



conejo valley

BONSAI society

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A member of the Golden State Bonsai Federation 

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Conejo Valley Bonsai Society Meetings

(When Covid-19 restrictions are lifted)

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/conejovallebonsaisociety

President's Message

Let's Have a Happy, Healthy New Year

By Marj Branson

Happy New Year to all and the best for 2022.

Sadly, due to the spread of the Omicron Covid variant, the Westlake Village Community Center has decided not to open for meetings in January. They will let us know for February. All the approvals are in place—it is the health status of the community that remains an issue.

While we await permission to meet indoors at the Community Center, CVBS Member Rick Boyer has offered the use of his nursery in Moorpark on a Saturday afternoon to hold a bonsai workshop. Last year, we had one very successful workshop there. As before, this workshop would be outside. If you are interested, please let me know and if there is enough interest, we'll schedule another *en plein air* workshop.

The Conejo Valley Bonsai Society calendars and mugs for 2022 were a great success. The photographs of club members' trees in the calendars turned out very well. One member suggested we have calendars made as an annual event. Keep this in mind for our 2022 show. There are two mugs left should you be interested (see below).

Our niche display calendar for 2022 needs to be filled. We have a volunteer for January but need volunteers for February, March, April, May, and beyond. We are not sure if the displays will be virtual (by photographs) in our newsletter or physical during our monthly meeting. We will know more by early February.

Bonsai Community News

The following spring bonsai shows are still planned:

- Baikoen Bonsai Kenkyukai's 58th Annual Winter Silhouettes Show at

the Los Angeles Arboretum

- The Golden State Bonsai Federation/Huntington Gardens Bonsai-A-Thon

The 18th Bi-annual California Shohin Seminar, however, has been canceled.

See page 8 for the details of each. Should we receive notice of any changes or modifications we will let you know.

Helen Barrett has some bonsai



Marj Branson

items for sale: pots (not Jim Barrett-made pots), small stands, and coffee table bonsai books. She is selling these by appointment only. Should anyone be interested, call her at (626) 445-4529.

With this current Covid-19 variant, the bonsai community is being very cautious with club activities, either for holding events or attending an event. If you are aware of any information about event cancellations, please let us know.

Stay safe, stay healthy. 🌱

Two 2022 11-oz. CVBS logo mugs (below) are available for \$10 each.



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(Click on Email Address)

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CVBS Tentative Programs 2022

If you are interested in the CVBS Mentoring Program, please contact Marj Branson for more information & applications to participate.

January 20	CANCELED DUE TO COVID 7:30 PM: Brief Meeting followed by Workshop— BRING YOUR TREES
February 17	TENTATIVE 7:30 PM: Brief Meeting followed by DEMONSTRATION: TBA
March 17	TENTATIVE 7:30 PM: Brief Meeting followed by Workshop— BRING YOUR TREES
April 21	TENTATIVE 7:30 PM: Brief Meeting followed by DEMONSTRATION: TBA
May 19	TENTATIVE 7:30 PM: Brief Meeting followed by Workshop— BRING YOUR TREES
June 16	TENTATIVE 7:30 PM: Brief Meeting followed by DEMONSTRATION: TBA
July 21	TENTATIVE 7:30 PM: Brief Meeting followed by Workshop— BRING YOUR TREES
August 18	TENTATIVE 7:30 PM: Brief Meeting followed by Workshop and Swap Meet — BRING YOUR TREES AND OTHER ITEMS
September 15	TENTATIVE 7:30 PM: Brief Meeting followed by PEER CRITIQUES—BRING YOUR EXHIBITION TREES
October 1 – 2	TENTATIVE 19TH ANNUAL CVBS EXHIBITION
October 20	TENTATIVE 7:30PM: Brief Meeting followed by Workshop— BRING YOUR TREES
November 17	TENTATIVE 7:30 PM: Brief Meeting with Club Elections followed by DEMONSTRATION: TBA
December 15	TENTATIVE 7:30 PM HOLIDAY POTLUCK, RAFFLE & AUCTION

Potting and Repotting Season Is Now Open

By Jim Barrett

Editor's Note: While the Conejo Valley Bonsai Society's monthly meetings remain suspended due to the coronavirus pandemic, our trees still need attention. We will continue to publish Barrett's Bonsai Tips for the duration.

