



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

Kusamono Demo/Workshop Next

By Damon DuBois

After a long and wet spring, summer is finally here! A lot of our trees will be growing vigorously at this time of year, but we also need to be careful to protect our trees from heat stress, so keep an eye on the forecast as the weather heats up. (For more information about bonsai care this time of year, see Barrett's Bonsai Tips, page 3 of this newsletter.)

The August 17th Conejo Valley Bonsai Society meeting will feature a demonstration and workshop led by Debra Mauz-Melitz on the creation of Kusamono in hypertufa pots. This will be a hands-on event: Debra will bring 10 pots that she made herself and plants for members to use in a class format. At press time, we had nine people signed on for the workshop, so there is still one pot left if someone decides they want to join in. Please let me know if you are interested and would like to secure your spot either in advance or at the beginning of the meeting.

Board Meeting

The CVBS board of directors met this week and we have decided to do our annual club exhibition in person at the Gardens of the World. We also discussed moving the dates to November 3rd and 4th instead of early October. We



Damon DuBois

hope to have this confirmed soon. This change will avoid having our show too close to the Golden State Bonsai Federation's Bonsai Rendezvous 2023. And the change will push our show back slightly later into the fall so that we'll have cooler weather.

Prepping Trees

We will have a short discussion about the annual show at our next meeting. Traditionally, we have devoted

the meeting a month before the annual exhibition to peer critiques and prepping our trees. This year, that preparation workshop will happen either at our meeting in September or in October, depending on the exhibition's final schedule. Stand by for more news.

See you at the meeting on August 17th! 🌳

Former CVBS President Marj Branson packed six bonsai in the back of her RAV-4 (below) for her drive to Wisconsin. (See story, page 8.)



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(Click on Email Address)

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CVBS Programs 2023

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

January 19	7:30 PM: Brief Meeting followed by Workshop— BRING YOUR TREES
February 16	7:30 PM: Brief Meeting & Presentation: Trimming junipers led by Marj Branson followed by Workshop— BRING YOUR TREES
SATURDAY March 4	1:00 – 4:00 PM: Workshop on Potting Ventura County Nursery, 4595 Balcom Canyon Road, Somis BRING YOUR TREES (CLUB WILL SPONSOR SOIL)
March 16	7:30 PM: Brief Meeting & Presentation: Wiring a tree into the pot led by Ken Martin followed by Workshop— BRING YOUR TREES
April 20	7:30 PM: Brief Meeting & Presentation: Bugs & Fungi led by Ken Fuentes followed by Workshop— BRING YOUR TREES
SATURDAY APRIL 22	10:00 AM – Noon Behind-the-scenes tour of the Huntington's bonsai nursery led by Ted Matson, bonsai curator The Huntington Library, Art Museum & Botanical Gardens San Marino, California
SATURDAY May 6	1:00 – 4:00 PM: Workshop: Bring Your Own Trees Ventura County Nursery, 4595 Balcom Canyon Road, Somis BRING YOUR TREES
May 18	7:30 PM: Brief Meeting & Presentation: Fertilizers led by Ken Martin followed by Workshop— BRING YOUR TREES
June 15	7:30 PM: Brief Meeting followed by DEMONSTRATION —PETER MACASIEB
July 20	7:30 PM: Brief Meeting followed by Workshop and Swap Meet — BRING YOUR TREES AND OTHER ITEMS
August 17	7:30 PM: Brief Meeting followed by DEMONSTRATION —DEBRA MAUZ-MELITZ
September 21	TENTATIVE 7:30 PM: Brief Meeting followed by PEER CRITIQUES—BRING YOUR EXHIBITION TREES
October TBA	TENTATIVE 20TH ANNUAL CVBS EXHIBITION VENUE TBA
October 19	7:30 PM: Brief Meeting followed by Workshop— BRING YOUR TREES
November 16	7:30 PM: Brief Meeting with Club Elections followed by Workshop— BRING YOUR TREES
December 21	7:30 PM HOLIDAY POTLUCK, RAFFLE & AUCTION

Summer Care for Semi-Dormant Bonsai

By Jim Barrett

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

If the maples are healthy, consider leaf pruning them toward the end of this month. Remove every leaf—large, small, healthy, or shriveled. Leaving some or pruning in stages only makes the tree try to survive on what is left. I don't recommend leaf pruning red or lace leaf varieties.

