

MAY 2010



St Mark's Episcopal Church  
600 Colorado Ave.  
Palo Alto, CA

Meeting Date:  
May 21, 2010

3<sup>rd</sup> Friday of the Month  
7 pm Techniques Workshop  
8 pm General Meeting

## KUSAMURA BONSAI CLUB

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### President

Jerry Carpenter  
408.823.9525

### Vice president

Stephanie North

### Recording Secretary

Dave Curbow

### Cors. Secretary/ Newsletter

Bang Vo

### Librarians

Ricardo Archilla, Rita Curbow

### Benefit Drawing

Dave Curbow

### Hospitality

Bang Vo

### Treasurer

Helen Reist

650.324.1445

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Lonnie McCormick

Michael Greenstein

Mo Suresh

Jane Iki

Janet Refvem

John Planting

## The Bonsai Corner

### Refreshment

**May:** Janet Refvem and

Helen Reist

**June:** Wayne Richter and

Barbara Shahinian

**July:** Mark O'Brien and

John Planting

### Hospitality

**May:** Jerry Carpenter

**June:** Jane Iki

**July:** Lonnie McCormick

**Education Hour: 7:05-8:00**—Air-Layering Technique with Sandy Planting and Michael Greenstein

**Workshop: 8:15-9:15**—Air-Layering Hands-on workshop

Sandy Planting and Michael Greenstein will talk and demonstrate about air-layering technique. Immediately following is a hands-on workshop. Air-layering is a method of propagation to grow a better nebari (surface root) or to create a large tree quickly. An advanced note prepared by Michael on air-layering technique is included in this month's newsletter.

Bring for each air layer:

- A suitable branch in the range of ¼ to 2 inches in diameter
- A sharp clean knife
- Rooting hormone
- Wet sphagnum moss to form a cylinder about three branch diameters wide and 2 diameters long
- Plastic bag to wrap around the sphagnum moss clump
- Wire ties to tie off the plastic

**Show and Tell:** Flowering and deciduous tree (May flowers)

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### Club News

**New Location for 2011 and 2012 Annual Show** – We need a committee of Palo Alto citizens to scout for sites in Palo Alto. Jane, Stephanie and John (backup) volunteered. We will need this new facility for 2+ years. Currently we pay \$2000 for 2.5 days. Our rent budget should be no more than \$2500. If you know of any sites that might be suitable or wish to join the committee, let us know.

**Club Heath** – Kusamura is 50 years old and it is fortunate for us that many of our original members are still with us today. Most, if not all of our senior members have served and led many times over on many club activities and they deserve a rest. It is not to say that we are short of volunteers to handle various tasks, this is a chance and an opportunity for new members to step up and to learn and hopefully to lead Kusamura to for next 50 years.

**New Board Members of 2010-2012** – Hot news from Charlene is Mark O'Brien, Jim Thompson and she are candidates to serve Kusamura as board members. This is an excellent opportunity to be involved, learn, and decide first hand club activities. Welcome Mark, Jim, and Charlene to the Board.

**Club Trees For Sale** – Lonnie has a large number of club trees that are for sale. Dave Curbow is in progress of photographing these specimens. These plants could also become good landscape plants. Price is ranging from \$50 to \$100.

**Club workday at the Collection North Garden** – The board is planning a workday at the garden in the Fall. We will announce the date soon. Stay tuned.

**E-news?** – This subject is up for discussion again. A couple months ago we first asked if there are any members that wanted to have the club newsletter delivered electronically. The response is very low, only three (or four) members signed up for the E-news. We understand that E-mail addresses and phone numbers are private information and it should not be released without your permission. E-mail Bang Vo: [bangvo@comcast.net](mailto:bangvo@comcast.net) if you would like to receive our club newsletter via e-mail.

**2010 Show Debrief** –

- Overall positive.
- Every tree has a story—maybe we should have expanded cards for more trees.

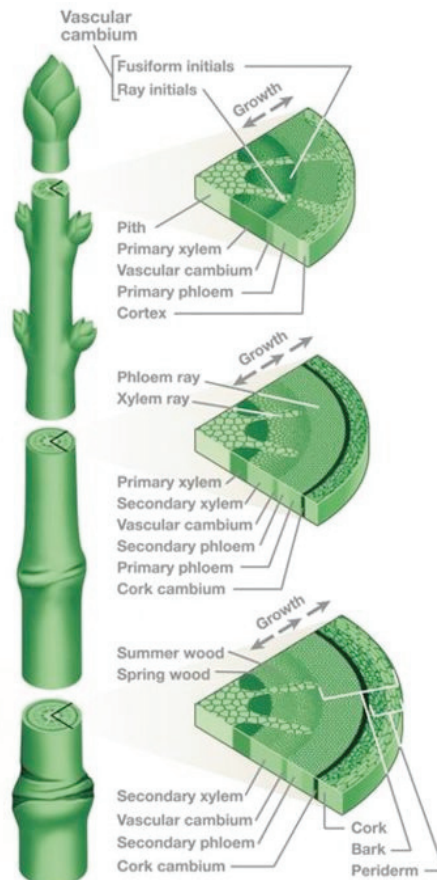
With your dedication, ideas, and participation plus with the guidance of our senior members, you will help to improve the future of Kusamura.

