



conejo valley BONSAI society

Volume 13 Number 7 July 2016

A member of the Golden State Bonsai Federation 

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President's Message

Club's Fundraiser Works

By Marj Branson

Our June meeting was an informative and fun night. Our own Ann Lofquist did her demonstration on tanuki bonsai. She brought materials for members so we can all go away and do our thing! Most attendees purchased the shimpaku juniper whips that Ann sold at cost (\$25 each). She donated matching pieces of California juniper deadwood to the club, which we sold at modest prices. We raised more than \$200 for the club. See the feature story on pages 4 – 7 of the newsletter for the details if you missed the demonstration or were there and want to refresh your memory. Of those who took the whip-and-deadwood kits home, I wonder how many have done it already? Thank you Ann for a great and engaging demonstration.

Just a reminder that our July and August meetings will be workshops, so bring your trees to work on. August also will be our annual swap meet, so start looking around your bonsai treasures and see if you have any material kicked to the curb you would like to bring or any pots or related items. They are all welcome. And please come to the August meeting with checkbook or cash so you can take advantage of the bargains offered by your fellow CVBS members!

I went to the Gardens of the World in Thousand Oaks this week to see how the late Nat Stein's elm tree has survived the sooty mold treatment I gave it (see

CVBS's newsletter for April 2016 for details). I would like to report the tree is doing well. I was not able to get all of the black residue from the upper branch structure, but the tree is filling out with the new growth and is looking great. When visiting the Gardens, have a look at it.


Just a reminder: Should you like to take a stroll, the Gardens of the World is a relaxing place to do it. You can take a lunch and sit in the picnic area and enjoy it. They have been hosting our Bonsai exhibitions since our beginning. Go to their website to see other community activities they sponsor.

The early registration for the Golden State Bonsai Federation Convention 39 opened July 1, 2016.

You can get the application from their website or their recent Golden State-ments. The convention is in Sacramento this year, so check it out.

The Club Library has not been used much in 2016. We are considering reducing the books and keeping the DVDs. It seems many of our members are using web materials and have their own library; therefore, we're beginning to think that it is not necessary to carry all the books. This will be a point to discuss at our next meeting—give this some thought.

There are a few summer bonsai shows in July and August, with more to come in September and October. Check page 8 of the newsletter for details about what's coming.

See you Thursday—July 21st. 



Marj Branson

Conejo Valley Bonsai Society Meetings

**Westlake Village City Hall
Community Room**
31200 Oakcrest Drive
Westlake Village, CA 91361
3rd Thursday of the Month
7:30 PM – 9:00 PM

Contact Us

(Click on Email Address)

Officers

President

Marj Branson

Phone (805) 373-1330

president@cvbs-bonsai.org

Vice President

Ann Lofquist

Phone (805) 484-3140

vice.president@cvbs-bonsai.org

Treasurer

Ken Fuentes

Phone (805) 495-7480

treasurer@cvbs-bonsai.org

Secretary

Ken Martin

Phone (805) 445-9221

secretary@cvbs-bonsai.org

Advisor

Ken Fuentes

Phone (805) 495-7480

advisor@cvbs-bonsai.org

Committees

Membership Chair

Larry Kimmelman

Phone (805) 493-5103

membership.chair@cvbs-bonsai.org

Newsletter Editor

David E. Whiteside

Phone (805) 509-1830

editor@cvbs-bonsai.org

Program Chair

Al Espinoza

Phone (818) 284-1693

program.chair@cvbs-bonsai.org

Publicity Co-Chairs

Guy & Deborah Ervin

Phone (805) 495-8688

publicity@cvbs-bonsai.org

Refreshments Chair

Grace Sy

Phone (818) 915-8545

refreshments@cvbs-bonsai.org

Librarian

Larry Kimmelman

Phone (805) 493-5103

librarian@cvbs-bonsai.org

Field Trips & Activities

Rick Naber

Webmaster

Tom McGuire

website@cvbs-bonsai.org

CVBS Programs 2016

**If you are interested in the CVBS Mentoring Program, please see
Larry Kimmelman for more information & applications to participate.**

