

# The Collection-Connection

A newsletter from the Bonsai Garden at Lake Merritt

Quarterly Newsletter

Volume VIII, Issue 3 September 2010

## Of Special Interest

Roly-Poly Galls Found on Carmel Oak

Volunteer Information

Updated 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday Education Programs

## Calendar of Events

Nov. 27, Board Meeting-Noon  
Dec 26-Jan1 and Jan 6-16:  
Kathy Shaner in the Garden

Jan. 8, 2011-Board Meeting,  
1PM

Feb 19-27: Kathy Shaner in  
the Garden

Feb 26, 4-7PM Club  
Connection Event

Feb. 26-27, 2011 Mammoth  
Fundraiser Event at BGLM

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## Roly-Poly Galls Found on Carmel Oak

Last year the Coast live oak or Carmel oak, famous for its exceptionally small leaves, developed an unusual feature. Some thought it was nut or seed growth and others wondered if it was a living creature in these small round growths that covered the tree. We simply removed many of them leaving them on the ground or sweeping them up into our regular green trash.

The Carmel oak was donated by Katsumi Kinoshita and collected in

the Carmel area in the mid 1970s. It has been in the collection for many years and has always displayed some galls on the trunk of the tree.



Kathy Shaner reconsidered the situation this year when the round objects

reappeared in great numbers. She consulted the *Garden Insects of North America* by Whitney Cranshaw, 2004, published by Princeton University Press. In reading about problems that impact some types of oaks in our area, she came upon the "Gall Makers." "Galls can cause problems for trees when they occur on the twigs and branches. This and interferes with transport of food and water."

(Continued page 2)

## First Citrus Tree Added to the Garden

Myrtle Leaf Orange, Citrus Sinensis "chiniotto" has come to the Garden. #400 on the tree number list came to us via a donation from Joan Scroggs in 2010.

It was originally intended as an informal upright grown from nursery stock. It had developed a considerable canopy and had no particular shape.

In August, Kathy Shaner put the tree through a major pruning, cut back branches,

cleaned cuts, and applied cut paste to protect the major cuts. Two oranges were left on the tree for interest.

The tree is expected to over-winter at the Garden with no issues since Oakland's temperatures stay mild. If the temperatures happen to drop below 24 degrees then the tree would probably be brought inside the workroom until the temperatures rise. The tree will be sprayed with Cloud

Cover and Anti-Stress 2000 to keep it safe. Volunteer Donna Farmer started the repotting process this month and Kathy Shaner completed it by not removing too much root base at this time. The standard process of removing 1" of soil from sides and bottom was done and the tree was placed back into its pot. The tree had excellent root growth and will need to be cleaned out more next year.



*Some small-sized galls will be removed from the trunk of the Carmel oak where they seem to be causing some constriction. They are removed with a chisel and then cleaned so that bark may re-form over the area.*

## Roly-Poly Galls Found on Carmel Oak (cont.)

Most of the development of the galls is produced during the spring or rapid growth seasons. The biggest issue is that once the galls are initiated they create an irreversible process.

Roly-Poly galls are generally spherical and hollow with the larva developing in a chamber that lies free in the center of each formation. There are several species that produce the growth such as succulent oak gall

wasp and the California gall fly that particularly like the valley, blue, leather, and the scrub oak trees.

We have begun an aggressive process of removing as many of the galls as possible and removing them from the property into regular trash as opposed to placing in our green trash material. We are using tweezers or hands to remove as many as can be found. Inspecting all areas

of new growth has begun and we remove the gall as soon as it is safe to remove it without destroying all the developing buds. Kathy Shaner will spray the tree in the Fall with sulfur to attempt to contain the development of new galls.

### Viewing the Larva of a California Gall Fly



In the picture to the left, we can see several different developmental stages of the gall. We were able to locate a live moving larva in one gall and removed it for display. It is the small bean shaped object near center of the photograph. At this point in development of the gall had changed color to a purple green and was very visible to the eye. All galls will be diligently removed and disposed of carefully.



In the picture on the left, we see the trunk deformed by many galls. Only the smaller ones will be carefully removed. Larger galls would leave giant scars on the trunk and may not heal over well.

Older galls also appear to be changing to a more withered woody look and may be shrinking on their own. Careful observation will be needed to figure out what their future form will be and whether they pose any threat to the tree.

# Tree of the Month: Bunjin Style

by John Boyce

Bunjin is one of the most difficult and maybe the least understood style in all of bonsai. A really good bunjin is found in nature and is not man made. We can help to increase or develop the bunjin aspect, but the basic trunk and branch positions should be there to start with. One cannot take a tree and cut some of the branches and have a bunjin.

