



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

### February 2024

The new year has started well with lots of rain in January, should make happy bonsai. Between the rains I have been trimming, restyling, repotting with still more work to do.

We have a lot of new members asking where to purchase supplies. The Mammoth Sale and Auction in Oakland is coming up on February 17 and 18 and is a great source for tools, pots, and bonsai. Additional information can be found in the newsletter and our website.

We had an Introduction to Bonsai class last year and will have another one in March if there is enough interest. At least a few participants will be needed to pay for supplies and facilities. Let me know by February 18<sup>th</sup> if you are interested so we can make the necessary arrangements. [lukrich@sonic.net](mailto:lukrich@sonic.net)

Ivan Lukrich

## January 2024 REBS EVENTS

**February 1 (Thurs): 6:00PM to 9:00 PM.**

**Note the time change**

**REBS INTERMEDIATE WORKSHOP  
Rohnert Park Community Center**

Work can be done on most trees. Potting season is starting duh duh Dom! Please let Ivan know if you are attending- here's his contact info

[lukrich@sonic.net](mailto:lukrich@sonic.net)

707-529-3298

**February 22 (Thursday):**

**6:15PM to 7:15-Board Meeting**

**7:30PM to 9:00PM or so- General Meeting**

**Rohnert Park Community Center**

Adam Toth will give a demonstration and discussion regarding junipers. He is an excellent lecturer and stylist.

A reminder to the participants of Adam Toth's Advanced Workshops. They will be held on February 23 and 24. The workshops are a continuation of the ones held in 2023 and are full.

## RECENT REBS ACTIVITIES

### January 4- Members' Workshop

Everyone must have behaved themselves and worked diligently on their bonsai- I didn't hear any police sirens near the Rohnert Park Community Center, so you go campers.

### January 13 and 14- BABA Show at Lake Merritt

Several REBS Members enjoyed the Show on Sunday. It sometimes pays to come late if viewing the displays is the object. It was noticed that "JMD" had many labeled trees in the show, and guess who saunters in near the end of the Show? Why, Jay McDonald! He had some lovely trees, including the famous "Chick Magnet". It's a 40 year old flowering apricot (*Prunus mume*)



The Chick Magnet  
(Jay muttered that it hasn't worked yet.)



Japanese Black Pine  
Age and time in training- 60years



Clockwise from top: Japanese Black Pine,  
Satsuki, Trident Maple, Chinese Elm,  
Chojubi (Japanese Flowering Quince)



Limestone Suiseki

Dumb bonsai joke

"I'm trying to find the root of my bonsai's problems, but I'm stumped."  
(That is sooo lame. Geologist jokes are worse, actually.)

## MEETINGS AND DEMONSTRATIONS

The General Meeting and Demonstrations are held on the fourth Thursday of each month from 7:30 to 9:30 pm. Before the meetings, a table will be set out with items that are free, and the REBS Library will have some books/magazines available for members to check out. Another area will have items for sale by silent auction. The items need not be bonsai related; gift certificates for bottles of wine are encouraged. A fee is collected by REBS to facilitate the sale of the members' items.

Free tickets are handed out to win a choice of door prizes, usually bonsai tools. Members also can buy raffle tickets for the door prize, usually the demo tree.

## DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM SCHEDULE FOR 2024

The 2024 Demonstrations are now set up. The presenters are well-known experts in their fields and REBS is proud to offer the demonstrations to both members and the general public.

January 25– Samuel Tan: *Repotting a Japanese Black Pine*. Sam studied bonsai under Ryan Neil at Bonsai Mirai in 2019. Sam has also attended classes given by Jonas Dupuich and Michael Hagedorn.

February 22– Adam Toth: *Juniper*. Adam apprenticed in Japan under Mr. Taiga Urushibata.

March 28– Juan Cruz: *Purchase criteria for new bonsai with demonstration*. Juan is a thermochemical engineer who has been a bonsai devotee for at least 30 years. He studied under Kathy Shaner.

April 25– Eric Schrader: *Deciduous*. Eric and his wife Dory founded Bonsify. Eric has been growing and developing Bonsai trees for over fifteen years– his specialty is producing modern mini-bonsai.

May 23– Bob Shimon: *Redwoods*. Bob founded Mendocino Coast Bonsai in 1995 and specializes in Redwoods, Sierra Junipers, Mendocino Pygmy Cypress, and Live Oak yamadori.

June 27– Bill Castellon: *Japanese Black Pine*. Bill studied under Mas Imazumi and interned with Head Gardener Tokushirou Tamane in Kyoto in 2001.

