

JULY 2011

Meeting Date:  
July 15, 2011



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

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

## KUSAMURA BONSAI CLUB

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### President

Rita Curbow  
408.732.4957

### Vice President

Charlene Fisher

### Recording Secretary

Dave Curbow

### Treasurer

Mo Suresh

### Cors. Secretary/ Newsletter

Bang Vo

### Librarian

Zoltan Gulyas

### Benefit Drawing

Lynne O'Dell

### Hospitality

Bang Vo

### Past President

Jerry Carpenter

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Michael Greenstein

Lynne O'Dell

Helen Reist

Stephanie North

Jim Thompson

Mark O'Brien

## The Bonsai Corner

### Refreshment

**July:** John and Sandy  
Planting

**August:** None

**September:** Lynne O'Dell  
and Sally Halstead

### Hospitality

**July:** Stephanie North

**August:** None

**September:** Jim  
Thompson

**Show & Tell**—Open

**Raffle**—Open

**Library**—Open

### July Meeting: Subtropical Plants

Our July meeting workshop will focus on olives, bougainvillea, boxwood, ficus, and other subtropical trees.

Bang will bring in an oak species he purchased from Saratoga Horticulture Research years ago. Jerry has examined a leaf sample and concluded that the oak is similar to Daimyo. Jerry believes it is a Japanese Mountain Oak and most likely a derivative of the Daimyo. We will look at them to see what kind of styling they lend themselves to.

**Show and Tell:** Subtropical and various species.

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### CLUB NEWS

#### Board Meeting

The transition board meeting will be held at the home of Rita and Dave Curbow, 615 Cheshire Way, Sunnyvale, CA 94087 on Tuesday August 2<sup>nd</sup> at 7:00 pm. Rita asks that all newly elected and retiring board members and officers plan on attending to make this a smooth transition.

#### August Club Events:

There is no club meeting in August. We will have a garden tour and potluck, and go to the REBS show in Santa Rosa as a group.

#### Club Garden Tour: Saturday, August 20

Our garden tour will be at the home of Mo and Sue Suresh (100 Whitney Ave, Los Gatos, CA 95030), the Filoli Center (86 Canada Road, Woodside, CA 94062), and the home of Michael and Sharon Greenstein (860 Covington Road, Los Altos, CA 94024).

The schedule for the day:

10:00 AM - 11:00 AM – Tour Mo Suresh's garden and bonsai collection in Los Gatos. Mo has his bonsai displayed in quite an ingenious way along a hillside. He also has a great view of the valley.

11:00 AM - 1:00 PM – Free time to have lunch and get to Filoli. It'll take about 45 minutes to get from Mo's house to Filoli. You can bring a bag lunch to eat at Mo's house, have lunch in the cafe at Filoli or eat along the way. We'll have a list of several good but reasonably quick restaurant stops along the way.

## What is Penjing?

Penjing is the Chinese art of creating a miniature landscape in a container. The word consists of the two characters: "pen" - "pot" or "container", and "jing" - "scenery". An artist may use plant material and natural stone to portray an idyllic mountain retreat with a murmuring brook or a waterscape with a lush tropical island. Or he or she may design a much simpler scene where one single tree makes up the entire composition.

Penjing and bonsai are closely related art forms. Penjing is the older form from which bonsai derived. While the similarities by far outweigh the differences, there is a significant variance in scope: "Bonsai" literally means a "tree in a pot" and therefore as an art form, bonsai is more narrowly defined than penjing, a "landscape in a pot". Many of the beautiful, elaborate tray sceneries created by Chinese artists clearly defy the parameters of bonsai.

While penjing can be found in many variations, the Chinese themselves recognize three distinct categories:

Tree Penjing (shumu penjing)

Landscape Penjing (shanshui penjing)

Water-and-Land Penjing (shuihan penjing)

1:00 PM - 2:00 PM – Meet as a group at Filoli (in Woodside) for a tour of the bonsai collection

We'll meet in the Visitor's Center at Filoli as a group to begin the tour of the bonsai there. The bonsai collection is cared for by five Kusamura club members. They are on display in three locations accessible to the public. In addition, you will be able to see the behind the scenes "in-progress" trees and where they do lots of their work. After the bonsai tour, members can opt to tour the house and gardens further until 3:30 if they wish.

