



conejo valley

BONSAI society

Volume 16 Number 4 April 2019

A member of the Golden State Bonsai Federation 

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President's Message

Goshin III Recreated

By Marj Branson

After all the winter rain, the recent warm, sunny weather is welcome. Now, even slow deciduous trees should all start to pop!

Looking ahead to the Conejo Valley Bonsai Society's regular monthly meeting on April 18, bonsai master Jim Barrett will create a forest of foemina junipers. Over the years, we have seen samples of Jim's foeminas from his personal collection at various shows. This should be a great night.

At our March 21, 2019 meeting, Frank Yee introduced members to cork jades, a variety of jade that he developed. After styling one large jade, he put together a forest using 11 of these unusual trees. It is a unique and stunning piece that some lucky person will get in our 2019 holiday potluck's raffle and auction. See story and photos starting on page 4.

The California Bonsai Society (CBS) had its exhibition the last weekend of March. It was a treat to see the variety of old trees on display.

Many members of the bonsai community attended the Huntington Gardens' thank you party for volunteers (such as Bonsai-A-Thon helpers). It was a good time to catch up, exchange news, and talk about all the upcoming bonsai club activities and exhibitions. (See page 9 for details of upcoming events.)

During the CBS show, the club hosted an historic event: the replanting of Goshin III. As detailed in our February newsletter, this famous foemina juniper forest was created by bonsai great John Naka to honor his children and grandchildren (see February 2019 issue, page 11).

There was much care taken to put the forest back together looking like Naka's original creation. The replanting team had many pictures of the original forest so they could achieve that objective.

The first step in the replanting of Goshin III was to select from the many trees 11 that would best suit the final planting. This was achieved by placing the individual trees, in their black nursery cans, on the workbench.

Once the trees were selected, the large (36 x 24 x 3 1/2 inch) pot was placed on the table and the repotting took place. This was the work of Mel Carrillo, Douglas

Continued on page 6



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

CVBS Membership

Final Call: Membership Renewals

Conejo Valley Bonsai Society memberships expired on February 15th, so it's past time to pay your dues for 2019. It's still a bargain at \$25 for one person, \$30 for two or more. That gets you a rich program of bonsai demonstrations, workshops, 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 on April 18 or mail it to me, CVBS Membership Chair, 2727 Autumn Ridge Drive, Thousand Oaks, CA 91362.

Thanks for your prompt attention and payment.

—Larry Kimmelman

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(Click on Email Address)

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CVBS Programs 2019

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

January 17	7:30 PM: Brief Meeting with Club Elections followed by DEMONSTRATION: Roy Nagatoshi / Tree Critiques BRING YOUR TREES
February 21	7:30 PM: Brief Meeting followed by Workshop— BRING YOUR TREES
March 21	7:30 PM: Brief Meeting followed by DEMONSTRATION: Frank Yee / Cork Jade & Forest Planting
April 18	7:30 PM: Brief Meeting followed by DEMONSTRATION: Jim Barrett / Group Planting
May 16	7:30 PM: Brief Meeting followed by DEMONSTRATION: Mel Ikeda / Rock Planting
June 20	7:30 PM: Brief Meeting followed by Workshop— BRING YOUR TREES
July 18	7:30 PM: Brief Meeting followed by DEMONSTRATION: Jason Chan / TBA
August 15	7:30 PM: Brief Meeting followed by Workshop and Swap Meet — BRING YOUR TREES
September 19	7:30 PM: Brief Meeting followed by PEER CRITIQUES — BRING YOUR SHOW TREES
October 5 – 6	16TH ANNUAL CVBS EXHIBITION Gardens of the World
October 17	7:30PM : Brief Meeting followed by DEMONSTRATION: Kathy Benson / TBA
November 21	7:30 PM: Brief Meeting with Club Elections followed by Workshop— BRING YOUR TREES
December 19	7:30 PM HOLIDAY POTLUCK, RAFFLE & AUCTION

Work on Deciduous Trees

By Jim Barrett

Since our meetings are ... well past the middle of the month, we will attempt to include information that is important for the next month as well.

This time of year can be a very busy one for those of us with deciduous trees.