July 20 (Saturday) REBS Annual Picnic

July 25– Lucy Sakaishi–Judd: *Kusamono workshop*. Fascinating woman! Check out <https://insidesacramento.com/branching-out/>. She and her late husband have had a long career in bonsai.

August– no meeting. (August 31– tentative show date.)

September 26– Jonas Dupuich: *Show critique*. Jonas is a noted Bonsai artist and instructor. He and Eric Schrader found the Pacific Coast Bonsai Expo. Eric is the author and creator of the blog [bonsaitonight.com](http://bonsaitonight.com)

October– to be determined

November 21– Boon Manakitivipart: *to be determined*. Boon has won numerous national and international awards for his work on bonsai. He is known for his innovative techniques, unique bonsai styling, and creative teaching methods.

December 21 (Saturday) REBS Annual Holiday Celebration

## JANUARY'S GENERAL MEETING AND DEMONSTRATION

Sam Tan gave the first styling of a Japanese Black Pine (JBP) and discussed styling techniques. He first asked the audience as to why one would want to build a JBP bonsai. Answers included easy care and versatility in terms of styling. Everyone metaphorically cracked their knuckles and settled down to watch Sam tackle a JBP, still in its nursery pot. (I have in my notes "No tree is hopeless", which seemed to be the theme for the demonstration. But I digress).

At the beginning of the demonstration, Sam asked why one grows Japanese Black Pine, why are they bonsai-worthy. Various audience answers were given, but the Bonsai Nut forum has a more complete discussion. "It is very responsive to bonsai techniques. Very vigorous, fast growing, builds trunk girth quickly, creates rough (old looking) bark quickly, tolerates root work well, yet the branches are flexible enough to bend with wire, yet the branches will "set" in a season or two, needle length is easily managed with the proper techniques, back buds easily, easy to graft, can be started as bonsai from seed or from nursery stock, and lastly, there is a vast amount of information available about JBP " *Bonsai Nut Member- Adair M.*

And now I speak truth: I haven't worked with Japanese Black Pines at all and so my understanding of Sam's discussion will be incorrect and lead people astray. Please check out the Bonsai Mirai website and YouTube, Jonas Dupuich's Bonsai Tonight Blog, or the website for Eisei-en (Bjorn Bjorholm's garden. Eric Schrader, who helped found Bonsaify and its associated the website, is offering a class on Japanese Black Pines. Here's the link. <https://www.bonsaify.com/collections/ecourses/products/mastering-shohin-japanese-black-pine-bonsai-ecourse>

The Japanese Black Pine, unaware of its fate



Cathy Taylor won the raffle and thus the demo tree. Sam Tan is explaining an aspect of styling a bunjin.

## FEBRUARY'S UPCOMING GENERAL MEETING AND DEMONSTRATION

Adam Toth will give a demonstration lecture regarding various aspects of Juniper bonsai culture. His presentations are excellent and audience participation is often vigorous.



## UPCOMING REBS EVENTS

**February 1 (Thursday): 6:00PM to 9:00 PM.**

### REBS INTERMEDIATE WORKSHOP

#### Rohnert Park Community Center

Continue trimming and styling your trees, once they dry out a bit. Potting season is almost upon us, and if you lack pots, check out the Mammoth Show on February 17 and 18. The vendors will be featured on Sunday.

Please let Ivan know if you are attending- here's his contact info

[lukrich@sonic.net](mailto:lukrich@sonic.net) 707-529-3298

**Please note the changed beginning time.**

**February 22 (Thursday):**

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Japanese White Pine. Years in training- 38

## UPCOMING BONSAI EVENTS

**February 10 (Saturday) and 11 (Sunday): 9:00AM to 5:00 PM**

**TRIP TO OROVILLE GROWING GROUNDS LOTUS BONSAI NURSERY, PLACERVILLE,** Bonsai materials of exceptional quality at reasonable prices. Some trees are close to 20 years old. (No cost was given on the website.)

To sign up, email us at [mail@lotusbonsai.com](mailto:mail@lotusbonsai.com)

**February 17 (Saturday) and 18 (Sunday)**

### 🤖 MAMMOTH SALE AND AUCTION

**Lakeside Park Garden Center at Lake Merritt, Oakland**

- Live auction on Saturday with preview at 12pm and auction at 1pm.
- Vendors on Sunday 9:00 am – 3pm. Bargain sales 10am – 3pm.

If you want to score an unusual tree, buy an interesting pot, or bid for a tree that you can't live without, this is the Show for you.

All proceeds support the GSBF Bonsai Garden at Lake Merritt.

