



Conejo Valley Bonsai Society

A member of the Golden State Bonsai Federation 

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CVBS on the Web

(Click on name to visit Web site.)

Conejo Valley Bonsai Society

CVBS CaféPress Store

CVBS Online Bonsai Gallery

Other Bonsai Groups

(Click on name to visit Web site.)

Golden State Bonsai Federation

American Bonsai Society

Bonsai Club of Santa Barbara

California Aiseki Kai

Descanso Bonsai Society

Dai Ichi Bonsai Kai

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Sansul-Kai of So. Cal.

Santa Anita Bonsai Society

South Coast Bonsai Association

San Diego Bonsai Club

President's Message

Happy New Year & Best Wishes for 2012

By Marj Branson

2012 is stacking up to be a busy bonsai year. We would like to introduce you to a number of programs we are focusing on:

CVBS Demonstration Program

As in past years, we have invited demonstrators to nearly half of our 2012 meetings—five out of eleven, excluding the annual Holiday Potluck. (Please see the program schedule on page 2.) Our demonstrator in February will be Bob Pressler. He will be talking about bonsai soils and transplanting. This is the lead into Spring and a good time to start thinking about which of your trees need to be transplanted. Bob will give us pointers on how to best do this.

Please note that if there is a particular bonsai topic that you would like to see covered in a future demonstration, please bring it up at our January meeting and maybe we can have the material covered in a later demo. Suggest it in the business meeting, mention it to Program Chair Debbie Irvin, to me, or any officer or board member.

CVBS Workshops

The Bonsai Basics Workshops for beginners have been suspended, but the regular workshops, which are for every one of all skill levels, will continue in the New Year. On these nights, bring your trees, tools, wire, and other supplies you will need. (The club has a limited supply of wire for sale, but we do not inventory all sizes.) However, we would like to introduce an occasional half-hour program during the workshops covering specific topics such as wiring, maintaining junipers, maybe plucking and trimming pines, etc. We will discuss this program at our January meeting—please bring up your bonsai areas of interest.

CVBS Mentoring Program

Membership Chair Larry Kimmelman initiated and developed this program, which is designed to connect members of any level of experience with other members who have more experience and expertise. Mentors will be volunteers, as will their "protégés." Our intention is to provide support and a learning opportunity for all members, and especially for novices and new members. If you are interested, please see article page 8, attend Larry's presentation at the January meeting, or contact Larry directly (see page 2 of any newsletter for his email link and phone).

Nursery Trips

Let's start the season off as early as we can. Please check your calendar now for your own availability, and then pick your nursery of preference, if any. Maybe do some online research about bonsai nurseries within driving distance of Conejo Valley. We will start setting up the calendar.

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President Marj Branson

Contact Us

(Click on E-mail)

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Conejo Valley Bonsai Society Meetings

Westlake Village City Hall
Community Room
31200 Oakcrest Drive
Westlake Village, CA 91361
7:30 PM – 9:00 PM
3RD Thursday of every month

Note: Bonsai Basics Classes & Workshops have been suspended (see page 1).

CVBS Programs

2012

A new CVBS Program: Mentoring, will be launched during the January business meeting. Bonsai Basics Classes and Workshops have been suspended indefinitely due to lack of participation.