Deciduous trees need constant attention to keep upper growth in balance with the middle growth and the lower areas. Cut long shoots in the tops of maples, elms, and especially zelkova, to one or two nodes or leaves. Rub off unwanted sprouts before they develop into shoots.

Prune for shape and remove large leaves that block sunlight to the interior of the tree. From now on our task should be to encourage ramification, shape, and health.

Fertilize your trees with slow acting fertilizers or time-release plant food. It is better to feed a little more often than a lot once in a while.

Resist candle pruning your black pine

bonsai until June or later. Black pine, in growing containers that need more development, can be candle pruned in May.

Repotting—bonsai pot to bonsai pot—can still be done safely, especially pomegranate, most ficus, elms, wisteria, junipers, and azaleas. Olives can be potted, or if you wish, they can be worked on now.

Watch for powdery mildew on maples, quince, crabapples, and crapemyrtle.

Watch for aphids and spider mites. They will be very active this year. If your trees are infested with black



Jim Barrett

ants, chances are you have aphids or scale. Keep after the trees you want to show in June [at the Descanso Bonsai Society exhibition—some CVBS members do this—Editor]. A little work often will save a lot of work later on and the tree will look super. Look for stands and accents. 🌳

Refreshments

April Showers

As the saying goes, “April showers bring May flowers.” Except if you live down under, where April brings the autumn leaves. According to the Gregorian calendar, April is the fourth month and in the Julian calendar it’s the fifth.

The month of April provides more confusion this time with William Shakespeare. He was born on April 23rd and died on April 23rd with a few years and 32 plays in between. Washington Irving was an April baby and so was Shirley Temple. They would make for an interesting horoscope.

In April we celebrate the cheese ball, pigs in a blanket, and licorice. April also celebrates greenery day and plant day. I’m not sure what the difference between the two are? We also observe Earth Day.

Those are just a few reasons why the CVBS loves April. Let’s show how we love CVBS and volunteer to bring eats and cold beverages. June and July are waiting for someone to bring cold beverages to their meetings. November would love you to bring eats to the meeting. You can sign up at the next meeting or call me at (818) 865-1034. or email me at refreshments@cvbs-bonsai.org.

Thanks, to all of you who have already volunteered this year.

—Denise Snavely

2019 Refreshments		
	Cold Drinks	Eats / Sweets
April	Mary Welz	Larry Kimmelman
May	Larry Garfinkel	Mike Blumenberg
June	Volunteer Needed	Dick Winston
July	Volunteer Needed	Mary Welz

Timing Spring Flowers

This India Hawthorn bloomed too late to be offered for CVBS’s March niche display—and too early for April. Originally a landscape shrub, I’ve been developing it as a bonsai for nearly a decade and put it in this glazed bonsai pot just two years ago. This is the best display of blossoms it’s ever produced, maybe because of all of this year’s rain?

—David Whiteside



CVBS Membership

Interested in CVBS?

CVBS welcomes new member Robert Westberg of Ventura and returning member Edward Henjyogi of Thousand Oaks. Our club 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

Frank Yee Demonstrates Cork Jade Bonsai

By David Whiteside

“When you’re old, you don’t get to go anywhere much except the doctor’s office,” quipped Frank Yee. “The diagnosis is always the same: typical for your age.”

That’s how Yee introduced himself to the Conejo Valley Bonsai Society at its March 21, 2019 monthly meeting. He was there to introduce members to cork jade as a material for bonsai, and to show them how to create a small forest using this unusual species of tree.

Cork jades have smaller leaves than ordinary jades. They also have, as the name implies, a cork-like bark.

Before demonstrating how to build a forest, Yee showed attendees two large cork jades. The largest one is over 50 years old, he said, and it’s the mother of all his cork jades. All cuttings from this tree develop the cork bark.

It takes about five years for the cork bark to develop, Yee explained, adding that he initially got this effect from spraying his jades with DDT. “Eventually, a transformation took place,” he said.

A second large tree that Yee presented is about 15 – 20 years old, he said, but jokingly cautioned that “bonsai people like to exaggerate.”

To develop this jade as a single-tree bonsai, Yee first examined it to determine its most likely front, which he explained is usually where one can see the widest part of the trunk. Another consideration, he said, is the tree’s surface roots, which should give the tree stability and character. “If you go to a nursery looking for a bonsai tree, scrape off the soil and check the surface roots,” he advised.