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

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

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

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

Some trees are entering a semi-dormant period now and,



Jim Barrett

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

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

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

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

No repotting except emergency repotting until this fall.

Refreshments

August	Antonio Viscara
Sept.	Rick Boyer
Oct.	Ken Fuentes

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 calendar (see the list of 2023 display volunteers at right) and let us know when you would like to present your display.

—Editor

Niche Displays

August	David Whiteside
Sept.	Volunteer Needed
Oct.	Volunteer Needed
Nov.	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, 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 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 Nancy Smeets, 837 Rim Crest Circle, Westlake Village, CA 91361, or bring it to our next meeting.

—Nancy Smeets

Event

Bonsai Show at Ventura Botanical Gardens

By Mike Blumenberg

The Ventura Botanical Garden held its 2nd Annual Bonsai Demonstration and Exhibition on June 10, 2023 at the Gardens behind Ventura City Hall. The outdoor show was under several pop-up canopies near the trailhead for the Gardens. This location got a lot of foot traffic as visitors accessed the trails. It also provided a beautiful view of the Ventura Pier and Pacific Ocean.

There were seven exhibitors, including Mike Blumenberg from the Conejo Valley Bonsai Society. Other exhibitors included Diane Boydston (the Botanical Garden's volunteer who coordinated this event), Jeff Sczechowski (president of the Bonsai Club of Santa Barbara), Wally Kunimoto, Daniel Martinez, Joe Cahill (executive director of the Ventura Botanical Gardens), and Terry Cahill (Joe's dad).

During the exhibition, there was an introductory class giving an overview of the bonsai hobby, which started with Terry Cahill. When Terry finished his presentation, Diane Boydston continued the lecture with information about local plant sourcing, what species and attributes to look for, and tools to accumulate. Then she invited Jeff Sczechowski to sit with her as she explained the tools: usage, sources, quality, professional vs self-made, and substitutions.

The students had an opportunity to buy some beginner trees to start their own bonsai journeys.

The show was informal without any judging, but Wally Kunimoto's beautiful juniper bonsai trees were a highlight. Mike Blumenberg displayed the rosemary originally created by CVBS member Ann Loftquist, Korean Hornbeam originally created by Jim Barrett, the Japanese maple recently shown as the niche display at our May CVBS meeting, and a Chinese elm. 🌳



The Ventura Botanical Garden's June 10th bonsai demonstration and exhibition (top) was under pop-up canopies. Visitors gathered for the introduction to bonsai class.

Botanical Garden Volunteer Diane Boydston (sitting on the ground in photo above) explained local plant sourcing, what species and attributes to look for, and tools to accumulate.

One of Wally Kunimoto's juniper bonsai (left) was a highlight of the exhibition.

Photos by Mike Blumenberg

Bonsai Videos from GSBF and YouTube

By Ken Martin

Online Video Review: one video reviewed this month was streamed via Zoom by the Golden State Bonsai Federation with Peter Tea. The other is on YouTube featuring Ryan Neal.

Peter Tea
Peter Tea Bonsai
Auburn, California
Golden State Bonsai Federation
Golden Zoom Presents Peter Tea
discussing Juniper Bonsai Structure
and Pad Development
2 Hours 22 Minutes

GSBF presents the fourth of the Golden Zoom Series. Peter Tea of Peter Tea Bonsai discusses designing your tree structure to allow optimal foliage pad development. Structure allows proper location of the pads and ramification improves the structure and sustainability of your design.



This two-hour-plus video not only discusses juniper structure and pad development but a myriad of other juniper-related topics such as soils, watering, diseases, fertilizers, etc. In my opinion this lecture is worthwhile viewing for anyone interested in developing quality juniper bonsai over a period of time. Peter seems very knowledgeable and conveys this knowledge well.

The video can be viewed on GSBF's website at www.gsbfbonsai.org.



