



August Program

Juneu Kim will lead our August 24th meeting with a “Question and Short Answer” type of approach dealing with any subject related to Korean *suseok*, his website, and his book. Also, he can try to demonstrate the way he displays *suseok*. He hopes the presentation will lead to a wide open discussion among suiseki people, viewing stone people and *suseok* people. **Juneu** provided handouts at the July meeting so we could read about his point of view.

Please see the October 2010 newsletter for information on **Juneu**'s book, *Viewing Stones, Korean Classical Concepts*.

This will work best if we come prepared to ask questions! See: koreanviewingstones.com



ALERT: Again, so soon? We have another month with 5 Wednesdays. Please join us on the 24th. On the 31st, there will just be forgetful you, alone and in the dark...

SAVE THE DATE: Aiseki Kai presents Chiara Padrini March 7, 2012 Huntington Library, Ahmanson Classroom. Reception to follow in Banta Hall.

Stone of the Month

Barry Josephson suggested that we bring stones that show movement. The first stone I thought of was **Mary Bloomer**'s wave stone from the Van Duzen River. **Mary** made the *daiza*. **Peter** thinks it is one of her very best.



11"W x 3"H x 7"D

Alice Naka

On a cold winter's day, circa 1923, in Sedgwick, Colorado, **Charles Nagahiko Mizunaga** made a decision that ultimately led to the creation of California Aiseki Kai.

It was a step in our direction. Was it the only step in the creation of Aiseki Kai? - well no. But his decision 88 years ago was, non-the-less, crucial to our existence.

Sedgwick is a small farming town in the northeast corner of Colorado, the birth place of **Alice Toshiko Mizunaga-Naka**. When Mr. **Mizunaga** made the decision to move to central Colorado he set the stage for **Alice** to meet **John Naka**.

The next step was when **John** returned to Colorado in 1935 and soon after, set his eyes on **Alice**. She was 18 and “movie star” beautiful. **Alice** wrote of meeting **John**, in ‘*Our Life Together*’ – “*He says he first saw me pumping water at the well. I don't remember this. Sadao (John's older brother) brought Yoshio over to meet the family and so we became acquainted. He would come over often, but because he spoke only Japanese at the time, my folks would monopolize the conversation*”. (Wow, I never knew that! OK, he was in Japan for 13 years. Nevertheless, he learned to ask “**Alice**, will you marry me?”)

They were married a few months later on December 8, 1936. Over the next ten years three boys would be added to the family, **Gene**, **Bob** and **Dick**. They survived the depression, WWII (the Governor of Colorado refused to incarcerate citizens) and several fierce winters. Thus, the next defining step: **Alice** wrote, “*Finally, in 1946, we had a good year and made some money off the farm and so decided to quit and move to California.*”

The next step: once settled, **John** got interested in bonsai and suiseki. I asked him about stones in Colorado. He admitted that, while trout fishing with his good friend **Harry Hirao**, neither ever paid attention to the thousands of rocks they were walking over.

The next step occurred when I started taking bonsai lessons from **John** in 1966. He provided neat, detailed drawings and written instructions as lesson plans for every basic bonsai style. I have recently learned that it was **Alice** who translated **John**'s Japanese to English and it was **Alice** who did the same

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July Meeting Notes

by Linda Gill

Less often seen members: **Bryan Nicholson** brought **Sarah Gyer**. **Ralph Bischof** came from New Jersey and **Juneu Kim** came and gave out homework for his talk next month (see page 1).

Announcements: **Jim Greaves** announced that the Huntington is going to create a river bed next to the Japanese Garden. They want to start in September and complete it in 3 months. Call **Jim** if you have river stones you would like to donate.

Stone King summer sale: call for info & appointments. 50% off until Sept. 1st ~ 626-524-5021

The Bower's museum will have a bonsai and suiseiki show September 9, 10 & 11. Space is limited so display is by invitation only. It is a Ko Fu Kai sponsored event.

Richard Aguirre wants us to start thinking of poetic names for the stones we will put in our show.

Stone of the Month: Something suggesting coolness
Measurements are in inches: w x h x d

Bowers Museum: Bonsai and Suiseiki Exhibit

September 9-11, 2002 North Main St., Santa Ana, 10-4.