4:00 PM – Arrive at Michael Greenstein's home in Los Altos for a potluck dinner and tour of his bonsai collection.

### Filoli details:

We will be touring Filoli as a group and getting in at the group rate. Kusamura will pay for all club members who want to attend but we need to know our group count two weeks in advance. Therefore, we are asking everyone to let Rita Curbow know if you plan to attend this event and how many guests (non-members) will be joining you. Kusamura guests can attend at the group rate of \$12 for adults and \$5 for students. Children ages four and younger are free. Club members or guests who are also Filoli members will get in for free but we need to include you in our group count. If you don't talk to Rita before the cut-off date of August 6, you can still join us on the Filoli tour but you'll have to pay the regular admission price of \$15 for adults.

At Filoli, you will have to stop at a front gate. Tell the gatekeeper you are headed to the Visitor's Center and he/she will tell you where to go. Members are encouraged to carpool if possible.

### Potluck details:

We will be eating outdoors in a patio area. You are encouraged to bring a dish that can be served to the group. Perishable foods should be kept in ice coolers if you need to bring your potluck dish with you for the day. A number of members live between Filoli and Michael's house and can probably stop and pick things up after they leave Filoli.

Michael has volunteered to barbeque-marinated chicken as a main dish! But we need a coordinator to help with things like getting kitchen supplies from the shed, drinks, etc.

### Redwood Empire Bonsai Show and Sumagawa's Nursery Visit: Saturday, August 27

We will leave from the Planting residence around 8AM to get to the Sumigawa Nursery by 10AM. After shopping at the nursery, we will go to the Sumigawa growing grounds for more shopping! Bring a bag lunch because we usually don't get to the REBS show until about 1PM. But that's in time for the 1:30PM demo by Kathy Shaner.

Please contact Rita Curbow (or Charlene Fischer) if you are planning on driving and have room for others or if you need a ride.

### September Club Meeting:

Bob Shimon will do a demonstration on a redwood.

## **Subtropical Bonsai for Indoor Gardening** by *CONSTANCE TORTORICI DERDERIAN*

Traditional bonsai are trained hardy trees and shrubs grown in classic containers on shelves or benches and brought indoors to be enjoyed for a day or two, then returned to the growing area. In winter they require dormancy, as do the same species growing in the ground. If one has succumbed to the charm of these miniatures of nature and one lives in a cold climate, winter is a time of parting, for the bonsai must go into a cold frame or other storage place until spring. Happily, such deprivation is no longer necessary because bonsai enthusiasts have discovered a new challenge: growing subtropical trees and shrubs in containers indoor, at all seasons if desired.

As a group subtropical material is more colorful than hardy material. Many of the trees and shrubs produce showy blossoms, some blooming more than once a year, or even constantly. Among frequent bloomers are Malpighia, Calliandra, the Jasmines, and Serissa Foetida, known as the snow rose in the south. In addition to flowering trees and shrubs, some also produce fruit that is a delight to see.

The same general rules for selecting hardy bonsai materials apply to the subtropical. Choose plants with small leaves and short internodes. If possible, avoid grafted material because it usually has ugly swellings on the trunk. In the south one often finds nursery stock has been grafted on nematode resistant roots. If there is no choice and the graft is well done or can be concealed neatly, the design of the bonsai may not be ruined. Since subtropical are in bloom frequently, choose plants with small flowers so that the proportions of the bonsai will not be destroyed. Hardy material blooms for such a short period that this selectivity is not always a requirement.

The greatest satisfaction comes from hunting subtropical bonsai material in the wild, which is considerably easier than hunting for hardy trees. The ground is never hard (except when the digging is in coral rock), and the weather is warm. Keep the collected trees very moist until well established to insure success. One should not bring material from the southern states to the north unless it has been inspected and approved by the U.S.D.A., by the way.

