



*conejo valley*

**BONSAI** society

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A member of the Golden State Bonsai Federation 

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## **Conejo Valley Bonsai Society Meetings**

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

**Visit Our Website**  
[www.cvbs-bonsai.org](http://www.cvbs-bonsai.org)

**Follow Us on Facebook**  
[www.facebook.com/conejovallebonsaisociety](http://www.facebook.com/conejovallebonsaisociety)

### **President's Message**

## **Prepare for Fall Exhibition**

By Marj Branson

Our annual bonsai exhibition has been confirmed by Gardens of the World in Thousand Oaks for the first weekend of October. That may seem like a long way off, but it's really not too early to start planning for the show now. This will be the Conejo Valley Bonsai Society's 15th Annual Exhibition, so let's make it our best ever.

As soon as you can, look through your collection and start preparing your trees for the show. Avoid doing a hard trim, but trim for keeping the shape of your tree. In past years we have had some late hot weather, so you might look at how you can protect your show trees from the intense heat. (For more on how to prepare trees for a show, review Jim Barrett's column on page 3 of our May issue.)

Forecasts are that we are in for some hot weather, so keep an eye on your watering program. Neither too much nor too little.

I have to watch for spider mites in my junipers. If you find the color of your junipers' foliage is graying, that is one of the signs of a spider mite infestation. (Again, see Jim Barrett in our May newsletter because he suggests treatments to use. And while you're reading Jim's excellent advice, be sure to check out his column about early summer bonsai tasks in this issue, page 3.)

We tried something new for our May meeting. Our members performed peer critiques on each other's trees. This was an interesting evening as more than a dozen members in attendance reviewed the trees that eight of their peers bravely presented. We all tried to be diplomatic yet at the same time give constructive advice. This is not an easy task. Nor is it always easy for the tree owner to set ego aside and listen to criticism as well as praise. And as we learned at this meeting, each owner gets numerous, often conflicting suggestions—and still has to decide which ones to take. Although you hear comments such as "the tree is your tree and do what you like," this is sometimes easier said than done!

Overall, it was a very successful evening. (See details in David Whiteside's feature on pages 4 – 5.) As you can see on the list of our 2018 programs (on page 2), we already plan to do another peer critique at our September meeting, when the primary focus will be on preparing trees for our October 6 – 7 exhibition.

For our June meeting, one of Southern California's premier bonsai experts, Ann Erb, will demonstrate the art and science of pine candle pruning. Don't miss this interesting and timely presentation.

I'm sorry to report that our fellow member Shelia Galinsky is moving to Costa Rica. At our May meeting, she brought in a number of pots and gave them to the club members. In turn, some members made donations to the club in return for some of the pots they most admired or needed. I would like to thank members for their donations and thank Shelia for her gift of the pots. They will all be put to good use. She has given us other pots which will go into our holiday potluck raffle and auction in December. Thank you Shelia. You will be missed.

Meanwhile, the spring bonsai exhibition season is winding down. It culminates

*Continued on page 3*



**Marj Branson**

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(Click on Email Address)

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# **CVBS Programs 2018**

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

<del>January 18</del>	7:30 PM: Brief Meeting followed by Workshop— <b>BRING YOUR TREES</b>
<del>February 15</del>	7:30 PM: Brief Meeting followed by Workshop— <b>BRING YOUR TREES</b>
<del>March 15</del>	7:30 PM: Brief Meeting followed by <b>DEMONSTRATION: Ted Matson</b> / Group Planting
<del>April 19</del>	7:30 PM: Brief Meeting followed by <b>DEMONSTRATION: Bob Pressler</b> / Styling a Cedar
<del>April 21</del>	<b>ACTIVITY / FIELD TRIP: Nursery Crawl</b> Fuji Bonsai Nursery / Kimura Bonsai Nursery Members Only. See President's Message for details.
<del>May 17</del>	7:30 PM: Brief Meeting followed by Workshop and <b>PEER CRITIQUES—BRING YOUR TREES</b>
June 21	7:30 PM: Brief Meeting followed by <b>DEMONSTRATION: Ann Erb</b> / Pine Candling
July 19	7:30 PM: Brief Meeting followed by Workshop— <b>BRING YOUR TREES</b>
August 16	7:30 PM: Brief Meeting followed by Workshop and <b>Swap Meet—BRING YOUR TREES</b>
September 20	7:30 PM: Brief Meeting followed by <b>PEER CRITIQUES—BRING YOUR SHOW TREES</b>
October 6 – 7	<b>15TH ANNUAL CVBS EXHIBITION</b> Gardens of the World
October 18	7:30PM : Brief Meeting followed by <b>DEMONSTRATION: Cesareo Perez</b> [TENTATIVE] / TBD
November 15	7:30 PM: Brief Meeting followed by Workshop— <b>BRING YOUR TREES</b>
December 20	7:30 PM <b>HOLIDAY POTLUCK, RAFFLE &amp; AUCTION</b>