Sept 10: **Tom Elias** will trace the roots of bonsai back to its origin in China, and describe how dwarf trees in a pot reached Japan and developed into today's modern bonsai.

Sept 11: "**Bonsai and Suiseiki, the Illusion of Size and Age.**" **Larry Ragle** will explain the techniques of recreating the grandeur of nature with a small tree or stone. He will reveal the mystery of how, in a relatively short time, one can create what it took nature centuries to accomplish. He will explain the appreciation and display of bonsai and suiseiki.

Stone Sales Ken McLeod

209-605-9386 or 209 586-2881

susekiken@sbcglobal.net ~ californiasuiseiki.com



Buzz Barry 4.5 x 1 x 2.75; foothills in the fog. From the holiday raffle. Buzz made the daiza



Joseph Gaytan 9 x 6 x 4 from California. Cliff Johnson made the daiza



Ann Horton 5 x 6 x 4; on its side, it looks like a snowy range with the moon above.



Don Kruger 5.5 x 6 x 4; waterfall and mist



Joseph Gaytan 10 x 5 x 6: from Harry Hirao



Kathleen Fugel 4 x 1 x 3.5, cool water pool



Lois Hutchinson 6 x 3 x 4; coastal stone with surf, from Lake Hill



Nina Ragle 7 x 5 x 4: from Ralph Johnson, cobalt ore (heterogenite). Looks icy cold



Ralph Bischof 4.5 x 3 x 3; see the polar bear in a snow storm?

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The 1 inch wide inner margins are designed for use with a 3 hole punch.



July Program Notes

by Linda Gill

Presentation by **Tom and Hiromi Elias:**

Tom and **Hiromi** were in Japan recently. They attended a stone auction and visited with Mr.

Kasahara, the new chairman of the Nippon Suiseki Association. Mr. **Matsuura** stepped down as the chairman after having served for 20 years.

Mr. **Matsuura** has been promoting suiseki in Japan to make suiseki more popular among younger people. As a part of his efforts, he helped make a television program titled *The Secret of Beauty: Suiseki*. Thanks to Mr. **Matsuura**, **Tom** and **Hiromi** borrowed the DVD and showed it at our meeting.

The program opened with shots of the Meihin-ten Suiseki show at the Meiji Shrine, which takes place in June every year. The program first explained how the term suiseki originated. It was *sansuiseki* (mountain, water stone) and, later, was shorted to suiseki.

Some historical stones were introduced: 'Kamakura' held by the **Date** family of the Sendai-clan reminds us of the mountain-surrounded city of Kamakura; a figure stone titled '*Guanyin*' gives us mysterious and religious feelings. The famous 'Floating Bridge of Dreams,' now held at Tokugawa Museum in Nagoya, was introduced with several historical owners such as Emperor **Godaigo**, Shogun **Hideyoshi**, Shogun **Tokugawa Ieyasu**, and finally it was passed to the **Tokugawa** family.

The young man who provides the comic relief in the program brings a 'pickle stone' to his mentor and asks if it is a suiseki, but the mentor says it is not and suggests that they study suiseki together. (**Hiromi** later showed us her mother's pickle stone.)

Mr. **Baba**, who has been collecting suiseki for 50 years in Kyoto, displays about 200 of his collection of suiseki in his company's conference room. In 1997 he was honored to display his hut stone in Kyoto's Imperial House for the Emperor's stay. Although he cherishes and honors this experience, Mr. **Baba's** favorite stones are distant mountain stones. He feels that a distant mountain stone is an easy introduction to the beginner of suiseki. He, further, mentions that he can learn much about life by collecting and looking at suiseki since suiseki comes from nature and cannot be changed.

Mr. **Baba** talked much of distant mountain stones and the program introduced the first secret of suiseki. **Suiseki appreciation begins with appreciating distant mountain stones and ends with appreciating distant mountain stones.**

In order to understand what makes an excellent distant mountain stone, Mr. **Matsuura** discusses the law of three sides. The front must be a gentle slope, the back a gentle hill, and the bottom must be natural with a balanced 360 degree view.

