



# THE TREE SHRINKER

East Bay Bonsai Society

Holiday Party: **Wednesday, December 11, 2024 at 6:30pm**

## 2024 EBBS Schedule

### Regular Meetings:

2nd Wednesday, every month  
(except June & Oct.) @ 7:30pm

**Dec 11** - Holiday Party \*, 6:30pm

**Jan 8** - Repotting Party \*, 7:30pm

**Jan 26** - Intro to Bonsai, Tom Colby

**Feb 12** - Dylan Ferreria, Cedar Rose Nursery talking about growers

**Mar 12** - Jarod Carrion - Northwest bonsai and pottery expert talking about bonsai as a side hustle

**Jan 26** - Intro to Bonsai, Addison Galambos

**Apr 9** - Adam Toth, Shohin development

**Apr 27** - Intro to Bonsai, Michael Jensen-Akula

**May 14** - Andrew Robson, deciduous

**May 25** - Intro to Bonsai, Janet Nelson

**June 11** - EBBS Annual Auction

\* located at the Bonsai Garden workshop

**It's time to pay 2025 club dues! We will have a box at the holiday party for payments, cash or check. See Bev for credit card payments.**



## Thank you, Bev Martinez, for an incredible presidency!

As Bev Martinez steps down after two years as EBBS president, we want to take a moment to express our gratitude for her remarkable leadership and devotion to the club. Over the past four years, she has devoted countless hours into making EBBS a better, more vibrant community for every member.

Under Bev's leadership, the club grew to over 130 members and flourished in ways that will leave a lasting legacy. Her presidency began with a focus on listening to members through a survey, and the board used that feedback to deliver on initiatives that brought us together in new and meaningful ways. From accent plant workshops with Lucy Sakaishi-Judd to yamadori field trips and annual repotting parties, the board has championed hands-on opportunities for us to deepen our connection to bonsai under Bev's leadership.

The board also organized enriching field trips, including visits to Peter Tea and to the private gardens of fellow members. We got closer to the legends of the bonsai world, with EBBS hosting

## Bonsai Calendar

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### Enjoy the silhouettes on your deciduous trees and take note of their ramifications.

- This is a great time of year to cut, thin and wire just about any of your bonsai, provided they are in good health!
- Pull old needles from Japanese Black Pines and Red Pines (multi-flush). Do not do the same with White Pines or other single-flush pines.
- This is the time of year for any heavy pruning or bending you need to do on junipers, pines, cypress, cedars and spruce.
- Remove brown leaves from hornbeam or beech.
- Stop fertilizing. Trees don't grow this time of year (although roots will continue to grow)
- Insect and disease control - Remove dead plant material. Watch for and treat insect infestations and fungus.
- Don't overwater. It can cause root rot!

**Refer to the EBBS Bonsai Seasonal guide for more info on care**

incredible speakers like Julian Tsai, Val Monroe, Janet Roth, Tony Tickle, Andrew Robson, Bob Shimon, Jonas Dupuich, Eric Schraeder, Adam Toth and Daniel Robinson. The caliber of these presentations inspired and educated us, elevating our collective skills and knowledge.

Bev fostered a spirit of collaboration and mentorship within the club. Members of the board started a mentoring program to encourage new members to engage in hands-on activities like creating tokonoma displays at meetings. The club show under her leadership was so well attended, with so many members showcasing their trees, that we nearly ran out of space—a testament to the thriving community Bev helped cultivate.

As Bev passes the presidency to our new leader, Addison Galambos, we welcome him with enthusiasm and confidence. Addison, our previous vice president, has big shoes to fill, but we know he'll carry forward the momentum Bev created and lead us to even greater heights. I hope you'll also enjoy the Meet the Member story in this issue when I visited Bev's studio at got a pottery lesson!

Thank you, Bev, for your tireless efforts, creativity, and passion. EBBS is stronger, more connected and more inspired because of you.

- Adam Kleinberg

## Welcome, your 2025 EBBS Board!

Without the EBBS Board, we would have no club! They are the planner and leaders that make EBBS great. This year, we have an incredible group of energetic, passionate and devoted club members who have taken on the responsibility of being members.

