



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

**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

President's Message

CVBS's Annual Exhibition Goes Virtual

By Marj Branson

The Conejo Valley Bonsai Society has canceled its 19th Annual Exhibition at the Gardens of the World. Originally scheduled for October 7 – 8, 2022, we are replacing it with a virtual show in the November 2022 issue of our newsletter. We invite all members to photograph up to three of their bonsai and send the pictures to Newsletter Editor David Whiteside (at cvbs.editor@earthlink.net) by November 1, 2022.

In keeping with this change, we also are postponing the pre-show peer critique of exhibition trees to our October 20 meeting. Please bring in trees you plan to photograph for the virtual show. This will allow members to fine-tune their exhibition bonsai prior to the November 1 deadline for submitting photographs for the virtual show.

During our August meeting, we discussed a Korean hornbeam bonsai that Mike Blumenberg submitted for the second John Y. Naka Memorial Bonsai Exhibition (formerly known as Nambu Kai), which was during Nisei Week later in the month. I gave a short talk about how to prepare a tree for showing, and we demonstrated and discussed the preparation of Mike's tree.

Mike did a light trimming of the tree removing so-called "hanger downers" and "straight uppers." That's removing leaves that hang straight down or point straight up and obscure the movement of the tree.

We removed a light layer of soil around the inside of the pot. We also took off any calcium built up from the water around the edge of the inside of the pot. I used a fine pumice scouring stick to remove the calcium. I then used camelia oil to hide any residue.

The hornbeam's soil had a beautiful moss covering. We removed loose debris from the moss and covered bare areas with black lava rock.

We also cleaned calcium deposits off the outside of the unglazed brown pot with the pumice stick. Mike and I then

cleaned the sides of the pot with camelia oil.

The oil layer should not leave the pot with a watery finish—it should look burnished rather than wet. This gives the brown finish of the pot a clean look.

Also, the annual August swap meet was a big success—for members providing bonsai items, the buyers, and the club. Thank you all for your participation.

David Whiteside will lead our September meeting discussion. His topic will be Bonsai v. Penjing.

Remember that the Golden State Bonsai Federation (GSBF) will hold its annual Bonsai Rendezvous in Santa Nella on October 8 and 9. See page 8 of this newsletter for the details and for other upcoming shows.

The GSBF has redone their website—please check it out at www.gsbfbonsai.org. They also are launching a new quarterly education program for GSBF member clubs called the Golden Zoom Series. Their inaugural program featuring Bjorn BJORHOLM will be on Monday, September 19, at 6:30 PM PST. The CVBS is a member club, so all our members can participate in this educational program. I will send out a separate email to club members in good standing with instructions to join the zoom.

It is almost time to elect officers and appoint committee chairs for 2023. Election of officers will be at our November meeting. The new officers will appoint the chairs. If you would like to become more involved in the running of the club, please see or email me—or speak to the new officers at the November meeting.

See you Thursday, September 15. 🌳



Marj Branson

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(Click on Email Address)

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CVBS 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	CANCELED DUE TO COVID 7:30 PM: Brief Meeting followed by DEMONSTRATION: TBA
March 17	CONFIRMED! 7:30 PM: Brief Meeting followed by Workshop— BRING YOUR TREES
April 21	7:30 PM: Brief Meeting followed by PEER REVIEW/WORKSHOP: BRING YOUR TREES
May 19	7:30 PM: Brief Meeting & Presentation: Fertilizers led by Ken Martin followed by PEER REVIEW/WORKSHOP: BRING YOUR TREES
June 16	7:30 PM: Brief Meeting & Presentation: Pot Selection led by Mike Blumenberg followed by WORKSHOP: BRING YOUR TREES
July 21	7:30 PM: Brief Meeting & Presentation: Air Layering led by Ken Fuentes followed by WORKSHOP: BRING YOUR TREES
August 18	7:30 PM: Brief Meeting & Presentation: Show Preparation led by Marj Branson followed by Workshop and Swap Meet—BRING YOUR TREES AND OTHER ITEMS
September 15	7:30 PM: Brief Meeting & Presentation: Bonsai v. Penjing led by David Whiteside followed by WORKSHOP: BRING YOUR TREES
October 7 – 8	CANCELED 19TH ANNUAL CVBS EXHIBITION Gardens of the World
October 20	7:30PM: Brief Meeting & Presentation: Selecting a Tree led by Rick Boyer followed by PEER CRITIQUES—BRING YOUR EXHIBITION TREES
November 17	7:30 PM: Brief Meeting with Club Elections & Presentation: Wiring led by Ken Fuentes followed by WORKSHOP: BRING YOUR TREES
December 15	7:30 PM HOLIDAY POTLUCK, RAFFLE & AUCTION