January 19	7: 30 PM: Brief Meeting followed by Workshop— BRING YOUR TREES
February 16	7: 30 PM: Brief Meeting followed by DEMONSTRATION: Bob Pressler /Soils & Transplanting
March 15	7: 30 PM: Brief Meeting followed by Workshop— BRING YOUR TREES
April 19	7: 30 PM: Brief Meeting followed by DEMONSTRATION: Ted Matson / TBD
May 17	7: 30 PM: Brief Meeting followed by Workshop— BRING YOUR TREES
June 21	7: 30 PM: Brief Meeting followed by Workshop— BRING YOUR TREES
July 19	7: 30 PM: Brief Meeting followed by DEMONSTRATION: Kathy Benson / Crapemyrtle
August 16	7: 30 PM: Brief Meeting followed by Workshop— BRING YOUR TREES
September 20	7: 30 PM: Brief Meeting followed by DEMONSTRATION: Roy Nagatoshi / Critique for Show BRING TREES YOU PLAN TO EXHIBIT
October 6 – 7	9TH ANNUAL EXHIBITION Gardens of the World
October 18	7: 30PM : Brief Meeting followed by Workshop— BRING YOUR TREES
November 15	7: 30PM : Brief Meeting followed by DEMONSTRATION: Al Nelson / Oaks
December 10	HOLIDAY POTLUCK 7: 30 PM

Clean and Repot Hardy Evergreens

By Jim Barrett

Most hardy evergreen bonsai such as Japanese black pine and junipers may be repotted at this time. Wait until next month to pot for the first time from nursery can to bonsai pot.

Now is the time to clean and groom most bonsai. Black pine needles that are discolored because of age or disease may be removed.

Leave more needles on weak and low branch terminals, fewer on middle branches, and fewer yet on upper growth. How many you leave depends on the age and health of the tree. All terminal buds should be fat, healthy, and beginning to grow this month.

Slow release fertilizers such as one of the Osmocote formulas, bone meal, blood meal, cottonseed meal, or any of the rapeseed pellets may be applied now. It takes a while for the organic fertilizers to break down and become available to the plant. Wait another month or so before you use liquid chemical fertilizers.

Blooming bonsai, such as ume, apple, plum, and wisteria can be moved to show pots at this time, providing they are already in bonsai pots.

Prune all deciduous trees, removing heavy overgrown branches and twigs—especially in the upper areas of the tree. Upper-story branches tend to grow unnoticed during the year and now is a good time to trim or remove them.

If you are into making cuttings, these older branches that are removed may take root. I use a rooting medium of 80% perlite (sponge rock) and 20% peat moss. Drench the rooting medium with a good fungicide such as benomyl.

Deciduous tree branches are fairly flexible now and can be wired. If you are using copper wire, make sure it has been annealed. Think about paper wrapping heavier wires before applying them to Japanese maple and other tender bark trees.

When you are finished cleaning and pruning your trees, spray them with a good dormant oil spray such as Ortho's volck oil. You may want to combine it with Ortho's lime sulphur dormant spray. One is for bugs; the other is basically a fungicide. Follow directions on the labels and cover your soil and pot with plastic or a towel. Lime sulphur will stain the pot if not washed off.

Don't forget to choose your show trees for this year's show. Detail wiring is a tedious and boring chore, but is a must if you want your trees ready to exhibit. You'll be glad you did it.

We are coming into prime potting and re-potting time. From now until April, try to get all of your trees that need it repotted.

If you need pots, ask around, supply seems good for both used and new ones. If you haven't done so, get your soil mix prepared and stored. I use a trash can with a tight lid.

Put your bonsai in a sunny location where it will be admired for its winter look and enjoy it. 🌳



Jim Barrett

Refreshments New Year Volunteers

Jill Peters

It's a New Year and we are in desperate need of new-year resolutions to bring refreshment to Conejo Valley Bonsai Society meetings in 2012! Please, everyone, pitch in to surprise us with creative choices for Eats/Sweets and Cold Drinks.

Ken Martin and I are starting us off with January's fare. And the volunteer list will go around at the meeting—please sign up to get us through Spring! Thanks and here's to a good bonsai year!

2012 Refreshments

	Cold Drinks	Eats / Sweets
Jan.	Ken Martin	Jill Peters
Feb.	Fr. Tom Davis	Dave Williams
March	Volunteer Needed	Volunteer Needed
April	Volunteer Needed	Volunteer Needed
May	Volunteer Needed	Volunteer Needed
June	Volunteer Needed	Volunteer Needed

CVBS Membership

We Are an Open Society—Come Join Us!