# Early Summer Tasks Galore

By Jim Barrett

If you have been pruning your deciduous trees properly, you should be seeing more and finer twigs, which, in turn, make for a more mature-looking tree and a great winter silhouette.

Continue to prune fast-growing elm, zelkova, and maple twigs, leaving one or two nodes on each new branch. Usually the distance between nodes is regulated by the amount of nitrogen the plant is able to use. The more available nitrogen, the longer the internodes—this assumes that the plant is healthy and vigorous.

Because not all bonsai grow at the same rate, you must pay attention to the habits of each one. If you have crab apple, ume, or quince, prune all new growth to one or two nodes around the first week in July. Then do not prune again until next fall. Flower buds form during summer and early fall and pruning during this period reduces the number of flowers you may get next spring.

Along with this procedure, feed high-phosphorus and low-nitrogen fertilizers. Satsuki azaleas should not be fed until after blooming. Once the peak blooming period is over, pluck, or better yet, cut all of the flowers off, making sure to remove any seed pods.

If you have black pine bonsai, try to finish your favorite candle pruning procedure by mid-July or earlier. How you needle prune black pine will depend on the health, the age, and your goals for each tree.

Check with your instructor or bring your untrimmed black pine to your club's next meeting for advice.

Aphids are really out in force now. Watch for them especially on apple, quince, and ume. Spray with an appropriate insecticide. You may want to introduce ladybugs purchased at your local nursery. (Let me know how you keep them in your yard.)

Warm days are ahead of us, so pay attention to your watering program and hold back on the high-nitrogen fertilizers.

You should be able to repot ficus, pomegranate, and atlas cedar anytime now. If you need to repot elm and maple, make sure the new growth has hardened somewhat and try not to remove too many fine roots. You may find trident maples have developed a thick pad of roots on the bottom of the root ball. Add soil as needed and return the tree to its place. Save any major root pruning for next January or February. 🌳



Jim Barrett

### President's Message (Continued from page 1)

with the Descanso Bonsai Society show the weekend of June 16 – 17. This is the last of the spring shows, so do attend. We then start with the summer, autumn, and winter shows. (See page 8 for details on Descanso's exhibition and other shows later in the year.)

Finally, our condolences go out to Ann Lofquist who has recently lost her mother. Our thoughts are with her and her family.

See you Thursday, June 21st. 🌳

### CVBS Membership

## Interested in CVBS?

CVBS is open to anyone interested in the horticultural art of bonsai. If you are not a member, consider joining now. We meet monthly on the third Thursday of every month at the Westlake Village City Hall (31200 Oakcrest Drive, Westlake Village, CA 91361). Meetings start at 7:30 PM, 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 may also mail a check to: Larry Kimmelman, CVBS Membership Chair, 2727 Autumn Ridge Drive, Thousand Oaks, CA 91362.

—Larry Kimmelman

### Refreshments

## June Blooms

Haro nakama no bonsai aiko-ka. (Loose translation: Hello fellow bonsai lovers.)

June is here and in full bloom. It's the month we celebrate our flag and fathers everywhere.