January 21	7:30 PM: Brief Meeting followed by Workshop— BRING YOUR TREES
February 18	7:30 PM: Brief Meeting followed by Workshop— BRING YOUR TREES
March 17	7:30 PM: Brief Meeting followed by DEMONSTRATION: Bob Pressler / Tree Critique BRING ONE TREE FOR BOB TO CRITIQUE!
April 21	7:30 PM: Brief Meeting followed by Workshop— BRING YOUR TREES
May 19	7:30 PM: Brief Meeting followed by Workshop— BRING YOUR TREES
June 16	7:30 PM: Brief Meeting followed by DEMONSTRATION: Ann Lofquist / Create a Tanuki Graft
July 21	7:30 PM: Brief Meeting followed by Workshop— BRING YOUR TREES
August 18	7:30 PM: Brief Meeting followed by Workshop and Swap Meet—BRING YOUR TREES
September 15	7:30 PM: Brief Meeting followed by DEMONSTRATION: David Nguy / Juniper and Pine
October 1 & 2	13TH ANNUAL EXHIBITION Gardens of the World
October 20	7:30PM : Brief Meeting followed by DEMONSTRATION: Tom Vuong / Olive
November 17	7:30PM : Brief Meeting followed by Workshop— BRING YOUR TREES
December 15	HOLIDAY POTLUCK, RAFFLE & AUCTION 7:30 PM

In Summer Heat, Check Watering, Protect from Sun

By Jim Barrett

This month we can expect a slowing down of both roots and top growth.

Deciduous trees, especially Japanese maples, may need protection from direct sun and drying winds. Home Depot sells shade cloth in varying strength, if you feel ambitious and want to build a shade frame over your more tender trees.

Make sure your watering program is not neglected. It may be that you will have to water more than once a day. Shohin bonsai will need an extra amount of care in terms of water, shade, and maintaining a cool, humid atmosphere.

It is becoming more and more common to see shohin collections imbedded in a tray of damp sand. This not only provides humidity and moisture but also keeps the pot cool. If your trees are placed against a wall or fence, be sure to rotate them every week or so. This evens out the tree's form by exposing all sides to the elements. Trees left against a fence or wall tend to develop flat areas, stunted branches and even dead branches on the wall side.

Except for emergency potting, wait until early fall for this chore.

Crab apples and ume should be left to grow wild until late September—the same with wisteria. Try stripping the first three to four sets (closest to the trunk) leaving only a few leaves at branch terminals. Try this on crabapple and ume. Do this also on the compound leaves on wisteria, but just strip the first few sets of leaflets on



Jim Barrett

each leaf. This procedure should cause the tree to set more buds for next year's flowers.

Fertilizers high in phosphorous and potash, low in nitrogen, should be used this summer. Do not over-fertilize. In fact, if you are using liquid or chemical fertilizers, cut the recommended dose in half. Over-fertilizing during this semi-dormant period could cause root rot and other undesirable conditions.

If you are planning to add new plants to your collection or are just starting out, now is a good time to look for potentially good bonsai stock—especially deciduous material. [You will find many bargains at the ... Conejo Valley Bonsai Society's Swap Meet at its August meeting.] 🌳

Refreshments

Summer Treats

It's full summer and our tradition of fun food and refreshing drinks continues.

Many thanks to our June volunteers. Marj Branson provided Cold Drinks while Richard and Kazue Winston brought yummy Eats/Sweets. Coffee compliments of CVBS (Marj Branson).

Please do not hesitate to contact Grace Sy and join the Refreshments Corner! Contact her at wkhlady@yahoo.com or call (818) 915-8545.

Thanks everyone!

2016 Refreshments

	Cold Drinks	Eats / Sweets
July	Volunteer Needed	Mike Mulhern
Aug.	Sheila Galinsky	Ken Fuentes
Sept.	Nancy Smeets	Volunteer Needed
Oct.	Volunteer Needed	Jill Peters & Valentina
Nov.	Ken Martin	Norm Nason
Dec.	Annual Holiday Potluck, Raffle & Auction	

CVBS Membership

Interested in CVBS?

Consider becoming a member. We meet monthly on the third Thursday of every month at the Westlake Village City Hall (31200 Oakcrest Drive, Westlake Village, CA 91362). Meetings start at 7:30, and include occasional demonstrations by bonsai experts, workshops, critiques, and member swap meets.

It's inexpensive and easy to join. Annual dues are \$25 for one, or \$30 for couples. Simply bring cash or a check (made payable to the Conejo Valley Bonsai Society) to our next monthly meeting. You can also mail it to: Larry Kimmelman, CVBS Membership Chair, 2727 Autumn Ridge Drive, Thousand Oaks, CA 91362.

