



YAMATO BONSAI KAI

“FRIENDSHIP THROUGH BONSAI”

Since 1968

Newsletter – March 2012



MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD

By Tony Hayworth– President

What makes bonsai click for you? Is it the magic of a before and after transformation; the labor and results of a few years of careful shaping, trimming and root cultivation; the simple enjoyment of watering and watching the growth or foliage changes during the year? Whatever it is, that magic thing that brings you to bonsai, make sure you take the time to nurture it and make it important in your life. In so doing bonsai will bring you great enjoyment and have an important role in your life and perhaps your health. Yes, a great hobby like bonsai can be a health thing for you too. Stay active and do healthy things with your bonsai time. Get off the sofa, put down the TV remote controller and get out in your yard and enjoy the coming spring time bonsai season.

Spring time brings many changes to our trees. They are waking up and starting to grow again. It is the best time of the year to transplant almost anything. If you have any conifers, between now and mid April, you are pretty safe to get on it.

We held the first workshop of the year on Saturday, February 25th, turnout was thin but those present got some first-hand help from myself and Mike Baker. It was a good evening, including pizza and soda. Diana Wong brought a wonderful dessert too. Don't miss the next one. Details later in the

newsletter.

The Yamato Board held its second board meeting of the year on Saturday 10 March. The agenda was centered on the coming annual Fall Show and Exhibition. We are looking for committee leaders and other volunteers to execute the show. At the next club meeting we will be calling on all members to help with the show and committee assignments. Please come to the meeting and help.

If you have any input for the Board, please let me or any board member know your needs.

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## AT THE NEXT CLUB MEETING...

On Tuesday, March 20th, Sensei Uchida, Tony and Mike will give detailed instruction on Conifer transplanting and early spring care. We will have our monthly raffle at the end of the meeting, so come out and support the Club.

PLACE: [Eden Japanese Community Center](#),  
[710 Elgin Street, San Lorenzo, CA](#)

Note: Club Meetings start at 7:30 PM.

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Club Workshops – we will have 4 scheduled workshops this year. All events are listed on the Yamato 2012 Calendar of Events.

Our next club workshop is on Saturday 24 March, from 5 PM, at the same place we hold our monthly club meeting (EJCC, San Lorenzo, CA. Workshop fee is 10 dollars. The theme will be on transplanting and root work. Of course that involves some styling or decision making on several aspects of your composition. Don't forget to bring all your tools, wire and soil materials. My preference is for you to bring bonsai or pre-bonsai, but if you must, initial nursery stock is okay too (just not too raw please). We will organize food and beverage for each event. Sign up will be at the Club Meeting on 20 March or contact me if you have questions.

Annual Fall Show – our show this year will be on the Weekend of 20 & 21 October, 2012. Please reserve this weekend now!!

Housekeeping – Annual Membership Drive continues this month. Bring your dues to the next club meeting or simply mail them to the Club P.O. Box in Union City.

At any time you have input, please contact me to discuss your needs, ideas or concerns.

About the Yamato Bonsai Club

The Yamato Bonsai Club has a long and distinguished history in the Bay Area. In 1968, the club was founded with six members including its first Sensei, Mr. Jimmy Inadomi from the Castro Valley area. Its second

sensei was Mr. Juzaburo Furuzawa. Since 1976, the Yamato Bonsai Club has been under the guidance of Sensei John Uchida of Hayward.

Note: If you have moved or have update contact details, please notify Yamato Bonsai Kai, so that we may update our records. Thank you.



Meeting Location Reminder

Our monthly club meetings are now held at the Eden Japanese Community Center. The location address is 710 Elgin Street San Lorenzo.



SENSEI UCHIDA'S NOTES

By Johnny Uchida – Club Sensei

Dear member, how are you? It's just about time it started raining. Rainwater is "million dollar" water for your bonsai. All of your bonsai will be very happy. But too much rain and your deciduous trees' new growth will start to get very long (long internodes).

March and the first 3 weeks of April are a very good time for repotting junipers and Japanese Black Pine. Also if there is a lot of

rain it can be good and bad. Especially black pines, the needles and candles get longer so soon. So we have to watch very closely, every time we repot the soil has to be very dry. Never use wet soil.

I think the March meeting is very important, hopefully more people come to the meeting. The more you bring trees in I think the more you learn and the better you do. If your bonsai is in good condition or bad condition, either one, please bring it in-the more bonsai the better. I will see you at the meeting.

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## **BONSAI BASIC**

By Tony Hayworth– President

Time to get busy on your transplanting!! Also, even if we get any late winter rain, don't be fooled by a few sprinkles and think you can skip a week of bonsai watering. If you follow my advice on your soil mixtures, they should all be draining well and this means they need plenty of water as we enter late March and early April. You should by now be into at least one round of fertilization on your trees. Don't forget your yard trees too.