Once he had identified the probable front, Yee removed leggy branches and reduced the top. These jades tend to be top heavy and cascade down from there, he said.

Next, he started removing leaves from the bottoms of branches, as one would do with any other species of bonsai except the cork jade foliage snaps off easily with the fingers. “You can prune or pot any time,” he said.

When he pots them, he lets them dry out and doesn’t water them for three days. “It’s a succulent and has moisture in the foliage,” he pointed out. “Watering will cause root rot.”

As he worked on this jade, Yee explained that it’s best to remove bar branches in the lower parts of the tree, but higher up in the tree bar branches can be left if removing them would leave a bare spot. “If it’s not too big and there’s another branch you can wire over to replace it, then it’s okay to remove it,” he said, adding: “You’d be surprised, they’re not that brittle.”

Before wiring, Yee said to let the tree dry out for a week and then apply the wire loosely, although wire marks in the mark will heal. He uses both directional pruning and wiring to style cork jades.

To finish his work on this tree, Yee made sure that the front branches were shorter than its back branches, “to give it depth.” And he wired the top, using the wire to introduce some movement to this part of the trunk.

Yee uses cactus soil for his cork jades, but adds inorganic material such as perlite, scoria, or decomposed granite. He puts cuttings in 4-inch liners and keeps them on a piece of dark roofing felt, which absorbs heat and produces faster growth.



Frank Yee prepares a cork jade for a single-tree planting (above).

Yee places another cork jade in his forest composition (below).

Next, Yee turned his attention to building a forest with 11 small cork jades.

First, he placed large pieces of screen over the drainage holes—he uses big sections of screen because they won’t move around all that much, so he doesn’t have

to wire them in place. Then he added a layer of soil covering the entire bottom of the pot.

Next, Yee said to divide the pot into thirds vertically and horizontally in your mind. This will help guide the placement of the trees. You don’t want square or equal spacing between the trees—vary the distance between them. Also, no three trees should be in a straight line and once finished, you should be able to see some of every tree. Usually, a tree on the outside of the group should lean outward.

The jades that Yee used for the forest were all very narrow and had very little rootage. He explained that these trees would not be candidates for individual bonsai, but in a forest they work

(Continued on page 5)



Yee (Continued from page 4)

well together.

Instead of trying to wire them in place, he used balls of muck made of clay and peat moss. Each tree was placed in a muck ball, and then the ball positioned in the pot. Some members helped hold trees in place while Yee added more and adjusted their positions and attitudes.

He explained that interior branches should not cross. Also, Yee rotated each tree so it would appear to have a straight trunk from the front of the composition.

Yee placed the No. 1 tree first, selecting the “biggest, baddest, dominant” tree for the purpose. The second tree, which he called a jumper, was placed near the first tree. And then the third tree was placed “between” the first two—that is, not in a straight line.

Gradually, Yee worked outward from the first three trees, placing shorter trees toward the back and sides of the pot. He arranged six of the trees in one group and five in another group, with only a little space between so all 11 trees blended into a single composition.

Once all the trees were in place, Yee added soil to fill the pot and tamped it down firmly. As a final addition, he sprinkled red lava rock over the surface of the soil for accent.

Yee said the forest should not be watered for four or five days. It should remain in this pot for five to seven years before moving to another pot. He said the way to transplant

Red lava rock added to the finished forest for accent (right).

The heavily corked bark on Frank Yee’s mother cork jade (below left).