Yoseki, cultivating stones, was demonstrated by Mr. **Komatsu** who lines up his stones on benches in his garden along with his bonsai. He uses the sun and rain to develop patina on the stones. If it does not rain, he will water the stones. *Yoseki* is important since this leads to the second secret: **suiseki appreciation is to enjoy the patina that time has cultivated on stones.**

The third secret of suiseki is to **enjoy the seasonal change that suiseki can present.** This secret is related to how suiseki can be displayed. The most traditional display place is in a *tokonoma*. In this portion of the program, Mr. **Matsuura** shows how to prepare a *tokonoma* display. In a summer display, a waterfall suiseki with a twilight moon scroll and a pine bonsai can create coolness. It is important to note that a waterfall suiseki has to be sprayed with water and placed in *suiban* filled with sand which is also sprayed with water. For a spring display, a distant mountain stone can be shown with a camellia scroll and a small pot of fresh grass such as a *kusumono*. Fall would be implied by a distant mountain stone with some snow and a scroll with a few ripe persimmons. A new year's display can include a fan with painted pines, a bamboo fan hanger, and a plum flower stone.

To make a stone a piece of art, the role of the *daiza* was emphasized in the program. Mr. **Suzuki**, a *daiza* master, described that it was a *daiza* that makes a suiseki a piece of art. The entire program was designed very well for beginners to understand suiseki. Since most of us are long time suiseki collectors, it was refreshing for us to see this program and we should keep these three secrets of suiseki in mind for future practice.

HUNTINGTON LIBRARY in FRIENDS' HALL on
Wednesday, Sept 7, 7:30 PM. Free.

Penjing: From its Roots to the Present Day

Join Thomas Elias for a survey of the history of *penjing*, the art of miniature trees and rockery, known as *bonsai* in Japan. In this lecture, Elias will explore the earliest evidence of *penjing* in China, the development of the art form during the Tang (618-907) and Song (960-1279) dynasties, as well as the blossoming of various schools during the Ming (1368-1644) and Qing (1644-1911) periods. His investigation will extend into the modern period with Chinese participation at the major world's fairs in the 18th and 19th centuries, and the growing relationship between *penjing* and *bonsai* styling in the 20th century.

Ask Guy Jim

Dear Guy Jim,

There is insufficient space for the GuyJim you submitted for August. Any chance you have a shorter back-up?

Nina (July 27th email)

Dear Readers,

Unfortunately, my answer was no. However, I have been given special dispensation to skip the usual question and answer format and, instead, will meander in my favorite direction: display and specifically, creating thematic displays with viewing stones. The inspiration for this is the fact that I just ‘completed’ a thematic display that has been gestating for over six years: the Japanese *Tanabata* Festival.

Technically, my timing is a month late as the *Tanabata* or Star Festival is now commonly held on July 7th. However, some regions continue celebrating on August 7 that is around the 7th day of the 7th month of the older lunar calendar. With origins in the ancient Chinese tale involving two radiant stars, the Cowherd Star (Altair) and the Princess Weaver Star (Vega) each set apart on either side of the River of Heaven (the Milky Way). The variation in details is endless, but the basic folktale takes the following form:

The story is that the Princess was weaving a robe for her father, a celestial king, when she spied a handsome cowherd. They met and fell in love. It was acceptable to the king that they marry, but soon she abandoned her weaving and he let the cows go astray. The exasperated king dictated that they had to remain on opposite sides of the Milky Way, with the provision that they could only meet once a year. Lacking a way to cross the ‘River of Heaven’, the two lovers despaired of ever holding one another again until a flock of magpies formed a bridge by overlapping their out-stretched wings so that the princess could cross. The *Tanabata* Festival celebrates the lovers’ annual reunion.



The Milky Way, Star-pattern Stone (Hoshigata-ishi) Trinity River, CA 5 3/8" W x 6 1/4" H x 2 3/4" D (13.7cm x 15.9cm x 7cm)

My interest in working with this theme began when I found a stone in the icy Trinity River that shouted Milky Way or in Japanese, *Ama-no-gawa*, the River of Heaven. In the 2007 Huntington Exhibit our stone was presented in a non-traditional, truly arcane place on the

theme (that I will discuss towards the end, see pg 5). However, since then I have sought proper auxiliary elements to mount a formal presentation of the classic story. Over time I considered scrolls with attributes associated with the Festival: cows, cowherds, magpies, *tanzaku* (small paper strips carrying wishes) or the colorful paper streamers that



The Cowherd (Altair) and Weaving Maiden (Vega)

symbolize the weaving threads. Similarly, I searched for *okimono* representing cows, weaving implements, and magpies. Three years ago I found the scroll representing the Weaving Maiden and the Cowherd (with a somewhat Chinese feeling, above right). Less than a month ago I obtained the Chinese bronze representing a pair of magpies (at right).