**March 16 (Saturday)- 11:00 to 5:00**

**March 17 (Sunday)- 12:00 to 4:00**

### SAN JOSE BETSUIN BONSAI CLUB EXHIBIT

There will be a demonstration on Saturday at 1:00pm by David Nguy and at 1:00pm on Sunday by a club member. The benefit drawing will follow immediately afterward. Vendors will be present.

640 N 5th St, San Jose

## SEASONAL TIPS FOR BONSAI CARE

Gleaned from the "Bonsai Season Care Guide for the San Francisco Bay Area", as published by the East Bay Bonsai Society (snarky comments are my own and meant for humor only)

**General care for Late Winter:** Many trees are coming out of dormancy, so this is a good time to plan for future growth, especially for trees that you plan to exhibit. Entry photos were taken in April(?) for last year's REBS Show. Don't get caught flat footed

Move all trees into full sun.

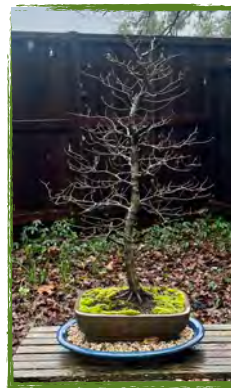
**Watering considerations:** Ensure that plants receive sufficient water, however, if water drains slowly through the pot, it may be time to repot the bonsai. Trees in small pots may need watering more frequently than those in larger pots.

**Fertilizing rears its ugly head:** I think that this issue is one of the most contentious in bonsai culture. Everyone seems to have a hill to die on regarding NPK proportions, frequency, trace minerals, chemical vrs organic sources, etc etc. Personally, I have been using MAXSEA Seaweed Extract Acid Plant Food. Most of my trees like slightly acid soil (azaleas, junipers) and our tap water is slightly basic.

**Repotting pondering:** Warm weather will soon bring the bonsai out of dormancy, if they haven't started already. Generally speaking, conifers can be repotted now. Deciduous trees should be repotted about every 1- 2 years and in early spring. (Thankfully, repotting doesn't seem to awaken great passions in the bonsai world. No, I lie. There's the various aspects bonsai soil and the battle over akadama, including the vexing tubes.

## NEW MEMBERS

The Redwood Empire Bonsai Society welcomes its newest members- Alex Koski, Skylar DeWitte, and Jeff Bibiana. Alex has been involved in bonsai for a while, and Jeff is new to the hobby. He went to the ongoing REBS exhibit at the Sonoma Botanical Garden and was impressed by the bonsai, as were his sons. Skylar has a kick-ass lovely hornbeam. We look forward to seeing you all at the meetings.



Skylar's European Hornbeam- in leaf and in winter silhouette

## MONTHLY MEMBERS' INTERMEDIATE WORKSHOPS

The Intermediate workshops are held on the first Thursday of each month, from 6:00 until 9:00 PM at the Rohnert Park Community Center. Senior members will provide assistance to members with beginner and intermediate levels of experience. Observers are welcome. Cost is \$15.00 per workshop, payable by check OR CASH at the door.

Ivan Lukrich is the workshop leader and a long time devotee of the art. He joined REBS in 1985 and is a certified bonsai instructor. Please contact him if you are planning to join a class. He needs to know what club supplies, such as wire, to bring.

[lukrich@sonic.net](mailto:lukrich@sonic.net).

Have fun and learn stuff- sounds like a plan.



Ivan needs a bigger boat

Root cutters!



## 2024 ADVANCED WORKSHOP SCHEDULE WITH ADAM TOTH

Adam Toth is a Bay Area resident and has just completed an apprenticeship in Japan. He brings a wealth of bonsai knowledge and is eager to assist us in elevating both our skills and the quality of our trees.