Sometime we forget that re-potting is something that is done on healthy trees. You do not need to wait till a tree is stressed and completely root-bound to do a transplanting. On the contrary, repotting a bonsai in good health is a great way to make it even healthier and to grow even more.

If you are having trouble getting part of your tree to grow in order to finish a particular styling or new direction of growth for a style, try to transplant it in a slightly larger growing pot, so the roots have some room to

take off and stretch out. However, don't get carried away and go from a 1 quart sized to a half oak barrel. Be sensible about it. A little larger on the pot is a healthier condition for the tree. What would you rather have, a struggling tree in a perfect sized pot or a happy tree in a pot that is slightly larger? I know how I answer that question. There are so many little things that are important to remember when transplanting a tree.

Take your time if you need to. Learn the steps and learn the proper technique for each step. There is a lot too it I know, but with some practice, you can do it. After care is more important than the actual transplanting steps. Some will argue this and I know I probably debate it myself from time to time. (lol) but my point is that no matter how good your transplanting knowledge and technique, if you don't manage the after care properly, you could kill your bonsai. Don't over worry this point, just learn proper after care and you will be okay. Your key enemy during the early repotting or the early transplanting season is "Mr. Frost". Any late season frost on newly transplanted trees is not good. A two or three day cold period and any repeated direct frost is almost certain doom. Keep your newly transplanted work under eaves or some other outdoor cover until the danger of extreme cold or frost is gone. We are lucky in the SF Bay Area because we don't really have much risk here.

At the same time, please remember the wind is the enemy anytime you transplant. The wind can dry out a tree that does not have much root structure left. So make sure you water the foliage also

for a good three weeks or so after transplanting along with watering the soil area. Key points are:

- Always err on the side of caution and protect your early transplant work from wind and the possibility of a direct overhead frost through the end of March.
- Make sure anything that you do in the way of transplanting gets some early sun each day and is not stuck away somewhere in full shade.

When you repot pay attention to the rules of each bonsai style, particularly where to position the trunk in the pot and where the finished apex ends up in your completed work. In my earlier days, I was concentrating so much on the roots and the soil conditions that I lost track of the rest of the balance of the piece. In many cases I ended up with the trunk of the tree right in the middle of the pot! This is NOT where the trunk should be positioned. (*Yes there are exceptions, but that is not the point*). Key points are:

- The tree's trunk should be placed either to the left or right of the center and slightly to the back of the pot. The apex or crown should lean slightly forward.
- Check that the tree is not planted too low in the pot or too high in the pot. These general rules are not for group plantings as you can imagine.

I am also thinking of finished bonsai and not pre-bonsai or items in growing pot conditions. These instructions are for your Show ready bonsai. If you feel like planting your trees in oversized pots to encourage development, etc... go for it, I do a lot of this.

Over time you will pot and re-pot a tree sev-

eral times. During each of these operations it is not like the initial transplanting of a nursery stock tree into a first pre-bonsai state. Please know the difference. Ask me if this is not clear.

Fully mature pines for example, you need to show off the surface roots and slightly raise the placement of the roots in the pot each time. Seeing these surface roots as they connect to the trunk is very desirable and they should radiate from the trunk in all directions. You cannot wait until a finished bonsai state to work on this. You must start early, and at your initial transplanting from nursery stock to pre-bonsai, handle the placement of the available roots properly to achieve a great bonsai. Don't neglect this aspect; do some research into this topic.

In bonsai you are working towards a great "tachiagare". Tachiagare is the area of the bonsai where the roots (nebari) attach themselves to the trunk and extending up to the first branch. This is tachiagare. What happens in this area, in the way of definition and development, is often the essence of the difference between a good tree and a great bonsai.

**Bonsai Tip:** as a tip this month, you need to be prepared to transplant this month and to prepare for the new spring growth period. Between now and June is the most active period for transplanting. Have enough soil material handy so if you decide to transplant something that is not already on your list, you can react quickly.

If you want to prevent your flowering and fruiting bonsai from losing too much of its growing strength, then after about

80% of the buds have bloomed, you can remove all spent flowers and buds that have not bloomed. The energy will now be directed into supporting new growth. For the fruit trees, you can leave some of the blossoms on to form the fruit for decorative and viewing pleasure later. If new growth starts to get too long, be careful not to trim back too soon. Make sure the growth is firm and strong before you go cutting back or your pruning may cause the whole area to die back.

As trees wake up and start to grow you must have your fertilizer schedule understood, supplies on hand and ready to go. I know some of you have so many trees that it might take you a week to get them all fertilized! I trust you have the time?!

Remember... keep your eye on Bonsai.

See you at the next club meeting.



## **GSBF CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

(For a more complete list, please refer to Golden Statements calendar of events or visit the web site at [www.gsbf-bonsai.org](http://www.gsbf-bonsai.org)).