I will bring the treats and Nancy Smeets will bring the cold beverages to our June 21 meeting. In July, Ben Conway will bring beverages and Larry Kimmelman is supplying the sweets. And in August, Marj Branson will bring drinks while Ben Conway has promised us treats. Dick Winston signed up for snacks in September. We still need someone to bring cold drinks. October: Mike Blumenberg signed up to bring snacks and I will bring the cold beverages. November's meeting has Nancy Smeets bringing snacks. We need a volunteer for the cold beverages. To sign up for one of the available months, call me at (818) 865-1034 or email me at refreshments@cvbs-bonsai.org.

—Denise Snavely

2018 Refreshments		
	Cold Drinks	Eats / Sweets
June	Nancy Smeets	Denise Snavely
July	Ben Conway	Larry Kimmelman
Aug.	Marj Branson	Ben Conway
Sep.	Volunteer Needed	Dick Winston
Oct.	Denise Snavely	Mike Blumenberg
Nov.	Volunteer Needed	Nancy Smeets

# Club's First Peer Critique Reveals Variety

By David Whiteside

Members of the Conejo Valley Bonsai Society own and are developing a wide range of tree species in their collections, if the club's first Peer Critique evening is any indication. About a dozen members participated in the club's May 17, 2018, meeting; seven of them presented trees in various stages of development.

At least six different species were represented in the group. Varieties included several species of juniper as well as an unusual species of ficus, a hackberry, a chokecherry, and a California live oak.

Some of the trees presented were raw nursery stock whose owners were looking for suggestions for basic styling decisions. Others were "finished" bonsai needing refinement or redevelopment. As a result of this variety, lively discussions among the attendees covered everything from choosing a front and developing an apex to fertilization and special techniques such as air layering. Some of the presenters implemented suggestions on the spot, while others planned to make final decisions and do the work later.

If you missed this fun and useful event, not to worry: another Peer Critique is scheduled for the club's September 2018 meeting. That event will focus on bonsai being prepared for the 15th Annual CVBS Exhibition, which is scheduled for the weekend of October 6 – 7. All members are encouraged to bring in trees for advice and help fine-tuning them for the show. 🌳

**Ken Fuentes' Burtt-davyi ficus (below) stimulated a lot of discussion about dealing with its large first branch.**



Photos by Larry Kimmelman



**Marj Branson brought in her large San José juniper (above). Some members suggested she change the front of the tree while others thought she should keep it where it currently shows a lot of deadwood.**



**Richard Winston asked for input on his hackberry (right) and how to best utilize the graceful movement of its trunk.**



The chokecherry that Damon Dubois showed (left) got a lot of suggestions about how to deal with the large aboveground root as well as where to establish its apex.

Nancy Smeets got a lot of advice about how to develop her foemina juniper (right) into a formal upright style bonsai as well as improve its nebari and roots.

Ken Fuentes and Damon Dubois helped Wendy Rector style her procumbens juniper (below left).



Ben Conway asked for input on continuing to develop his procumbens juniper (above).



Ken Martin acted quickly on the discussion of his California live oak (left).

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 her/his 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 your 2018 calendar and let us know when you would like to present your display.

—Marj Branson

2018 Niche Displays	
June	Nancy Smeets
July	David Whiteside
August	Volunteer Needed
Sept.	Volunteer Needed
Oct.	Larry Kimmelman
Nov.	Volunteer Needed

Library

# Check Out the CVBS Library

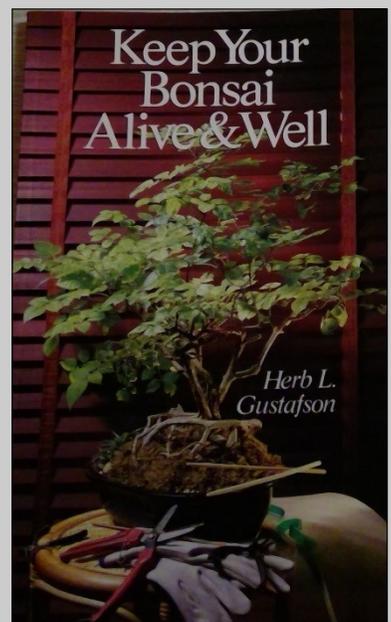
The Conejo Valley Bonsai Society has an extensive library of books, magazines, and DVDs available for members to borrow at no charge. The collection is available for your review at each monthly meeting. Material may be borrowed for a month at a time, so take home a book or DVD from our next meeting and return it at the following meeting. If you have any questions regarding the CVBS Library, please contact me at [librarian@cvbs-bonsai.org](mailto:librarian@cvbs-bonsai.org).