President: **Addison Galambos**

Past President: **Beverly Martinez**

Vice President: **Michael Szabo**

Treasurer: **Pat Cahill**

Secretary: **Ashley Pouliot**

Board Director 1: **Tom Fedor**

Board Director 2: **Michael Jensen-Akula**

Board Director 3: **Michael Hylton**

Board Director 4: **Freddie Winter**

Board Director 5: **Bryan Morgan**

Board Director 6: **Wendy Quan**

## A word from our new president, Addison Galambos

My mission as the EBBS President is to preserve all the things that have kept our club vibrant and growing over the past 5 years to continue us on our upward trajectory. I would like to work closely with passionate board members who care about our members deeply to help them enjoy bonsai to the fullest. Over the past few years we've launched expanded workshops, field trips, soil bulk purchases, mentorship, and improved our yearly show. These are all things I hope to continue while also helping our board make more data driven decisions and shape our goals intentionally. Lastly, I want to continue fostering growth in technical skills in our new and experienced members alike to help them engage with bonsai more actively.



Looking forward to many more healthy years for our club,

- Addison Galambos

## November meeting recap: Suiseki with Janet Roth

This past month, we were treated to a fascinating presentation on Suiseki stones by one of the top experts in the field, former club member (starting back in 1983!), Janet Roth. Janet walked us through the meaning and background of the stones and presented many pictures of stones she and Mas Nakajima have collected over the years. She ended the presentation talking about a potential stone collecting trip that our club may do in 2025.



Below is an great overview of suiseki from the Suiseki Art website she ran with Mas Nakajima at [www.suisekiart.com](http://www.suisekiart.com).

*"Suiseki" is an abbreviation of "san-sui-kei-jyo-seki", or "landscape scene stone". Suiseki are natural stones that suggest natural scenes or animal and human figures. The stones should not be modified and are displayed as found in nature, although in some cases the artist may make a single cut to enhance the proportions and balance of the stone. In general, weathered dark-colored stones of medium hardness are preferred, with no jagged "new" edges. The display and appreciation of natural stones was introduced to Japan from China some 1400 years ago, and was gradually adapted to Japanese taste and culture. Historically, suiseki were particularly associated with Zen Buddhism and tea ceremony, but starting in the Meiji period (1868-1912) appreciation of suiseki spread to a broader populace. Suiseki are now admired and*

*collected around the world.*

*Suiseki are traditionally displayed either in carved wooden bases (daiza) or in shallow ceramic or metal trays (suiban).*

*Several members of the club also brought examples of suiseki they own to the Show & Tell for the meeting. Enjoy the pictures on the following page!*



## Bonsai Buddy Updates

At the beginning of the year, we tried an informal experiment where we paired up some junior club members with a more experienced partners that could answer their questions and help them move forward on their bonsai journey. Here's a brief look at what some of these Bonsai Buddies have been up to.

### Ashley P & Michael JA

*"Ashley visited my garden a couple times. We started some Japanese maple air layers. One of them was successfully removed. We plan to check on the others in the coming spring."*

### Matt B & Addison G

*"We reimagined the design for a few trees and now he has a plan for how to develop them going forward."*

### Jessica P & Micah C

*"We focused on tree care. We talked a little about development ideas, but that was just broad strokes - things like giving the tree a bigger pot to thicken up, and allowing sacrifice branches for the same reason (and just for the health and strength of the tree)."*

### Mike R & Michael S

*"We scouted for pre-bonsai material at Lone Pine and Berkeley Hort. In Spring, we picked out a medium-sized juniper which we cleaned up in prep for styling. We came back in late Summer and did a full style and wire."*

### Laurien F & Addison G

*"We did some bold cutbacks on her Brazilian rain tree which led to a new flush of healthy, compact growth!"*

## December Holiday Party!

What a great year 2024 has been! To celebrate our community and our successes as a club, our final meeting of the year will be a holiday dinner where we get to share and remember events of the past year. Michael Hylton has once again produced special video presentation of our events for 2024 so we can remember everything we did. We will begin the festivities at 6:30 pm with beverages and appetizers. Note that we start one hour earlier than usual. Doors will open at 6pm – we could use help in setting up!.



