



conejo valley

BONSAI society

Volume 15 Number 7 July 2018

A member of the Golden State Bonsai Federation 

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President's Message

Lego Bonsai? Really!

By Marj Branson

Are you ready for summer? There will be something of a break in Southern California bonsai shows, but then the action picks up in October. It will be here before you know it, so it's already time to get ready.

First up: The Conejo Valley Bonsai Society's own annual exhibition at the Gardens of the World in Thousand Oaks is scheduled for the first weekend of October (the 6th and 7th). If you can believe it, this will be our 15th annual show!

As you will note in our Program Calendar (page 2), our September club meeting will be our second peer critique evening. Members will bring trees they plan to exhibit in October for help fine-tuning them for our big show.

Following our show, the next major exhibition will be at the 2018 Golden State Bonsai Federation convention, which will be at the McClellan Conference Center in Sacramento from October 24th to the 28th. This will be the federation's 41st annual convention; the theme this year is "Creativity Taking Flight." (Please see page 8 or go to the GSBF website for program details.)

Speaking of summer breaks, I just had a very nice vacation visiting my family in Wisconsin. I took in the botanical gardens in Green Bay where there is currently a Lego® exhibition. Seeing Lego blocks in the forms of flowers, dragonflies, birds, and spiders was quite a treat. The old Lego block has come a long way since I was a kid. To top it off they had a Lego bonsai! I wish my trees looked as green as the blocks. Speaking of green, while I was gone we had the hottest and most brutal temperatures here that I have ever experienced. It certainly took a toll on my plants!

At our June meeting Ann Erb was our demonstrator working on a pine and giving us all pine hints. She also brought along one of her flowering azaleas. What a treat. (See pages 4 – 5 for the details.)

Our July meeting will be a workshop, so bring your trees to work on. Our August meeting will be another workshop along with our annual Swap Meet, so give your collection a once over and see if there are any items you would like to clear out.

Meanwhile, two of our members are due for some hearty congratulations! Both Rick Naber and Mel Carrillo won ribbons for bonsai they displayed at the Descanso Bonsai Society's annual show at the Descanso Gardens in La Canada Flintridge. (It was their 49th annual exhibition.)

- Rick Naber: For his Chinese Elm Forest in the Advanced Section, he won Best of Advanced
- Mel Carrillo took two awards in the Novice Section:
 - ◊ For his Juniper in the Evergreen Under 24-inch category, he won 2nd place
 - ◊ For his Juniper in the Evergreen Under 10-inch category, he won 1st place
 Please join me in congratulating both Rick and Mel. Congratulations!



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

Visit Our Website
www.cvbs-bonsai.org

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

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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.**

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

Adjust Care to Summer Heat

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 strengths, 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 [small] bonsai will need an extra amount of care in terms of water, shade, and maintaining a cool, humid atmosphere. ["Shohin" refers to trees that are 6 inches – 8 inches from base to apex. The smallest bonsai classification is called "mame," (which translates as "bean"). Mame measure 3 inches – 6 inches. —Editor]

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.

Crabapples and ume [*Prunus mume*, commonly called Chinese plum or Japanese apricot] 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 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 annual August Swap Meet]. 🌳



Jim Barrett

Refreshments

July Sizzles

July, named after Julius Caesar, a great Roman general but not so great in picking best friends, arrived on the wings of 100 degree heat. My garden went from lush green to Baghdad brown in a matter of hours.

July also celebrates our Nation's birthday. In keeping with the summer theme, July has days dedicated to celebrating the Bikini, Piña Colodas, Ice Cream, Hot Dogs, Fried Chicken, Jell-O, French Fries, Caviar, and my personal favorite, Hot Fudge Sundae Day!

July 19th we honor bonsai with our monthly meeting. Ben Conway will bring cold drinks, Larry Kimmelman is in charge of treats.

We still need someone to bring cold drinks in September, October, and November. If you haven't volunteered yet, now is your chance! Just call me at (818) 865-1034 or email me at refreshments@cvbs-bonsai.org.

Stay cool and enjoy this great month.

—Denise Snavelly

2018 Refreshments		
	Cold Drinks	Eats / Sweets
July	Ben Conway	Larry Kimmelman
Aug.	Marj Branson	Ben Conway
Sep.	Volunteer Needed	Dick Winston
Oct.	Volunteer Needed	Mike Blumenberg
Nov.	Volunteer Needed	Nancy Smeets
Dec.	HOLIDAY POTLUCK, RAFFLE & AUCTION	

President's Message (Continued from page 1)

With this heat, I strongly recommend that you watch your trees carefully. I have had to move some of mine under my landscape trees for shade. Some deciduous trees that I was planning to show in our October exhibition look pretty sick. My hope is that if I clean them up now, I might have a new growth of leaves before then and they will look good enough to show. Time will tell.

