



conejo valley

BONSAI society

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A member of the Golden State Bonsai Federation 

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President's Message

Keeping Busy with CVBS

By Marj Branson

The Conejo Valley Bonsai Society has a busy program for our future bonsai meetings, thanks to the organizing efforts of Program Chair Nancy Smeets. (See page 2 for the details.) Our next meeting is on Thursday, March 15th.

At that meeting, bonsai master Ted Matson will demonstrate group plantings. Ted is the curator of the bonsai collections at the Huntington Library, Art Collections, and Botanical Gardens in San Marino. He succeeded the legendary Ben Oki, who recently passed away. (See In Memoriam, below.)

In addition to our rich roster of meeting programs, we also organize field trips. The first one for 2018 is April 21—just two days after our monthly meeting on the 19th. For this field trip, we plan to visit two bonsai nurseries: Fuji Bonsai Nursery in Sylmar and Kimura Bonsai Nursery in Northridge. These nurseries are owned by two of Southern California's most prominent bonsai masters—Fuji is owned by Roy Nagatoshi while Kimura belongs to Bob Pressler (who is a member of this club). We will plan the details at our March 15th meeting. Save the field trip date and put it on your calendar.



Marj Branson

Bonsai Shows

Remember to take in as many as you can of the spring and summer bonsai club shows coming up. There is a list on page 6 of this newsletter.

Our own annual bonsai exhibition and demonstrations at the Gardens of the World in Thousand Oaks will be the weekend of October 6th and 7th. Keep this in mind when working on your future display trees.

Bonsai-A-Thon

Thanks to everyone for their help in contributing to a successful Bonsai-A-Thon weekend at the Huntington Gardens on February 24 – 25. Every year the Huntington organizes a beginners' class for children and adults on Saturday morning. The students for the class are recruited from the Huntington's own membership. The class is

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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)

In Memoriam

Bonsai Legend Ben Oki

The bonsai community was saddened to learn of the death of Japanese-American bonsai pioneer Ben Oki on Friday, February 23, 2018. He was born in Sacramento, California, in 1927.

It is said that when Ben Oki first saw a bonsai tree as a curious youngster of six, he asked his father what bonsai was. "It's something people do when they retire," his father explained. Luckily for the world of horticulture, Oki didn't wait

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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
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 [TENTATIVE] / TBD
November 15	7:30 PM: Brief Meeting followed by Workshop— BRING YOUR TREES
December 20	7:30 PM HOLIDAY POTLUCK, RAFFLE & AUCTION

Potting Chores This Month

By Jim Barrett

Azaleas that have not been repotted for two or more years may be repotted this month, especially if the plant is to be heavily pruned.

Wash all of the exhausted soil from the roots, making sure that you clean out all of the old soil directly under the base of the tree. Be careful of the fine feeder roots and do not let them dry out.

Several soil mixes are now being used. All provide excellent drainage with the ingredients tending to provide an acid reaction on the pH scale (pH 5 to 6 is recommended by Mr. Richard Ota).

Fertilizers such as cottonseed with bone meal and blood meal may be used. Use four parts cottonseed and one part bone meal to make a good, safe fertilizer for the promotion of blooms and good color. Stop feeding one month before



Jim Barrett

blooms appear. Repotting or potting for the first time:

- Black pine from nursery container to pot or pot-to-pot
- Trident maple from nursery container to pot or pot-to-pot
- Zelkova from nursery container to pot or pot-to-pot
- Beech, hornbeam, junipers, and Atlas cedar may all be potted or repotted now

If your elms, Japanese maples, pomegranates, etc., are leafing out, wait until this new growth hardens before repotting.

We should be feeding everything now. Use your favorite fertilizer.

Aphids are really multiplying at this time, especially on crab apples and quince. A good systemic insecticide should take care of them.

Refreshments

Everyone's Irish!

To all the Irish among us, Happy St. Patrick's Day! Our March meeting will be the 15th and Ken Martin and Mary Welz have volunteered to bring drinks and eats that evening.

We still need volunteers for cold beverages for our May and June meetings. For July we need someone to bring "eats." August, September, October, and November are all wide open for volunteers for both drinks and eats. Let me know what month you want to volunteer and what you would like to bring. Looking forward to hearing from you at refreshments@cvbs-bonsai.org. Let me know your preference and I'll do the rest.

See you at the next meeting.

—Denise Snavely

2018 Refreshments		
	Cold Drinks	Eats / Sweets
Mar.	Ken Martin	Mary Welz
April	Mel Carrillo	Steve Riley
May	Volunteer Needed	Dick Winston
June	Volunteer Needed	Denise Snavely
July	Ben Conway	Volunteer Needed
Aug.	Volunteer Needed	Volunteer Needed

Membership

Pay Dues Now: Save Your Subscription

I'm sorry to remind you that this will be the last Conejo Valley Bonsai Society newsletter you receive if your dues for 2018 are not paid by March 31. After that, your email address will be deleted from the distribution database.