The club will provide ham, chicken and non-alcoholic beverages. EBBS has purchased a permit for beer and wine for this event and members are free to bring their own to enjoy.

The rest is provided by attendees as follows:

<b>Last name A-F</b>	<b>Side dish</b>
<b>Last name G-L</b>	<b>Appetizer</b>
<b>Last name M-R</b>	<b>Salad</b>
<b>Last name S-Z</b>	<b>Desert</b>

The appetizer-people should plan to arrive early so food is available at the beginning of the evening. Please supply an appropriate serving utensil for the dish you are furnishing. Also, be sure to bring your own plate and eating utensils and glass. A decorative place mat would make a festive setting for the meal. People are also encouraged to bring a small bonsai decorated for the holiday season as table center pieces. This greatly adds to the ambiance of the evening.



## Meet the Member: Bev Martinez

This month, we're celebrating Bev Martinez, whose two years as EBBS president have left an indelible mark on our club. Bev's leadership has been marked by her warmth, creativity, and dedication to nurturing the club and its members. But at the heart of Bev's impact is her deep passion for bonsai—a passion that goes far beyond technique or expertise.

Bev's love for bonsai began over a decade ago, sparked by her interest in plants and pottery. Today,

her backyard in Oakley is a wonderland of bonsai, each tree with its own story and personality. Her black pines stand tall and proud, shaped with a steady hand and a patient heart. A Manzanita gifted by a friend has been coaxed into a refined work of art. Her dwarf pomegranates are lined up like little soldiers, showing off their resilience and charm. There's even a bougainvillea that blooms so brightly it feels like summer in a pot. Bev doesn't just tend to her trees; she connects with them, celebrating their quirks and triumphs like a proud parent.

### **A Lesson in Pottery**

Recently, I had the chance to visit Bev's home pottery studio, a cozy and creative space filled with tools, glazes, and the hum of artistry. Bev's second love, pottery, ties beautifully





into her bonsai practice. She's been crafting pots for years, creating bespoke homes for her trees that enhance their beauty and balance.

The lesson started with clay—a deceptively simple material with layers of complexity. Bev explained how

different types of clay, from coarse to silky smooth, impact the strength and texture of a pot. For bonsai, durability is key, as the pots must endure the elements while showcasing the tree's personality. She shared anecdotes about legendary potters like Jim Gremel, whose mastery of clay inspires her own work.

When it was time for me to try my hand, things got interesting. Bev showed me how to roll out a slab of clay using a slab roller (a gadget that looks like a pasta maker on steroids). From there, we cut pieces with precise 45-degree angles to form the pot's sides. My hands were clumsy, and I kept worrying I'd wreck the whole thing, but Bev's calm guidance kept me on track.



Next came the fun part—texture. Bev has a collection of textured rolling pins, each etched with designs

ranging from delicate florals to bold dragon scales. I picked something simple to avoid disaster, and by some miracle, my pattern came out even. Then came the challenge of adding little feet to the pot. Let's just say my pot might wobble on an uneven surface, but Bev reassured me it added "character."



By the end, I had a lopsided but endearing pot that I was genuinely proud of. Bev promised it would look better after firing—pottery, like bonsai, has a way of surprising you.

### **The Art of Firing**

One of the most fascinating parts of the lesson was learning about firing. Bev walked me through the process,

explaining how bisque firing sets the clay, and a second firing locks in the glaze. She shared the magic of reduction firing, done in gas kilns, which creates the rich, earthy tones prized in traditional bonsai pots. Unlike electric kilns, which provide steady heat, gas kilns allow flames to dance and move, creating unique variations in color and texture.

She also introduced me to burnishing, where the surface of the pot is polished with a stone to a near-mirror shine before firing. This technique is often used for unglazed pots, and Bev's burnished works have a subtle elegance that draws the eye.

### **More Pottery Insights**

Beyond firing, Bev shared insights into other techniques that left me awestruck. She described the process of coil building, where long strands of clay are layered and smoothed to form a pot. It's time-consuming and requires patience, but the result is stunningly organic. I even got to try my hand at this method, though my efforts looked more like a child's pinch pot than a masterwork.