I hope everyone is having a great summer. See you Thursday, July 19th. 🌳

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 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

Ann Erb Outlines Black Pine, Azalea Care

By Ken Martin

Contrary to widely accepted notions, “Japanese black pines are pretty forgiving,” Ann Erb told the Conejo Valley Bonsai Society at its June 21, 2018, meeting. That’s not to say they are without challenges. “They take a long time to develop,” she said, adding that “spider mites are a big problem.”

Ann brought several black pines to her demonstration and devoted most of her comments to their care, but she also brought a large azalea and spent some time discussing it later in the meeting.

June is the month for decandling black pines, so that procedure was Ann’s primary subject. She outlined the yearly calendar for black pines:

- Decandle in June
- Thin new emerging candles to two at a tip when they emerge in late summer or fall
- Around September, remove all but two emerging candles at each branch tip

- Needle pluck in November or December
- Do heavy pruning and wiring in January or February
- Repot around April, when the buds just start to grow

She suggested fertilizing black pines from February through candle-pruning time in early June, then holding off until September and October. Fertilize these two months, then no or very little nitrogen until February. Not fertilizing in the summer, when the new candles are forming, helps keep them small. Ann uses two fertilizers for her black pines: Dr. Earth® pellets (5-5-5) in the spring then and Gro-Power® (2-12-12) in the fall.

Ann discussed two methods for decandling black pines.

The first way is to cut the weakest (smallest) candles first, the mid-sized candles 10 days later, and then the strongest 10 days after that. This allows the weaker areas 20 days to catch up with the strongest ones.

The second method is to decandle the tree all at the same

(Continued on page 5)

Ann Erb (below) with three Japanese black pines she used in her June 21 demonstration.



Photos by David Williams

time. If taking this approach, she said, trim the weaker candles completely but leave 1/2 inch or so of the stronger candles. It will take some time for the candle stubs to die back, again allowing the weaker areas to catch up. The ultimate goal is to have equal-sized candles throughout the tree.

But, Ann said, if your goal is to have a larger tree, don't decandle because this slows the growth of the tree.

Black pines can be needle plucked in November or December, with the stronger trees done earlier. Actually, Ann trims needles with scissors instead of plucking, leaving about 1/4 inch of the needle, which will die back in a couple of weeks.

In addition to these seasonal suggestions, Ann shared some non-seasonal tips for Japanese black pines:

- Tip 1. The flaky, exfoliating bark on the trunk and branches of a black pine is a sign of age. Try not to touch the trunk when repotting. "You can knock 100 years off the apparent age of the tree," Ann said.
- Tip 2. If needle cast is apparent, Bravo fungicide may help.
- Tip 3. The soil Ann uses is a mixture of akadama, red lava rock (scoria), and granite. She reuses her soils and sterilizes it by heating it in a 200 degree F oven for 1 1/2 to 2 hours. She sifts her soil and doesn't use anything that will pass through a 1/8-inch screen.
- Tip 4. Pines need full sun. The needles should always be sharp to the touch. This is an indication of a healthy black pine that receives an adequate amount of sun.
- Tip 5. When wiring black pines, put the wire under the tip to point the new candles up.

Ann brought in a young black pine to donate for our Holiday Potluck, Auction, and Raffle in December. She said this tree would profit by being grown in the ground for a couple of years. One downside of black pines, she said, is it takes a longer time to become a mature, show-worthy tree than many other varieties.

Marj Branson, David Williams, and Ken Martin brought in black pines for Ann to critique. The down-pointing needles on Marj's tree can go. She really liked David's tree but suggested more soil could be added to cover the exposed roots. Ken's tree needs some branch rearrangement at the apex and some minor branch removal. It also needs more sun as the needles aren't as sharp as they could be.

Next, Ann turned her attention to azaleas.

She brought in a large 40-year-old Satsuki azalea she purchased in Japan. It had to go through a very expensive three-year quarantine, which included bare-rooting. She has had it in her yard for four years now. It is a very beautiful specimen with a great nebari and thick tapering trunk. She uses pure Kanuma soil for her azaleas. She collects rainwater and uses that for her azaleas and black pines.

She allows her azaleas to bloom every third year because blooming every year would create unhealthy stress in the tree. In June, when the blooms are about 70% to 80% spent, she cuts them off. At the same time, she reduces five shoots to two. In the fall she reduces every tip to two buds and cuts off any that are growing downward. She uses a balanced 5-5-5 fertilizer in the fall and a 6-4-2 fertilizer in the spring. She repots every third year in late February after blooming the previous spring.



Ann shows CVBS members proper decandling technique (above).

Here are some more of Ann's tips not specifically related to black pines or azaleas:

- Some manual flexing of branches while wiring encourages growth on most bonsai.
- When applying aluminum wire, press a 1-inch length of wire against the branch to be wired. If the branch moves without bending the wire, the wire is heavy enough.
- When choosing between a coarse branch and a thinner branch, cut the thicker branch. Both trunks and branches should have positive taper.
- Use a tablespoon of vinegar to acidify (lower the Ph) a gallon of tap water. (Her tap water is probably somewhat alkaline as is ours here in Ventura County.)
- You can water and/or mist the foliage of your bonsai, both conifer and deciduous, to cleanse it of dirt and pathogens.
- Use alcohol pads from hand-cleansing packets to remove sap from hands and, more importantly, tools after a trimming session and before moving on to the next tree.

