

# YAMA KI NEWSLETTER

Learning from each other. . . . . Sharing with the community”

December

2008

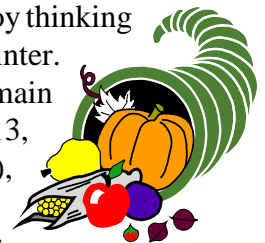
## YAMA KI ANNUAL HOLIDAY BUFFET & AUCTION SUNDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2008 12:30 PM AT THE BARTLETT AROBORETUM



Are you in a party mode? Has the holiday spirit infiltrated your mind-set? . . . because on Sunday, December 14<sup>th</sup>, YAMA KI is having its annual HOLIDAY PARTY! Yes, that’s not a mistake! Our annual festivities will take place on **SUNDAY** due to a date conflict with the arboretum’s important fund raising function.

For our new members (refresher for returnees), each December we “gather together” to celebrate a year of friendship with a time to break bread, observe a mourning moment for lost trees, enjoy thinking about the year of new learning, new growth, successful grafting or guiding plants through winter.

We start with a pot-luck luncheon - - everyone brings something to share: appetizer, main course, side-dish, salad, dessert, etc. You call one of the elves (*Lucille Miller*, (914) 934-0613, *Melba Grieshaber*, (203) 840-1942, or *Rhoda Kleiman* (212) 724-7840 ([irkleiman@rcn.com](mailto:irkleiman@rcn.com)), and let us know what you will add to the table.



Then, when we’re sated, we have our semi-annual auction: bonsai (or pre-bonsai) material, trees saved from artist’s demonstrations, a tree that needs someone else’s eye, tools, fertilizers, books, magazines, tool carriers, wire, wire racks, containers, miscellaneous as-you-think-someone-else-needs-what-you-have-too-much-of.

**Come share,  
come celebrate!**



### NOTES ON NOVEMBER’S BOARD MEETING

*Norm Geisinger* noted that the KIKU exhibit at the New York Botanical Garden was highly successful with many of the Conservatory visitors specifically interested in bonsai. We have a number of new members, some as a result of the exhibit at the NYBG and some from our website.

*Irv Kleiman* reported that our treasury is in sound shape in contrast to our national financial melt-down.

*Lavanya Muller* is now joint web-master with *Joann Thomas*.

*John Cotoggio* announced the 2009 meeting dates and artists contracted to date. Please mark them in your calendar.

Jan 9 - TBS

May 9 - *Sandro Segneri*

Sept. 12 - *Marty Schmalenberg* (3)

Feb 14 - *Arthur Skolnik*

June 13 - *Marty Schmalenberg* (2)

Oct. 10 - *Colin Lewis*

Mar 21 - *Marty Schmalenberg* (1)

July 11 - Annual Meeting/Auction

Nov. 14 - TBS

Apr 16-18 MABS

Aug. 8 - TBA

Dec. 12 - Holiday Party/Auction

Apr ?? - *Isao Omachi*

The Board asked *Berni Gastrich* to set up an Intermediate Bonsai Class for continuing individual studies. Members will get an announcement of time/place details.

## NOVEMBER'S MEETING ON FORESTS WITH MARTY SCHMALENBERG

Board meetings are open to members (as observers) and some folk drifted in. Following the Board Meeting, in his usual gracious and thorough way, *Norm Geisinger* opened the meeting by welcoming and greeting new members and guests. He reminded us that the date for our HOLIDAY PARTY is rapidly approaching. Everyone brings a lunch comestible for our buffet table. Appetizers, main or side dishes, salads, desserts (beverages are already spoken for). Please call *Melba, Lucille Miller* or *Rhoda* (see the first paragraph on page 1) to tell us what you are sharing. That will save us from all sushi and no main course, etc.

*Norm* reminded us to bring plant material, tools, books, magazines, fertilizers, soils, containers, wire, mesh, etc., etc., and so forth. Don't forget your cash or checkbook!

None of the announcement took up much time which let us quickly move to the serious bonsai business of the day. *Marty Schmalenberg*, guest artist to explore bonsai forests, gave us a look into the First National Bonsai Show in October in Rochester organized by *Bill Valavanis*. *Marty* said it was an outstanding bonsai show, worthy of the "National" designation. The exhibit included trees from 27 states, and one Pitch pine alone was worth the drive to Rochester.