By Larry Kimmelman

Whether you are a visitor to our website, a reader of our newsletter, a guest at a monthly meeting, or have already decided to join our club, there are effectively no barriers to entry. Annual dues are \$25 for one, \$30 for couples.

Our monthly meetings are held on the third Thursday of every month, starting at 7:30 PM, in the Westlake Village City Hall (located at 31200 Oakcrest

Drive, Westlake Village, CA 91361). Starting this month, we also offer a mentoring program (see article, page 8).

To join our club, please bring your check (made out payable to the Conejo Valley Bonsai Society) to our next monthly meeting, or mail it to: Larry Kimmelman, CVBS Membership Chair, 2727 Autumn Ridge Drive, Thousand Oaks, CA 91362. 🌳

Jim Barrett: Bonsai Pot Guru

By Ken Martin

Bonsai master and bonsai potter Jim Barrett delivered an informative and entertaining lecture on bonsai pots at the Conejo Valley Bonsai Society's October 2011 meeting. He brought about a dozen bonsai pots of various shapes and sizes from his own collection to illustrate his comments.

One of the first things bonsai enthusiasts need to know about their pots is where and how they originate, Barrett explained. Prior to around the 1920s, most bonsai pots were imported from China to Japan. In the 1920s, the Japanese started making their own pots, at first copying Chinese pots then later designing their own.

Lack of modern freight transportation technology meant that early on a pottery kiln had to be situated near sources of clay, water, and fuel (meaning wood during those early days). As a source dried up (water) or was depleted (trees for wood, useable clay), the owners moved their kilns to be closer to new sources of material, water, and wood.

Kilns in Japan

Presently there are five major kiln areas in Japan, the most famous of which is the Tokoname area. A well-known kiln in this area is Yamaaki. (Yamaaki translates as "fall color by a spring.") Barrett showed the club members a couple of Yamaaki pots. Tokoname pots that are good enough to be exported to the U.S. always will have a quality control acceptance chop on it.

The name or chop on the bottom of a Japanese pot is almost always the name of the kiln, not the potter. This chop has a large influence on the pot's value.

Pots with protruding "buttons" on their outer surface are called tycho or drum pots (see photos facing page).

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Jim Barrett (top right) shows a shallow, oval Japanese pot. Two drainage and four wire holes in bottom (detail above—Jim's finger is through one of the drainage holes; note the price). Barrett also showed a square pot with rounded corners (above right); it has one drainage hole (Jim has his finger in this one, too) and four holes for anchoring wires (one in each corner). A round pot (above right) has three drainage holes (the large ones) and three wire holes; the price is visible center left. These three pots illustrate some of many types and shapes of bonsai pots.

The pot at left shows a designed scribed into the clay while the blue pot above it is hand painted.

Photos by Shig Hayashi



(Continued from page 4)

These buttons are added after the pot has been thrown. A drum pot needs to be used with an especially striking or bold bonsai so the buttons don't detract from the tree.

Among Chinese clays, Yixing clay is notable because it usually has a purple cast to it. Barrett brought an example of Chinese Yixing pottery.

Another Japanese kiln area is Yokoi-shi. Barrett says the pots from this area are not the high quality as the Tokoname pots.

Barrett then showed a series of slides pointing out the features of various Japanese pots such as colors, textures, cloud feet, bands around the center of the pot, etc. Also in the slides were pic-

tures of pots being formed in a Japanese shop where molds were used for the outer shape of the pot while the inside of the pot was formed manually by a scraping tool.

As a potter himself, Barrett said the clays used today are produced in formulae, each formulae designed to produce specific characteristics.

