



Monday Nov 24 Meeting Improving Your Trees 7:00PM—9:00 (Garden Center)

by Valerie Monroe

Join us on the Monday before Thanksgiving, for a look at how to take your trees to the next level. Because our trees are living and growing, they are constantly changing and evolving. So sometimes a new start is needed.

Valerie will start the meeting with some photo examples, and then continue with a group discussion on members' trees.

Please bring in a tree for advice on any styling or health

SBBK Calendar

Nov 24 Club Meeting
San Mateo Garden Center

Monday
7-9 pm



Dec 2 First Tuesday Workshop
San Mateo Garden Center

Tuesday
7-9 pm

Dec 7 Holiday Party
La Lanterna Ristorante
(RSVP by Sun, Nov 30)

Sunday
1-4 pm



Dec 13 Nursery Field Trip
Sacramento

Saturday
7am departure



Sign up by QR code, or see articles for more details

Seasonal Advice from Bonsai Tonight:
Fall Maintenance Tasks – removing old leaves
OCT 17, 2017 by JONAS DUPUICH 

Timing for fall pruning when the weather is still warm
OCT 20, 2020 by JONAS DUPUICH 

Preparing for Winter
NOV 20, 2009 by JONAS DUPUICH 

Refreshment Reminder

Nov Mtg	Jan Mtg	Feb Mtg
Richard & Jill Oaks	Lynn O'Dell	Enrique & Jen O.
Catherine Tierney	Kit & Margaret S.	Kathi Page

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

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Member Spotlight: Russell Leonard
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First Tuesday Workshop for Members
Forest Planting Workshop

President's Message

By Mike Rosenthal

Hello My Bonsai Colleagues,

Not sure if I like it getting dark so early, but I guess that means getting up earlier to work on trees. The worst part of shorter days and longer nights is it gives the Stanford rodents more opportunity to feast on my trees. I have found that to be the most frustrating aspect of maintaining my bonsai collection. There appears to be no limits to their appetites or needs for nest building. I have tried traps, poisons, feeding feral cats in my yard, deterrent chemicals, large bird of prey statues and whatever. I am open to any other suggestions not to include firearms which are discouraged on the campus. Also remember that it is getting colder at night and you should consider your tropicals' tolerance as temperatures drop.

I, like many of you, had a wonderful experience at the GSBF Rendezvous in Santa Nella. On the heels of a much-remembered guest presentation at our October SBBK meeting by Yamaji San, the Rendezvous gave all an opportunity to see quite extraordinary demonstrations by Mauro Sternberger from Italy, Suthin Sukosolvisit from Boston and Yamaji from Japan. One of the high points was the auction of their material at the Saturday night dinner where our own Steve Iwaki had the winning bid on a magnifi-

cent California Juniper styled by Sternberger and Matt Spain was the winning bid on an Austrian Pine designed by Yamaji San. Matt's tree had actually been donated by SBBK to the benefit of the GSBF. We are hoping to get Suthin as a guest sometime next year.

I hope all of you are giving careful consideration to join your fellow members at our annual Holiday Party at La Lanterna in San Mateo on December 7. John Mekisich has organized what looks to be a wonderful event at a true bargain price. There is more information in this Snippet.

Our next meeting is on MONDAY, Nov 24 and will include the annual SBBK business meeting where you will be asked to vote on next year's officers and board of directors. Valerie Monroe will also lead us in working on our own trees and you are encouraged to select one of your special trees to get advice on improving their design. It will be an opportunity to consider the tree(s) you may want to include in our 2026 annual show next June. It is never too early.

Remember to consider the field trip to Sacramento area planned by Gianne Souza and Steve on Dec 13. I am looking forward to it.

Mike

Important Message from Kris Kringle

An early MERRY CHRISTMAS to Sei Boku from all of us at the North Pole working hard so all good girls and boys have a very enjoyable holiday season. You may be wondering why none other than Kris Kringle himself is contacting you? Well boys and girls, HO HO HO, a letter came to me from an anonymous source confident that you have all been good boys and girls this year (you have been, haven't you?) mentioning a very special event planned this holiday season asking me Kris Kringle to extend a special invitation to all Sei Boku members to attend.

Date is Sunday December 7th from 1 to 4 pm taking place at *La Lanterna Ristorante* 180 West 25th Ave in San Mateo. Attending certainly sounds like a wonderful way to celebrate this year's holiday season,

HO HO HO. Our location will be decorated very festively, and you will have it all to yourselves Sei Boku, how cool is that? Holiday festivities will include a raffle with a chance for everyone to win, please consider bringing an unwrapped bonsai-related raffle item of your choice. Also, Sei Boku there will be a gift exchange, for those of you that wish to partake, please bring these items wrapped. Those that bring a gift exchange item will have the opportunity to go home with a gift exchange package of their choice. Kris Kringle knows you know what gifts to bring better than I HO HO HO my job is package delivery in a sleigh led by reindeer, oh my. Can you name all my reindeer Sei Boku? HO HO HO.

