Conejo Valley Bonsai Society

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
7:30 PM – 9:00 PM

President's Message

Bring Swap Meet Material

By Marj Branson

Last month we had Kathy Benson do a demonstration on an olive. Kathy passed on many hints on designing and maintaining the olive. (See page 6 for details.) She also brought in before and after pictures of some of her olives. Thanks Kathy.

For the month of August we are having a workshop and our annual Swap Meet, so don't forget to bring in your bonsai material that you would like to sell to fellow members. And don't forget to come prepared to pick up some choice pieces.

It was suggested that we have another swap meet before the end of the year during one of our other workshop evenings. Your thoughts please—we will discuss on Thursday.

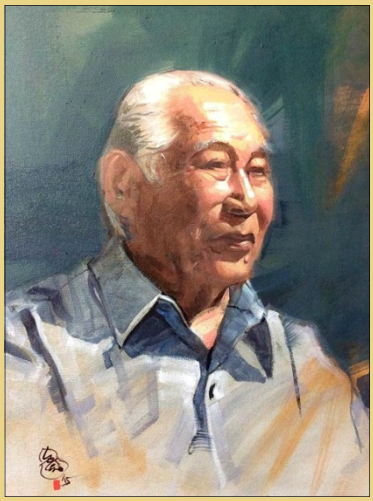
We have received a reminder from the Golden State Bonsai Federation about its upcoming 38th Annual Convention the end of October in Riverside. They are looking for bonsai-related items for their raffle and/or auction. We will discuss this at our August meeting so please give it some thought.

Our July nursery trip was to Fuji Bonsai Nursery. We arrived just before noon, so we had some time to ask questions of Roy Nagatoshi, the owner. Our fellow club member Rick Naber attends classes at the nursery. He was a big help to us in finding where the trees were placed within the nursery and just walking around and identifying a variety of trees. Many of us came away with something—it was a good day out for all! (For details and photos, see page 5.)

President Marj Branson

With our hot and humid days, watch your trees. Bugs, wire, and water are all concerns. (See Barrett's Bonsai Tips, page 3.)

See you Thursday, August 20th.



Harry Hirao

March 12, 1917 – July 23, 2015

Bonsai master Harry Hirao died on Thursday, July 23. He was 98 years old. He was at home with his family.

Widely known in particular for his enthusiastic collecting and development of California junipers as bonsai, he was active in the bonsai and suiseki community until near the end of his life. Services were held August 4 at the Orange County Buddhist Church in Anaheim.

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CVBS Programs

2015	
If you are interested in the CVBS Mentoring Program, please see Larry Kimmelman for more information & applications to participate.	
~~January 15~~	7:30 PM: Brief Meeting followed by Workshop—**BRING YOUR TREES**
~~February 19~~	7:30 PM: Brief Meeting followed by **DEMONSTRATION: Ryan Nichols** / Back to the Roots Part II
~~March 19~~	7:30 PM: Brief Meeting followed by **DEMONSTRATION: Ted Matson** / Zelkova
~~April 16~~	7:30 PM: Brief Meeting followed by Workshop—**BRING YOUR TREES**
~~May 2~~	10:00 AM — 5:00 PM **Spring Show** Camarillo Public Library
~~May 21~~	7:30 PM: Brief Meeting followed by **DEMONSTRATION: Jim Barrett** / Member Tree Critique
~~June 18~~	7:30 PM: Brief Meeting followed by Workshop—**BRING YOUR TREES**
~~July 16~~	7:30 PM: Brief Meeting followed by **DEMONSTRATION: Kathy Benson** / Olive
August 20	7:30 PM: Brief Meeting followed by Workshop and **Swap Meet**—**BRING YOUR TREES**
September 17	7:30 PM: Brief Meeting followed by Workshop—**BRING YOUR TREES**
October 3 – 4	**12TH ANNUAL EXHIBITION** Gardens of the World
October 15	7:30PM : Brief Meeting followed by Workshop—**BRING YOUR TREES**
November 19	7:30PM : Brief Meeting followed by Workshop—**BRING YOUR TREES**
December 17	**HOLIDAY POTLUCK** 7:30 PM

Barrett's Bonsai Tips

Maples Battle the Season

By Jim Barrett

Ahh! Good old summer. Between the heat and the not so good water, most maples (at least mine) look pretty tired.

If the maples are healthy, consider leaf pruning them towards the end of this month. Remove every leaf – large, small, healthy or shriveled. Leaving some or pruning in stages only makes the tree try to survive on what is left. I don't recommend leaf pruning red or lace leaf varieties, but mountain or trident maples may be defoliated. This will help create a tighter inner ramification and allow the tree to develop another set of fine twigs. Also, with the first cold snap, the leaves should turn color. Though such defoliation is done in the spring in Japan, for us here in southern California, leaf pruning then only leads to the new leaves browning out in summer. Always remember that defoliation is stressful for the tree, and should only be done if the tree is totally healthy.