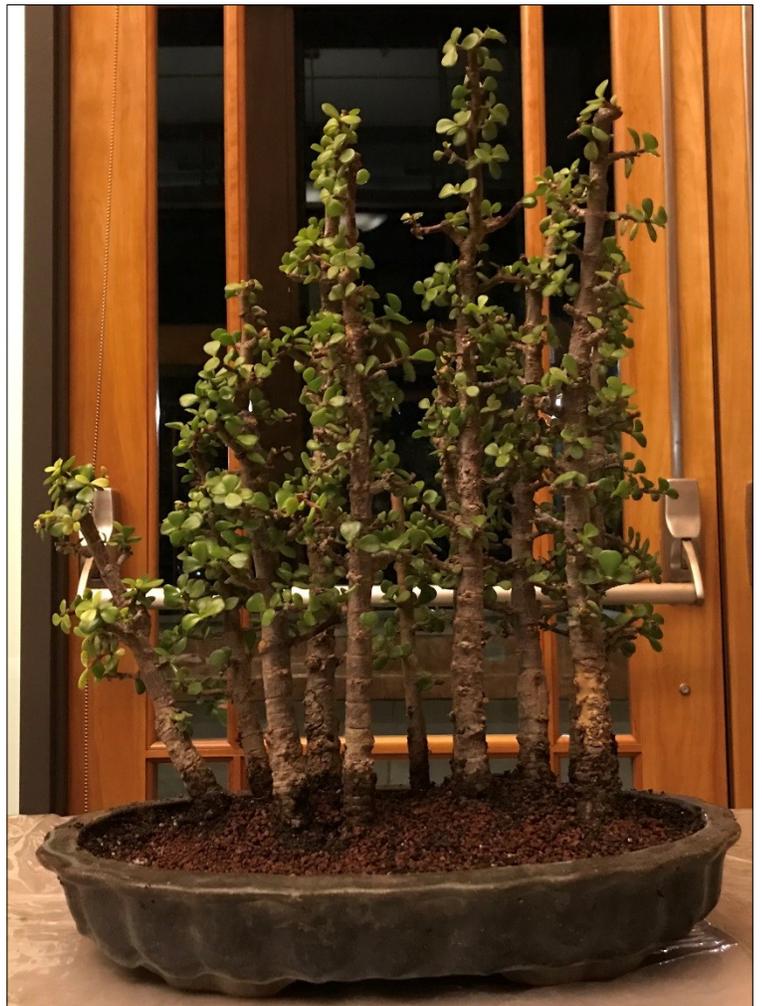
The finished cork jade forest (bottom right).

the forest is to cut it into triangles and then moving one triangle per year into the new pot.

In general, it’s okay to prune both foliage and roots of cork jades at the same time, Yee said.

Yee donated both the single tree and the forest to the club for its annual raffle and auction in December 2019. He noted that the new owner of the forest will eventually want to put it in a different pot as the current one is too deep and has too many curlicues. “It should be in a nice, shallow, oval pot,” he advised.

Frank Yee’s presentation style was both informative and entertaining with frequent quips and sometimes self-deprecating humor. CVBS thanks him for this valuable demonstration and his generous donations for the annual fundraiser. 🌳



Photos by David Williams and David Whiteside



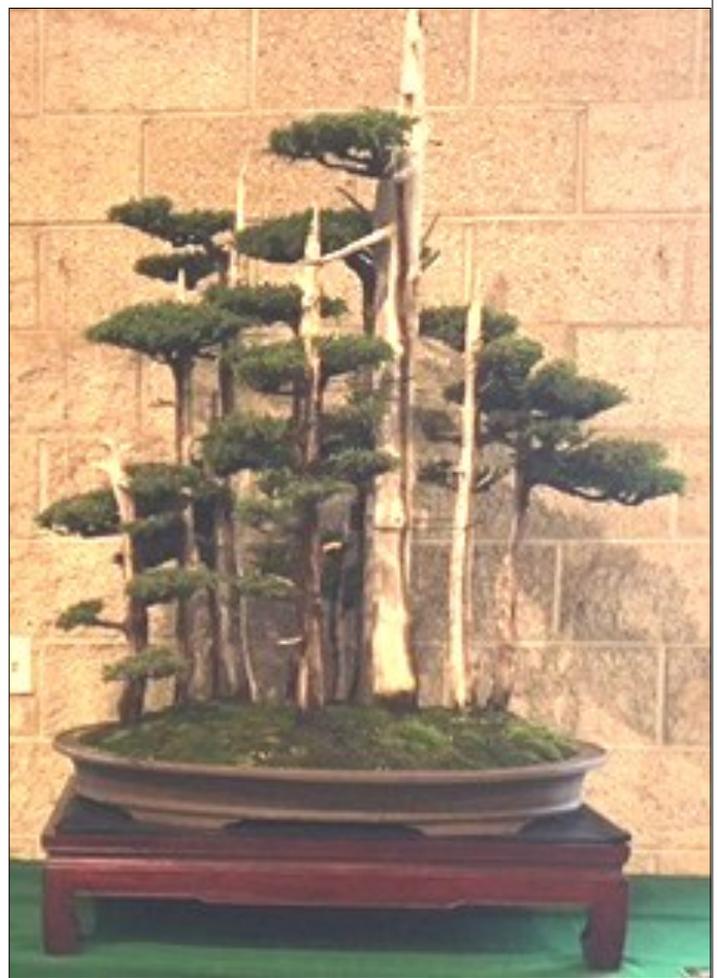
Trees selected for Goshin III arranged while still in their nursery cans (above).