Most hardy evergreen bonsai such as Japanese black pines and junipers may be repotted at this time. Wait until next month to pot for the first time (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 maples and other tender-bark trees.

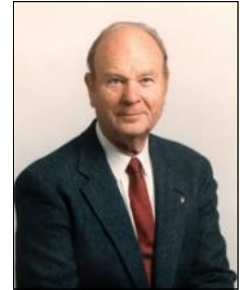
When you are finished cleaning and pruning your trees, spray them with a good petroleum-based dormant oil. You may want to combine it with a lime sulfur dormant spray. One is for bugs; the other is basically a fungicide. Follow directions on the labels and cover your soil and pot with plastic or a towel.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

Don't forget to choose your trees for this year's show [if you plan to enter the Descanso Bonsai Society's annual exhibition in June; for CVBS's show in October, this task may be postponed until the spring].

Detail wiring is a tedious and boring chore, but is a must if you want your trees ready to exhibit in June. You'll be glad you did it.

We are coming into prime potting and repotting time. From now until April, try to get all of your trees that need it repotted. If you need pots, ask around—supply seems to be good for both new and used pots.

If you haven't done so, get your soil mix prepared and stored. I use a trash can with a tight lid. 🌱



Jim Barrett

CVBS Niche Displays

Virtual Niche Display Program

In normal times, the Niche Program consists of club members setting up mini exhibition displays on a table in our meeting room. But with the Westlake Village City Hall Community Room shuttered until at least February 2022 due to the coronavirus pandemic, this is not possible.

So we are doing virtual niche displays. We are asking niche display volunteers to set up their displays at home, photograph them, and send the pictures plus some comments (a paragraph or two will do) to our newsletter editor, David Whiteside (cvbs.editor@earthlink.net).

Please note that we list the month of the newsletter issue for each Virtual Niche Volunteer (right). For this, the January 2022 issue, Antonio Viscarra provided the virtual niche display (see page 5). Future volunteers, please note that we will be asking you to do the same as long as in-person meetings are not possible.

We encourage all members to sign up for the niche display! Please have a look at your 2022 calendar and let us know when you would like to present your display.

—Marj Branson

2022 Niche Displays (Month of publication)	
Jan.	Antonio Viscarra
Feb.	Volunteer Needed
March	Volunteer Needed
April	Volunteer Needed

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. Once Covid-19 restrictions are lifted, we will resume meeting at 7:30 PM on the third Thursday of every month in the Westlake Village City Hall Community Room (31200 Oakcrest Drive, Westlake Village, CA 91361). Please Note: during the pandemic, CVBS has cosponsored several demonstrations via Zoom; DVDs of those are available in our library. Membership includes demonstrations by bonsai experts, workshops, critiques, member swap meets, and this award-winning newsletter.

It's inexpensive and easy to join. Annual dues are \$25 for one, or \$30 for couples. Simply write a check (made payable to the Conejo Valley Bonsai Society) and mail it to: CVBS Membership, c/o Marj Branson, 1169 Triunfo Canyon Road, Westlake Village, CA 91361.

—Nancy Smeets

Nurturing a Raffle-Prize Olive Clump

By Ken Martin

I won this olive (*Olea europaea*) clump off the raffle table at a Descanso Bonsai Society meeting in 2014. A tag on it said, "cutting olive 6-20-05 TP 2-09-06 4-6-07." So, it had been planted for nine years at the time I got it.