First of all, the trunk is the main feature of the tree. The trunk must have little taper but must have some. Sometimes the apex can be a jin but it must look natural. The branches can be anywhere on the trunk

and the number one or more than three.

The trunk must be elegant and so it must be thin. It also is good to show a defect; knot or hoe, an insect sting, a shari or something that is attractive.

A bunjin should be stately, or graceful, eye catching, amusing, have a natural "wild look." It can be a formal upright, informal slant style, semi-cascade, full cascade, even a raft style, but that is the most difficult. One or two trunks would be easier to find.

The nebari is important. It

should have character, not necessarily even all around the base of the trunk. Perhaps a twisted root, a reversed root, or one with a shari.

The bunjin in the BGLM are gradually developing to their full potential. The pine (#285) has to develop a fuller or thicker, but not a larger branch. The junipers (#237 & #258) must be kept pinched back to form small clouds, and maybe some of the branches jinned. The zelkova (#335) and the ivy (#328) must be kept pinched all the time because they grow so fast.

*Bunjin is one of the most difficult and maybe the least understood styles in all of bonsai.*

We must be careful not to let the trunk thicken too much. This is done by putting the tree in the smallest pot possible to keep it healthy but slow down the growth. The tree must also be repotted each year.

Voids on the tree are very important, just as much as the branches. Voids have visual weight and must balance the branches. On top of all this the tree must have movement. It should not be static.

Pines are the most common tree form used but almost any other tree can be a bunjin.

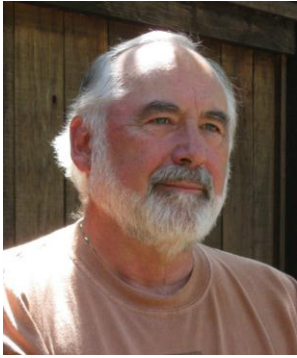


*The pine, #285, will be encouraged to develop fuller growth on its branches without making them too much thicker.*

*Our bunjin-style trees will often be displayed on the new small stands located just left of the entrance gate. These long slender stands help provide an excellent viewing platform for these tall graceful bunjin shapes.*



*This bunjin style juniper is an example of the thin but slightly tapered trunk and the use of voids and branches to create movement.*



Gordon Deeg

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## The Director's Corner

It is with great sadness that I report the passing of Frank Takahashi. Frank passed away on August 5, 2010, at the age of 91, in his Napa home. Frank was a devoted bonsai enthusiast, who was a member of the Napa Valley Bonsai Club and a supporter of various Golden State Bonsai Federation activities, including the Bonsai Garden at Lake Merritt. I was fortunate to have spent some time with Frank at his home this summer, as part of a work group doing routine maintenance on his bonsai collection. Though frail, Frank seemed to enjoy our presence and was in good spirits. Kathy Shaner, Bob Gould, Seiji Shiba and I spent an enjoyable day weeding and cleaning up Frank's bonsai, so that he could enjoy them during the summer months. Our thoughts and condolences go out to Frank's family. He will be missed by all.

We were visited a couple of months ago by Mr. Edgar W. Pye. Mr. Pye remembers how his good friend, Dr. M. Robert Harris, was a volunteer when the garden was first being built. Dr. Harris always told Mr. Pye that he really enjoyed the garden and how friendly everyone was to him. After seeing the garden develop after all these years and how nice it looks, Mr. Pye decided that he wanted to contribute to some of the new projects we've been planning. With the help of Wayne P. Kirchoffer, Mr. Pye's financial adviser, Mr. Pye has donated \$10,000 to the Garden for improvements. The money will be provided in four quarterly installments, with the first \$3,000 to be used to build and install the new large bonsai stands along the back fence. The additional money will be used on other projects (to be determined). It is through donations like Mr. Pye's that we are able to continually improve the Garden.

Volunteer appreciation day was held on September 12, 2010. A nice time was had by all in attendance. Special mention was made of the following volunteers:

**Over 50 hours**

Jeanette Arnold  
Dave Bautista  
Randi Keppeler  
John Nackley  
Hap Thompson  
Dave Turley

**Over 75 hours**

Alex Clark

Grace Li  
Ron Reed

**Over 100 hours**

Lonnie McCormick—128  
Francis Noles—147  
Gary Tom—170  
John Boyce—183  
Carl Osterholm—190  
Mike Mello—213  
Jerry Carpenter—214  
Janice Dilbeck—229  
Linda Soliven—298  
Allen Hightower—324  
Bob Gould—380

**Over 600 hours**

Kathy Shaner—602 (wow!)  
Andrea Burhoe—660 (wow!)