Jan 26 (Friday) – Group 1

Jan 27 (Saturday) – Group 2

Feb 23 (Friday) – Group 1

Feb 24 (Saturday) – Group 2

Mar 29 (Friday) – Group 1

April 26 (Friday) – Group 1

May 24 (Friday) – Group 1

June 28 (Friday) – Group 1

July 26 (Friday) – Group 1

July 27 (Saturday) – Group 2

**August – No Workshops**

Sept 27 (Friday) – Group 1

Sept 28 (Saturday) – Group 2

**Oct – No Workshops**

Nov – 22 (Friday) – Group 1

Nov 23 (Saturday) – Group 2

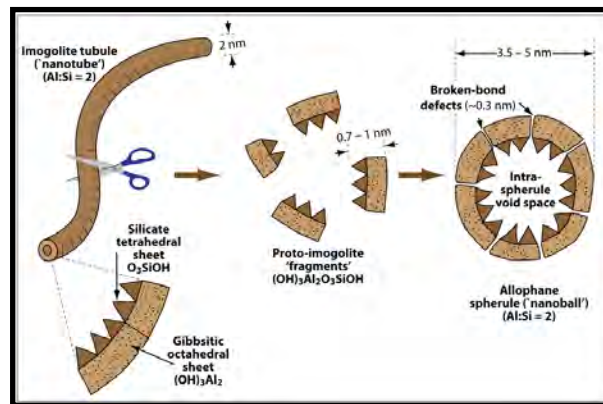
**Dec – No Workshops**

Please contact Bob Shimon to be placed on the waiting/substitute list  
[shimon@mcn.org](mailto:shimon@mcn.org)

## SOME THOUGHTS ON AKADAMA

Each potting season brings a discussion of the Japanese clay product, akadama. So far, the only known source for akadama, *sensu stricto*, is in Japan, first described in the Kuma Basin, Kumamoto prefecture

Akadama is a typically messy alteration of volcanic glass into imogolite “allophane, quartz, cristobalite, gibbsite, vermiculite, and limonite.”(1) Imogolite and allophane have the same chemical composition, but imogolite has a nanotube structure and allophane is formed of nanospheres. It is found in pure form as “gel-like films weathered pumice beds” or in soil “as a typical weathering product of pyroclastic material under a humid and well-drained conditions.”(2) Cristobalite and vermiculite are both clays, and limonite is a messy iron ore.



“Diagram of imogolite nanotubes and Al-rich allophane nanospheres”(3)

A quick explanation of the diagram– the imogolite nanotube is formed by an outer layer of gibbsite, which is a self respecting clay mineral, and an inner layer of quartz tetrahedrons chemically holding hands. It’s basically a smectite clay that is rolled up into tubes. Smectite has a platy structure which has a huge capacity for taking up and expelling water, as well as swapping ions (cation exchange capability). Santa Rosa soil is largely composed of expansive smectite. Thus summer cracks.

There is discussion that akadama is good for the bonsai trees because their roots can grow through the tubes, hoovering up and exchanging various cations, but I’m hard pressed to imagine a root that can fit into a 2 nanometer tube. The roots are more likely growing through the spaces between the tubes and the spheres and other crystalline debris formed by alteration of an unorganized ash fall.

Japanese akadama is a finite and expensive resource. Can a cheaper akadama-like material be found, perhaps in the United States? Both Japan and the US West Coast are well supplied with volcanoes, but Japan is much more humid than the West Coast. Ash from the Cascade volcanoes would be apt to blow to the eastern Cascade rain shadow.

Here’s a link to a fascinating discussion about possible Oregon sites. Don Pettit explains a great deal about the akadama and kanuma deposits in Japan as well. Definitely worth a read.

[https://www.arcgis.com/apps/Cascade/index.html?appid=6f0b256d0201451483f224d313109010\\_71](https://www.arcgis.com/apps/Cascade/index.html?appid=6f0b256d0201451483f224d313109010_71)

Citations: (1) Wikipedia discussion of Imogolite (2) Erwan Paineau, Pascale Lanois. Nanomaterials From Imogolite: Structure, Properties, and Functional Materials. Nanomaterials from Clay Minerals, Elsevier, pp. 257- 284, 2019, 10.1016/B978-0-12-814533-3.00005-3. hal-02323278 (3) from McDaniel et al, 2012, by way of Don Pettit and Bonsai Mirai Forum



## MEMBERSHIP DUES 2024

REBS membership dues became due in January 2024. Both current members and those wishing to join should complete the Membership Application available on the website and mail it, with a check, to

Joyce Smith, REBS Treasurer  
2309 Dancing Penny Way  
Santa Rosa, CA 95403

The 2024 dues are \$35 for individuals and \$55 for family.

In order to receive the "Nebari Network"—the REBS monthly newsletter, as well as various notifications via email, the 2024 Membership Dues must be paid.

## NOTEWORTHY

Are you subscribed to automatic email notifications whenever a posting to the REBS website blog occurs?

Visit the REBS website and scroll down the left column until "SUBSCRIBE TO BLOG VIA EMAIL". Enter your email address where it says "Email Address" and click the button "SUBSCRIBE". That's it! You will receive an email notification of any new postings to the REBS website blog. Blog postings occur for past demonstrations, generally of styling techniques, and special announcements, such as recent club activities.