Peter Tea with a selection of well designed juniper bonsai (above).

Ryan Neal
Bonsai Mirai
St. Helens, Oregon
YouTube: How to Turn Nursery Stock into a Shohin Bonsai Creation
25 ½ minutes

Every holiday at Bonsai Mirai, owner Ryan Neal picks out a neglected piece of nursery stock—often a recycled holiday tree or overlooked landscaping material. This year, he acquired a dilapidated blue rug juniper (*Juniperus horizontalis* 'Wiltonii') with tremendous potential for bonsai creation.

For all of us who would like to find, work on, and add to your collection without spending a wad of money, here's our solution. Before starting Ryan didn't know if he was going to end up with a mame (2-3 inches), a shohin (7 inches), or something else. After careful study with explanation, he ended up with a shohin with some tall, thin deadwood. 🌲

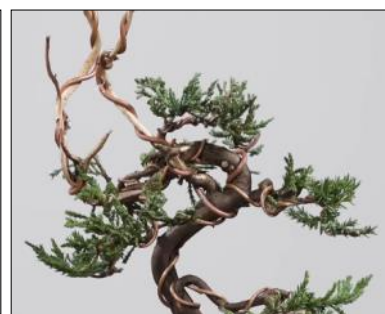
Ryan Neal with the blue rug juniper still in its nursery can (below).



Ryan with the styled blue rug juniper, now shohin size (below).



Detail of the blue rug juniper after styling (below).



All screen captures by Ken Martin

Fun with a Fig ‘Rescued’ from the Lost and Found

Editor’s Note: Nancy Smeets provided the niche display at CVBS’s July 2023 meeting. She showed this large fig. Here’s what Nancy says about her tree.

This month's niche was in honor of Peter Macasieb's June demo, when he styled young trees “bunjin” style for our club. I bought this fig four or five years ago at a bonsai show, and it was already goin’ bunjin, a great choice for this type of leafy, elegant tree. I had taken it to California Bonsai Studio for further styling along with some other projects, and inadvertently left it behind. Colin Purcell, the bonsai artist in residence there, reminded me (after about year's absence) that “Oh, the little fig you left is still alive and in the back of the nursery.” Much to my delight we were reunited. That was probably about two years ago.

Figs do crave a lot of water, and although sun tolerant, we have to be careful the bonsai fig doesn't get burned or dry out; semi shade and some sun seems optimum. They will cast off their leaves and go dormant, so do not lose heart, these clever trees will sprout again in spring, and are perfect for wiring and styling in the Peter Macasieb bunjin style!

The pot and mat are both from Japan while the display stand is a modern orchid stand from the U.S. The accent plant is lamb's ear and sedum in a Jim Barrett pot.

—Nancy Smeets

Nancy Smeets’ fig bonsai (below) was “lost” at the back of California Bonsai Studio’s nursery. She retrieved the tree about two years ago.



Photo by Nancy Smeets

Library

CVBS Bonsai Library at Your Service

Please remember to return any overdue items borrowed from the Conejo Valley Bonsai Society library. But also 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

Golden Statements formerly published by the Golden State Bonsai Federation (Sacramento, California).

Our next Book of the Month is the March/April 2014 edition of *Golden Statements*, the former magazine of the Golden State Bonsai Federation (GSBF). GSBF is a non-profit educational organization comprised of member and affiliate clubs in California and adjoining states. GSBF promotes the art of bonsai and published *Golden Statements* six times annually for many years. The magazine switched to an online format to save costs a few years ago but isn't published at all anymore. (Apparently it is hard to find a good newsletter editor these days!)

Before former CVBS president Marj Branson left for the frozen tundra of Wisconsin, she donated eight editions of *Golden Statements* to our library. I randomly picked one to read on my recent travels and was pleasantly surprised to find a photo gallery from the Bonsai Club of Santa Barbara's 42nd Annual Show. This was a nice coincidence because I was also writing a brief summary of the Santa Barbara club's informal bonsai show recently held at the Ventura Botanical Garden (see story, page 4).