Watering Should Be a Top Priority Now

By Jim Barrett

Although fall is approaching, hot, dry days are still a good possibility. Watering properly should be a top priority. If a plant begins to show stress because of lack of water, you may want to place the tree in full shade for two or three weeks. Return it to partial sun when new growth looks strong and healthy.

September and October are clean-up and pruning months. Fall pruning of quince or crabapples can wait until leaves fall or you can prune for shape now, removing all long summer growth.

Black pines should also be pruned, leaving one, two, or three of the new candles that have grown from the terminals left when they were pruned in June or July. What candles you choose to keep will be determined by your design goal for each tree. If you have an



Jim Barrett

that the new growth fills in to take the old growth's place—a good practice once or twice a year to keep the bonsai shape we strive for.

Pruning hard will also give you an opportunity to wire the secondary and tertiary branches, a tedious but important task. However, try not to prune shimpaku too hard. They do not respond well to drastic foliage removal.

The next two months are important ones. What you do to your trees now will reflect favorably or unfavorably on your design next

spring. Watch for heavy top growth on elms, zelkova, and trident maples. Remove thick vertical and horizontal branches now so they have time to start healing before the trees go into dormancy. Remember to watch for signs of disease and pests.

The next two months are important ones. What you do to your trees now will reflect favorably or unfavorably on your design next spring.

instructor, have them explain the procedure. Remove old needles, especially those hanging down.

Junipers may be trimmed to maintain their shape. Within reason, they may be trimmed rather drastically this month so

2022 Refreshments

Sept.	Damon DuBois
Oct.	Rick Boyer
Nov.	Volunteer Needed
Dec.	Holiday Party

CVBS Niche Displays

Niche Display Program

In the Niche Display Program, club members set up a mini exhibition display. Such a display consists of: the tree in a nice bonsai pot; a display stand; and an accent plant.

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.

However, it is also our desire to give everyone an opportunity to learn by doing. So if any less experienced member feels their trees are not ready for a finished display, it is worthwhile creating a display that is a work-in-progress. It will be up to the club member to determine which category their 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 2023 calendar (see the list of current display volunteers at right—2022 is filled) and let us know when you would like to present your display.

—Marj Branson

2022 Niche Displays

(Month of meeting)

Sept.	David Whiteside
Oct.	Ken Martin
Nov.	Ken Fuentes
Dec.	None: Holiday Party
2023	
Jan.	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. With Covid-19 restrictions lifted for now, we have resumed 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). Membership includes presentations by bonsai experts, workshops, critiques, member swap meets, field trips, a custom-made name badge, 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, or bring it to our next meeting.

—Nancy Smeets

Visit the National Bonsai Museum in DC

By Mike Blumenberg

On a recent business trip to Annapolis, MD, I was able to escape work a bit early one day and visit the National Bonsai Museum at the National Arboretum outside of Washington, DC. This museum's collections started in 1976 with the gift of 53 bonsai from Japan to commemorate the United States bicentennial. Most of those trees can still be seen at the Museum's Japanese Collection. In addition, the Museum includes Chinese, North American, and viewing stone collections. (There is also a Tropical Conservatory, but it is closed in the summer.)

I specifically wanted to see two bonsai in the North American Collection. First, I wanted to see John Yoshio Naka's Goshin. It is displayed in a place of honor at the entrance to the Collection, which is dedicated in honor of John Naka.

Goshin is a forest planting of 11 Chinese junipers (*Juniperus chinensis* 'Femina') that Naka created to honor his grandchildren. It has been on display at the Museum since 1984, and it continues to look great. (See the photo below.)

The second bonsai that I sought was another Chinese juniper (*Juniperus chinensis* 'Femina') created by Jim Barrett and donated by Jim and his wife Helen. Jim is a monthly contributor to our CVBS newsletter and also has demonstrated for our club many times over the years. I had the privilege of studying under Jim for a year before he stopped teaching, so I felt a special connection while viewing his bonsai. His tree also looks great. (See the photo below.)