### SUBSCRIBE TO BLOG VIA EMAIL

Enter your email address to subscribe to this blog and receive notifications of new posts by email.

SUBSCRIBE

## MONTHLY MUSINGS

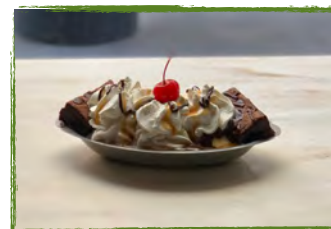
Stealing has been on the collective bonsai mind lately— the theft at the Bonsai Garden at Lake Merritt being the latest larceny. Bonsai trees are relatively portable and often prized.

Why do people steal? I pondered that while working out at the Y and came up with "need" and "fun". People need the trees for themselves or to sell for money. And it's fun to play "Catch a Thief", as long as you don't get caught. (The Ten Commandments don't get as granular— it's just "Thou Shalt Not Steal".)

I'm not sure that any tree can't be stolen, either for need or for fun, regardless of the security system. Exhibiting a bonsai is a double edged sword: the public can admire the tree and the public can steal the tree.

Is having a hobby a sort of theft? A hobby can be defined as an "activity done regularly in one's leisure time for pleasure". And here is where guilt rears its ugly head. "Leisure time" is, at least if you have been raised with metaphorical Puritans leaning over your shoulder, not something that you should have. You are squandering time, spending money, and generally having fun. And possibly engaging in intellectual theft, swiping other people's ideas.

Do the Puritans win? Can white upper middle class guilt be assuaged regarding hobbies? I hope think so. The opposite of theft is giving. If a part of your philosophically larcenous bonsai hobby can be giving something of yourself, then I think that the conundrum is solved. Teach! Donate some hard won money! Help out! (And a plea from me— please write up articles on the technical aspects of the monthly demonstrations, to be put in the newsletter. But I digress).



## REBS SHOW VENDORS

Art of the Daiza- Jerry Braswell- Custom Suiseki and Bonsai Stands. <https://artofthedaiza.com/>

Bonchi Bonsai- Matthew Walker- Copper Wire, Muck, Fertilizer, and Bonsai Services. <https://www.bonchibonsai.com/>.

Bonsai Tonight- Jonas Dupich- Everything You Need to Make Beautiful Bonsai. <https://bonsaitonight.com/>

Bonsify- Eric Schrader- Bonsai Trees, Supplies, and Instruction. <https://www.bonsaify.com/>

Carman's Nursery- Nancy Schramm- Bonsai Starters, Dwarf, Rare, and Unusual Plants. [Carman's Nursery:](#)

Drew Tucker Enterprise- Drew Tucker. [Midori Bonsai Club](#)

Danny Powell- "Stumbling my way through the art of bonsai in the SF Bay Area"

<https://www.instagram.com/dpowellphoto/?hl=en>

Hokum Bonsai- Geoff Campbell. [hokumenbonsai@gmail.com](mailto:hokumenbonsai@gmail.com)

Janelley's Bonsai- Jannette Bautista. [jannetteavid2@yahoo.com](mailto:jannetteavid2@yahoo.com)

Lotus Bonsai- Scott Chad- Bonsai trees, Supplies, and Instruction. [lotusbonsai.com](http://lotusbonsai.com)

Mendocino Coast Bonsai- Bob Shimon- Trees, Display Stands, Slabs, and Joshua Roth Tools. <https://mcbonsai.com/>

Moonshine Ranch Bonsai- Phil Richardson. [moonshineranchbonsai@gmail.com](mailto:moonshineranchbonsai@gmail.com)

Pagodas, Lanterns, & Temples- Rick Saval. [pagodas@sonic.net](mailto:pagodas@sonic.net)

Peter Tea Bonsai- Peter Tea- Bonsai Creation, Collection Management, and Instruction. <https://www.ptbonsai.com/>

Rizeup Bonsai- Mikel Edwards- Pottery. <https://www.facebook.com/rizeupbonsai/>

Soh-Ju-En Satsuki Bonsai- Darren Wong. <http://www.sohjuensatsukibonsai.com/>

Suiseki Stones- Ken McLeod- Beautiful Viewing Stones From All Over. <https://suisekistones.com/>

REBS Address:

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Santa Rosa, CA 95405-2872

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### COMMENTS AND FEEDBACK

If you want to contribute articles, advertise items you wish to sell, buy, or donate, or to ask questions, please contact the Newsletter Editor, Elizabeth Herbert, at [eherb1954@gmail.com](mailto:eherb1954@gmail.com) (way) prior to the end of the month.