**AIR-LAYERING** (bv, illustration from Wikipedia)

The advantage of air-layering is to reduce the length of a trunk, to grow a better nebari (surface root), to create a large tree quickly, to create a new plant that has exact characteristics of the parent plant. Compared to other propagating techniques, air layering is done above ground while the propagule is still attached to the parent plant. This way of propagating has been practiced for centuries. It requires excessive care and patience. The best time for air layering is spring from March to May. Most cuttings, like maples, are ready by fall, but some cuttings may take two growing seasons to root.

**Anatomy of Plant**

Under the bark of trees there is a layer of cells called the phloem. This living tissue carries organic nutrients, particularly sucrose to all parts of the plant where needed. Beneath the phloem layer is another layer called the xylem that transports water and mineral nutrients throughout the tree. Beneath the xylem is another xylem layer called the secondary xylem. These xylem layers are thicker and deeper into the wood of the tree than the phloem layer. Lying on top of these layers just under the bark is a layer of actively dividing cells called the cambium.



- Discussed that we need more complete task lists. More detailed lists will help demystify roles and help get volunteers in place.
- The Friday night set up made a huge difference in the success of the show – at least lowering the stress level on Saturday.
- Publicity – flyers out early. It needs to be sent out 1–2 months early for other clubs.
- John recommended that “beginner’s tree” should be separated from “in-progress” trees. In-progress trees should have small signs that is describing, “what is in progress” for each tree.
- Tim (Saturday demo) gave lots of info! The Sunday demo was more interesting than previous years when one person / team was working. We had a lot more attendees than previous years.
- Let’s shoot for first week(s) of April – avoiding Easter, but making sure that it is early enough to avoid the heat.
- Discussion about needing to get new members, and non-participating members, to participate more in clubs activities.

**Have feedback. Let a board member know so we can continue to improve our show.**

## The Methods

There are two techniques to air layer: the tourniquet and the ring method. As the name implies, the tourniquet involves tightly wrapping the branch with copper wire to block the nutrient stream partially. As the trunk grows thicker, the stream of nutrient is restricted further, forcing it to grow roots just above the wire. The ring method involves cutting away a ring of bark. The portion above the ring will have to grow roots immediately to survive. The ring should be large enough to prevent the tree from bridging the gap.

## The Process of Air-Layering

For deciduous trees, air-layering should be carried out in late spring when the first leaves are beginning to harden off. The process of air layering being discussed here is the ring method. Materials needed to perform air-layering include a sharp grafting knife, sphagnum moss, root tone, clear plastic, wire for tying, and gloves for protection. Deciding on where you want roots to develop, assess the amount of space desired between the roots and first branch. Preferably, the first ring cut is just below an old leaf node.

- Make two ring cuts. The distance between two rings should be at least 1 to 2 times the diameter of the branch.
- Peel off the bark from the entire circumference to reveal the cambium layer
- Smear the upper cut with rooting hormone compound
- Wrap in wet sphagnum moss; enclose in a plastic bag, and tie both ends
- Keep the moss damp by punching a small hole to facilitate watering or untie the top to water

## Care

The moss should be kept moist at all times. When the bag is filled with mature brown roots, carefully remove the new tree just underneath the new roots. Keep the roots intact with the moss, pot the new plant in fine gravel and potting compost and tie in place to prevent it from rocking and damaging the new roots. Keep the tree in a shady spot and mist regularly until it is established.

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## Last month photos of Dremel demonstration by Jerry Carpenter



## Events

**May 22-23 Oakland, California** - Bay Area Satsuki Aikokai: 16th Annual Satsuki Bonsai Show at the Lakeside Park Garden Center at Lake Merritt, 666 Bellevue Avenue. Hours are Saturday, 10AM-5PM and Sunday, 10AM-4PM. Fabulous blossoms and bonsai display. Demonstration both days at 1:30PM using mature bonsai material. Rick Garcia will be featured on Saturday and Bonsai Master Johnny Uchida on Sunday. Large selection of bonsai trees and other bonsai-related materials available for purchase. For further information, please contact Ron Reid, 925-831-2500.

**June 5-6 San Mateo, California** Sei Boku Bonsai Kai: 27th Annual Show at the San Mateo Garden Center, 605 Parkside Way. Hours are 10AM-4PM both days. Demonstrations at 1PM on Saturday by John 'JT' Thompson and on Sunday by Valerie Monroe. A raffle will follow the demonstrations. Plant and bonsai related items for sale and 'Dr. Bonsai' tree clinic. Free admission. For more information contact Mike Haley. [Mike.Haley@ucsf.edu](mailto:Mike.Haley@ucsf.edu)

**June 12-13 Oakland, California** California Suiseki Society: 14th Annual Suiseki Exhibition, "The Japanese Art of Stone Appreciation", at Lakeside Garden Center, 666 Bellevue Avenue. Hours are 10AM-5PM both days. Suiseki for sale. For more information contact Felix Rivera, 510-527-6255 or e-mail [felixsuiseki@gmail.com](mailto:felixsuiseki@gmail.com)

**July 1-5 San Rafael, California** Marin Bonsai Club: Bonsai Exhibit at the Marin County Fair, Veteran's Memorial Auditorium, 10 Avenue of the Flags. Hours are 11AM-10PM daily. Admission to Fair is \$14 for adults; \$12 for seniors and children 5 to 12. For more information contact Craig Thompson, 415-472-6685.