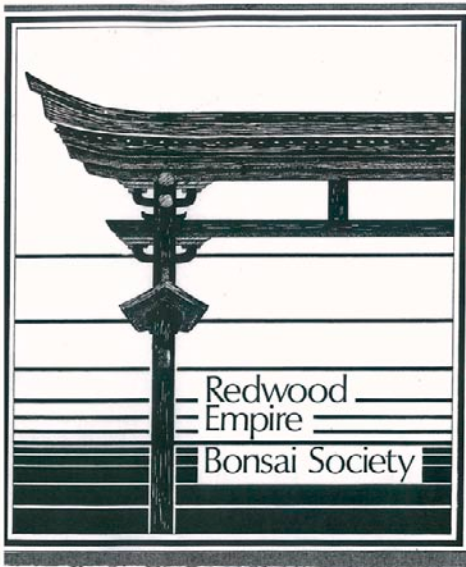


Redwood Empire Bonsai Society



REBS NEWSLETTER

Volume 28, Issue 5

May 2011



REBS President Arty Kopecky

President's Message

Dear Friends:

Greetings, here we go into real Spring. How lucky we are, with plenty of water, and mild misty days that bonsai adore. In keeping with my theme of community of bonsai I'm going to talk about some of our most accomplished members, and this time I'll pick on that wonder of modern science, Jim Gremel.

Now the main course. Our friend Mr. Gremel was once an aero-space engineer, for 17 years, no less. Jim is one of those rare (fools) individuals who make a life-altering decision to follow a dream; in this case to be a potter and grow bonsai. Now 27 years later he can survey his wild bonsai jungle and be sure (?) he made the right decision.

But first a word about rotating your plants. Mas Imazumi used to emphasize this. As the sun encourages the new growth it often is easy to see which side is facing south. So keep an eye out and turn those plants so the exposure and growth are even. And this is a good time to move plants to get a dose of sun if they have been sheltered. In the high summer I move many plants into shade to prevent burning but now is a good time to get those rays.

Jim's Blue Atlas Cedars and grafted Shimpakus are renown throughout the U.S. One won the title in Rochester: "Finest American Bonsai Masterpiece". Jim makes extensive use of grafting, often creating the entire tree branch system. Here is a case where the artist just had to come out. He studied with Mas and they became good friends; he has studied some with Kathy Shaner, and he still studies with Boon. And of course people study with him and he gives popular workshops at conventions.

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Redwood Empire Bonsai Society

Peter Tea – Apprenticeship Begins in Japan

Peter Tea of Peter Tea Bonsai, San Jose, California departed the U.S. on March 14, 2011, enroute to Japan. There he will start his apprenticeship, working with Bonsai Master, Mr. Junichiro Tanaka in Nagoya, Japan.

Nagoya is located southwest of Tokyo (about three hours by express rail), on the Pacific coast in the Chubu region on central Honshu. It is the capital of Aichi Prefecture and is one of Japan's major ports along with those of Tokyo, Osaka, Kobe, Yokohama, Chiba, and Moji. It is the third largest incorporated city and the fourth most populous urban area in Japan. It is known as the Chukyo Metropolitan Area. As of 2000, Chukyo Metropolitan Area has 8.74 million people, of which 2.17 million live in the city of Nagoya¹.

Peter has created a web page for posting stories and pictures of his apprenticeship in Japan. You can follow his progress at PeterTeaBonsai.com.



¹ Wikipedia

Update: Follow along day to day work of the apprentice Peter Tea by reading his journal postings at http://web.me.com/petertea/PeterTeaBonsai/Aichien_Journal/Aichien_Journal.html

—Report and photo by George Haas.

Reprinted from *Golden Statements* magazine, May/June 2011 issue, page 33.

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Jim has become a smiling fixture throughout the American bonsai world and we're very glad he is a hardcore member of our REBS. He joined our club in 1995 when he moved to Sonoma County from Berkeley and bought his property on Deer Meadow Lane which he found after a long search. Now he has planted in the ground what can't be less than 10,000 pre-bonsai trees.