As for bonsai forests: *Marty* began with a slide program of bonsai forests to morph our thinking into critiquing forests. It didn't take too long for the us to be able to find the strengths and weaknesses of the illustrations....there were even a few "ahhs" for outstanding examples.



Every forest reads from left-to-right or right-to-left. You need to look at your material and plan its layout for directional consistency and try to create a sense of unity. The composition should have the look of an asymmetrical triangle when viewed from the side. You must allow for space among your trees to provide a sense of vista (natural forests are not tight little knobs of trees). Space "shows up details and balances mass." Look for depth of field – do you feel you can enter the forest? Also, as you are placing the material, look into

the top-branches to see which inside limbs may need to be removed--fewer branches add to the sense of age even as they help create a mood. You do not need perfect trees for a forest; if you have such a tree, work it as a single bonsai.

Your group will be arranged and pruned as though it is a single tree. Small leaved trees work better. Forests require wiring. Literati forests can be created with fairly ordinary material. It is important to recall this since it is hard to find outstanding material for forests. For example, Larch on a rock slab will not work well.

If you use dead trees as part of your forest, NEVER place one in the front; you want your eye to wander through the forest looking at the many trees. Dead trees must add interest to the grouping. They can help change the focus to a higher point.

As *Marty* walked us through the examination of member's trees, we found that:

- \* at least one tree needed a different front;
- \* improving ramification (do as the leaves start falling) will improve the overall look of a grouping;
- \* in literati forests rules can be dropped or broken;
- \* in literati forests it is harder to suggest "grace, elegance, drama, or poetry;"
- \* it is easier to create a forest of one species because "mixed-forests must be able to tolerate the same growing conditions;"
- \* large trees are not in the middle of a grouping but in front or at the rear;
- \* plant the main tree about 1/3 of the way into the group;
- \* even as trunk diameters should vary, heights should also.

Some other *Marty* Gleanings (from *Marty's* handout at the meeting):

- ✿ No two trees should be parallel with each other.
- ✿ Shallow, wide containers (or slabs) should have enough “empty space” to simulate the vastness of land.
- ✿ Trees should not conceal one another (unless more than approximately 13 trees).
- ✿ Trees in front should have branches that grow out from a higher place on the trunk while those in the background should have branches that grow from a lower position ...this helps create perspective and three-dimensionality.
- ✿ Small-leafed trees work best for the overall silhouette.
- ✿ Heights should be all different...that helps create depth and perspective.
- ✿ If there are many trees, have fewer branches.



Forests critiqued included *Charley's* and *Lucille's* Maples, *Norm's* Hornbeams, *Joann's* Junipers, *Mike's* Ficus, *John's* Chamaecyparis, and *Joan's* Henway



*Joann's* Juniper restyled "so that "birds could fly thru the branches"

## YAMA KI @ NYBG KIKU EXHIBITION

*Norm Geisinger*

YAMA KI had a very successful exhibit again this year supplying 75+% of the trees and providing docents for all the hours the exhibit was open. I want to thank those members who supplied their trees & those who gave their time as docents. Plus, a special "Thanks" to *Mike Pollock* who was YAMA KI'S project leader for the exhibit and *Lavayna Muller* who designed and maintained our docent schedule. The exhibit helped people to understand the art of bonsai and how we care for the trees...it was a GREAT success!

We distributed 1,500 YAMA KI brochures and 1,000 of our business cards. We already have a number of new members. Thanks again to all who helped in this very successful venture.

OFFICERS

Norm Geisinger. . . . . President  
Mike Pollock. . . . . Vice-President  
Irv Kleiman. . . . . Treasurer  
Lavanya Muller. . . . . Secretary  
Gail Therrien. . . . . Immediate Past President

DIRECTORS

David Castro, John Cotoggio, David Cruz,  
Charles Muller, and John Ruggio

Co-Editors: Rhoda & Irv Kleiman

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COMING EVENTS

Dec. 14 12:30pm Annual Holiday party & auction  
Jan, 10 12:00pm TBA  
Feb. 14 12:00 pm Arthur Skolnick

Remember to check our website ([www.yamakibonsai.org](http://www.yamakibonsai.org)) for updates and latest information

WEATHER HOTLINES

*Norman Geisinger*..... 203-746-3200  
*Irv & Rhoda Kleiman*..... 212-724-7840  
*Mike Pollock*..... 914-764-5557

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