effort. He told us that he had felt all was lost, and he was ready to give up, but with the help from the Church and the personal donation from the club, Sato found the strength to continue on.



Sato-san with his wife — Oct 2008

SBBK Helps A Bonsai Master

(continued from page 3)

The friendship that began because of bonsai trees has lasted now thirteen years. We have been back to see Sato on several occasions. We were often filled with gratitude and tears, as we ate the refreshments he always offered. He also gave us the one extra copy of a photo album of the bonsai trees that had been produced before the tsunami. When we last saw him in July 2024, he had rebuilt a home—on high ground—and he had started again to cultivate bonsai trees. His garden was filled with beautiful new creations. There was more sadness: we learned that he had a grown daughter, but she had not been healthy and passed away last year at the age of forty-six. It was her son that died with his grandmother in the tsunami.

Perhaps the most satisfying part of this story is that thirteen years after Sato-san went through this disaster and the village become self-reliant again, eighty-three old Sato has been invited to travel around Japan to give lectures on emergency preparedness, helping others avoid disaster or recover emotionally from his kind of unbelievable tragedy and loss. The club's donation not only lifted him, but it lifted us as well when we see the large impact it has had on his life. Sato, like the nearly dead trees he had kept alive, truly had come back to life to bless the lives of others. I never asked Sato-san what he did with the donation from the club, but I feel sure that money went to help others in the village. That's the kind of heart that beats inside Seigo Sato.



Honoring Gerry Fields

by Valerie Monroe

Our good friend Gerry Fields passed away in the night, this last September. He has been a faithful supporter of bonsai in the Bay Area for many years. Sei Boku has been lucky to share Gerry with his home club Midori Bonsai in the South Bay.

I got to know Gerry in the *Electric Termites*; a group where several of us met at founder Mike Page's garage for some serious sawdust making and bonsai camaraderie. The trees Gerry would bring in were small, yet interesting. We would all have to discuss just what we would do to improve this material. Over the years, I came to see that Gerry loved his small project plants; even in our most recent workshops he was still interested in improving small olives and boxwoods and privets.



When Gerry decided to move to the Mendocino Area to be with Mary Anne, he had a strict mandate - there was to be a limit on the number of plants brought from Saratoga. We all laughed when we saw Gerry planting six to ten plants into Anderson flats in order for it to count as 'one'.

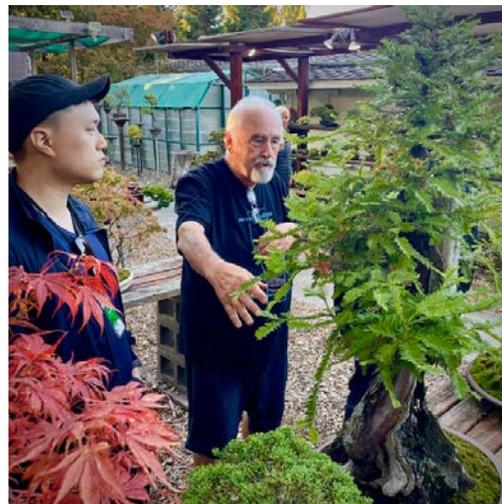
After being a part of the workshop for over four years, there are many things to miss; Gerry's spontaneous vocal outbursts of 'you do good work' to anyone he approved of, discussions of bonsai topics, stock topics, wine topics, but rarely political topics.

Gerry was as he would say 'hit with the bug'; the bonsai bug. Both his parents grew bonsai, and Gerry still had several trees that had been started by his 'Papa Fields'. He was part of the Conifer Society. He had held board positions with Midori and SBBK and the San Mateo Garden Center. He was the force behind our popular annual Bonsai Challenge program; providing the material, care sheets, and moderation. He docented at the BGLM Collection for years with George Shoptaw. He was an enthusiastic attendee at the Seminars and Conventions; frequently taking classes to acquire yet another small funny plant.

Gerry, we toast you with our Peet's Coffee and our Justin wine. We will miss you, our friend.

September SBBK BBQ by Michael Wei

Thanks to Gordon & Kamrin for hosting, and for all the delicious potluck fare, and for all who organized and set up the BBQ. It was great seeing many club members and appreciating a lovely bonsai garden.



A few notes gleaned from a garden tour by Gordon:

- Redwoods are great material for large and small bonsai, they prefer less sun.
- If hollowing out a trunk for a fire-surviving style, do not use actual fire to blacken the interior as it will damage the tree. Suggests using Miniwax Ebony stain.
- PC Petrifier is a good preservative for shari & deadwood.
- A Korean Lilac has delicate pink leaves now, and has a beautiful fragrance to fill your yard.

Peter Tea — October Study Group

“Deciduous work is winding down and now we’re much more focused on Conifers.”

“At this time of year, all of our trees should have fertilizer on them. I normally fertilize till about December.”

Please follow the QR link below for more great advice that Peter shares with his study group.

Peter Tea has been practicing bonsai since 2003, apprenticed in Japan, and teaches in No. CA.



Refreshment Rotation

Thanks to club members who share in the hospitality of snacks at each month’s meetings. If you are new or would be on stand-by to help out, please email Michael W.

Oct Mtg

Christine W & Jimmy Y

Jerry C & Catherine T

Nov Mtg

Matt S

Brian & Linda G

Please find a replacement if you are unable to bring refreshments as scheduled. Refer to the SBBK roster.

Email mwei2cre8@msn.com if you need member contacts to swap dates or have questions.

Golden State Bonsai Federation

BGLM has a new website: bonsailakemeritt.com with a blog feature for posting various articles, monthly newsletters and general happenings at the Bonsai Garden. Individuals can subscribe to the blog postings. Once subscribed, they will receive an automatic email notification for all new blog postings.

2024 SBBK Calendar of Events

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

- Oct 23 Special guests Yannick Kiggen & Bjorn Bjorholm Style-off
- Nov 25 What Makes a Good Pot? – Val & Josh
- Dec 1 Holiday Event



First Tuesday October Workshop — under the stars!

Welcoming New Members



- Wendy M
- Paticia L
- Vince P

Suggestions for upcoming meeting Show & Tell:

- October/November—Autumn Colors
- November—Unique or beautiful pots, collected or self-made

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.

Accept my apology for any delayed or missed Snippet distributions to members as we update our roster and distribution list.

Visit us on the web at <http://seibokubonsai.org/>



or at <https://facebook.com/seibokubonsai>
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