To achieve that tight growth his best plants are in full sun. He uses a 16-5-9 apex brand fertilizer and is very generous with it on the



Jim achieves mind-meld with a Shimpaku juniper—he is a master!

plants. As in the strict practice, his planting mix has no organic matter, no compost, only akadama, pumice, black lava rock and such.

Jim has a once a month workshop on the first Saturday of each month for only \$15-20 per person, or else by appointment (707.874.1679).

So, in our club, you can see that the sky's the limit in what one can achieve.

— Arty Kopecky



Upcoming Bonsai Events

May 1, 6, 7, 8

Oakland

Yasuo Mitsuya and Kathy Shaner will be giving workshops at the **Bonsai Garden at Lake Merritt**. Billed as "Edu-Fun II." Check website for details on registration and seminar schedule: <http://www.gsbf-bonsai.org/lake-merritt/NewHome.htm>

May 7-8

Sacramento, CA

Sacramento Bonsai Club presents the **64th Annual Bonsai and Suiseki Show** at the Sacramento Buddhist Church, 2401 Riverside Boulevard. Show hours are Saturday 12 to 5 p.m., and Sunday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Demonstration by Boon Manakitivipart at 2 p.m. both days; raffle will follow. Plants and bonsai related items for sale. Free admission. For further information contact Gary Judd at 916-630-1340.

May 21-22

Sacramento, CA

Satsuki Aikokai of Sacramento presents its **40th Annual Show** at the Shepard Garden and Arts Center, 3330 McKinley Boulevard. Show hours are Saturday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sunday 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Demonstration at 1:30 p.m. both days, followed by benefit drawings. Member and vendor sales also available. Free admission. For more information visit Satsukiaikokaisac@sbcglobal.net or contact Ronn Pigram at 916-428-8505.



Small is beautiful. Another of Arty's lovely shohins, an orchid color Azalea.



So is tall, as Gene Lynch's fruitful pear tree shows. Gene reports its fruit is plentiful and delicious, too!



Redwood Empire Bonsai Society

Repotting a Raft Juniper and a Wisteria – Demo by Kathy Shaner

Our April 26th meeting and demonstration featured Sensei Kathy Shaner repotting not one, but two bonsai trees, purchased during the recent GSBF Bonsai Garden at Lake Merritt Mammoth Fundraiser event.

The first tree was a raft styled Shimpaku juniper (*Juniperus chinensis* 'Shimpaku'). The second was a Wisteria (*Wisteria sinensis*) with blue flowers. Both demo trees showed age and other quality characteristics of mature bonsai.

Kathy enlisted the assistance of REBS member Bernardo Fernandez to help with the prep work.

Kathy chose to demonstrate repotting techniques because of the importance of repotting bonsai, and to ensure members understood that the procedures must be deliberate and correct. She emphasized the following:

- ☼ Safely remove the tree from the bonsai pot
- ☼ Prepare the bonsai pot for repotting
- ☼ Remove old soil and prune roots
- ☼ Fill bottom of pot with good bonsai soil mix
- ☼ Ensure proper placement of tree in bonsai pot
- ☼ Tie down securely
- ☼ Top off soil mix and remove air spaces
- ☼ Water thoroughly



REBS sensei Kathy Shaner cleans the roots of the Shimpaku juniper raft tree.

Kathy began her demo by removing the juniper from its slab-like bonsai oval pot, cutting and removing the tie down wires. She wanted to accomplish placement of the tree that was higher in the pot and that would show off the age and features of the bark and twisted trunk. But first she did some root cleaning, removing the old soil and in particular removing the soil from covering the bark, exposing more of the twisted trunk. She showed everyone how the tree would be placed differently, exposing more of the bark, leveled as if floating,



Chopsticks are used to secure the tie down wires without cutting those tender roots. Ingenious!