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GSBF Rendezvous Memories

as mentioned in the President's Letter

I hope you had the opportunity to attend this year's GSBF Rendezvous to learn, buy, and socialize.



"Being a part of both the Sei Boku and Kusamura clubs made this second time attending very special to me. I loved spending time with my bonsai buddies (especially during the Saturday night banquet!). The club show was fantastic and I have so many new ideas for trees and displays. I also attended three amazing workshops (JT's wiring workshop, Adam Toth's advanced name workshop, and Bob Shimon's monterey pygmy cypress workshop) and learned so much. I somehow managed to stay under budget despite all of the new little trees I picked up in the vendor area, and I can't wait to work on them." — Gianne Souza



Oct Meeting: Yamaji San

by Steve Iwaki

For our October meeting, SBBK welcomed second generation Japanese bonsai nursery man, Hiro Yoshi Yamaji. The meeting started off with a slide presentation showing where in Japan he was from, the bonsai growing culture and photos of his nursery, now being run by his son, Taka. He then moved onto styling a Japanese black pine, while taking questions about the life of a second generation bonsai grower. The tree was later raffled off, board member Gary Smith, being the lucky winner.



“Study that tree intently and summon your powers of imagination, and I guarantee you will perceive a landscape extending beyond it, and feel profoundly inspired.”

Masahiko Kimura

(preface to [Beauty of Bonsai - A Guide to Displaying and Viewing Nature's Exquisite Sculpture](#), by Jusun Yamamoto)

Spotlight: Russell Leonard

My Bonsai journey began when our youngest daughter Sarah was born...28 years ago. However, I really think it started at an earlier age. Why? Because I've always had a hobby, often more than one at a time. First it was model trains (N Gauge—i.e. very small trains). I built a boat in my early teens. Then some early wood working projects when our son was born. I've had a run with succulents, radio controlled airplanes, another run with very large trains (LGB), some more wood-working after that, and along came Bonsai.

Rocking Horse for our son, 1990



LGB Train, 2012



Scratch built remote control airplane, 2012



Saguaro started in 1990, shown in 2025



I took a class with Johnny Uchida at the adult school in Hayward and was hooked. Like all my hobbies I jumped in with both feet. Bought lots of trees, pots and all the tools. After two semesters I joined Yamato Bonsai Kai in the East Bay. One of my fondest memories was having Sensei Kimura as our guest artist. And while I loved Yamato, driving to the East Bay with young kids was a challenge. So I found a closer option and joined Sei Boku Bonsai Kai in 2012. One of the best decisions I've made!

Since joining Sei Boku I've managed to bring along two fellow Yamato members, Mike Mello and Dennis Hawkins. Introduced Mike Rosenthal to the art of Bonsai, and made tons of great friends along the way. I spend my time now working on trees and making Ukuleles. I am grateful to my wife Carolyn of 37 years for putting up with all my hobbies through the years,



and my kids for watering while I'm traveling for work. And my dad for his perspective when asked the question, "how many trees do you have"? My answer was "maybe a few show-worthy trees," his reply "I think you need to count any tree that needs watering." Great advice to anyone starting out, or well into their Bonsai journey.

Some final thoughts:

- My two favorite species are maples and junipers.
- I'm still working on figuring out the care and maintenance of black pines.
- You can never have too many pots.
- Even with too many pots, you never seem to have just the right one when repotting.
- Less can be more when starting your collection.
- At some point, one tree out for every new tree in (you'll know when you are out of space).
- Don't be afraid to ask others for their help.
- Losing a tree can almost be as beneficial as keeping one alive.
- For my wife...only two hobbies at a time. Right now it's Bonsai and wood working (with a focus on building Ukuleles)

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Sacramento Nursery Field Trip

by Gianne Souza

Sei Boku is planning a field trip to Sacramento to visit Maruyama Bonsai Nursery and Lucy Judd's Garden on Saturday, December 13 for anyone interested in joining! [Maruyama Bonsai Nursery](#) is a retail nursery that carries a wonderful selection of bonsai, pre-bonsai, accent plants, and various bonsai supplies including tools, pots, soil components, and more. This is a great time to stock up on materials for the upcoming repotting season! Lucy Judd is happy to invite Sei Boku bonsai members to view her wonderful garden and bonsai collection while we are in Sacramento.