If you candle pruned your black pines in June or July, you should have many new shoots appearing at the base of the cut-off candles. Selectively remove those shoots that are growing vertically off horizontal branches, leaving one or two side shoots and one for the new terminal of each branch. What you want to promote is a fine network of twigs.

On vertical branches in the upper areas and the top of the tree, remove the center candles, leaving one, two, or three side shoots. On more mature trees and more intricate networks of twigs and branches, leave fewer new shoots.

In October or November, you will want to remove some of the new growth you left this summer. More about this next month.

Jim Barrett

Think about rotating your trees – especially if they are displayed against a wall or fence. Turning them periodically will even out the growth and may prevent dieback.

Some trees are entering a semi-dormant period now and, for this reason, seem to need less water. Don't think that something is wrong unless the tree shows signs of distress. Heat buildup in soil above 80 or 90 degrees tends to slow growth. This is natural. Do not water if the soil is still wet. It takes practice and knowledge of your plants' needs to keep them healthy and happy. Fortunately most plants survive most mistakes.

If you fertilize this month, do so sparingly. I recommend a very diluted liquid fertilizer low in nitrogen if you must fertilize.

Spraying fungicide to control powdery mildew or needle cast may also kill beneficial fungi present in soils. It's not a bad idea to cover soil surfaces with plastic or a portable shield to keep drips and spray off of the soil.

Wire that was put on earlier this winter or spring should be checked – especially on deciduous trees. Remove all wire and reapply it only on those branches that do not hold their position and shape.

No repotting except emergency repotting until this fall.

Refreshments

Help Needed!

At press time, we were still looking for volunteers for September, October, and November. Both Cold Drinks and Eats/Sweets are needed for all three months.

Please contact Grace Sy and join the Refreshments Corner!

Contact Grace at wkhlady@yahoo.com or call (818) 915-8545. Thanks everyone!

2015 Refreshments

	Cold Drinks	Eats / Sweets
Aug.	Lydia Su	Marj Branson
Sept.	Volunteer Needed	Volunteer Needed
Oct.	Volunteer Needed	Volunteer Needed
Nov.	Volunteer Needed	Volunteer Needed
Dec.	Annual Holiday Potluck	

CVBS Membership

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).

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.

July Niche

Prize-Winning Trash Pile Boxwood

Editor's note: Rick Naber provided the niche display at our club's July meeting. The boxwood he displayed won the 3rd place ribbon in the advanced section of the Descanso Bonsai Society's annual exhibition in June of this year. Here is what he says about this prize-winning bonsai.

I found this tree in a trash pile at a construction site in Huntington Beach six or seven years ago. It was the middle of the summer and I picked up about eight boxwoods, two of which survived. I pulled them out of the trash, bare-rooted them, soaked them in Super Thrive overnight, and planted some in the ground and put some in nursery cans, including this one. I did a lot of wiring early on, but since then it's been mostly clip and grow. I have about 10 boxwoods and foliar feed them with a weak solution of Miracle Grow three times a week. Now I'm looking at filling in some areas. I want to keep the pads but open them up, create a more open and natural look.

–Rick Naber

Photos by Norm Nason

Library

Take Advantage of Our CVBS Library Offerings!

Larry Kimmelman

From John Naka's classic *Bonsai Techniques* to Bonsai Boon's DVDs on styling, pruning, and repotting, we offer a wide array of library materials to enhance and improve your understanding of the art of bonsai. We have *Bonsai International* magazines that date back to 1974 as well as Walter Pall's gallery of 8,000 bonsai tree images on DVD. Interested in suiseki? Take a look at *Suiseki Viewing Stones—An American Perspective* by Melba Tucker. And be sure to check out our novice bonsai books that help newcomers build a strong bonsai foundation.

Members can borrow our library materials for a month at a time. There is no charge and all we ask is that borrowed books and DVDs be returned at the next club meeting.