I put it in a pond basket in 2016 and never photographed it until March 2020. I like the small leaves. I added some wire and trimmed it a bit. I had a very tough time deciding whether to put it in a rectangular or oval pot. The rectangular pot was a little ornate and a little big for the clump, so I settled on the oval one. In the future, I might want to consider this being the focus trees for a saikei in a long shallow tray.

After potting in the oval pot, I photographed it again. Note the added tool to provide visual scale in this working photo. The tool is about six inches long and the apex is a little over twice the tool length in height above the pot rim so about 14 inches.

Finally, I photographed it in October 2021 for the Conejo

Valley Bonsai Society's virtual annual exhibition. I took off all the wire that had been on since March 2020. An interesting data point: in 19 months from application, there was no noticeable scarring of the trunks or branches from the wires. This is a fine example of the correct answer to the question invariably asked by a novice viewer at a demonstration: "How long do you leave the wire on?" The answer should be, "Until you see it just start to bite into the branch."

Viewing and Photography Note

I feel most bonsai should be viewed with the eyes at the level of the pot rim. This tends to make the trunk(s) more visible as the trunk(s) and the nebari are the most important indicators of age to a viewer. Also, the viewer is now looking up into the tree as he or she would do when viewing a large tree in nature, again making the tree more real, more like an abstract of a real tree in nature in the viewer's mind. I tried to do that here with the camera lens at pot rim level. 🌳



The Descanso-raffle olive clump in a pond basket on March 18, 2020 (above).



The olive clump in its oval pot on March 20, 2020 (above). Note the wiring and also the 6-inch tool just below the pot.



Show ready: this is how my olive clump looked on October 23, 2021, when I photographed it for the CVBS Virtual Annual Exhibition (below).

Two Trees, Different Origins, Both Doing Well

Editor's Note: New CVBS Member Antonio Viscarra provided the virtual niche display for this, the January 2022 issue of our newsletter (see listing of virtual niche volunteers, page 3). Because physical meetings remain on hold due to the pandemic, Antonio set the display up at his home and photographed it. Here are some details about his niche trees.

I have a San Jose juniper (*Juniperus chinensis* 'San Jose') that I bought from a nursery a couple of years ago. I repotted it and now it seems to be thriving. I am particularly fond of this tree for its tanuki-like features.

The second, just to give a choice, is a coastal redwood (*Sequoia sempervirens*) that I won through a silent auction at the Golden State Bonsai Federation Bonsai Rendezvous in Santa Nella, California, last October. I have not done much with it as it seems to be doing just great with simple maintenance.

—Antonio Viscarra

Antonio Viscarra's coastal redwood (below left) is from a silent auction at the GSBF Bonsai Rendezvous last October. The San Jose juniper (below right) is from a nursery. Both are doing well with minimal work.



Photos by Antonio Viscarra



The Good and the Not So Good Online Demos

By Ken Martin

Online Video Reviews

This month I return once more to two of my favorite bonsai experts, Bjorn Bjorholm and Jason Chan. Bjorn discusses many aspects of season bonsai maintenance while Jason outlines black pine candle pruning—when to skip it.

Bjorn Bjorholm
Eisei-en Bonsai

Nashville, TN

Broadleaf & Deciduous Bonsai Seasonal Tips

42 minutes

YouTube address: [Bonsai-U Broadleaf & Deciduous Bonsai Seasonal Tips](#)

In this episode of Bonsai-U, Bjorn discusses a huge list of seasonal maintenance tips and tricks. The subjects include timing of fertilization, pest control, pruning, partial defoliation, large cuts, soil, etc. I had never heard some of his sound and detailed reasonings for maintaining a tree through the summer. A lot of good information!

**Bjorn Bjorholm at
Eisei-En Bonsai Garden
(right).**



Jason Chan

Eastern Leaf Bonsai

Black Pine Bonsai Maintenance—Skipping Candle Cutting Season

10 min.