Two Magpies, Chinese bronze, 8 1/2" H

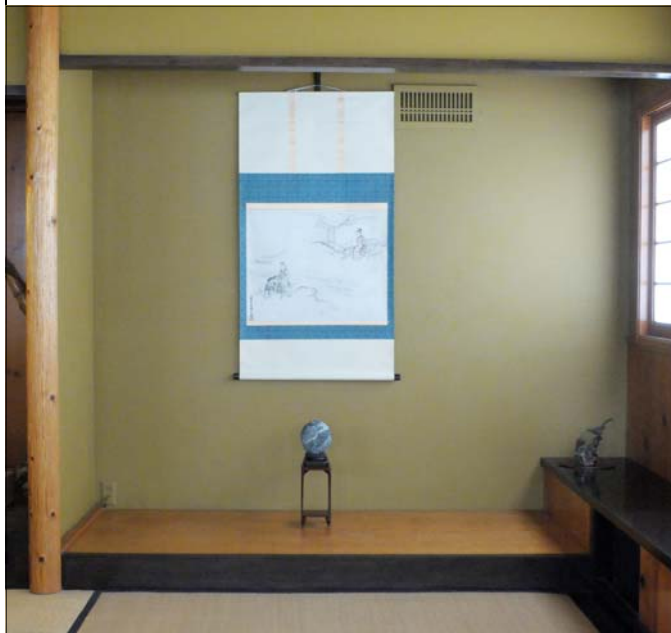
With regard to the tokonoma display, (page 5, top) I recognize that both the scroll and magpies are larger than ideal, but a bird in the hand ...! The arrangement would be greatly improved if the magpies could be shown in a secondary alcove (*biwadoko*), an effect that is approximated by placing them on the shelf at the right edge of my tokonoma (pg 5, lower). While one can see room for improvement, the very lack of perfection ensures that I will find future enjoyment as I continue to revisit, and perhaps refine, the presentation.





Tokonoma display

Japanese practice would likely find such a combination of so many literal story elements to present ‘too much information’. Reducing the elements to the scroll and stone – as can be seen if you ignore the magpies (below) – would be preferable. My earlier thematic presentation went even further in the opposite



Tokonoma display using bench for magpies

direction, being a reach into the realm of abstract, arcane references and as such, its very obliqueness may better represent the essential Japanese approach to display (see top of next column). Any success/ acceptance is dependent upon the viewer’s prior knowledge of the above story – in particular the part the Milky Way plays in the separation of devoted lovers –

but the display itself did not directly reference it. The Milky Way stone is shown elevated above a second embedded-image stone depicting a samurai

We see him seated alone on a knoll, standing watch. He gazes up to the Milky Way and commiserates with the Princess and the Cowherd; he longs for his own

lover far away... all is very quiet and melancholy. (Specific references to such separation, especially the longing warrior, are frequently found in Japanese and Chinese poetry and Japanese woodblock prints.) To many readers, this kind of thinking may be dismissed as highfalutin baloney or B.S., but regardless, that is what I ‘saw’ in the samurai stone as I picked it up in the Merced River.

Attempting such thematic displays will not interest many, but I know of a few collectors beside myself who have found that the process has genuinely increased their appreciation of stones and the cultures from which that stone appreciation evolved.

Guy Jim



‘Tanabata’ This original 2007 arrangement could also be shown on a step stand, but I prefer the ‘framing’ provided by the circle.



‘Night Watch’, Embedded-image Stone (Monyo-ishi) Merced River, CA
4 5/8" W x 3 1/8" H x 3" D (11.7cm x 7.9cm x 7.6cm)

The views expressed in this column are personal, perhaps irreverent, irrelevant or just plain wrong and do not reflect the consensual view of California Aiseki Kai. Send your viewing stone questions (or comments) for GuyJim to jimgreaves@roadrunner.com or 1018 Pacific Street, Unit D, Santa Monica, CA 90405 (310) 452-3680

International Exhibition of Suseki and Shangshi

Juneu Kim

[**Juneu Kim** went to the Czech Republic to attend the International Exhibition of Suseki and Shangshi at Troja Castle, Prague May 21-29, 2011.]