Club Event

Group Visits Roy Nagatoshi's Fuji Bonsai Nursery

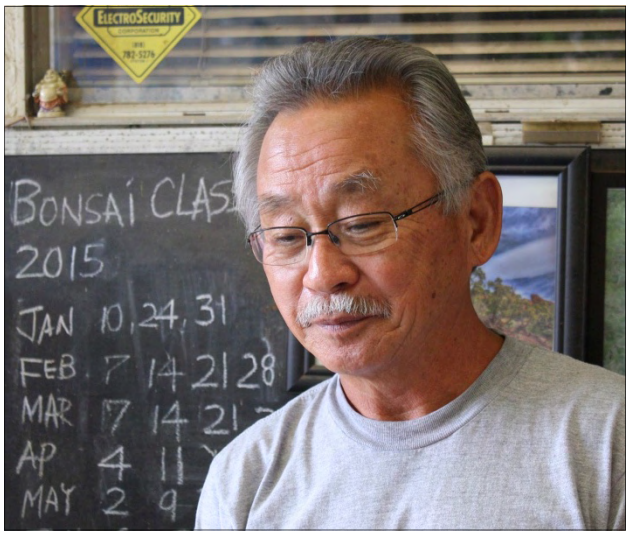
On Saturday July 18, a small group of Conejo Valley Bonsai Society members visited Roy Nagatoshi's Fuji Bonsai Nursery in Sylmar. The group included Ann Lofquist, Ken Martin, Marj Branson, Ken Fuentes, and Rick Naber. Several members purchased trees.

Ken Martin bought a shohin black pine, Marj purchased two gingkoes and one foemina juniper, and Ann bought two shimpaku whips for grafting plus a large pot. "I also brought two California junipers for Roy to critique," Ann says.

For his part, Ken Martin explains that he bought "a very young, grown from seed, Mikawa black pine. It will take several years in a pond basket to develop a decent nebari and lower trunk."

All of the trees Marj picked up are destined to be added to to existing forest plantings. "I like forests," she says. "Fuji nursery has a good group of one type of tree to select from to make a forest."

Marj plans to replant her gingko forest this winter or spring. She notes that the foemina juniper she purchased at Fuji is in addition to two she acquired earlier this year during our field trip to House of Bonsai. "Fuji has some small ones, so I got one," she says.



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Overall, the group felt it was a good trip, although Ken Martin confesses that he "kind of felt guilty—Roy's got to make a living and we didn't buy too much."

"It had been some time since I had been there," Marj says. "There was a good selection of trees to pick from. I also found the stock trees have been trimmed and maintained so it is good bonsai stock to work from. The front of the nursery has many bonsai in bonsai pots, of all sizes but mostly stunning!"

—David Whiteside

Roy Nagatoshi (top).

Ken Fuentes, Rick Naber, Marj Branson, and Ken Martin (back to camera) examine a tree (left).

Ken Martin, Marj Branson, and Rick Naber in discussion (bottom left).

A small sample of Fuji's stock (below).

Photos by Ann Lofquist

Club Program

Benson Demonstrates Olive Tree Bonsai

By Ken Martin

Kathy Benson, who did a demonstration on olive trees at the Conejo Valley Bonsai Society's July meeting, says she has been involved in bonsai for "quite a while." She currently belongs to the Descanso and California Bonsai Societies. This year she is co-chair of the bonsai display at the Golden State Bonsai Federation's 38th Annual Convention in Riverside in the fall.

She teaches and frequently demonstrates bonsai in the Southern California area. We have been very fortunate to have her demonstrate for our club several times in the past.

Olive trees are a favorite of Kathy's. They are hard to kill and survive well in the heat and in dry soil; they adapt to a wide variety of soil mixes; they can be grown into a nice tree from just a bare stick; they do okay in our heat and with our not-so-good water. They can be worked on almost any time of the year, even in summer heat. Kathy uses organic fertilizers, but says olives are not picky.

One small downside is the olive doesn't heal from cuts well, so "try to make your scars interesting because they'll be there a long time," Kathy said. For example, she has killed branches by girdling them and then breaking them off to get a more natural looking scar.

Photos by Norm Nason

Kathy Benson (above) did a demonstration on olive bonsai at the CVBS July meeting.

One of Kathy's favorite olive bonsai (left) shows how striking they can be.

When treating a cut scar there are a several things that can be done to speed up the slow process of healing. An application of cut paste immediately after the cut is made will keep it from drying out, which speeds living tissue to roll over the cut. It also helps to get rid of the ridge at the edge of the cut so the living tissue will roll over the area easier. Kathy has found that irritating the skin once a year in the spring so some green is exposed around the rim next to the scar also helps.

It's also worth noting that branches are not very flexible once they reach ½ inch or so. After that, she uses the cut-and-grow method for movement.

Kathy has one tree of a unique variety that attracts whiteflies. It also got black fungus. Other than that, an occasional scale she removes by hand is the only pest problem she has.

(Continued on page 7)

(Continued from page 6)

She said the best way to get a big base is to plant the tree in the ground and let it grow, cutting back the growth as required. It may not do very much the first year, but after a few years you should have a tree with a nice nebari. This works well with olives and pomegranates as well as other trees.

Kathy has a growing bed where she plants trees to develop faster. It is 8 feet by 3 feet by 1 foot high made of 2 x 6 lumber and rat wire on the bottom. She likes this raised bed as she doesn't have to put her face on the ground to see how the trees are doing.

Before working on the tree, Kathy discussed her plan (above).

Kathy revealed more of the base by removing soil (left).