It's still a bargain at \$25 for one person, \$30 for couples. That gets you a rich program of bonsai demonstrations, workshops, critiques, and activities as well as this award-winning newsletter.

Simply bring a check made payable to the Conejo Valley Bonsai Society to our next meeting or mail it to me, CVBS Membership Chair, 2727 Autumn Ridge Drive, Thousand Oaks, CA 91362.

—Larry Kimmelman

CVBS Membership

Interested in CVBS?

The Conejo Valley Bonsai Society 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

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	
March	Steve Riley
April	Mel Carrillo
May	Ken Martin
June	Nancy Smeets
July	David Whiteside
August	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.

Book of the Month

Practical Bonsai by Paul Lesniewicz and Hideo Kato

This little book packs a lot of information and provides a broad introduction to the art of bonsai. It is a good resource for beginners who may be trying to understand all the different aspects of bonsai, from tree selection to potting and care. It also includes many illustrations and pictures that explain key processes and provide examples of finished bonsai.

—Mike Blumenberg

President's Message (continued from page 1)

always popular, and this year was no exception as it was sold out, which is good to see. Hopefully this is an indication of our upcoming bonsai enthusiasts. CVBS members Ken Fuentes and Ken Martin helped teach the beginners' class this year.

The exhibition trees this year came from the Golden State Bonsai Federation and the Huntington collections. (The majority of the bonsai you see in the Huntington's bonsai courts belong to the gardens but many others belong to the GSBF.) Many of the trees are part of the exhibition near the Japanese garden. The bonsai on display are constantly changed. Be sure to check them out during your next visit to the Gardens.

This year as usual, Telleen/Jorgensen Director of the Botanical Gardens Jim Folsom led an entertaining and enlightening tour of the Chinese and Japanese gardens, reports CVBS member David Whiteside. Folsom revealed that in addition to many improvements scheduled for those two gardens, the Huntington now plans to add a new Korean garden.

Jim ended his tour at the Ben Oki Bonsai Nursery, where bonsai that are not on public display reside. At that point, he left the tour in the capable hands of Ted Matson, who delivered an impromptu talk about the ongoing efforts to refine and improve the bonsai collections. He showed attendees some very interesting advanced techniques now being employed in those efforts. If you are interested in learning more, there are opportunities to participate as volunteers in the bonsai nursery—see page 5 for details.

Crazy Weather

We have been having some crazy weather. The warm days have prompted the breaking out of many deciduous trees—and then we have nights that get down to freezing in some areas. Keep an eye on your trees so the new growth doesn't get frostbite. Spring-time leads to repotting, tree trimming, and just cleaning up your trees. (See Barrett's Bonsai Tips for more, page 3.)

See you Thursday, March 15th. 🌳

In Memoriam: Ben Oki (Continued from page 1)

that long to start.

In 1933, Ben moved to Japan, where he learned Japanese landscape and stone techniques. In 1950, he returned to the United States after graduating from Matsu Moto Business School. In addition to managing his own landscape gardening business, Ben studied bonsai under world master John Naka, and assisted him with demonstrations and meetings. Ben started teaching bonsai in 1958. He specialized in California juniper.

Oki was one of the internationally known bonsai masters, and played a key role at conventions by conducting workshops, demonstrations, and critique sessions. He was well known for his rugged, freeform style, fine detail work, fast wiring, and skillful tree-splitting techniques. For many years, Oki was curator of the Bonsai Collections at the Huntington Library, Art Collections, and Botanical Gardens in San Marino, California.

VERSO, the blog of the Huntington, notes that Oki devoted more than four decades to the art of bonsai and has received so many honors as a teacher that several prestigious awards bear

his name, including the Ben Oki International Design Award sponsored by the Bonsai Clubs International.

In 1989, according to VERSO, Los Angeles Consul General of Japan Seki Hiromoto honored Ben with a prestigious recognition of his “Dancing Dragon,” a collected California juniper. In 1991, the tree became a part of the North American Collection at the National Bonsai and Penjing Museum, United States National Arboretum in Washington, D.C. Ben’s 35-year-old hackberry is displayed as a part of the Pacific Rim Bonsai Collection.

Oki was a former vice president of the California Bonsai Society, and a program chairman of the Satsuki Society. Ben was also an active member of other bonsai organizations, including the American Bonsai Society, the BCI, the Nampu Kal, and the Southern California Chapter of the Japanese Satsuki Society.

A memorial for Ben will be held at the Buddhist temple on Braddock and Centinela in Culver City on Friday, March 9th, at 11:00 A.M. (12371 Braddock Drive, Culver City, CA 90230).

—David Whiteside



Bonsai Volunteers Needed at the Huntington Gardens

Ted Matson is busy at the Huntington Gardens organizing the work on and upgrading the bonsai trees in both the Golden State Bonsai Federation’s collection and the Huntington’s own collection. This is an ongoing task—so anyone who would like to volunteer, there are opportunities and your help would be greatly appreciated. There are no restrictions as to your level of bonsai knowledge—all levels are welcome. Ted has many tasks that need to be done. In some instances, he has mini teaching sessions, so no one feels overextended.