### Book of the Month

*Keep Your Bonsai Alive and Well* by Herb L. Gustafson.

This month's featured book is *Keep Your Bonsai Alive and Well* by Herb Gustafson. This short book is packed full of practical guidance, including how to water your bonsai, how to prune, and how to combat pests. As I read it, I wanted to highlight passages and make notes in the margins so I could remember tips that related to my trees. I resisted that urge since it is a CVBS library book, and bought my own copy instead. Check it out.

—Mike Blumenberg



# Huntington Bonsai Volunteer Summer Hours Announced

Ted Matson has announced the summer schedule for volunteer work weekends at the Huntington Gardens (see table, right). Work is on bonsai trees in both the Golden State Bonsai Federation's collection and the Huntington's own collection. There are two weekends planned each month from July through September. All levels of bonsai knowledge are welcome and sometimes he has mini teaching sessions, so no one feels overextended.

"Again, parking is available at the Ikebana House lot. You're responsible for any lunch you need, water will be provided," Ted said. "Bring your own tools, but if you don't have any, we have tools to lend. We'll start at 8 AM, so we will be able to work in the cooler parts of the morning as we move into summer."

If you are interested, please let me know or contact Ted at [tmatson@earthlink.net](mailto:tmatson@earthlink.net).

—Marj Branson

2018 Work Dates
June 23 – 24
July 14 – 15
July 28 – 29
August 11 – 12
August 25 – 26
September 15 – 16
September 29 – 30

# A Twisted Chinese Elm from China

**Editor's Note:** Ken Martin provided this twisted Chinese elm for the niche exhibit at CVBS's May 2018 meeting. Here's what Ken says about his elm and its interesting history.

This Chinese elm (*Ulmus parvifolia*) was a David De Groot class tree at the Shohin Seminar in February 2012. It was imported from Gwanzo, China, in 2011. In China it was wired to a heavy steel wire to produce a twisted shape. Literally millions of other elms were grown this way at the same time, all for export.

The leaves on this tree were the smallest of any of the elms De Groot brought to this class. If it were locally propagated, it would probably be called a Catlin elm.

I have repotted it twice in the past six years. During the growing season, I fertilize it with half-strength Miracle-Gro™ every two weeks. I let the shoots grow to about five leaves before cutting them back to two leaves.

I have brought this tree to the club for the niche before, but since my instructor, Ted Matson, said he thought it is ready to show, I thought I'd bring it in again.

Note: The small, inset photo was taken in 2012. Ted had me wire the tree to a stake to make a couple of the trunk's bends more pronounced. I left the stake in place for about a year.

—Ken Martin



Photos by Ken Martin

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**2018**

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**June**

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**June 2 – 3, 2018 San Mateo, California**

Sei Boku Bonsai Kai: 35th Annual Show at the San Mateo Garden Center, 605 Parkside Way (next to Beresford Park). Show hours are 10 AM - 4 PM both days with demonstration by Jonas Dupuich from 1 – 3 PM Saturday and Noon – 3 PM Sunday a workshop led by Jonas. Demo tree will be raffled off and one of the workshop trees will be raffled at the conclusion. Large club member plant sale, vendors, door prizes and our always popular raffles. Admission is free. Dr. Bonsai will be available to offer styling and care tips. For more information contact Marsha Mekisich at [eclectic.gardener@yahoo.com](mailto:eclectic.gardener@yahoo.com).

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**June 16 – 17, 2018, La Cañada Flintridge, California**

Descanso Bonsai Society: 49th Annual Show at the Descanso Gardens, 1418 Descanso Drive, La Cañada Flintridge, CA, 91011. Setup on the 15th from 10 AM on for anyone who wants to help out. Demonstrations 11 AM and 1 PM both days. Reception Saturday at 6 PM. Raffle and auction 7:30 PM Saturday evening. Sales table with bonsai and bonsai-related items.

