



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 Is Planning an Exciting Year!

By Damon DuBois

Happy new year everyone!

The Conejo Valley Bonsai Society has a lot planned for 2024, including demonstrations, workshops, and field trips. The details are still being finalized for some of these activities, but we have confirmed that Roy Nagatoshi will be coming to our February meeting to critique member's bonsai.

Roy is the owner of Fuji



Damon DuBois

Bonsai in Sylmar. As a second-generation bonsai artist, he has a wealth of bonsai knowledge to share. This will be an opportunity for members to get a critique and advice on one of their trees from a high-level bonsai professional.

I also want to remind everyone that the Golden State Bonsai Federation's Bonsai-A-Thon is just

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It Is a New Year, Time To Pay 2024 Dues

The Conejo Valley Bonsai Society's dues remain \$25 for one, or \$30 for couples. (Members who joined recently please contact Damon DuBois before sending your check.) Simply write a check (made payable to the Conejo Valley Bonsai Society) and mail it to: Wendy DuBois, CVBS Treasurer, 4549 Alamo Street, Unit H, Simi Valley, CA 93063 or bring it to our next meeting.

Westlake Village Community Room decorated for the Conejo Valley Bonsai Society's Holiday Potluck. (More photos on page 6.)



Photo by Sue Falkin

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(Click on Email Address)

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CVBS Programs 2024

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

January 18	7:30 PM: Brief Meeting followed by Workshop— BRING YOUR TREES
February 15	7:30 PM: Brief Meeting followed by TREE CRITIQUE —ROY NAGATOSHI BRING YOUR TREES FOR ROY TO ANALYZE
March 21	7:30 PM: Brief Meeting followed by Workshop— BRING YOUR TREES
April 18	7:30 PM: Brief Meeting followed by Workshop— BRING YOUR TREES
May 16	7:30 PM: Brief Meeting followed by DEMONSTRATION —TBA
June 20	7:30 PM: Brief Meeting followed by Workshop— BRING YOUR TREES
July 18	7:30 PM: Brief Meeting followed by Workshop— BRING YOUR TREES
August 15	7:30 PM: Brief Meeting followed by Workshop and Swap Meet — BRING YOUR TREES AND OTHER BONSAI ITEMS
September 19	7:30 PM: Brief Meeting followed by DEMONSTRATION —TBA
October 17	7:30 PM: Brief Meeting followed by PEER CRITIQUES — BRING YOUR EXHIBITION TREES
TENTATIVE November 8 – 9	TENTATIVE NOTE: FRIDAY–SATURDAY 21ST ANNUAL CVBS EXHIBITION GARDENS OF THE WORLD
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

Get Ready: Bonsai Potting Season Is Upon Us

By Jim Barrett

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



Jim Barrett

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

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Refreshments

Jan.	Sue Falkin
Feb.	Rolando Guevara
March	Mike Blumenberg
April	Becky Hosseini
May	Ron Manwill
June	Antonio Viscarra

Foodies Needed

We need individuals to cover the refreshments for the months of July to November, please see me to sign up

—Sue Falkin

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 for 2024 and let me know when you would like to present your display.

—Antonio Viscarra

Niche Displays

Jan.	Mike Blumenberg
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. We meet 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. (Members who joined recently please contact Damon DuBois before sending your check.) Simply write a check (made payable to the Conejo Valley Bonsai Society) and mail it to: Wendy DuBois, CVBS Treasurer, 4549 Alamo Street, Unit H, Simi Valley CA 93063, or bring it to our next meeting.

—Jim Falkin

When Is a Branch Not a Branch?

By Ken Martin

Online Video Review: Ryan Neal explains some basic bonsai concepts.

Ryan Neal
Bonsai Mirai
St. Helens, Oregon
YouTube: Bonsai Mirai Bonsai Anatomy
28.41 Minutes

An excellent demonstration for folks new to bonsai and the rest of us also. Ryan defines Japanese words such as nebari, tachi-nebari, shari, and jin, as well as English words such as trunk(s), first branch, etc. He does this by employing four bonsai: ginkgo biloba, California live oak, pine, and a juniper.



Ryan and a ginkgo (left). He says you can name every up pointing “branch” as a trunk. So you could say this tree has ten or so trunks. This naming can be the subject of a discussion: branch or trunk? A branch off a trunk is a first branch, a branch off a first branch is a second branch, and a branch off a second branch is a tertiary branch.

Pine with example of a defining branch (below). Here, Ryan discusses nebari and root structure (primary, secondary, and tertiary roots).



Live Oak with no nebari but lots of deadwood (shari) to anchor the tree (above).

This Juniper was Ryan’s first bonsai styled when he was 12 years old (right). He is pointing to the defining branch. One thing I had not heard before was the concept and definition of first branch, main branch, and defining branch.



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 CVBS website www.cvbs-bonsai.org.

—Mike Blumenberg

Book of the Month

The Complete Book of Bonsai: A Practical Guide to Its Art & Cultivation by Harry Tomlinson (Abbeville Press, New York, 1991).