*(continued on page 7)*

## From the Editor

Welcome to the new format of the *Collection-Connection* newsletter. The design of the newsletter has been static for a few years now and in an effort to increase readership and general appeal, I have drastically changed the look and feel of the newsletter. I will appreciate any and all comments about the new look, article ideas, and

future improvements from everyone.

I am looking for regular contributors to the content as well. If you have a particular interest and would like to write a regular column, please let me know.

We are always looking for volunteers to help proof, process, take pictures, write articles, and create new

literature for the garden. Currently we are in the process of creating a "Giving Campaign" brochure and would appreciate ideas on style and design.

Contact the editor of *The Collection-Connection* at [bonsailakemerritt@gmail.com](mailto:bonsailakemerritt@gmail.com) or [jcsf1090@comcast.net](mailto:jcsf1090@comcast.net). Just specify in the subject the newsletter title.



## Bonsai Garden Tips-Grapes

Grapes can make interesting bonsai trees. There are several ways to begin one. You can visit a local nursery and buy them in containers or get them from vineyards that are pulling them out of production.

Container grapes will take considerable time to develop the aged bark and interesting design of limbs. Some folks that I know keep an eye out for local

vineyards that are changing their vines. You will have to seek permission to enter their space and inspect what they have removed. It is best to be there as they are taking them out so you can bag and moisten roots to keep them alive. Planting them in a box for a few years will reveal whether it will thrive. Careful root work and trimming will make them excellent additions to your collection.



*The grape displayed on the front bench has undergone some great transformation. From green to purple it has amazed visitors this month.*

## Trees from the Garden on Display at Redwood Empire Bonsai Show

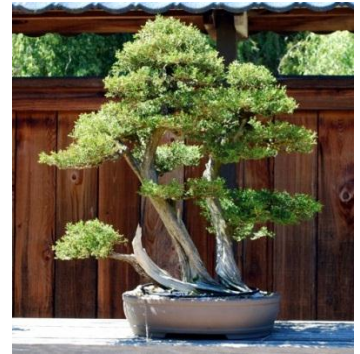
Periodically, trees from the Garden are displayed at local club shows around the Bay Area. Many of our trees have been created or cared for by members of those clubs.

This year three trees were shown at the Redwood Empire Bonsai show in Santa Rosa, CA.

The Mas Pine, #262, also known as the Pacific King, which first appeared in this country as part of the 1915 Pan Pacific Expo. The Sequoia sempervirens was also displayed. It was donated by Bill Sullivan has been in training since 1975. Finally, the California juniper donated

by the estate of Bill Sullivan, a tree that was collected by Mr. Sullivan in the high desert region of southern California, was also be on view.

Bill Sullivan is a legacy member of REBS. REBS has sponsored these three trees for the past three years.



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*Our bougainvillea while in full bloom at the Garden in July.*

## Club Connection Event! RSVP Required.

On Saturday, Feb 27, 2011 after the Mammoth Fundraiser Auction at 4-7PM the BGLM will be hosting a special event for club officers or their official representatives.

This event will be a wine and cheese event in the Garden wherein club officers will learn more about what the Garden is doing, where

it is going and how that affects all the local clubs. It will give a chance for local club officers to meet each other and enjoy the BGLM. This is an RSVP event. Club officers should send the RSVP to Randi Keppeler at: [Calshohin@yahoo.com](mailto:Calshohin@yahoo.com).

The BGLM is asking local clubs to update their information for mailing,

email, phone contact, and club officer information so that we can make sure we get information to the people who can share it with the clubs.

Contact information is very important and we will treat it carefully. We do not send out a great deal of mail, but we do target program information to clubs all around the Bay Area and now across the nation.

## Club Volunteer Hours from 7/1/09-6/30/10

BSSF	1054
Sei Boku	630
BAA	602
EBBS	451
Yamato	438
Kusamura	412
Marin	343
BASA	326
Local Community	155
San Jose	123
REBS	88
Ft. Lauderdale	67
Milwaukee	59
Lighthouse Masqua	57
NBPM	56
BABA	50
Chico	40
Napa	36
Santa Cruz	34
Sacramento Bonsai	13
Midori	11
Austin, TX	7

Be sure to check in with your group when you sign in and remember to sign out to get credit for your volunteer hours.

## BGLM Needs a Construction Supervisor

BGLM is looking for a qualified Construction Supervisor.

The supervisor would be responsible for helping us plan and execute the painting of the multipurpose building, as well as the docent house and the tool storage area. We plan to construct a building or construct a kit to house bonsai soils and larger equipment.

The Construction Supervisor will need to assist with the possible changes to the present Tokonoma areas, docent house, and shelving inside the multi-purpose room to house books, suiseki, and antique pots.