It was a pleasure meeting Mr. **Igor Barta**, President of the European Suseki Association, and members from Italy, Germany, France, Spain, Austria, Holland, Poland, Hungary, Lithuania, Denmark, etc.



With Igor Barta, President of the European Suseki Association

The exhibition was more than a success due to careful planning by Mr. **Barta** and due to the unconditional support by the Botanical Garden of Prague as well as by the tireless help by Czech and Slovak Suseki club members.



Gala Dinner Preparation

There were impressive gala dinners and lunches at the top of the hill (the best view looking over the Troja and Prague castles) accompanied by music bands. It was really something else! There was also a boat ride under the moonlight to see the night scenery of beautiful Prague.

I felt that the character of European Suseki is somewhat different from the character of American Viewing Stone. I wish to address the issue at the meeting in person. I hope more meetings will occur between European and American enthusiasts to share the love of stone appreciation.

I gave an hour presentation. The topics were related to the underlying concepts of Korean Suseok:

1. Scenic Landscape Stone and Scenic Landscape Painting
2. Concept of Chi and Viewing Stone
3. Ideology of Korean Literati during 1400-1850
4. Yang Ban Literati Scholars
5. Character of Literati Art
6. Myth of Stone Appreciation by Korean Literati Scholars

More information is shown on my website: KoreanViewingStones.com



Troja Castle, site of the Suseki and Shangshi Exhibition



Auction Scene





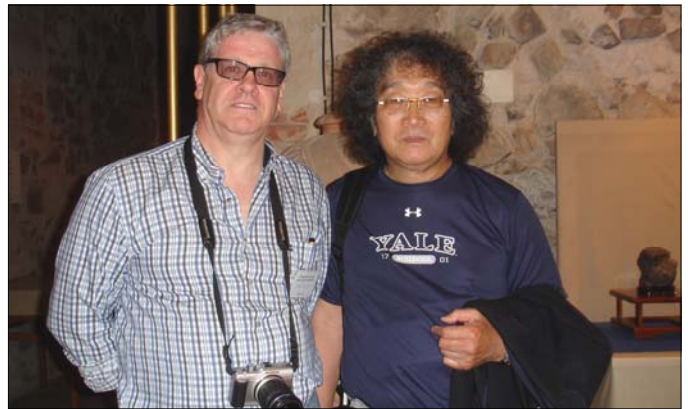
Exhibition Area



With Aiseki Kai member Luciana Queirola from Italy. Juneu is holding our April 2011 newsletter. To see more of Luciana's stones, look at the June 2008 newsletter



Presentation by Juneu Kim



With Aiseki Kai member and newsletter contributor, Jesus Quintas, from Spain. See his article, Stone Identification, in the March 2011 newsletter



With Mr. Fabrizio Buccini from Italy



With Mr. Karel Serak, from the Czech Republic



Visiting with a new friend, Daniela Shifano of Italy

Juneu made a lot of new friends....

And now on to some of the beautiful stones on exhibit:



International Exhibition Stones



Luciana Queirolo



Igor Barta



Juneu Kim



Czech Stone



Czech Stone



Where? Alps



Willi Benz

Suiseki Show at Bonyu Kai Bonsai on Kauai June 25-26



We are grateful to **Claude Joseph** for sharing these images from his beautiful exhibit. Most of his stones are from Japan.... **Claude** said that Kauai does not offer much for the stone collector.



Alice Naka

continued from page 1

for *Bonsai Techniques, Vol. 1 and 2*. Because I was **John's** student, I attended the annual displays at the Museum of Science and Industry where there were stones on display and nine were pictured in *Bonsai in California Vol.1* (1967). That got my attention. That was also the next step in our direction.

In 1982, I was a new member of Nanpu Kai. **John** requested that members branch out and become teachers. He saw my passion for stones and directed me with the suggestion of a suiseki study group as an adjunct to California Bonsai Society. That was the next step that created California Aiseki Kai.