not digging in at either of its ends. The tree was bare rooted when she finished cleaning and cutting off unwanted large roots. There were no signs of new root growth so root cutting was kept to a minimum. The bonsai pot was cleaned of dirt, fitted with new screens for the bottom drain holes and tie wires were set in place for tying down the roots and trunk. While working, Kathy explained how a single tree is



Bernardo Fernandez inserts tie down wires through the screens of the slab pot.

developed into the raft style. A single trunk is laid down on its side with the underside stripped of all its branches. The underside can be slit cut to promote feeder roots. Branches on top of the trunk are selected, usually in odd numbers, and wired up into a forest or group. The demo tree had six developed trunks and one jinned trunk which had died back. Ready for placing the tree back into the bonsai pot, Kathy had Bernardo fill the bottom of the pot with a mound of Akadama soil mix. Kathy moved the tree into place, pressing down to eliminate air pockets. She then began to arrange the tie down wires around the roots and trunk, using chopsticks across the roots in order to secure them without the wire

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Repotting Demo Continues

Continued from p. 4

cutting into them. Before securing tightly she would ensure placement of the tree was at the height and angle she wanted. After securing the roots and trunk, Kathy and Bernardo worked together to fill in all the spaces with the Akadama, using chopsticks again to move the soil mix into air pockets and to ensure the roots were covered. After this, Bernardo watered the soil and tree roots thoroughly.



Bernardo combing the soil from the lovely wisteria's roots.

Kathy moved on to the second demo tree, the wisteria. The wisteria was in a large Chinese decorative pot with garden soil. It was not tied down and was easily removed from its pot. While Kathy had been working on the juniper raft, Bernardo had been working on bare rooting and combing out the roots on the wisteria, and also preparing a smaller oval bonsai pot. Kathy cut

large unwanted roots with a sharp scissors, explaining that certain tree roots, such as elms, maples, trident maples and wisteria, are easy to shred if not using sharp cutting tools. Wanting to ensure the root cuttings were clean and sharp around the edges, she used a sharp knife to further cut the edges on the large root cuts. She removed more than half the root ball before finishing, then sized the root ball to the new pot. Kathy



Kathy cuts a tie wire while Bernardo begins to strip off the leaves and flowers.

made deliberate steps to ensure the placement of the tree in the bonsai pot was suitable to the tree shape and pot size, trying several angles before deciding which way the tree would finally rest in the bonsai pot. With the wisteria she considered the front of the tree as well as the manner which the flowers would hang. After filling the bottom of the pot with Akadama, Kathy firmly placed the root ball on top of the soil mix and pressed down to eliminate air spaces and set the tree in the desired position. Tie wires were wrapped around the

roots and chopsticks were used to prevent the wires from cutting into any roots while securing the tree to the pot. Once the tree was secured, additional soil mix was added, and she instructed Bernardo to remove all the leaves from a number of branches, leaving only the leaf at the tip, and also to remove the flowers from the tree branches. Since the root ball had been reduced, much the top of the tree, leaves, flowers, had to be removed for balance and allow energy for root growth. At this point, Kathy wired some of the major branches, separating them and opening up the interior of the branching while adding movement to the branches.

Kathy provided care instructions, including watering and fertilizing when appropriate.

A raffle drawing was conducted in which REBS member Paul Wycoff held the winning ticket. Paul had to make a choice of either the juniper raft or wisteria as his raffle prize. Paul chose the juniper raft as something different to add to his collection at home. Wayne Culp will care for the wisteria until August 2011 when it will be raffled again for our annual bonsai show.

*—Report by George Haas,
photos by CA and George Haas.*



Redwood Empire Bonsai Society

Show and Tell

April 26, 2011



Arty's black pine, all candled up for Spring; does it know those candles will be clipped off soon?



Arty's Mangetzu azalea in gorgeous orchid is just shy of being in full bloom.



Dave Hattem's ginkgo tree shows off its vibrant new foliage.



The apex of Dave's ginkgo shows vigorous propagation of new leaves and branches.



Bernardo's upright informal Shimpaku juniper looks handsome on its artfully handmade new stand.