There are a few plants that are especially amateur-resistant and therefore satisfactory as a beginner's bonsai. The genus Ficus provides a whole range of rugged bonsai for beginners. The plants are fast growers and soon produce the effect of a mature tree. They are also tolerant of poor soil, poor light, and poor humidity. Spectacular in bloom is bougainvillea. It does require attention to its needs, however, and must be warm and dry to produce flowers.

Subtropical bonsai, with rare exceptions, prefer a light humus and sand-soil mixture slightly acid to neutral. Watering is simplified under these conditions; generally, a heavy application once a day should suffice. In the dark winter months as the light and temperature decrease, reduce watering; except for the mames it is even possible to skip a day. With heavy watering of a small amount of soil, a regular program of fertilization is advisable to replace the nutrients that have leached out. Frequent but VERY dilute applications of an all-purpose product are recommended.

The familiar indoor pests - mealy bug, scale, spider mites, etc. - will attack subtropical bonsai, but unless the air is very still and very hot, it is possible for the plants to go through the winter without trouble. If infestations do occur, they may be dealt with in the usual manner by spraying with insecticides. This is not always practical in a house or small apartment, however. A simple solution is to use a 1/2-inch-wide soft paintbrush dipped in alcohol to brush the entire plant trunk, branches and both sides of the leaves; then rinse off under a spray of water. (The surface of the soil should be covered with plastic during this operation.) An alternative is to wash the plant with soapy water. In case of heavy infestation, both treatments can be used consecutively.

## Events

**July 13 East Bay Bonsai Society 2011 Annual Club Auction of trees, pots, and bonsai items, Lakeside Garden Center, 666 Bellevue Avenue. Preview at 7:00pm, Auction at 7:30 pm. For information, contact John Nackley at 510-693-2420**

**August 27-28 Santa Rosa, California Redwood Empire Bonsai Society (REBS): 28th Annual Show** at the Veteran's building, 1351 Maple Avenue. Hours are Saturday from 10AM-5PM and Sunday from 10AM-4PM. There will be 200 trees on display, a large vendor area, a members sales room, a demonstration by Kathy Shaner at 1:30PM each day and a benefit drawing and silent auction. Admission and parking are free. Contact Bob Shimon at [shimon@mcn.org](mailto:shimon@mcn.org) or 707-884-4126 for additional information.

**September 18 San Mateo, California San Mateo Bonsai Club: 48th Annual Bonsai Show** at the San Mateo Gardener Association Hall, 503 E. 5th Avenue. Hours are 10AM-5PM. Demonstration at 2PM. Bonsai sale. Free admission. For more information contact Sam Tachibana, 650-548-9470.

**October 8-9 Oakland, California East Bay Bonsai Society: 50th Annual Show** at the Lakeside Garden Club, 666 Bellevue Avenue. Hours are Saturday, 10AM-5PM and Sunday, 11AM-4PM. There is an entrance fee to the park, but show entry is free and donations are welcome. Silent observers are welcome to the club's workshop on Saturday from 1PM-4PM. A demonstration by Kathy Shaner will from 1-4 PM, Sunday, followed by a raffle of bonsai and related items. A large selection of club member consignments will be for sale throughout the show. Contact Janice Dilbeck, 925-458-3845, or John Nackley, 510-693-2423 for more information.

**October 27, 28, 29, 30 Riverside, California GOLDEN STATE BONSAI FEDERATION CONVENTION XXXIV, Bonsai Full Circle** at the Marriott Hotel and Convention Center, 3400 Market Street. Headliners are: Kathy Shaner, Ryan Neil, Roy Nagatoshi, and Pedro Morales. Demonstrations, seminars, critiques, workshops, benefit drawings, vendors and more. More information available at: [www.gsbfbonsai.org](http://www.gsbfbonsai.org).

## Kusamura Bonsai Club

3580 Butcher Drive  
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