She also showed me the process of mixing clay to achieve different textures and colors. For instance, combining coarse and fine clays in a pug mill (a clay-mixing machine) can yield a material that's both strong and workable. Watching Bev work made me appreciate how much thought goes into every detail, from the clay's consistency to the shape of drainage holes.



### **Reflections on Leadership and Creativity**

As we wrapped up the lesson, I asked Bev how she felt about stepping down as president. She smiled and said, "It's been a joy, but I'm excited to pass the torch. The club is in great hands, and I'll always be here to support it."

That's Bev in a nutshell—always giving back, whether it's through her trees, her pots, or her mentorship. Her passion for bonsai is contagious, and her artistry inspires everyone who knows her.

Thank you, Bev, for all you've done for EBBS. You've enriched our club with your creativity and heart, and we can't wait to see what you'll do next. As for my pot, it may not be gallery-worthy, but it's got a story—and isn't that what bonsai (and life) are all about?

- Adam Kleinberg



## Barcelona Bonsai!

Thanks to Jeff Doney for sharing these photos from the annual bonsai show he visited in Barcelona, Spain recently. It's cool to see how our love of bonsai is shared by people in every corner of the world.



## Join the conversation!

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**facebook.com/groups/  
ebbsmembers**

Our members-only Facebook group and a great place to share personal photos and get advice from fellow club members

**facebook.com/  
EastBayBonsaiSociety**

Our public Facebook group with over 3,000 followers and a great spot to keep up with news and photos from our club

**instagram.com/eastbaybonsai/**

**x.com/EastBayBonsai**

**www.eastbaybonsai.org**

## Member Ads

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Each member can run a free ad in the newsletter once a year. Email Adam at [adam@tractionco.com](mailto:adam@tractionco.com) to submit yours.

## Newsletter Contributors

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**Editor:** Adam Kleinberg

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## Upcoming Bonsai Events

### **Baikoen Bonsai Kenkyukai 61st Annual Winter Silhouette**

**Exhibition** Jan 18, 2025, 10am – Jan 19, 4:30pm, Arboretum of Los Angeles County, 301 N Baldwin Ave, Arcadia

**Bay Area Bonsai Associates 43rd Annual Exhibit.** Jan 18, 2025, 5:00 PM – Jan 19, 2025, 4:45 PM, Lakeside Garden Center, 666 Bellevue Ave, Oakland, BABA's 43rd Annual Exhibit. Saturday from 5:00 pm to 9:00 pm. Sunday from 10:00 am to 4:45 pm. Displays of fine bonsai. Demonstration Saturday at 6:30 pm. Snacks, Plant Sales, Raffle. Free Admission.

**Bonsai-A-Thon** Feb 22-23, 10am-5pm, Brody Botanical Center, 1151 Oxford Rd, San Marino. This fundraiser is for the GSBF Collection at the Huntington. Join Visiting Artist, Jonas Dupuich, at this much anticipated annual event. Trees styled by bonsai masters will be auctioned daily. Demonstrations, live and silent auctions, raffles and vendor sales will be held daily.

### **GSBF Bonsai Garden at Lake Merritt Mammoth Auction & Sale**

Mar 1 -2, 11am-3pm, Bonsai Garden at Lake Merritt, 666 Bellevue Ave, Oakland

**For additional events, visit <https://www.gsbfbonsai.org/events>**

## Bonsai Show Prep!

*Adapted from [Jonas Dupuich's Bonsai Tonight blog](#).*

Getting ready for our October show? While it may seem far away, experienced bonsai artists know that preparation often begins over a year in advance. Here's a practical timeline to help you prepare your trees for their spotlight moment.

### **December Update - Planning 10 Months Out**

Start by selecting which trees you'll display. If you need custom stands or special pots, now is the time to place those orders. Custom work can take months, and you'll want everything ready for the perfect display.

#### **Key tasks for the coming months:**

- Evaluate your complete display elements (tree, pot, stand, and accent plants)
- Plan remaining work needed before the show
- Consider your accent plantings - they need time to mature
- Complete any major pruning, wiring, or repotting soon

Whether you're showing a single large tree or planning a small tree display, starting early gives you the best chance of creating something spectacular!