Thus, each step in **Alice's** life, led us to this moment. Had **Alice** stayed in Sedgwick, there would be no **Alice** and **John Naka**, no California Bonsai Society as we know it and certainly no California Aiseki Kai. And perhaps no **Larry** and **Nina** since we met in my mother's front yard while I was washing rocks still covered with mud from the Eel River. We are grateful for their encouragement.

Thank you, **Alice**, dear friend, for always cheerfully supporting our every endeavor. That's karma.

~Larry Ragle



Alice Naka 1917-2011

Stone of the Month from page 2

Here are more stones suggesting coolness, some with snow, ice or water:



Nina Ragle 5 x 2 x 4; rushing water



Larry Ragle 8.5 x 3 x 5; glacier



Joseph Gaytan 8 x 5 x 2 from China



Lois Hutchinson 8 x 4 x 3; Lake Hill



Larry Ragle 4.5 x 5 x 3; snow capped

California Aiseki Kai meets on the 4th Wednesday of each month at 7:30 pm at the Nakaoka Community Center located at 1670 W. 162nd St, Gardena, CA. Second floor. We do not meet in Nov-Dec.

Contact People

Programs: Larry Ragle 949.497.5626
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Newsletter Committee

August Contributors: Linda Gill, Juneu Kim, Jim Greaves and Larry Ragle.
Mailing: Flash Partch
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We hope you will participate. Please send any submissions to ragle@cox.net no more than 10 days following our monthly meeting. Thank you!

Ragle
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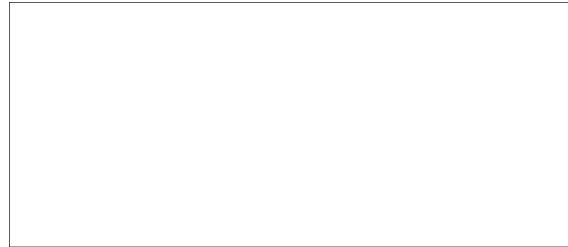
ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED



Leaves no stone unturned

See our website:

aisekikai.com



Coming Events

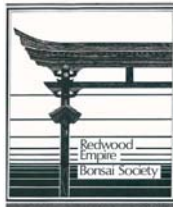
NANPU KAI

Annual Nisei Week Bonsai Exhibit, August 20-21, JACCC, 244 S. San Pedro St, LA. 10-5 both days



REDWOOD EMPIRE BONSAI SOCIETY

28th Annual Bonsai Show, August 27-28, Santa Rosa Veterans Memorial Bldg., 1351 Maple Ave., Santa Rosa. Sat 10-5 Sun 10-4. Demos both days 1-3:30 **Kathy Shaner**. 200 bonsai, sales, raffle. For more information: Bob Shimon 707-884-4128 or email shimon@mcn.org. Website: rebsbonsai.org



PACIFIC NORTHWEST BONSAI CLUBS ASSOCIATION

Convention XXII: "Elegance in Emerald City", Sept 3-5, Fairmont Olympic Hotel, 411 University St, Seattle. **Michael Hagedorn, Boon Manakitivpart, Ryan Neil, Suthin Sukosolivist**. Bonsai exhibits, demos, workshops, critiques, raffles, auctions and vendors. Suiseki display in the Windsor Room. More at: pnbca.com

KO FU BONSAI KAI

A bonsai and suiseki exhibit, Sept 9-11, Bowers Museum, 2002 North Main St., Santa Ana, 10-4. Speakers: **Tom Elias** and **Larry Ragle**. See page 2. For more information go to their website: bowers.org

GSBF CONVENTION XXXIV

"Bonsai Full Circle" Oct 27-30, Marriott Hotel and Convention Center, 3400 Market St., Riverside. **Kathy Shaner, Ryan Neil, Pedro Morales, Roy Nagatoshi**. Demonstrations, seminars, critiques, workshops, raffle, vendors
Go to: gsbf-bonsai.org



Refreshments

The July table was set by the **Hausslers**, the **Josephsons**, **Bruce McGinnis**, the **Cultons**, **BJ Ledyard**, **Joseph Gaytan** and **Harry Hirao**. Thank you one and all! Yummy!



August treats will be provided by **Joe and Arlene James**, **Marge Blasingame** and the **Ragles**.



Always check Golden Statements Magazine
Calendar section for additional coming events