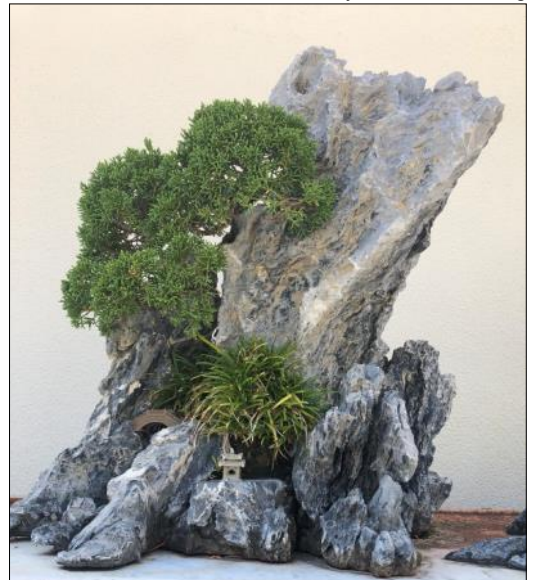
In addition to the two trees in the North American Collection, I want to share a favorite tree from the Japanese and Chinese collections. From Japan, this Japanese red pine (*Pinus densiflora*) has been in training since 1795 (that's 227 years ago!) and was one of the original bonsai donated to the U.S. by Japan in 1976. It sits in the place of honor at the entrance to the Collection. (See the photo above.)

From China, I was impressed by a rock penjing that was donated by the Shanghai Botanical Garden in 2006. It is very different from a traditional Japanese bonsai, but I love the mix of rock, flora, and structures.

If you ever get to Washington, DC, I highly recommend a visit to the Arboretum and Bonsai museum. It sure beat working! 🌲



Photos by Mike Blumenberg



Japanese red pine (top right).

Chinese rock penjing (middle right).

Jim Barrett's 'femina' juniper (bottom right).

John Naka's Goshin forest (bottom left).



Vuong's Bonsai Yard, Chan's Movement

By Ken Martin

Online Video Review: All on YouTube

Ben B.—a collector in the Seattle area

Tour of Tom Vuong's Bonsai Yard

Orange County, California

YouTube: Bonsai Tour of one of the best Yamadori collectors - Tom Vuong

53 minutes

Ben B. "Seattle" takes us on a tour of Tom Vuong's yard in Orange County, California, in this video posted on YouTube September 4, 2022. Bonsai artist Tom Vuong provided a memorable CVBS demonstration six years ago at our November 17, 2016 meeting. Although self-taught, his work is so well regarded that he is a member of the by-invitation-only California Bonsai Society in Gardena. He has performed demonstrations for many Southern California clubs.

Tom has a large bonsai collection, mostly junipers, pines, and olives. In this tour Tom discusses collecting native junipers, how to tell the difference between several types of native-to-the-West junipers (smell is one difference), black pines, grafting black pines, watering bonsai, and planting olives upside-down—all in this 53-minute video.



Tom Vuong in his extensive Orange County bonsai yard (above).

Screen captures by Ken Martin

Jason Chan

Eastern Leaf Nursery

YouTube: How to Create a Bonsai with Movement

14 minutes

Jason starts out with a prostrata juniper (*Juniperus communis* 'Prostrata') that costs about \$10 in a nursery. He describes how to wire it to create movement. He used two trees. The first photo (below left) is the first tree. Later he wired a second tree that had better movement (below right) and repotted it. There were a number of tips Jason discussed as to direction of wire, how to apply wire, etc. A good refresher on wiring. 🌲



Prostrata Juniper with French Thyme

Editor's Note: Damon and Wendy DuBois provided the niche display at the Conejo Valley Bonsai Society's August 2022 meeting. They showed this prostrata Juniper (aka, prostrate common Juniper or *Juniperus communis* 'Prostrata'). The accent plant is French thyme (aka, summer thyme or *Thymus vulgaris*). Here are some details about Damon and Wendy's display.

We have had this tree for two and half years. We got it in CVBS's holiday auction in 2019. It was repotted into its current pot (a plastic training pot) in March of this year. It is 12.5 inches tall from the top of the pot. We picked the French thyme as an accent plant to give the impression of a high desert climate.

—Damon & Wendy DuBois

Damon and Wendy DuBois' prostrata juniper after its trunk was chopped and it was repotted into its first training pot (near right).