The finished tree (bottom).

Olive trees generally are wider than tall, so Kathy said they should be styled in an oak tree or olive tree style with a softer top rather than like pines.

The olive tree she brought to style was a small-leafed seedling. First she looked at the nebari and upper root area. Olives easily sprout off the base and lower trunk, which is an important feature. At times, they temporarily may look like porcupines, but this does enlarge the base, she pointed out.

On the demonstration tree, she deleted some branches but left others to be sacrifice branches and thicken the base. Kathy said she was not going to trim this tree for a show tomorrow, so she left these sacrifice branches to thicken the trunk, which will result in a nice show tree in about five years. When asked, she said this tree will definitely be shohin-sized (less than 25 cm or 10 inches from base to apex). There is a nice back branch that will make the opposite side the front by definition.

Kathy generously donated the tree to the club so it will be auctioned off at our holiday party. For the new owner: Kathy left two branches on the tree to fatten the lower trunk. The larger one can definitely come off in a year or so.

This was a very informative demonstration with lots of practical advice for taking care of olive bonsai.

Coming Events (click on the hyperlinks to visit Web sites or send e-mails)

2015

August

August 22 – 23, 2015 / Santa Rosa, California

Redwood Empire Bonsai Society (REBS): 32nd Annual show, at the Santa Rosa Veterans building, 1351 Maple Ave. 10 AM – 5 PM Saturday and 10 AM – 4 PM Sunday with demonstrations both days at 1 PM by club sensei Kathy Shaner. Large exhibit of members' trees, vendors' sales room, members' sales room, raffle, and silent auction. Free admission, parking, and treats. Contact Bob Shimon @ 707-884-4126 or shimon@mcn.org

September

September 23 – 27, 2015 / Santa Ana, California

Kofu Bonsai Kai: 2015 Bonsai Fest at the Bowers Museum "The Bonsai Tradition: Cultural Arts of Japan" – John M. Lee Court, 2002 N. Main St., Hours are 10 AM – 4 PM daily. Featuring bonsai trees of the members of Kofu Bonsai Kai and special presentations by noted speakers (names, dates and times to be announced). Free to Bowers Museum members or with paid museum admission. Final speaker and presentation schedules will be posted on the Bowers Museum Website: http://www.bowers.org/ and Kofu Bonsai Kai: http://www.kofukai.org/. Questions? Call the museum at (714) 567-3695 or email Michael Walsh at michaeljwalsh@outlook.com.

September 25 – 27, 2015 / Portland, Oregon

The Artisans Cup held at The Portland Art Museum. The Artisans Cup is the premier exhibition of American Bonsai. The event will also feature select artisans who are creating distinctive supporting elements such as ceramics, woodwork, tools, and more. For further information, visit our website at http://www.theartisanscup.com.

September 26 – 27, 2015 / Penryn, California

Sierra Bonsai Club: Club show in conjunction with Placer Buddhist Church's Annual Fall Food Festival. Hours are 11 AM – 4 PM Saturday and 11 AM to 4 PM Sunday. Bonsai demonstration by Scott Chadd in the afternoon, both days. For more information contact Robin Knittle at robin_knittle@yahoo.com or Gary Judd at juddbonsai@att.net or 916-622-8048.

September 26 – 27, 2015 / San Diego, California

San Diego Bonsai Club: 50th anniversary fall exhibition and sale of bonsai at Casa Del Prado, Room 101, Balboa Park. Hours are 10 AM – 5 PM with demonstrations at 11 AM and 1 PM daily. Free admission, donations are appreciated. Bonsai of various sizes and species plus other bonsai related items are for sale at attractive prices in club member's sale area. For more information visit www.sandiegobonsaiclub.com or contact Gary Jones via the website.

October

October 3 – 4, 2015 / Thousand Oaks, California

Conejo Valley Bonsai Society: 12th 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 at 11 AM (Saturday) and 2 PM (Sunday) in the Bandstand. Free Admission. For information, call Marj Branson at (805) 373-1330 or visit our web site at www.cvbs-bonsai.org.

October 29 – November 1, 2015 / Riverside, California

Golden State Bonsai Federation (GSBF) presents 2015 Convention 38 "Bonsai Fusion: Where Tradition Meets Innovation" at the Riverside Convention Center, 3637 Fifth Street near Main. Headliners: Bjorn Bjorholm and John Wang. Guest artists: David Nguy and Tak Shimazu. Demonstrations, seminars, critiques, workshops, benefit drawings, vendors, and much more. More information available at www.GSBF2015.com.

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 2015 calendar and let us know when you would like to present your display.

—Marj Branson

2015 Niche Displays	
August	Norm Nason
Sept.	Fr. Tom Davis
Oct.	Volunteer Needed
Nov.	Volunteer Needed