—Larry Kimmelman

Why Tanuki Bonsai Deserves Respect

By Ken Martin

You don't read much about bonsai created by attaching living trees to pieces of deadwood. Various referred to as "tanuki" or "Phoenix" grafts, it's a largely neglected technique for quickly creating a bonsai that has an old, well-established look in a fairly short period of time. Often treated like an unloved stepchild, tanuki seldom if ever make it into traditional bonsai exhibitions or demonstrations.

But that has changed for the Conejo Valley Bonsai Society (CVBS). At its June 2016 meeting, Ann Lofquist, the society's vice president, showed several of her finished and in-progress tanuki, talked about the background and theory of the technique, and demonstrated how to do it. At the end of the meeting, members had an opportunity to purchase shimpaku whips

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Ann Lofquist with several of her finished and in-process tanuki bonsai (top right).

Two of Ann's finished tanuki bonsai (below and bottom right).



Photos by Norm Nason

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and pieces of California juniper deadwood to take home and try it themselves.

For the uninitiated, Lofquist explains that the term “tanuki” refers to a badger-like small mammal that is native to Japan and also resides in Japanese folklore as a mischievous, “not what he seems to be” critter. Some Western bonsai practitioners call this process a “Phoenix” graft, after the mythical Phoenix rising from the ashes. But Ann feels that tanuki is an apt name for the technique and is more closely related to the Japanese heritage of bonsai.

Whatever it’s called, some bonsai purists think tanuki is not “real” bonsai. Lofquist herself concedes that an ungrafted tree is the purest form of bonsai, with grafted trees and tanuki somewhat less “pure.” Nonetheless, she loves the grafting process and has had some success with approach grafting, thread grafting, and tanuki. In her professional life, Ann is a painter and says that she enjoys the sense that in a tanuki she has more creative control.

For the June meeting, Ann brought several tanuki she has developed over the past four years and discussed the particulars of each. It was amazing to see the very mature look of her tanuki only three and four years old.

She says junipers are the obvious choice for the living-tree component because the water and nutrients flow up and down the trunk or branches in parallel veins, which facilitates the formation of jins and shari in nature. In contrast, not many deciduous trees naturally form large areas of deadwood because nutrients flow in crisscross veins in the cambium layer.

For tanuki, junipers such as shimpaku, foemina, and rigida are the most commonly used. Small-caliper foemina whips can be found in most bonsai nurseries while shimpaku whips are more difficult to find as there is more demand for short, thick shimpaku pre-bonsai than the long, thin material that is needed for a tanuki graft.

The CVBS meets in Westlake Village outside Los Angeles, and in this region California juniper is probably the easiest deadwood to come across. There are many areas where suitable deadwood can be found. Ann’s favorite place is in the hills near Cuyama.

One element she feels is critical to the long life of a tanuki is preservation of the deadwood. Non-living wood—no matter the type or how hard or dense—will decay, especially in contact with moisture, Ann emphasizes.

To combat decay, Lofquist has been treating the lower portion of the deadwood with PC-Petrifier®, a wood hardening product, and then placing the base of the deadwood with its graft on quick-draining gravel in the pot. Lately, however, she has been experimenting with J-B Weld KwikWood™ Wood Repair Epoxy Putty to fabricate a two-inch waterproof base for the deadwood.

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California juniper deadwood with the channel for the living whip gouged out (top).

Securing the shimpaku juniper whip in the channel with plastic-tube covered wire (middle photo above).

The tanuki assembled with whip in place and pieces of wood chopsticks attached (above).

KwikWood epoxy (right).





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Using a sharp tool, Ann makes natural-looking striations in the epoxy. She sands and applies a little color to create an effective illusion of natural deadwood. One minor drawback: neither the Petrifier nor the KwikWood will take lime sulfur. For Ann, this is a minor issue as she is not a big fan of lime sulfur because she feels the stark white it creates looks a little artificial. (As an aside, she says lime sulfur is less expensive from a pet supply store than from most bonsai retailers.)

When positioning the live whip on the deadwood, don't necessarily place it in a natural channel, she says. Try to find a place where it will look the most natural. Sometimes that may be on top of a large, natural vein. Once the location has been determined, a channel must be cut in the deadwood.