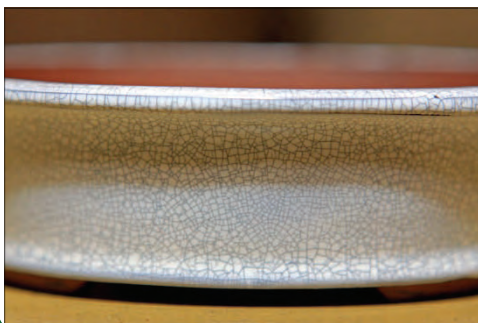


Examples of "chops" on the bottom of pots (top right, right, and below right). A chop from a quality kiln can add significant value to a pot. The second chop on the pot above may be an acceptance chop on a Tokoname pot.

This indicates it is good enough to export to the United States.

Two types of tycho or drum pots (left). The "buttons" are added after the pot is thrown. It takes a special tree with a lot of interest not to be upstaged by a drum pot.

Four different treatments of pot texture, glaze, top and bottom edges, as well as feet (right and bottom). Note the scribed "columns" on the pot at right (also note the price—good pots are not inexpensive). Observe the different methods of "sculpting" the upper lip (bottom right and below); actual turning out profile and sculpted. The crackled glaze (bottom left) adds interest to a pot with simple lines.



To All Southern California Bonsai Enthusiasts: 2012 National Exhibition

By Ted Matson

As you may know, Bill Valavanis will be staging the third U.S. National Bonsai Exhibition on the weekend of June 9-10, 2012. This event will take place at a new venue, The Fair and Expo Center, in Rochester, New York. I was lucky to be able to attend the last exhibit in 2010, and was very impressed by the variety and quality of the trees. However, what also struck me was the noticeable absence of trees from Southern California. (Larry Ragle was the lone entry.)

I'm as much a reason for this as anyone. In past years, I've been reluctant to participate in this exhibit, mostly due to logistical concerns over transporting trees across the country. However, after working out many of the bugs in the two prior events and also offering to provide a refrigerated truck specifically for our trees for this upcoming show, I think Bill has made it a more practical endeavor.

I know that there are many excellent trees in Southern California worthy of entry into this exhibit. There are also substantial cash prizes to be won. But, most of all, I really feel that for this to be considered a true national exhibition, it needs the support of bonsai folks from everywhere, including here. And, I'd like to help make that happen.

For this reason, I've offered to be a driver of the truck to haul trees across country to and from New York. With this letter, I extend an invitation to Southern

California bonsaiists who'd like to enter a tree in the U.S. National Exhibition to select their trees, submit their entries, and start preparing for the competition. For rules and to submit an entry, go to Bill's website at <http://www.internationalbonsai.com>, and follow the link to the "2012 US National Bonsai Exhibition" where you'll be able to learn everything about the event. Entry deadline is April 15.

In transporting these precious artworks, I will take every precaution to ensure that all trees are cared for along the way and during the return. However, the one thing I will not be able to do is to prepare, pack/crate and label your tree, along with the necessary stands, accents, etc., for your display. Each individual must be responsible for ensuring that your bonsai are pest/disease free and packed/padded/crated to protect branches, twigs and pots, while also allowing for watering. We'll arrange logistics for collecting/returning entries once they're identified.

If you have any questions about the event, your best bet is to go to Bill's website. For questions about the transport, don't hesitate to contact me, either via email at tmatson@earthlink.net, or via phone at (626) 398-8412.

I'm hoping for a very enthusiastic response to this invitation. I hope

**VISIT THE
U.S. NATIONAL BONSAI
EXHIBITION**

**See Museum-Quality Bonsai
Enjoy Bonsai Fellowship**



**3RD U.S. NATIONAL BONSAI
EXHIBITION**

many of you bonsai enthusiasts will join me in bringing a strong California presence to the 3rd U.S. National Bonsai Exhibition. 🏠

President's Message

Happy New Year & Best Wishes for 2012

(Continued from page 1)

Exhibitions and Shows

Take in as many exhibitions and shows as you can. We include announcements of other club and association activities in our newsletter (always check the last page). Also see the [Golden State Bonsai Federation's website](#) and click on "Calendar" to see what they have listed.