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**June 16 – 17, 2018 Livermore, California**

Valley Bonsai Society: 10th annual show at Alden Lane Nursery, 981 Alden Lane. Show hours are 10 AM to 4 PM with a demonstration at 1PM on both days. The finished tree will be raffled off at the end of the demonstrations. Bonsai pots, soil, etc. available for purchase. Admission is free.

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**June 23 – 24, 20018 Anaheim, California**

Orange County Bonsai Society: 53rd Annual Bonsai Exhibit at the Orange County Buddhist Church, 909 South Dale, Anaheim, CA 92804. 10:00 AM—4:00 PM both days. Feature demonstrations: 1:00 PM Saturday, David Nguy; 1:00 PM Sunday, Frank Goya. Free Parking. Trees for sale, vendors on site, drawings. Free admission.

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**August**

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**August 25 – 26, 2018, Santa Rosa, California**

Redwood Empire Bonsai Society (REBS): 35th 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](http://www.rebsbonsai.org) or contact Bob Shimon at (707) 884-4126 or [shimon@mcn.org](mailto:shimon@mcn.org).

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**September**

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**September 6 – 9, 2018 Santa Ana, California**

Kofu Bonsai Kai: 2018 Bonsai Fest at the Bowers Museum - John M. Lee Court, 2002 N. Main St., Daily 10 AM - 4 PM, Featuring bonsai trees of the members of Kofu Bonsai Kai and special presentations by noted speakers (names, dates and times to be announced). Free entrance to bonsai area. Access to other museum exhibits requires admission ticket. Questions? Call the museum at (714) 567-3695 or email Michael Walsh at [michaeljwalsh@outlook.com](mailto:michaeljwalsh@outlook.com). Final speaker and presentation schedules will be posted on the Bowers Museum Website: <http://www.bowers.org/> and Kofu Bonsai Kai: <http://www.bowers.org/>

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**September 22, 2018 San Andreas, California**

Mother Lode Bonsai Club: 4th Annual Bonsai Exhibition at the San Andreas Public Library, 1299 Gold Hunter Road (off Mt. Ranch Rd.). Show hours are 10 AM - 4 PM with demonstration by bonsai artist Joan Scroggs at 1 PM and benefit prize drawing immediately following. Vendor and member bonsai-related items will be available for sale. Open to the public with free admission and parking. For more info, contact Richard McKinstry (209) 288-2330 or email [richardwandr@aol.com](mailto:richardwandr@aol.com). Visit club website at [www.motherlodebonsai.org](http://www.motherlodebonsai.org).

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**October**

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**October 6 – 7, 2018 Thousand Oaks, California**

Conejo Valley Bonsai Society: 15th Annual Exhibition. At the Resource Center of the Gardens of the World, 2001 Thousand Oaks Boulevard Thousand Oaks, CA 91362—across from the Civic Arts Plaza. Hours are 9 AM—4 PM both days. Demonstrations both days in the grandstand at 1 PM. Free admission. No sales of bonsai related items. For information, call Marj Branson at (805) 373-1330 or visit our website at [www.cvbs-bonsai.org](http://www.cvbs-bonsai.org).

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**October 24 – 28, 2018 Sacramento, California**

Golden State Bonsai Federation: Convention 41 “Creativity taking Flight” held at the McClellan Conference Center. Registration begins July 1st online at <http://www.gsbfcconvention.org/> for Convention, Workshops, Seminars, Excursions, etc. GSBF recommended lodging is Lion’s Gate Hotel at McClellan Park. This year's headliners are Yasuo Mitsuya, Suthin Sukosolvisit, and Bjorn Bjorholm. Please join GSBF and Yasuo Mitsuya’s esteemed students in honoring Mitsuya-san for his influence on bonsai in the modern era. Hosting Yasuo Mitsuya’s visit are: Kathy Shaner, Hideko Metaxas, Boon Manakitivipart, Kenji Miyata, Cheryl Manning, David DeGroot, Gordon Deeg.