After some discussion, John Snell's tree is identified as a "Lion's Head" Trident maple, an unusual variant.

Help Needed!

The directory at right shows several positions *open* and in need of your support.

The club needs to fill these open positions as soon as possible. The new year is a busy time and lots of club activities are taking shape, including getting our Annual Show ready for prime time.

If you can help please contact Arty Kopecky (707.829.5670) or any board member.

What are you waiting for?



Directory 2011

Art Kopecky President	(707) 829-5670	artsankopecky@msn.com
Rick Batcheller Vice President		r1xcape@sonic.net,
<i>(Open)</i> Secretary/Editor		
Yvonne Batcheller Treasurer		ybforms@sonic.net
Wayne Culp Board Member	(707) 874-1809	doublec@sonic.net
Jim Gallagher Board Member	(707) 575-8726	
Ivan Lukrich Board Member	(707) 527-0795	lukrich@sonic.net
Ned Lycett Board Member	(707) 887-2004	nlycett@comcast.net
Gene Lynch Board Member	(707) 763-7504	erlynch@aol.com
Bob Shimon Board Member	(707) 884-4126	shimon@mcn.org
James Whitfield Board Member	(707) 538-1077	jawhit6@yahoo.com
Jim McGlashan Past President	(707) 942-6316	
Kathy Shaner Sensei/Accredited Bonsai Master	(408) 226-6625	
<i>(Open)</i> Membership Chair		
<i>(Open)</i> Magazine & Video		
James Whitfield Book Librarian	(707) 539-4253	jawhit6@yahoo.com
Celestia Amberstone Webmaster/Editor du jour	(707) 527-6292	rebsweb@earthlink.com

Redwood Empire Bonsai Society

Calendar Of Events

May 2011

- 3 Board Meeting at Ivan Lukrich's. All are welcome.
- 12 Kathy Shaner Advanced Workshop, Thursday (6.1 & 3.1).
- 13 Kathy Shaner Advanced Workshop, Friday (6.2).
- 14 Kathy Shaner Advanced Workshop, Saturday (6.3).
- 19 Intermediate I Workshop, Thursday, VA Memorial Bldg, Santa Rosa, with Richard Hoskins and Ivan Lukrich.
- 20 Intermediate II Workshop, Friday, Frank Bardella's Bonsai Studio, with Frank Bardella and Gene Lynch.
- 24 General Meeting and Demonstration, 4th Tuesday, 7:30-10:00 PM, VA Memorial Bldg, Santa Rosa. John Thompson will do demo.



Visit the web site of GSBF for complete monthly events and/or revised dates at:

www.gsbf-bonsai.org

Annual Show 2011

Spring is finally here— or so it seems. Time to get busy with all those spring bonsai tasks we love so much: repotting our trees, fertilizing, pinching back and generally removing the residues of winter. Only three+ months left to recreate our bonsai best for our Annual Show...

REBS 28th Annual Bonsai Show

Saturday · August 27th · 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Sunday · August 28th · 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

One of the largest and best bonsai shows in the United States

Daily demos by renowned Bonsai Master Kathy Shaner
1:00 - 3:30 both days

Santa Rosa Veterans Memorial Building
1351 Maple Avenue, Santa Rosa

For information contact: Bob Shimon
707-884-4126 · shimon@mcn.org

Official REBS Newsletter is published monthly.

Redwood Empire Bonsai Society



Veterans' Memorial Building,
Santa Rosa, California

REBS was founded in 1981 for bonsai enthusiasts. Our club meets every fourth Tuesday of the month (except in July and December). The monthly meeting and demonstration is held at the Veterans' Memorial Building (across from the Sonoma County Fairgrounds) at 1351 Maple Ave., Santa Rosa, in the Lodge Room. Open to the public. Please refer to our calendar of events for specific time, date and guest demonstrator.

We're on the web:
www.rebsbonsai.org

Redwood Empire Bonsai Society
PO Box 2872
Santa Rosa CA 95405-2872

*Address Correction Requested
Please Forward*