If you hear of an upcoming activity that you do not see listed in the most recent CVBS newsletter, please call it to our atten-

tion so we can include it in the next issue. The easiest thing is to send an email to our newsletter editor, David Whiteside—just go to page 2 of any issue and under David's name, click the email link. (Were you aware that our newsletter has many interactive links? Look for them in this issue as well as past and future newsletters.)

Please remember, our club is for its members. Keep us in the loop if there is a bonsai activity you would like us to see.

See you Thursday the 19th at 7:30 PM. There will be a business meeting and then it is workshop night—bring your trees! 🏠

Club Member To Moderate New Bonsai Study Group in Conejo Valley

By David E. Whiteside

There is a new learning opportunity in our neighborhood. Long-time Conejo Valley Bonsai Society member Shig Hayashi has organized a “Conifer Study Group,” which will have its first meeting this month. It is open to all, including members of the Conejo Valley Bonsai Society, at no charge.

Shig, who for many years served as our photographer as well as an informal source of knowledge about bonsai in general and conifers in particular, tells us that this Study Group will meet on the 3rd Sunday of each month, from 12:30 PM – 4:30 PM. It will gather at the California Bonsai Studio, 4015 N. Moorpark Road, Thousand Oaks. (If rained out, the Study Group will meet the next—meaning the 4th—Sunday of the month.)

One of the distinguishing characteristics of this group is that there is no instructor as such. Shig is serving as the coordinator and moderator. He envisions the Conifer Study Group as a gathering of equals—everyone will be a

What: Conifer Study Group
Who: Shig Hayashi, Moderator
When: 12:30 – 4:30 PM
Date: 3rd Sunday of the Month
First Meeting: January 15
Where:
 California Bonsai Studio
 4015 N. Moorpark Rd.
 Thousand Oaks, CA

student and all from sophomores through graduate students are welcome. “I am willing to provide assistance,” he says. “Hopefully other participants will step forward and volunteer their knowledge and assistance.”

Participants are encouraged to bring their trees and work on them with fellow bonsai hobbyists, Shig says. “Each member should feel free to work by him/herself or request assistance from other participants.”

Important things Shig wants all participants to keep in mind:

- The owner of a tree has the final say on what is done to the tree and how it will be styled.
- Bonsai students from different schools/instructors can coexist and learn from each other.
- Participants who do not have a professional instructor are welcome to learn from those who have more experience.

For its first meeting, which is on Sunday, January 15, 2012 from 12:30 PM – 4:30 PM, the Study Subject will be grafting.

Shig will demonstrate his method of scion grafting black pines, but he encourages other Group participants to come prepared to discuss and/or demonstrate other methods of grafting. He asks that if interested, please email him at shayashi99@hotmail.com.

Also, there will be a potting station available for everyone’s use. And Stud Group members may bring any species tree to work on—it doesn’t necessarily have to be a conifer. 🌲

CVBS Niche Display

Our Niche Display Program Is for Members of All Levels

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

2012 Niche Displays	
Jan.	Ken Martin
Feb.	Volunteer Needed
March	Volunteer Needed
April	Gracy Sy
May	Larry Kimmelman
June	Eric Schrader

2012

January

January 14 – 15 / Oakland, California

Baikoen Bonsai Kenkyukai: 48th Annual Winter Silhouettes Show, Ayres Hall, Ls Angeles Aboretum, 301 North Baldwin Avenue, Arcadia, CA. Show Saturday and Sunday. Reception Saturday Evening 6:30 – 9:00 PM. For more information, please contact Lindsay Shiba, Show Chairman in the evening at (909) 473-0099.

January 15 / Thousand Oaks, California

Conifer Study Group: Grafting. Shig Hayashi, Moderator. 12:30 – 4:30 PM. California Bonsai Studio, 4015 North Moorpark Road, Thousand Oaks, CA. For more information, email Shig at shayashi99@hotmail.com.

