



# THE BONSAI GAKUSEI

## THE MODESTO BONSAI CLUB NEWSLETTER

### March 2009

#### Program

**Date:** March 21, 2009

**Location:**

Blue Oak Nursery  
784 Albers Rd.

**Program Schedule:**

8:00a Executive Board Meeting: All  
are welcome to attend.  
9:00a Club Meeting  
10:00a Work on your trees with  
assistance of John Thompson

**REMINDER:**

Each member is responsible for cleaning  
his/her work area/table before leaving.

#### Message from our president

##### **President's Message March**

This is going to be a busy month. If your  
trees are anything like mine, then they are  
spouting out all over the place. You will need to  
figure out which ones to repot, trim, etc; all at  
the same time!

Remember, we moved back to our regular  
time for our meeting this month. Executive  
Board Meeting at 8:00 and the Club Meeting at  
9:00.

Our 28<sup>th</sup> Annual Spring show is just around  
the corner on April 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>, again at the  
Modesto Centre Plaza. You should bring any  
tree you are planning to display to our March  
meeting so that you can get some great  
direction and advice from our sensei, Sam  
Adina.

Speaking of advice, don't forget that John  
Thompson will be making the first of his three  
visits this year to our March meeting to help  
you develop your trees. Although he  
specializes in Oak trees, he is also an expert in  
Maples, Pines and Junipers. Just remember to  
bring the same tree for each of his three visits.  
Michael Bennett has graciously offered to  
photograph your tree so we can have a record  
of what it looked like when you started.

During this last month, we had an  
opportunity to showcase our trees and our  
club. Richard McKinstry and I were on a live  
television show on Thursday, February 26. We  
hope to get a tape of that for your viewing  
pleasure

We also held a display and demonstration  
on Saturday, February 28 in the Gallo Centre  
for the Arts in Conjunction with the Festival of  
Harps. I would like to thank Sam, Richard,  
Jerry & Lois Jumper, Andy & Audrey Poulo and  
my wife, Anne, for all of their work and support.



Just one last note about our upcoming spring show. Our Vice President, Mark de St. Jeor, is the Chairman. We need numerous volunteers before, during and after the show. Please contact Mark for more information.

-Peter Camarena-

**February Meeting:**

February 21, 2009

Sam Adina demonstrated repotting techniques on a styled Elm.



Removing it from it's old pot.



The tree before repotting.



Cutting big roots off.



Tree in new pot getting wired in.



Tamping new soil around roots.

**Directions to Meeting Site:**

**Blue Oak Nursery** is on the east side of Albers Road, 1 mile north of Hwy. 132 (Yosemite Blvd.). Watch for the big blue sign with the blue oak silhouette. Turn into the gravel lane and follow it to the end. **Park in designated area.**

Mailing Address: Modesto Bonsai Club  
 P.O. Box 578518  
 Modesto, CA 95355

**Our Instructor**

Samson Adina 209-234-3956

**Board of Directors**

**President**

Peter Camarena 209-529-1759

**Vice President**

Mark de St. Jeor 209-667-4248

**Treasurer**

Janet Wakefield 209-341-4075

**Secretary**

Anne Camarena

**Members-at-Large**

Michael Bennett 209-669-1728

Brad Coleman 209-523-5857

Andrew Poulo 209-772-2440

**Immediate Past President**

Jerry Jumper 209-667-6701

**Other Support**

**Club Wire Supply**

Michael Bennett

**Guest Demonstrator Coordinator**

Peter Camarena

**Librarian**

Open

**Newsletter Editor/Membership Chair**

Lorraine Reynolds [lore@pacbell.net](mailto:lore@pacbell.net)

**Web Master**

Mike Reynolds

modestobonsaiclub.com

**Notes from Sam...**

**March**

**Pinching:** Whether or not a tree needs pinching is the most important question concerning your bonsai this time of the year. Before you start pinching your deciduous trees, ask yourself what stage of training the trees are in. Another question is what kind of deciduous tree do you have. Pinching techniques are often different from species to species.

Again, as a reminder, pinching should only be done on **refined bonsai** after branches and the overall structures have been developed.

If you pinch junipers too early, you will delay the development. You should let the junipers in training grow freely then wire new branches. Remove old leggy branches. branches that have become too thick should be made into jin. Do not cut thick branches too close to the trunk since the scar will not heal over.

If your deciduous bonsai is in an early stage of training, let new buds grow freely and wire them after they harden (mid summer around May-June) . Because these buds grow fast, you may have to rewire your trees several times in a single season. By wiring young branches, you can add interesting curves where they are needed. In fall or early spring, cut these long branches back to a desired length so they can begin to grow freely again the following season. This treatment will strengthen your bonsai and promote good root development. Cutting those long shoots leaving 2-3 sets of buds, you create new interior branches.

Most bonsai publications offer good information for pinching well developed bonsai. Here are some general guidelines:

**Japanese Maples** - Use tweezers to remove the center buds leaving a single pair of new leaves.

**Trident Maples** - Cut off the elongated center of the bud beyond the cluster of newly opened leaves.

**Beech**- Use tweezers to pinch back to two leaves after the buds open and the leaves start to unfold. Beeches are usually the last deciduous bonsai to open.

**Scale Junipers**- Pinch only when strong pointed shoots (runners) grow about half an inch to one inch beyond the general outline of the branch, usually in April or May.