The front of the composition should be decided at this time so that the live vein is at least partially visible from the front. Either unpot the whip or cut the top of the pot down to the level of the soil and place the whip alongside the deadwood. Unneeded branches should be removed to allow fitting the whip to the deadwood.

The next step is to create a channel to place the whip. The cross section of the channel should approximately equal the diameter of the whip and be a little deeper than a half circle to help retain the whip. While carving, the deadwood should be secured, preferably in a vise.

Before carving the channel for the whip, Ann marks the location with a pencil. She then uses a Dremel® with a one-inch diameter wheel to cut the outer edges of the channel. To remove the middle, "I like to use a hand-gouge," she says. "However, there have been times I have used a Dremel as well. People should use whatever tools they have and feel comfortable with."

Once the channel is cut, the next step in the grafting process is to decide how far below the deadwood to place the root mass. With that position set, the whip is placed carefully in the channel from the bottom up, anchoring it in place with wire covered by a short piece of ¼" plastic tubing to protect the whip. During the demonstration, Ann placed the first anchor wire about an inch up from the base and then every couple of inches to secure the whip trunk in the deadwood channel.

Lofquist then took a small slice of KwikWood epoxy putty and kneaded it with her fingers to activate the hardener. She used this epoxy to fill in any small gaps between the whip and the sides of the channel using a thin-bladed tool. After about 20 minutes the epoxy was hard enough to hold the whip in the channel. She then removed the retaining wires and filled in the gaps where the plastic tubing had been with a little more epoxy. The epoxy also serves as a barrier preventing moisture from getting in the channel.

At this stage, the whip didn't have a root system strong enough to hold the combined weight of the whip and deadwood in a growing pot. To stabilize the new tanuki in the pot, Lofquist wired four short pieces of wood chopsticks to the base of the deadwood. She placed the bottom of these wooden sticks in the

bottom of the pot and put some gravel directly under the base for drainage. Since the tree was essentially bare-rooted, she explained that it would be in the shade for a couple of weeks before styling. (At this writing, Ann has styled the demonstration tree—see photos this page and next.)

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Tanuki secured in growing pot with wood chopstick pieces (detail, top).

Shimpaku whips and California juniper deadwood kits which were sold to club members at the end of the demonstration (middle).

Whip secured in channel with epoxy, several weeks after the demonstration (left).



Photo by Ann Lofquist

(Continued from page 6)

For the demonstration, Ann brought in a dozen shimpaku whips she had purchased from Roy Nagatoshi's Fuji Bonsai Nursery in Sylmar for \$25 each. She sold these at cost to club members at the demonstration. She also brought in pieces of California juniper deadwood, which she had collected and prepared by cutting a flat base and soaking the base in PC-Petrifier. Each piece was matched with an appropriately long shimpaku whip. Ann donated this deadwood to the club as a fundraiser; more than \$200 was raised. Members took home a very reasonably priced whip-and-deadwood kit that should produce a great tanuki.

This was a very enjoyable and informative demonstration of a little-known or discussed aspect of bonsai that, when done well, can produce very nice, mature-looking bonsai in a short period of time. 🌲

The demonstration tanuki after initial styling several weeks after the demonstration (right).

Photo by Ann Lofquist



CVBS Niche Displays

Our Niche Display Program

In the Niche Program, club members set up a mini exhibition display. Such a display consists of:

- The tree in a nice bonsai pot
- An accent plant
- A stand

All these items are important to create the balance for a good display. We aspire to present the best display possible for everyone's pleasure and edification, so the niche is often assembled by one of the more experienced members. However, it is also our desire to give less experienced bonsai hobbyists an opportunity to learn by doing. So if any less experienced member feels his/her trees are not ready for a finished display, it is worthwhile to create a display that is a work-in-progress. It will be up to the club member to determine which category his/her display falls into, and then the work-in-progress display can become the talking point of work done, work intended, and suggestions from the floor.

We encourage all members to sign up for the niche display! Please have a look at the calendar and let us know when you would like to present your display.

—Marj Branson

2016 Niche Displays	
July	Ann Lofquist
Aug.	Norm Nason
Sept.	Nancy Smeets
Oct.	Ken Martin
Nov.	Bob Pressler

2016

July

July 16 – 17, 2016, Garden Grove, California

Vietnamese Bonsai Society: 17th Annual Bonsai and Nonbo Exhibition 2016. Time: 10:00 AM – 5:00 PM Location: Vietnamese American Temple, 12292 Magnolia Street (Magnolia / Lampson). Demonstration at 1:00 PM on both days. Vendor, plant sales, and auction. For more information please call (949) 331-4050.