I have included three pictures from their *Golden Statements* gallery, including a trident maple by Wally Kunimoto (who also showed several trees at the Ventura Botanical Garden), a coast live oak by Joe Olsen, and an olive by Ann Marie Erb.

You're welcome to check out an old edition of this classic magazine at a future CVBS club meeting.

—Mike Blumenberg

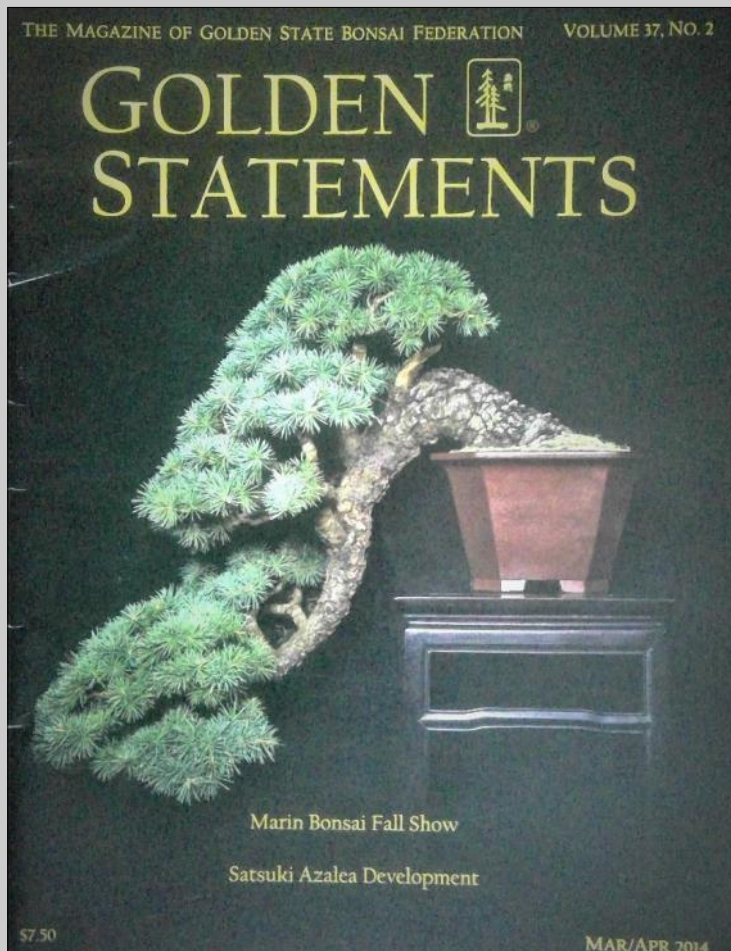


Golden Statements'
March/April
2014 edition
(right).

Trident maple
by Wally
Kunimoto (top
left) from the
magazine's
gallery of the
Bonsai Club of
Santa Barbara's
42nd annual
exhibition.

Coast live oak
by Joe Olsen
(middle left)
from the same
show.

Ann Erb's olive
(bottom left)
from the 2014
show in Santa
Barbara.



Photos by Mike Blumenberg

In-person bonsai events have returned (see below). Most gardens also are open—confirm status and Covid protocols of the garden ahead of time. We also list virtual bonsai events.

2023

August

August 26 – 27, 2023 Rohnert Park, California

Redwood Empire Bonsai Society 37th Annual Bonsai Show at Rohnert Park Community Center, 5401 Snyder Lane, Rohnert Park, California. Saturday from 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM. Sunday from 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM. Featuring the internationally renowned bonsai artist Ryan Neil as guest demonstrator. Ryan workshops both mornings from 9:00 AM – Noon. Enrollment is limited. Ryan's critique of the show trees from 5:30 – 6:30 PM on Saturday. Contact Bob Shimon (shimon@mcn.org) regarding cost and for enrollment. Demonstrations and raffles at 1:00 PM both days. Visit the REBS website for more information: www.rebsbonsai.org.