Ann lives in Nipomo with her husband, John, and a large collection of bonsai. She belongs to the California Bonsai Society as well as many other clubs. She is a frequent bonsai demonstrator and is a teacher at the Santa Maria Bonsai Club.

Her interesting presentation provided CVBS members a lot of excellent, expert, and pertinent advice. We appreciate Ann and John coming all the way from Nipomo to give this demonstration and for donating a tree for our December raffle. 🌲

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	
July	David Whiteside
August	Dick Winston
Sept.	Volunteer Needed
Oct.	Larry Kimmelman
Nov.	Volunteer Needed
Dec.	No Niche: Holiday Potluck

Library

Check Out the CVBS Library

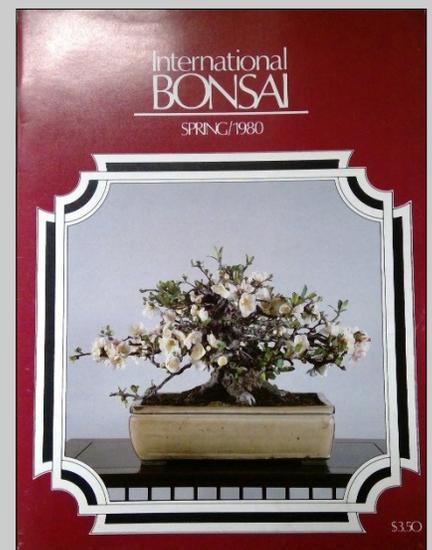
The Conejo Valley Bonsai Society has an extensive library of books, magazines, and DVDs available for members to borrow at no charge. The collection is available for your review at each monthly meeting. Material may be borrowed for a month at a time, so take home a book or DVD from our next meeting and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

Book of the Month

International Bonsai

This Book of the Month is actually a magazine. The CVBS Library has a collection of *International Bonsai* magazines starting with the spring 1980 edition (see photo, right) and running through 1995. These magazines were donated to the club and provide a wealth of information to supplement the library’s book and DVD collection. The pictured issue has several in-depth articles about flowering quince as bonsai, an interesting glossary of Japanese bonsai characters, and a good discussion on trunk line and direction for bonsai design. I don’t bring the magazines to every meeting, but I would be happy to bring them if someone lets me know they want to review them.

—Mike Blumenberg



Bonsai Volunteer Summer Hours at the Huntington

Ted Matson continues to organize 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.

—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 'Field Grown' Bougainvillea

Editor's Note: Nancy Smeets provided this blossoming bougainvillea for the niche exhibit at CVBS's June 2018 meeting. Here's what Nancy says about her "field grown" bougainvillea bonsai.

When I first joined the Conejo Valley Bonsai Society, I needed material, so I looked around my yard and rescued this bougainvillea. It is about 10 - 15 years old. "Field grown" in bonsai parlance! I wasn't even certain bougainvillea was a suitable bonsai, but I really love it. I like the Chinese pot, because the blue glaze compliments the fuchsia blooms. I use a standard fertilizer throughout the year, very weakly, and it loves a lot of water. Our esteemed guest demonstrator, Ann Erb (see story, page 4), suggested I keep pinching it back, and I will continue to do so. She did mention the accent succulent plant was a bit showy, and that generally speaking accent plants should be just that, an accent, and not steal the show ... however, my love of color and texture won out, and I chose this little cactus to be the co-star for our niche!

—Nancy Smeets



Photo by David Williams

2018

July

July 14, 2018 – Oxnard, California

Oxnard Bonsai Club: At the Obon Festival: A Gathering of Joy. Oxnard Buddhist Temple, 250 South “H” Street, Oxnard, CA 93030. For details, see ad this page or call (805) 483-5948.

August

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 or contact Bob Shimon at (707) 884-4126 or shimon@mcn.org.

September

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. 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/>

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. Visit club website at www.motherlodebonsai.org.

October

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.

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 Mitsuyasan 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.

OBON FESTIVAL
• A Gathering of Joy •

FREE ADMISSION!

Saturday, July 14, 2018

• • • • •

- 1:00 PM Oxnard Bonsai Club
- 2:15 PM Sasaki Kenpo Karate
- 3:00 PM Fuji Music
- 3:30 PM Dharma Service (in the temple)
- 4:00 PM West LA Taiko
- 4:30 PM Cosplay
- 5:00 PM Togen Daiko
- 6:00 PM *Bon Odori-1*
- 7:15 PM Togen Daiko
- 7:30 PM *Bon Odori-2*
- 8:15 PM Benefit Drawing

Oxnard Buddhist Temple
250 South “H” St. Oxnard, CA 93030, (805) 483-5948
www.oxnardbuddhisttemple.org
Exhibits | Demonstration | Cultural Activities

Map: 2nd St., 3rd St., 250 South “H” St. Oxnard, Ca 93030 (805) 483-5948