YouTube address: [Black Pine Bonsai Maintenance—Skipping Candle Cutting Season](#)

I watched this ten-minute video and expected to learn something but I'm not sure I did. He discussed two trees; one had been candle pruned the previous May the other had not. I expected him to make corrections to the later tree but he didn't. I guess the lesson is you should always candle prune unless you want a long, bare branch in your design. 🌲

**Jason Chan (right) discussing
black pine candle pruning.**



Screen captures by Ken Martin

Mobile-Mode Bonsai Library Continues

Just a reminder that while our club meetings are suspended amid the Covid-19 outbreak, I am providing the CVBS Book Mobile! If you want a good bonsai book or DVD to review while staying home, then give me a call and request a book, pamphlet, periodical, or DVD. We'll arrange for it to be sanitized and delivered (or picked up). For a complete list of our library holdings—books, pamphlets, DVDs, and periodicals—please see page 7 of the April 2020 issue of this newsletter.

—Mike Blumenberg

Book of the Month

Bonsai Ideas...A lifetime of Bonsai Secrets revealed by Marty Mann (Publisher: Bonsai Ideas Publishing, 2005).

“Bonsai” the sign proclaimed in big, bold letters. I’m always intrigued by roadside stands selling bonsai, so I had to stop and look. I usually leave unimpressed by the ubiquitous small juniper whips with Chinese statuettes, but this stand had something different.

This stand had a few small Sago palms in small bonsai pots. I had never seen Sago palms displayed as bonsai, and I kind of liked them. I still left the stand empty handed but decided to do a little homework.

I went to the Conejo Valley Bonsai Society library and consulted *Bonsai Ideas...A lifetime of Bonsai Secrets revealed* by Marty Mann (published by Bonsai Ideas Publishing in 2005). This book includes a chapter titled “Selected Species,” which describes the “growing habits and care requirements” for many “species of trees, vines and shrubs that make up an encyclopedia of bonsai possibilities.” That list of species includes Sago palm and guidance on how to care for and style it.

The small picture on the left isn’t from the roadside stand nor *Bonsai Ideas* but was found for sale on Etsy by Cute Little Bonsai. It’s not bad; Marty Mann suggests training the fronds into a weeping style to enhance its bonsai style. You can check out Marty Mann’s guidance regarding Sago palms and many other species by checking out this book from the CVBS Library.

—Mike Blumenberg



A Sago palm displayed as a bonsai (left).

The cover of Marty Mann’s 2005 book, *Bonsai Ideas* (below).