Other projects such as the shohin bench, "fence window" addition will also be required.

If you know of someone who can assist with these tasks, please contact Gordon Deeg. We are eager to begin many of these enhancements but need qualified individuals who can assist us.

## Myrtle Orange Tree



*On the left is the tree before its initial styling by Curator Kathy Shaner.*

*On the right is the tree after basic styling to reveal the trunk and cut back the overgrown foliage.*



## News From Around the Garden

### Dirt Pile Update

The dirt pile created from the change of the path is now gone! Thanks to help from our volunteers: Gino Gonzales, Vanessa Harrison, Bob Gould, and others who made constant trips with the wheelbarrow.

### New volunteers

Evelyn D. Harri  
Zeny Cruz  
Gino Gonzales

Vanessa Harris  
Amanda Newkirk  
Peggy Coy

### Curator Fund

Please keep in mind that we will be soon sending out our solicitation for help with the Curator Fund. The monies raised by this fund are earmarked specifically to be given to Kathy Shaner for all the labor and time she gives to the garden. Your help is greatly appreciated.

### Gardens at Lake Merritt

The Gardens at Lake Merritt is now planning a replacement of the fence gates to create a much more official and attractive entrance to the demonstration garden area. The Friends of the Gardens at Lake Merritt is the organization that comprises all the different gardens around and including the Bonsai Garden at Lake Merritt.



*Above: Gary Tom and Jeannette Arnold help with the trimming of our Hinoki cypress. This month both Hinoki were thinned out.*

*The new path dirt pile is gone; thanks to everyone who helped.*

*Gino Gonzales stands with shovel after finishing the dirt removal.*



## GSBF Convention in October

The Bonsai Garden at Lake Merritt will have a presence at the convention held in Santa Clara in October this year.

We will be displaying some of our trees, having tours in the Garden, and manning a table. Our table will have information about the Garden, garden posters, a new planned giving brochure, information on volunteer opportunities, and

much more. We are asking visitors for contact information so that they can receive news updates about the Garden.

Subscriptions to the *Collection-Connection* newsletter will be available as well.

Be sure to stop by and say hello while you are at the convention.

## Director's Corner (cont.)

I wish to thank all who volunteer. Without volunteers, this Garden would not function.

At the Board of Directors meeting on September 19, 2010, some changes were voted on regarding how volunteer hours are tracked. These changes will make the system fairer for all. The details of the new accounting system are being worked out, will be published in the winter Collection Connection and are slated to start on January 1, 2011.

Gordon Deeg

### Recent Visitors to the Garden Were From:

Ventura, CA  
Ft. Collins, CO  
Orlando, FL  
Dijon, France  
Costa Rica  
Italy

### Comments:

*Beautiful!*  
*I'm Home!*  
*Such variety, Amazing!*  
*Great Docents*  
*Fabulous!*  
*Nice and Peaceful*

## News Updates

*At Press time several new projects have begun.*

New pedestals are being designed and created for our benefactor Mr. Pye

Be sure to take a look at the entrance tree which is being transformed by volunteer David Bautista.

**GSBF Bonsai Garden at Lake Merritt**

Located near the boathouse and Garden Center on Bellevue Ave at Lake Merritt, Oakland, California

**Phone**

Phone: 510.763.8409

**E-mail**

[bonsailakemerritt@gmail.com](mailto:bonsailakemerritt@gmail.com)

## Bonsai Trees for the Mammoth Fundraiser

It is not too early to consider giving bonsai material for the Mammoth Fundraiser to be held in February 2011. We are soliciting trees now for auction at that event.

One way to thin down your collection is to give a tax deductible in-kind donation to

the BGLM by means of tree donations. Many of us have far too many trees and can let go of one or two for a great cause.

Please contact Bob Gould or Gordon Deeg if you have material to donate. They will make arrangements to help you get them to Oakland.

Contact them via our telephone number or via email. Include the Tree Donation in the header of your email.

We have space available and the watering system works well. Last year's auction and sale was very successful-let's see if we can beat it.

## About Our Organization

The GSBF Bonsai Garden at Lake Merritt is the home to some of the finest bonsai in Northern California. The Garden is the only public bonsai garden staffed and maintained by volunteers

and is supported entirely by donations.

This permanent collection assures that these precious trees by outstanding masters and collectors will be preserved for everyone's

enjoyment. The collection is changed regularly, so visit several times a year.

Curator Kathy Shaner is the only female Japanese-certified bonsai master in the United States.

*Golden State Bonsai Federation  
Bonsai Garden at Lake Merritt  
P.O. Box 16176  
Oakland, CA 94610-6176*



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**We're on the Web!**

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and on **Facebook**