January 28 – 29 / Oakland, California

Bay Area Bonsai Associates: 31st Annual Bonsai Exhibition at the Lakeside Park (Lake Merritt) Garden Center, 666 Bellevue Avenue. Show hours are Saturday, 5 – 9 PM and a demonstration by Ryan Neil starts at 6:30 PM, followed by a raffle of the demonstration tree. Sunday hours are 10 AM – 4 PM. A plant sale (including bonsai related items such as pots, tools, soils, wires, books, etc.) will be continuous both days. Admission is free. For more information contact John Roehl at bigbluemoon@comcast.net or 707-827-3206.

February

February 4 – 6 / Santa Nella, California

California Shohin Seminar 2012 at the Hotel de Oro. Registration forms and information will be available starting October 30, 2011. Visit the website at www.calshohin.org or email calshohin@yahoo.com.

February 25 – 26 / San Marino, California

GSBF Bonsai-A-Thon XVI at The Huntington Library and Botanical Gardens, 1151 Oxford Road. This is the annual fundraiser for the GSBF Collection at The Huntington. Admission to the event and to the Huntington Gardens is free with Bonsai-A-Thon “Early Bird” Registration. Hours are 7:30 AM – 4:30 PM, both days. A pancake breakfast, a tour hosted by Jim Folsom (Director of the Garden), demonstrations, lunch, bonsai exhibits, large sales area, raffle, and an auction will all be featured. For more information contact Marge Blasingame, 626-579-0420 or margeblasingame@att.net.

February 25 – 26 / Oakland, California

GSBF Bonsai Garden at Lake Merritt: Mammoth Fundraiser, 2012 at the Lakeside Garden Center, 666 Bellevue Avenue. On Saturday an auction of fabulous bonsai will be from 1 – 4 PM, with preview at 12 Noon. Sunday hours are from 9 AM – 4 PM and will feature demonstrations by Collection Curator, Kathy Shaner and Team, many vendors, a large consignment sale of bonsai and bonsai related items, and several raffle drawings throughout the day. For general information email www.bonsailakemerritt@gmail.com, visit www.gsbf-bonsai.org/lake-merritt/NewHome.htm, or phone Randi Keppeler 650-598-0127.

April

April 11 – 15, 2012 / Garden Grove, California

California Bonsai Society: 55th Convention and Show at the Crown Plaza Anaheim Resort, 12021 Harbor Blvd., and starring the iron men of Naka, Frank Goya, Harry Hirao, Shig Miya, Ben Oki, and Richard Ota. Also featuring Tomohiro Masumi, Ryan Neil, and Cheryl Manning, Kenji Miyata, David Nguy, Kathy Shaner, and the members of CBS. There will be workshops, demonstrations, auctions, drawings, a huge vendor area and prizes & awards for early registrations. For registration information contact Elizabeth Partch at elizabethpartch@yahoo.com.

New Program Announcement

Mentor/Protégé Program Rolled Out in January

Beginning with our January meeting, CVBS is implementing a new, voluntary program open to all Society members: Mentoring. The Member-Mentor program will enable hands-on coaching and guidance for members who are interested in establishing a relationship with a knowledgeable, experienced Mentor. Questions and discussions concerning design, style, and other related bonsai training (including firsthand work on your trees) will be covered at monthly meetings with designated Mentor/Member (aka Mentor/Protégé) teams. There is no extra cost for this program, and members can decide individually if this program is appropriate for their own needs. The Mentors

will be selected from volunteers—and members who choose to participate are asked to remember their mentor is a volunteer.

We will have a Q & A at our January 15 meeting. A sign-up sheet will be circulated for those interested in getting started as Protégés. Anyone wishing to volunteer as a Mentor should contact Larry Kimmelman or David Whiteside, who as Membership Chair and Education Chair, respectively, are in charge of the Mentor Program.

We believe this will help us improve our knowledge of the bonsai art form. 🌱

—Larry Kimmelman