**Needle Junipers**- (this applies to Juniper rigida only) Let new shoots elongate before using very sharp scissors to cut new growth back to a quarter inch or less. Do this in May.

**Fertilizing:** Organic fertilizer cakes made from rape seed or cotton seed meal (store-purchased or home-made) work well. Time-release fertilizers can be used to supplement organic fertilizers. Wait at least four weeks after repotting bonsai before fertilizing them.

For mature deciduous trees, wait until new leaves harden before fertilizing lightly. If you fertilize too early or too much, both leaves and internodes will grow large and long.

For the tree in training, your goal is to make thick trunk. Fertilize your tree early. Big leaves and long needles help the trunk to grow large.

Feed Japanese black pines heavily in spring to help the trees bud after decandling. For a twelve inch long pot, start with four to six fertilizer cakes and add a few more every few weeks. When the surface starts to get full, remove old cakes and replace them with new ones. By the end of May, the surface of the pot should be covered with fertilizer.

Begin feeding white pines when the new needles open, usually in May. Apply a light to moderate amount of fertilizer through fall, starting with 4 cakes for a large tree and adding 4 more a month later.

- - - Workshop Information - - -

Repotting is still okay for Conifers.

Pruning all kind of bonsai.

It is also a good time to wire and style conifers.

## **Bonsai-A-Thon at The Huntington**

by Mary Miller

The Huntington is a 200 acre masterpiece founded in 1919 by Henry E. Huntington and is devoted solely to research, education and beauty. I was lucky to attend this years annual fundraiser for the Golden State Bonsai Federation/Collection there this past weekend.

There were, of course, fantastic displays and demos hosted by some of the southern California clubs.



**Harry Hirao and his 500 yr. old Juniper collected in 1988**



Meals served up by hard working volunteers.



**Joanie Berkwitz and Steve Valentine San Diego Bonsai Club**



**Joe James and Al Keppler**

Tours of the amazing Chinese Garden, the Japanese Zen Garden and brand new Bonsai Courts.



The annual GSBF Spring Board Meeting was held on Sunday. Next year it will be at the Collection at Lake Merritt. Much business was discussed including the successful future of Golden Statements Magazine. The Riverside convention coming up this November and the plans to have the price of registration at an impressive \$200 to encourage as many people as possible to enjoy this event. It was reported that the Modesto convention made a profit of \$17991 and was given a nice round of applause by all present. I was asked to take back a message of gratitude to our club and each member who worked to make it so successful.

If you haven't already, put this huge collection of Art Galleries, Botanical Gardens and Historical Library on your list of places to visit. It was just over a five hour drive from Modesto and there are many places to stay and shop in nearby Pasadena.

For more photos of The 2009 Bonsai-A-Thon please visit [modestobonsaiclub.com](http://modestobonsaiclub.com)

### Club Information

**Membership Dues:** Anyone who has not paid their dues by April 1<sup>st</sup> will not receive the April newsletter. So please remember so you won't miss out!

### Calendar of Events

**March 29** **Scotts Valley, CA**  
**Santa Cruz Bonsai Kai:** 20th annual Bonsai Show at the Scotts Valley Community Center, 360 King's Village Road, Hours are 10:30AM-4:30PM. Demonstration at 1:30PM by Katsumi Kinoshita. Plant sales, door prizes, raffle of the demonstration tree and much more.

**April 4-5** **Sacramento, CA**  
**Bonsai Sekiyu Kai:** 32nd Annual Bonsai Show at the Sacramento Betsuin Buddhist Church, 2401 Riverside Boulevard, Saturday, 12:00PM to 5:00PM, and Sunday, 10:00AM to 3:30PM. Demonstrations both days at 2:00PM by Bonsai Master John Uchida. Refreshments, door prizes, raffles, plants and bonsai tool sales. Ron Krause (916) 481-4792.

**April 4-5** **Modesto, CA**  
Modesto Bonsai Club 28<sup>th</sup> Annual Spring Show at the Modesto Centre Plaza next to the Doubletree Hotel. Hours are Sat. 10AM-6PM. Sun. 11AM-4PM. Raffles and plant sales.

**April 18-19** **Palo Alto, CA**  
**Kusamura Bonsai Club:** 49th Annual Bonsai Show and Sale at the Mitchell Park Community Center, 3800 Middlefield Road. Show hours are Saturday, 12Noon-5PM and Sunday, 10AM-5PM. Featured guest (TBA). Bonsai

plant sale, and a show of both established and educational work in progress trees.

**April 26** **Watsonville, CA**  
**Watsonville Bonsai Club:** 35th Annual Bonsai Show at the Watsonville Buddhist Temple, 423 Bridge Street. Show hours are 10AM-4PM. Demonstration at 2PM by Katsumi Kinoshita of Monterey. Plenty of parking for group attendance. Raffle and plant sales. For more information call Don White 831-724-9283, or Iwao Yamashita 831-724-5332.

**Nov. 5-8** **Riverside, CA**  
Golden State Bonsai Federation: Convention XXXII 'A Southwest Bonsai Journey'. Click on <http://www.gsbfbonsai.org/GSBFconvention/Convention09.htm> for a sneak peek. For much more subscribe at [www.gsbfbonsai.org](http://www.gsbfbonsai.org).