September

September 23 – 24, 2023 Penryn, California

The Sierra Bonsai Club will display bonsai and suiseki in the temple as well as outdoors in conjunction with the Placer Buddhist Church Food & Cultural Festival Bazaar all weekend, September 23, 10:00 AM – September 24, 4:00 PM. Dine in the outdoor covered tents with friends/family, visit cultural booths of food and crafts, bingo, entertainment, & children's games. A bonsai demonstration will be inside the temple. The bonsai will be auctioned at the completion of the demonstration. Winner must be in attendance. 3192 Boyington Rd, Penryn, CA. For more information, call (916) 300-8103.

October

October 14 – 15, 2023 Union City, California

Yamato Bonsai Kai Show. Exhibition of bonsai trees, plant sales, and vendors. Free admission and free parking. Demonstrations both days at 1:30 PM, with Jonas Dupuich on Saturday and Yamato Bonsai Kai Club demonstrator Howard Correa on Sunday. October 14, 10:00 AM – October 15, 4:00 PM. 32975 Alvarado-Niles Road, Union City, CA 94587. Demonstration trees will be raffled off as grand prize each day. For more info and updates find us on Facebook by searching "Yamato Bonsai Kai". Phone: (+1) 510-378-9150 or Email: irishfishboy@yahoo.com.

October 14 – 15, 2023 Oakland, California

East Bay Bonsai Society show features an impressive exhibit of quality bonsai as well as a demonstration by Jason Chan, owner of Eastern Leaf Bonsai Nursery, past board member of GSBF, and author of a bonsai book dedicated to helping beginners and new bonsai enthusiasts. October 14, 10:00 AM – October 15, 4:00 PM. Lakeside Park Garden Center, 666 Bellevue Ave, Oakland, CA 94610. There will also be a raffle, silent auction and a sale of bonsai and related materials. For information, visit website www.eastbaybonsai.org. Or contact Michael Hylton mhylton@rocketmail.com.

October 20 – 22, 2023, Santa Nella, California

Golden State Bonsai Federation Rendezvous at Santa Nella, 13070 CA-33, Santa Nella, CA 95322. October 20, 10:00 AM PDT – October 22, 4:00 PM PDT. • Bonsai Sales • Auction • Workshops • Lectures • Community. Very little information is available at this time. We will publish more as it's made available. Please visit www.gsbfbonsai.org.

October 21 – 22, 2023, Sacramento, California

Capital City Bonsai Show, October 21, 10:00 AM – October 22, 3:00 PM. 3330 McKinley Blvd, Sacramento, CA 95816. This group show features tree and suiseki displays from participating area clubs. This is all the information available at this time. Watch this space for details as they are released. Please visit www.abasbonsai.org.

Member Travelogue

Bonsai Meet Deer & Rabbits in Door County

By Marj Branson

First, I want to thank everyone for the Ann Lofquist bonsai pot going away gift. It is beautiful and a real treasure—both as a gift from the club and from the hand of the maker.

I made it to Wisconsin and the trip went well. I am in a small rural area called Door County, a tourist attraction in the summer. Right now it is warmer and more humid here than southern California, but my trees are doing well.

I took six of my bonsai in the back of my car (see photo, page 1), including several ginkgo trees, which can handle Zone 3 temperatures. Although the ginkgo is not indigenous to this area, streets in downtown Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin, are lined with ginkgo trees. Evidently, they are a very hardy tree and not subject to many predators.

My niece, who made the trip with me, and I did not sightsee along the way. We had three 10-hour driving days and one 4-hour drive. We spent three nights in hotels. I did not want to unpack the car each night—but did not want it broken into if someone saw things to steal. Happily, there were no problems and everything arrived in perfect condition.

Here in Wisconsin, I was sad to see elm trees and whole ash forests dead. Most recently, the ash borer invaded. It kills the tree by eating the cambium layer. There are signs of new trees springing from the roots of some trees, so maybe they will reforest themselves. I am told the borer does not stay in the roots, so those trees will be good. However, this process takes years to complete.

Halfway through the trip my niece informed me that I would have to think about where I put my trees so the deer and the rabbits don't eat them. Life always throws something at you—we learn to adapt and survive.

Stay well and safe my friends. I miss you all and the club already! 🐰