Sacramento is roughly a 2 hour drive one-way from San Mateo (barring heavy traffic), which makes for a wonderful day of bonsai! Depending on the number of people that would like to join, we could potentially share a van rental. All interested members should sign up using this [Sign Up Genius](#) or let Gianne Souza know at the next meeting. We will decide closer to the date if we want to rent a van as a group or arrange carpool. We plan to leave from the San Mateo Garden Center at 7:00 am on Saturday morning and arrive back in San Mateo in the afternoon. Hope to see you there!

If you have any questions, please email Gianne at gianne00@gmail.com.



Message from Kris Kringle

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Holiday party cost is ONLY \$30 per person prepaid. Each membership can bring one guest at \$30. Over one guest additional guest cost is \$60 per.

Pre-Payment Options due by November 30:

- Zelle payment to seibokubonsaikai@yahoo.com no later than November 30.
- Send checks to the SBBK at PO Box 4463, Foster City, CA 94404. Check must be post marked by Friday November 28th.
- Pay at the November meeting - check, cash, Zelle, or credit card.

Please sign up at <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0A45A9AD2DA7FFC16-60095017-sbbk> to let us know you're attending and for us to look out for your payment.

Your payment is your RSVP. Cost overage, corkage fee (BYOB) and appetizers paid for by the club, Merry Christmas HO HO HO. Members can choose from the entire lunch menu to include salad, entree dish, dessert, and non-alcoholic beverage. Appetizers will be calamari and bruschetta. Cash Bar for alcoholic beverages.

To make things even more festive, members please bring holiday-themed centerpieces for the tables and small holiday-themed bonsai trees for a show and tell. Kris Kringle has no idea what a show and tell is Sei Boku but knows that all of you do, sounds like fun though. In the spirit of Christmas those of you with vivid imaginations just may feel my presence at your holiday gathering HO HO HO. Questions reach out to Santa's Helper at 650-477-8540 text preferred or call.

Do have a Holly Jolly enjoyable time Sei Boku.

Happy Holidays, Kris Kringle.

Member Spotlight: Russell.

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First show tree
Yamato Bonsai Kai
Shimpaku Juniper 2001



Last show tree
Sei Boku Bonsai Kai
Trident Maple 2022

First Tuesday Workshop for Members

Lots of busy hands and project trees in development. Boxwoods, Hornbeams, Junipers, Pines and more. Thanks to Val for the education and guidance. Great to see the collaboration and community. Drop in next month with a tree or two, or just come observe and learn.



Forest planting workshop

by Valerie Monroe

Our January 2026 meeting will feature Scott Chadd of Lotus Bonsai showing us how to assemble a forest planting.

The club is planning a separate workshop on a weekend day for inspired members to create their own group planting. This class will be limited to ten students and there will be a fee of \$30.

All materials must be provided by the student.

More details on dates, location, and plant materials will be coming.

Materials for the class:

- Pot to assemble the group. A large shallow tray, box, Anderson flat, etc.
- Trees. 3-9 (or so) trees of the same species. Best results will be with one species of tree, but different heights and calipers. A main tree, and then supporting trees. Trees that are deciduous allow you to see the structure when assembling.
- Soil. Enough bonsai soil to cover the roots of your trees and fill the container you're using.
- Tools and wire. Repotting tools, and Aluminum wire.
- Extras. Chopsticks, drainage screen, plastic tubing.



SBBK Show & Tell - Nov 2023



SBBK Show - Jun 2024

Stocking Stuffers

Sei Boku branded aprons are available for purchase and taking cap pre-orders. They are both one size fits all, Khaki color aprons with front pockets and a black cap with logo tree on the front and "Sei Boku" on the back.

Cost: \$15.00 apron and \$18.00 caps; cash or check made out to SBBK. See Patricia Lee.



New SBBK Calendar of Events

2025

Dec Holiday Party, no meeting

2026

Jan Scott Chadd Group/Forest Planting

Extra workshop to follow

Feb Young Choe Kusamono

Extra Workshop to follow

Mar Birthday Meeting. Adam Toth Shohin

Apr Kaya Mooney

May Multi Species Workshop

June Bonsai Challenge

Welcoming New Members



- Alexander Kowell

If new members would like to be paired with a **SBBK Bonsai Buddy**, please reach out to Bill, bill@walter-mcdonald.com

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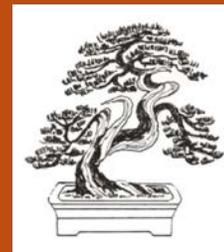
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