“This year, we can start allowing people to park up at the Ikebana House lot as there are no conflicts up there and it also frees up the public parking for other events/activities,” Ted said. “Also, since we’re getting into shorter days, we’ll start at 9 AM rather than 8.”

If you are interested, please let me know or contact Ted at tmatson@earthlink.net.

—Marj Branson

2018 Work Dates	
January 20	21
February 17	18
March 10	– 11
April 14	– 15
May 19	– 20

2018

March

March 24 – 25, 2018 San Marino, California

California Bonsai Society: 61st Annual Exhibition, Huntington Library, Art Collections, and Botanical Gardens. 10:00 AM—5:00 PM both days. Discover the timeless appeal of an ancient horticultural art form as the California Bonsai Society presents its 61st annual show, featuring dozens of beautiful specimens created by bonsai masters. (Additional examples can be seen in the permanent display in the Japanese Garden's Bonsai Courts.) General admission. Brody Botanical Center.

March 24 – 25, 2018 Oakland, California

Bay Area Bonsai Associates: 37th Annual Bonsai Exhibition at the Lakeside Park Garden Center, 666 Bellevue Avenue. Show hours are 5 – 9 PM Saturday and 10 AM – 4 PM Sunday. Light dinner at 5:30 PM Saturday followed by a bonsai demonstration by club members from 6:30 to 9 PM. Benefit drawing of demo tree(s). Winning ticket must be present to win. Sales of plants, bonsai, and other bonsai related items both days. Admission is free. Parking fee to the Lakeside Park entrance is required during the park hours. For more information, please contact Janice Dilbeck janicedilbeck@comcast.net

March 31 – April 1, 2018 Sacramento, California

Bonsai Sekiyu Kai: 41st Annual show at the Sacramento Buddhist Church, 2401 Riverside Blvd. Show hours are 10 AM – 4 PM daily with a demonstration at 2 PM. Amenities include refreshments, light snacks, door prizes, raffles and a silent auction. Member and vendor sales of plants and bonsai-related items, as well as a food vendor. For more information contact Bonsai Sekiyu Kai at bonsaisekiyukai@gmail.com.

April

April 6 – 7, 2018 Fresno, California

GSBF Clark Bonsai Collection at Shinzen: Kōen-Nai No Bonsai, Bonsai in the Park, 7775 North Friant Road. We have planned a new event style this year. Join us for an afternoon BBQ on Friday and a full day of bonsai on Saturday.

April 14 – 15, 2018 Sacramento, California

American Bonsai Association, Sacramento: Annual Spring Show at the Shepard Garden and Arts Center in McKinley Park, 3330 McKinley Blvd. Show hours are 10 AM - 4 PM with demonstrations by Peter Tea at 1:30 PM both days and a hands-on beginner workshop Sunday morning from 10 AM – 12 PM. There is a large member and vendor sales area, plenty of free parking and admission. A benefit drawing follows the demonstration each day and will include that day's demonstration tree and many bonsai and bonsai related items. For additional information call Renee Seely (916) 929-2106 or email breadcrust@comcast.net, or visit our website <http://abasbonsai.org>.

April 14 – 15, 2018 Santa Cruz, California

Santa Cruz Bonsai Kai: 30th Annual Bonsai Show at the Museum of Art & History, 705 Front Street. Show hours are from 10 AM - 5 PM with demonstration at 2 PM both days. Saturday's demonstrator is Jonas Dupuich and Sunday's is yet to be determined. Demonstration tree and trees prepared by club members will be part of the raffle after each day's demonstration. Sales area will include quality vendor and member trees, pots, and other related bonsai items. In addition, enjoy the Watsonville Taiko Drummers, a Martial Arts demonstration, and other Japanese cultural events in the recently revitalized Abbott Square next to the Museum. Admission price is \$5.00 for both the Museum and the Bonsai Show. For more information, contact Ed Lambing at edinbonnydoon@comcast.net.

May

May 19 - 20, 2018 Santa Barbara, California

Bonsai Club of Santa Barbara: Annual Bonsai Exhibition and plant sale in Fellowship Hall at Trinity Lutheran Church, 909 N. La Cumbre, (Corner of Foothill Rd.). Hours are 11:00 AM - 4:00 PM Saturday and 10 AM - 4 PM Sunday with demonstrations by Ann Erb and Mel Ikeda. Free admission. For more information, contact Joe Olson 805-964-0869, email joeyuccaseed@verizon.net, or visit www.santabarbarbonsai.org.

May 20, 2018 Van Nuys, California

Sansui Kai of Southern California: Annual Bonsai Show and Sale, Japanese Garden, Tillman Water Reclamation Center, 6100 Woodley Ave. Hours are 10 AM - 4 PM with demonstrations at 1PM. Entry fee \$5 to show and garden. There will be bonsai trees for sale as well as bonsai related things (pots, stones etc.).

June

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.