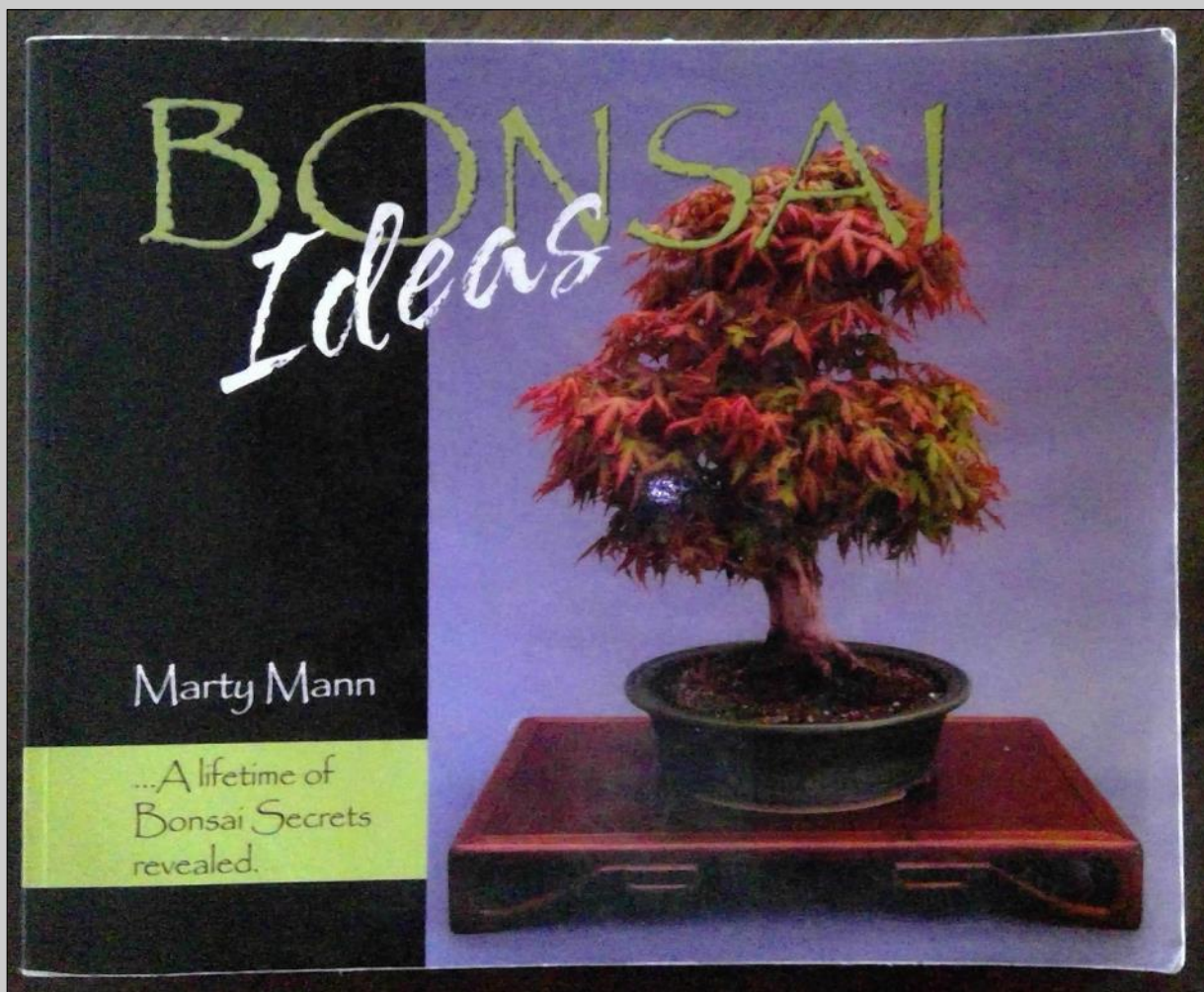


Photo & Screen Shot by Mike Blumenberg

Coming Events (Click on the Addresses to visit Websites or send Emails)

SOME IN-PERSON BONSAI EVENTS IN CALIFORNIA ARE SCHEDULED DURING 2022 (see below). MANY GARDENS ARE OPEN—BUT CONFIRM STATUS AND Covid PROTOCOLS OF THE GARDEN AHEAD OF TIME. WE ALSO WILL CONTINUE TO LIST VIRTUAL BONSAI EVENTS IF ANY ARE ANNOUNCED (NONE ARE LISTED AT THIS TIME).

2022

January

January 15 – 16, 2022 Oakland, California

Bay Area Bonsai Associates 40th Annual bonsai Exhibit at Lakeside Park Garden Center at Lake Merritt. 666 Bellevue Avenue, Oakland, California. Exhibit Displays, Light Dinner, Presentation, and Plant Sales

Saturday, January 15, 5:00 PM - 9:00 PM

5:00 PM – 6:30 PM: Exhibit and Sales of Bonsai and related items. Light dinner starts at 5:30 PM

6:30 PM – 8:00 PM: Presentation by Peter Tea

Sunday, January 16, 10:00 AM – 4:00 PM: Exhibit and Sales of Bonsai and related items.