After a hard cut back, an angle change, and initial styling (far right).

As it appears today (below) with its French thyme companion plant.



Photos by Damon DuBois

CVBS Bonsai Library Open for 'Business'

Now that the Conejo Valley Bonsai Society is meeting in-person, please return any overdue items borrowed from the CVBS Book Mobile while our club meetings were suspended amid the Covid-19 outbreak. But remember that if you want a good bonsai book or DVD to review, you can see me during a meeting or give me a call and request a book, pamphlet, periodical, or DVD. For a complete list of our library holdings, please see "Library" under the "Resources" tab on the revamped CVBS website www.cvbs-bonsai.org.

—Mike Blumenberg

Book of the Month

Botany for Bonsai, The Science Behind the Art by Enrique Castano de la Serna (Hasill Creek Publishing, a division of Stone Lantern; 2nd edition, January 1, 2011). 128 pages. Out of print.

Oh no! I returned from vacation to discover my small hackberry bonsai was severely wilted (see the photos below). My house sitter kept all the other trees alive but this one was in trouble.

I shouldn't have been surprised because I repotted it earlier this year into a coarse soil mixture that wasn't holding sufficient moisture. I knew it needed more frequent watering but neglected to tell the house sitter and it wilted in August's hot weather.

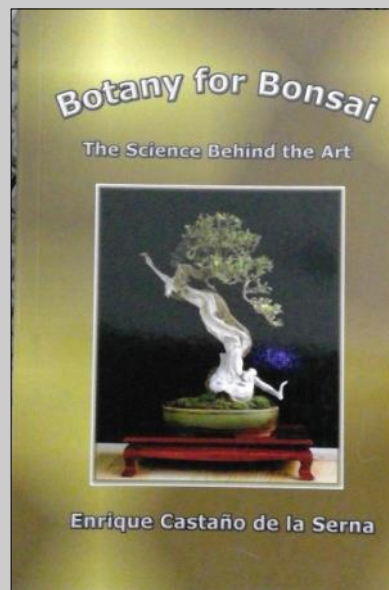
I responded by consulting a book from the CVBS library: *Botany for Bonsai, The Science Behind the Art* by Enrique Castano de la Serna. This book dedicates an entire chapter to water and states (in big bold letters) that "the lack of proper watering results in more dead bonsai than all other causes put together!" This chapter includes a paragraph that specifically addresses a dehydrated tree (like mine).

The author suggests that the best approach may be a resumption of the normal watering routine and cautioned against over-watering because it can cause more stress to the tree. He recommends adding sphagnum moss to improve the health of the roots and removing any new shoots that have dried up and collapsed because these can trigger additional loss in the same branch. He says that you can also fully or partially defoliate the tree to reduce transpiration or water loss through the leaves and then move it to a protected area until it recovers.

I decided to move my tree out of its bonsai pot and into a mesh rescue pot that would have good drainage and aeration. I was surprised to see strong root growth in the 5 months since it was repotted, and this gave me some hope. I added a little additional potting soil to improve moisture retention (which differs from what the author recommends) and moved it to a shady spot. I've kept it moist since then, but the mesh pot ensured it didn't stay wet. Three weeks later, I was thrilled to see some initial buds pushing out. Yeah! I hope the recovery continues.

You can check out this book and many others from the CVBS Library.

—Mike Blumenberg



Hackberry bonsai, badly wilted from underwatering in summer heat (below, far left). But it still had surprisingly strong roots (below, center). And now it is putting forth new shoots (below, far right)—a hopeful sign.



Photos by Mike Blumenberg

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

IN-PERSON BONSAI EVENTS IN CALIFORNIA HAVE RETURNED FOR THE REMAINDER OF 2022 and 2023 (see below). MOST GARDENS ALSO 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

September

September 9 & 10, 2022 Garden Grove, California

Viet Bonsai Today Association: Bonsai Exhibition 2022, Garden Grove Sport & Recreation Center, 13641 Deodara Drive, Garden Grove, CA 92844. Show hours are Friday 2:00 – 8:00 PM; Saturday 9:00 AM – 7:00 PM. For more information please call Dinh Nguyen (949) 302-3048, Tom Vuong (714) 878-8004, or Long Nguyen (714) 350-3184.