August

August 6 – 7, 2016, San Francisco, California

San Francisco Suiseki Kai: 35th Annual Suiseki Exhibit at the Union Bank Community Room, Japan Center, 1675 Post Street. Show hours are 10 AM – 5 PM Saturday and 11 AM – 5 PM Sunday. Show coincides with the 43rd annual Nihonmachi Street Fair, so come early and enjoy your day in San Francisco's historic Japantown. Suiseki and stone sales. For more information about our club, contact sfsuisekikai@gmail.com or visit <http://sfsuisekikai.wordpress.com>.

August 20 – 21, 2016, Santa Rosa, California

Redwood Empire Bonsai Society (REBS): 33rd Annual show at the Santa Rosa Veterans Memorial Building, 1351 Maple Avenue. Show hours are 10 AM to 5 PM on Saturday and 10 AM to 4 PM on Sunday with demonstration by Bonsai Master Artist Kathy Shaner from 1 to 3 PM both days. Demo trees will be raffled. See the largest bonsai exhibition. Large bonsai vendor and member sales. Exciting silent auctions or "buy it now". Free refreshments by the Bonsai café. Free admission and parking. For more information visit our website www.rebsbonsai.org or contact Bob Shimon at (707) 884-4126 or shimon@mcn.org.

August 20 – 21, 2016 Los Angeles, California

Nan Pu Kai: 27th Annual Show during Nisei Week at Japanese American Community Cultural Center, 224 S. San Pedro Street (Little Tokyo). Show hours are 10 AM to 5 PM both days. The Nisei Week festival celebrates many Japanese Cultural Arts, including ceramics, dolls, Taiko, clothing, painting, calligraphy, Samurai arts, and Ikebana in addition to Bonsai. John Naka's club will host several special guest exhibitors from the Bay Area, Capitol Area and Central Coast of California at this year's show in addition to club members. Additional information about Nisei Week can be found at: www.niseiweek.org

September

September 29 - October. 2, 2016 Santa Ana, California

Kofu Bonsai Kai: 2016 Bonsai Fest at the Bowers Museum "The Bonsai Tradition: Cultural Arts of Japan" - John M. Lee Court, 2002 N. Main St., Daily 10 AM - 4 PM, Featuring bonsai trees of the members of Kofu Bonsai Kai and demonstration by Takuo Nakamura on Saturday, October 1 from 1 to 3 PM. Free to Bowers Museum members or with paid museum admission. Further details will be posted on the Bowers Museum Website: <http://www.bowers.org> and Kofu Bonsai Kai: www.KofuKai.org

October

October 1 – 2, 2016, Thousand Oaks, CA

Conejo Valley Bonsai Society: 13th Annual Bonsai Exhibition at the Resource Center at the Gardens of the World, 2001 Thousand Oak Blvd; Hours are 9 AM – 4 PM both days with demonstrations in the Bandstand at 11 AM and 2 PM. Free Admission. No sale of bonsai related items. For information, call Marj Branson at 805-373-1330 or visit our web site at www.cvbs-bonsai.org.

October 27 – 30, 2016, Sacramento, California

Golden State Bonsai Federation Convention 39: A Bonsai Convergence: Gather at the Rivers, Double Tree by Hilton, 2001 Point West Way, Sacramento (916) 924-4900—ask for GSBF Group Code. There will be workshops, lectures, seminars, exhibits, and a vendors section. Headliners: Ryan Neil and Bjorn Bjornholm. More Workshops and Seminars from: Kathy Shaner, David Nguy, Peter Tea, and others. For more information, contact Scott Chad at scottchad@lotusbonsai.com or (530) 622-9681. Online registration begins on the GSBF website (www.gsbfcconvention.org) on July 1, 2016.

Library

From Books to Magazines to DVDs . . .

We provide educational and instructional materials for all levels of bonsai artistry. Considering honing your skills with styling, pruning, or repotting? Interested in learning more about fertilizing or wiring? We have lots of information available, and at no charge to our members. Any of our resource materials may be borrowed for a month at a time. We only ask that books, magazines, or DVDs be returned at the next meeting. I'm always happy to answer questions about our library, and to help you select appropriate materials for your bonsai knowledge.

—Larry Kimmelman