The trees were then moved into the large pot (below).

Goshin III is part of the Golden State Bonsai Federation's collection at the Huntington (right).



Photos by Marj Branson



President's Message (Continued from page 1)

McGavin, Mel Ikeda, and Jack Sustic (who was part of the original planting team), all with the support of Huntington bonsai curator Ted Matson.

The finished forest (see photo, above right) was set up at the Huntington, where it is part of the Golden State Bonsai Federation's collection, for everyone to view.

It was an enjoyable afternoon watching this all unfold and to see and hear of the care taken to make this happen. Audience members who knew John Naka relayed tales of their "times with John."

Meanwhile, our own club is very fortunate to have members who volunteer to help with activities. Without your support, our club cannot grow. If you would like to get involved and help

with any of our tasks or projects, please see me, one of our officers, or the chair of a committee that interests you. (See page 2 for a list of chairs and their contact information.) Your help will be appreciated by all!

We have an opening for Field Trips and Activities chair. If you're ready, willing, and able to take on this important activity, please see me to discuss.

As many of you know, the tasty refreshments that appear at each monthly meeting as if by magic are really the result of all the work done by Refreshments Chair Denise Snavely and her band of volunteers. Thank you, Denise. However, currently, we have a few months for which we need volunteers, so please pitch in. Have a look at the list on page 3 and email Denise or see her at our April meeting to sign up.

See you Thursday, April 18th. 🌲

'A Ton of Work' To Be Done on Bonsai Collections at Huntington

There's plenty of work for volunteers to do in the Huntington Gardens' bonsai collections, Bonsai Curator Ted Matson said in an email. "We've got a ton of work to do right now (including some major repottings)," he said. "With so many of our trees waking up, we have an even more critical need for Friday volunteers to work the display trees in the courts, especially the elms right now... they're exploding. Any extra bodies available for a couple hours on Friday really make a difference."

Volunteer weekends continue in May – June and are listed at right. "These dates work around the blackout dates as determined by Huntington Gardens, where there are other activities or events and traffic is limited," Matson said.

Work is on bonsai trees in both the Golden State Bonsai Federation's collection and the Huntington's own collection. All levels of bonsai knowledge are welcome and sometimes Ted has mini teaching sessions, so no one feels overextended. CVBS members who have participated uniformly report very positive experiences. If you'd like to participate or car-pool to one of the work sessions, please contact Marj Branson at president@cvbs-bonsai.org or (805) 373-1330.

—David Whiteside

2019 Weekend Work Dates

May 11 (Saturday only) / 18 – 19

June 1 – 2 / 22 – 23 / 29 – 30

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 2019 calendar and let us know when you would like to present your display.

—Marj Branson

2019 Niche Displays	
April	Nancy Smeets
May	Volunteer Needed
June	Volunteer Needed
July	Ken Martin

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.