Some nearby scheduled events are:

**March 21 - 25, 2012**

**San Mateo, California**

**Bonsai Society of San Francisco: Annual Bonsai Exhibit** at the San Mateo County Event Center, 1346 Saratoga Dr., San Mateo. General admission to the SF Flower and Garden Show is \$20.00. The hours are: Wed - Sat 10 AM - 7 PM, Sunday 10 AM at 6 PM. Additionally, there will be trees and pots for sale. For more information visit our website: [www.bssf.org](http://www.bssf.org) or for general information on the Flower and Garden Show please visit: [www.sfgardenshow.com](http://www.sfgardenshow.com)

**Mar. 31 - Apr. 1**

**Sacramento, California**

Bonsai Sekiyu Kai of Sacramento: 35th Annual Bonsai Show at the Sacramento Betsuin Buddhist Church, 2401 Riverside Blvd. Hours are: Saturday, 12-Noon - 5:00 PM, and Sunday, 10AM - 3:45PM. Demonstrations at 2PM, both days, by Bonsai Master Johnnie Uchida. Amenities include refreshments, light snacks, door prizes, raffles and a Silent Auction. Plant and bonsai tool sales also will be available. For more information contact Dareld Binns, [dwbpho-209op@yahoo.com](mailto:dwbpho-209op@yahoo.com)

**April 14-15, 2012**

**Sacramento, California**

**American Bonsai Association, Sacramento: 53rd Annual Spring Show** at the Shepard Garden and Arts Center, 3330 McKinley Ave, Sacramento, CA. Show hours are Saturday 10:00 AM - 5:00 PM, Sunday 10:00 AM - 4:00 PM. Demonstration each day at 1:30 PM by John Thompson followed by a raffle of bonsai (includes the demonstration tree) and bonsai related material. There is a large vendor area with club member trees, pots, etc. For information contact Greg McDonald at [Gregandleeanne@comcast.net](mailto:Gregandleeanne@comcast.net), by phone at 530-642-2521, or visit our website at <http://abasbonsai.org/>.

**April 21-22, 2012**

**Palo Alto, CA**

**Kusamura Bonsai Club: 52nd Annual Show** at the Lucie Stern Community Center, 1305 Middlefield Road. Admission is free. Show hours are Saturday: 12 Noon - 5PM, and Sunday: 11AM - 5PM. There will be demonstrations, raffles, and club member tree sales both days. Guest demonstrator to Tim Kong. For more information, contact Rita Curbow at 408-732-4957 or [kusamura@gsbf-bonsai.org](mailto:kusamura@gsbf-bonsai.org).

**April 21 - 22, 2012**

**San Jose, California**

**San Jose Betsuin Bonsai Club: 42nd**

**Anniversary Exhibition** at the San Jose Buddhist Church Betsuin, 640 N. 5th Street, San Jose. Hours are Saturday, Noon 5 PM, and Sunday 11 AM – 4 PM. Demonstrations featuring Harry Hirao, "Mr. California Juniper" will be held at 1 PM on both days. At the conclusion of each demonstration the tree will be raffled off. Plants and bonsai materials will be available for sale. Free admission. For more information, contact Ken Azuma, 408-730-4506 or [kennethazuma@sbcglobal.net](mailto:kennethazuma@sbcglobal.net).

**May 5 & 6, 2012**

**Sacramento, California**

**66th Annual Sacramento Bonsai Club**

**Show:** Sacramento Buddhist Church, 2401 Riverside Blvd., May 5 (12-5pm) & 6 (10-4pm). Demonstrations both days, 2 pm, by Boon Manatikivipart, followed by benefit drawings. Free admission, plant and tree sales.



### **YAMATO CLASSIFIEDS**

**Pre-Bonsai and Bonsai - For Sale** – Tony Hayworth has many bonsai and pre-bonsai material for sale... including some large landscape sized bonsai styled trees. These would make great focal points for any landscape or yard redo projects that you may be planning. I am overstocked and want to move this material to a good home. Is that you?

I have a few pots for cheap also.

Contact Tony Hayworth early for best selection.

Phone: 510-471-9238 or [bonsaicho@comcast.net](mailto:bonsaicho@comcast.net)

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THIS MONTH ...

A very Happy Birthday to:

- 25th – Dagmar Bedard
- 27th – Don Fernquest
- 30th – Brad Sheldon

Happy anniversary to:
1st – Doris & Art Johnson
14th – Dennis & MaryEllen Hawkins

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### **CONTACT US**

If you need to mail anything to the club in general, please send to:

**YAMATO BONSAI KAI**  
**P. O. Box 770**  
**Union City, CA 94587-0770**

If there is anything you would like to contribute or comment on regarding the newsletter, contact the editor, Noah Hanna, at [noah@invalidargument.com](mailto:noah@invalidargument.com)

*If you have moved, or changed your email address, please notify Yamato Bonsai Kai, so that we may update our contact and mailing list information. Thank you.*

## **YAMATO BONSAI KAI**

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