September 19, 2022 Zoom

Golden State Bonsai Federation: Golden Zoom Series. GSBF is beginning a new quarterly education program for GSBF club members called Golden Zoom Series. GSBF will arrange a professional bonsai artist to provide a demonstration/lecture via zoom. The inaugural “Golden Zoom Series with Bjorn Bjorholm” will occur on Monday, September 19 at 6:30 pm PST. CVBS is a GSBF member, so our members may attend. The Zoom link will be emailed to all CVBS members in good standing.

October

October 1 & 2, 2022 Oakland, California

East Bay Bonsai Society: Annual Show at the Lakeside Park Garden Center at Lake Merritt, located at 666 Bellevue Avenue, Oakland CA. Show hours are Saturday 10:00 AM – 5:00 PM and Sunday 10:00 AM – 4:00 PM. The show features an impressive exhibit of quality bonsai as well as a demonstration by Andrew Robson, a deciduous artist in the American bonsai community and the President of the Bonsai Society of Portland, Oregon, the largest bonsai club in the United States. There will also be a benefit drawing and a sale of bonsai and related materials. For information, visit www.eastbaybonsai.org.

October 8 & 9, 2022 Santa Nella, California

Golden State Bonsai Federation Bonsai Rendezvous 2022: Annual GSBF event held at Hotel Mission de Oro, 13070 S. Highway 33, Santa Nella, CA 95322. Free and open to the public. 30+ vendors from northern and southern California as well as several out of state vendors will be on hand both days. Admission is free, donations are appreciated. Free demonstrations throughout the days. Bring-your-own bonsai work area. Mel Ikeda and his tomodachi group will demonstrate the art of creating bonsai amongst friends. Silent auctions of bonsai trees and related material will be held both days. Consignment silent auction sales opportunities are available. Rendezvous hotel room rate \$155, two-night minimum. For more information contact Rich Guillen at richguillen@att.net or (831) 348-5015.



October 15 & 16, 2022 Sacramento, California

The Capital City Bonsai Association Show will be held at The Shepard Garden and Arts Center (in McKinley Park), 3330 McKinley Blvd. Sacramento, CA 95816. Show hours are 10 AM – 4 PM both days. The show is a benefit to raise funds for the Bonsai Garden at Lake Merritt and will feature trees from: • American Bonsai Association, Sacramento • Bonsai Sekiyu Kai • Sacramento Bonsai Club • Satsuki Aikokai Association. The sale will include established and starter bonsai, pots, tools, etc. Admission is free. Contact Paul Holtzen for more information at pbholtzen@sbcglobal.net.

October 22 & 23, 2022 Union City, California

Yamato Bonsai Kai's 51st Annual Exhibit. 32975 Alvarado-Niles Rd, Union City, CA 94587. Show hours 10:00 AM – 5:00 PM. Demonstrations on both days at 1:30 PM, featuring David Nguy on Saturday and Yamato Bonsai Kai Club demonstrator Howard Correa on Sunday. Demonstration trees will be raffled off as grand prize each day. Exhibition of Bonsai trees, plant sales, and vendors. Free admission and free parking. For more info and updates find us on Facebook by searching “Yamato Bonsai Kai.”

November

November 12 – 13, 2022 Oakland, California

The Pacific Bonsai Expo is to be held November 12 – 13, 2022 in Oakland, CA at the Bridge Yard, 210 Burma Road, Oakland, CA 94607, USA. Show hours are 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM. The Pacific Bonsai Expo is a juried exhibition featuring 70 outstanding bonsai displays and a selection of the community's top vendors. The Jurors, Bjorn Bjorholm, Ryan Neil, and William N. Valavanis will select the trees. For more information, go to the homepage using the following link to Pacific Bonsai Expo at www.pacificbonsaiexpo.com.

2023

January

January 21 & 22, 2023 Temple City, CA

Baikoen Bonsai Kenkyukai: 59th Winter Silhouette Show and Sale, Temple City Live Oak Park Community Center, 10144 Bogue Street, Temple City, CA 91780, 10:00 AM to 4:30 PM. Sales and demonstration at 1:00 PM on both days. Deciduous bonsai are featured from club members and invited guests. The Nagata-Komai award will be presented, and there will be a demonstrator at 1:00 PM on both days. There will be a sales area with club and vendor plants, pots, tools and more. For more information, please visit www.baikoenbonsai.com or email Joe Galgoul, joegalgoul@yahoo.com.