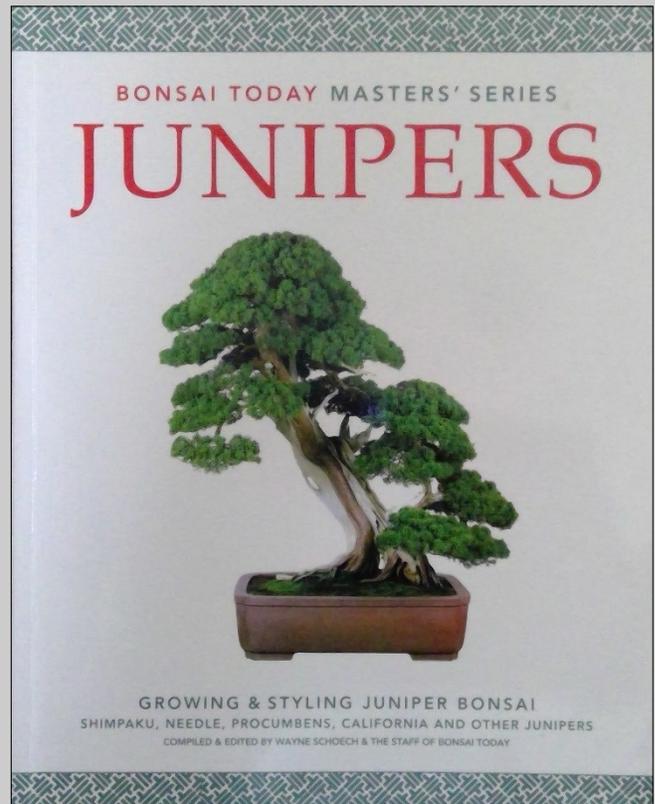
Book of the Month

The Bonsai Today Masters' Series: Junipers—Growing & Styling Juniper Bonsai, Edited by Wayne Schoech, Stone Lantern Publishing, Passumpsic, Vermont.

For this month's Book of the Month, I read several articles from *The Bonsai Today Masters' Series: Junipers*. This is one of the recent additions to our library that were listed in last month's newsletter. (*Bonsai Today* is a now defunct monthly magazine; the Masters' Series is still owned by the magazine's original publishing house, Stone Lantern, which remains a leading online shopping resource for bonsai tools, pots, books, and related materials. This book is currently listed on Stone Lantern's website as out of stock, but the third printing is expected to be in stock soon. List price: \$34.95, currently on sale for \$24.95.) The book's introduction notes that "junipers are probably the most popular bonsai in the world. Their natural elegance and beauty, combined with their easy adaptability and toughness, make them perfect candidates for bonsai – for everyone, from beginners to advanced bonsai artists." Like many CVBS members, I have several junipers in my collection, so I turned the pages looking for guidance on how to care for my juniper trees. This book is a compilation of articles describing techniques used by bonsai masters to create and care for juniper bonsai. I read one article entitled "Shaping Details & Refining Deadwood" and another about creating shari, or deadwood on the trunk. There are also articles on styling, ramification, creating a root over rock juniper and a terrific gallery of masterpiece junipers. Check it out at our next club meeting.

—Mike Blumenberg

Photo by Mike Blumenberg



Broom Style Olive with Massive Base

Editor's Note: Marj Branson provided this large-base olive bonsai at CVBS's March 2019 meeting. Here's what Marj says about her tree.

I don't know the age of this olive tree. I got it three years ago from a fellow retiring bonsai enthusiast. With the size of the base, I would guess 40-plus years. The tree was styled in a broom style, which I have kept and feel works well for the tree. I have been working on opening the tree up. Initially, it had heavy foliage at the end of each branch and many bar branches. The branches were getting long and leggy without growth in the inside. I eliminated the bar branches and opened the tree up. Now, branches are starting to grow in the inside. I don't want the tree to get any bigger, so I have to keep trimming it back. Last year I repotted the tree into its current pot, which is slightly larger than the original pot I bought the tree in.

—Marj Branson



Photo by Marj Branson

2019

April

April 27 – 28, 2019 Palo Alto, California

Kusamura Bonsai Club: 59th Annual Show, Lucie Stern Community Center, 1305 Middlefield Road. Show hours are Saturday Noon – 5 PM and Sunday 11 AM - 5 PM with a demonstration at 1:30 PM each day (Saturday's demonstration provided by Sam Adina and Sunday demonstration provided by club members). Free admission. Bonsai trees, pots, and other bonsai-related items will be for sale. For more information contact Charlene Fischer at charleneae@mac.com or visit www.kusamurabonsai.org.