The East Bay Bonsai Society and Marin Bonsai Club will be joining us this year in our club sales area on both days! Admission is free. Parking fee to the Lakeside Park entrance is required during park hours. Credit cards, checks and cash accepted. Sales tax will be added to purchases. Masks are required.

January 22 – 23, 2022 Arcadia, California

Baikoen Bonsai Kenkyukai 58th Annual Winter Silhouettes Show, Ayres Hall, Los Angeles Arboretum, 301 North Baldwin Avenue, Arcadia, California 91007. Founded by Frank Fusaji Nagata. 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM both days. CVBS members are cordially invited to be guest exhibitors. Deliver display anytime after 12:00 Noon on Friday, January 21, 2022. Display pickup is after 4:30 PM on Sunday, January 23, 2022. If you have any questions, please call Show Chairman Lindsay Shiba (909) 806-0937.

February

February 4 – 6, 2022 Santa Nella, California **CANCELED**

~~18th Biannual California Shohin Seminar at Hotel Mission De Oro, 13070 S. Highway 33, Santa Nella, CA 95322. Call (800) 546-5697 or (209) 826-4444. Please be sure to mention you are making a reservation for the Shohin Seminar to receive our discount. The only event of its kind in the U.S., every two years the California Shohin Society organizes a Shohin Seminar where bonsai masters, teachers, students, and general enthusiasts from all over the country gather to learn and share their love of Shohin bonsai. The seminar includes demonstrations, vendors, exhibition, and workshops. All workshops are held on Saturday, February 5, 2022. Session A: 9:00 – 11:45 AM. Session B: 2:00 – 4:45 PM. Please bring your own tools. Wire will be provided. For detailed information and registration forms, please visit the California Shohin Society's website at www.calshohin.org.~~



February 19 – 20, 2022 Oakland, California

Annual Bonsai Garden at Lake Merritt Mammoth Auction & Sale will be held on Saturday, February 19 and Sunday, February 20, 2022 at 666 Bellevue Ave., Lakeside Park Garden Center in Oakland. You are invited to the biggest auction and sale of bonsai, pre-bonsai, pots, books, stands, and related material. A Mammoth fundraiser with all proceeds going to support the Bonsai Garden at Lake Merritt. Saturday auction preview starts at 12:00 PM with auction starting at 1:00 PM. Sunday sale from 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM. Large showing of vendors, plant sales, and much more. Purchase your bonsai needs. For further information, contact George Haas at gwhaas@comcast.net or stay tuned to BGLM Website <https://bonsailakemerritt.com>.



February 26 – 27, 2022 San Marino, California

Annual Golden State Bonsai Federation Bonsai-A-Thon at the Huntington Library, Art Museum, and Botanical Gardens, 1151 Oxford Road, San Marino, CA 91108. Tour the expanded Chinese Garden! Walk through the Bonsai Nursery! Enjoy Vendors, Demonstrations, Auctions, Raffles, Huge Sales Area, Exhibits, Food, and Friends. Suiseki, the Japanese Art of Stone Appreciation talk by Suiseki Master Tom Elias. Foemina Grove creation by Huntington Bonsai Curator Ted Matson. For more details watch the GSBF Collection at The Huntington website.



April

April 9 – 10, 2022 Sacramento, California

American Bonsai Association, Sacramento: Annual Spring Show at the Shepard Garden and Arts Center, 3330 McKinley Blvd, Sacramento. Show hours are Saturday, 10 AM – 4 PM, and Sunday, 10 AM – 4 PM, with demonstrations each day by headliner Andrew Robson at 1:30 PM. There is a large vendor and member sales area, free admission and parking, and a beginner workshop Sunday morning from 10 AM – Noon (to register contact Renee Seely). The benefit drawings on both Saturday and Sunday will include each day's demonstration tree and many bonsai/bonsai related items. For additional information visit our website: American Bonsai Association of Sacramento www.abasbonsai.org or contact Renee Seely, (916) 929-2106 or email breadcrust@comcast.net.