April 27 - 28, 2019, San Diego, California

San Diego Bonsai Club: 54th Annual Spring Show in Casa del Prado, Room 101 Balboa Park. Amazing bonsai will be on display 10AM to 5PM each day. Bonsai of various sizes and species as well as other bonsai-related items will be for sale by club members at attractive prices. Open to the public and admission is free. For more information visit <https://www.sandiegobonsaiclub.com>

May

May 18 – 19, 2019 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.). Show hours are 11 AM – 4 PM Saturday and Noon – 4 PM Sunday with demonstrations at 1 PM on both days. Free admission. For more information, contact Joe Olson 805-964-0869, email joeyuccaseed@verizon.net, or visit www.santabarbarbonsai.org.

May 18 – 19, 2019 Oakland, California

Bay Area Satsuki Aikokai: 24th Annual Satsuki Bonsai Spring Show "Flowers Abound" at the Lakeside Park Garden Center, 666 Bellevue Ave., Lake Merritt. Show hours are Saturday 10 AM - 5 PM and Sunday 10 AM - 4 PM. Featuring Satsuki Azalea Bonsai in full flower bloom. Expert demonstration on styling, educational forums all day, member sales with beginner and Japan imported materials, vendors, silent auctions. Free admission and public parking available. For further information contact George Haas at gwhaas@comcast.net or visit club website <http://satsukiazaleabonsai.org>.

May 19, 2019 Van Nuys, California

Sansui Kai: Annual Bonsai Show at the beautiful Japanese Garden, 6100 Woodley Ave. Show hours are 10 AM – 4 PM with a demonstration at 1 PM. Come view member trees, members sale table, bonsai demonstration and tour the beautiful Japanese Garden. For more information contact: Steve Riley at tonapahal1953@gmail.com.

June

June 1 – 2, 2019 San Mateo, California

Sei Boku Bonsai Kai: 36th 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 from 1 – 3 PM. Demo tree will be raffled. 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.

June 29 – 30, 2019 Oakland, California

San Francisco Suiseki Kai, California Suiseki Society, Bay Area Shohin Society, and California Shohin Society: Inaugural Bay Area Suiseki and Shohin Show at the Lakeside Park Garden Center, 666 Bellevue Ave. Show hours are 11 AM to 5 PM Saturday and 11 AM to 4 PM Sunday. Suiseki Presentation on Sunday at 1 PM. Large vendor area. Members of all Bay Area Bonsai and Suiseki Clubs are invited to exhibit. Clubs can purchase vendor tables for club sales. If you would like to exhibit or be a vendor, please contact Lisa Harper at lisaharper@me.com, or call (510) 220-3339.

August

August 24 – 25, 2019 Santa Rosa, California

Redwood Empire Bonsai Society (REBS): 36th Annual Bonsai Show, at the Santa Rosa Veterans Building, 1351 Maple Ave. Featuring Bonsai Master Kathy Shaner. Bonsai demonstrations both days, 1 – 3 PM. Demonstration tree to be raffled. Largest bonsai and suiseki stone exhibition. Large bonsai vendor and plant sales. Exciting silent auctions. Free admission and parking. Relax with the Bonsai Cafe. Contact Bob Shimon at (707) 884-4126 or shimon@mcn.org. Visit our website www.rebsbonsai.org.

September

September 21, 2019 San Andreas, California

Mother Lode Bonsai Club: Fifth Annual Bonsai Exhibition at the San Andreas Public Library, 1299 Gold Hunter Road (off Mt. Ranch Rd.), San Andreas. Show hours are 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Demonstrations at 11 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. with prize drawings immediately following. Vendor and member bonsai-related items will be available for sale. Open to the public with free admission and free parking. For more info, contact Richard McKinstry (209) 288-2330 or email richardwandr@aol.com. Visit club website at www.motherlodebonsai.org.

October

October 5 – 6, 2019 Thousand Oaks, California

Conejo Valley Bonsai Society: 16th Annual Bonsai Exhibition at the Resource Center at the Gardens of the World, 2001 Thousand Oak Blvd. Show hours are 9 AM – 4 PM with demonstrations in the Bandstand at 1 PM both days. Free Admission. No sales of bonsai or related items. For information, call Marj Branson at (805) 373-1330 or visit our website at www.cvbs-bonsai.org.