I’m going to continue exploring *The Complete Book of Bonsai* by Harry Tomlinson by going back to the beginning. In Chapter One of this book, Tomlinson poses and then answers the question: “Why Bonsai?”

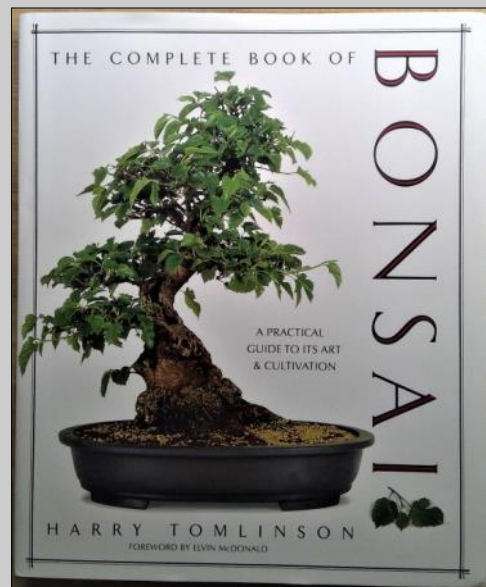
According to Tomlinson, bonsai is a unique art form that blends both artistry and horticulture. An “outstanding bonsai is ninety percent art and ten percent horticulture.”

Bonsai is also four dimensional, with time as the fourth dimension. Unlike a painting or sculpture, the artistry in bonsai evolves over years, over seasons, and sometimes overnight.

Why bonsai? Because it is a compelling combination of gardening and art, of nature and our capability to mimic and control nature. It’s satisfying to see our trees grow. Thrilling to see buds swell and leaf out in the spring. Captivating to study the ramification of a deciduous tree in winter. Bonsai is art that continually changes and is never finished, unless (sadly) it is finished (dead).

This book (as well as others in the CVBS library) provides practical guidance on both horticulture and design for bonsai. The information will help your trees grow and thrive, and then help you turn your trees into works of art. Here are four examples of outstanding bonsai from the book (see photos, this page).

You can check out this book and many others at our next club meeting. You can also check out many beautiful deciduous bonsai in the upcoming Winter Silhouette show this weekend (see page 7 for details).



—Mike Blumenberg



Japanese black pine (*Pinus thunbergia*) ‘can be relied upon for an interesting display through winter’ (left).

Japanese larch (*Larix Kaempferi*) in a group planting (below).



Unidentified species (perhaps cedar) with jin and shari (below).



Potentilla (*Potentilla fruticosa*) in blossom (left) are equally suited for the garden and bonsai.

Photos by Mike Blumenberg

It Was a Delicious, Abundant Holiday Potluck

The Conejo Valley Bonsai Society's December 21 potluck was a great success. A huge thank you to everyone who brought a dish to share with all. As usual we had an abundance of diverse dishes to choose from.

A special thank you to Nancy Smeets and Marilyn Fuentes for helping with decorating and setting up the food.

—Sue Falkin

Marilyn Fuentes putting food labels on the spread for CVBS's 2023 annual holiday party in the Westlake Village Community Rooms before the buffet line opened (right). As always, there was more than enough delicious food for everyone.



Main dishes included chili and pulled pork (above left).

Side dishes included corkscrew pasta, cheese plate, and green bean casserole (above right).

Salad plus deserts (left).

Photos by Sue Falkin

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

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.

2024

January

Jan 13, 2024, 10:00 AM – Jan 14, 2024, 4:30 PM, Arcadia, California

Baikoen Bonsai Kenkyukai—60th Winter Silhouettes Show, 301 N Baldwin Ave, Arcadia, CA 91007. First bonsai show of the year, bonsai trees in their leafless glory, bonsai, pre-bonsai, pots, and tools for sale. Giant raffle/auction and entertainment. Demonstrations both days at 1:00 PM. For more information, please contact Joe Galgoul, joegalgoul@yahoo.com
Phone: (+1) 323-828-2162

February

February 17 – 18, 2024, Lakeside Park Garden Center, 666 Bellevue Ave, Oakland, CA 94610

Live auction of approximately 115 bonsai trees, display stands, pots, and more. Sale of bargain priced bonsai pots, trees, stands, and more. 9:00 AM – 3:00 PM, Join us! Phone: (+1) 7077629154

February 24 – 25, 2024, San Marino, California

Golden State Bonsai Federation Bonsai-A-Thon at the Huntington Library, Art Collections, and Botanical Gardens, 1151 Oxford Road, San Marino, CA 91108, in the Brody Botanical Center. 10:00 AM – 5:00 PM. Extensive Bazaar with more than 40 vendors. Simultaneous demonstrations from 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM both days. Live auction and raffle 2:30 – 4:30 PM both days. Guided tour of the bonsai nursery and Shoya House 10:00 AM Saturday only. Guided tour of the Chinese Garden 10:00 AM Sunday only. Young Choe demonstration 10:00 AM – 1:00 PM Saturday. Young Choe Kusamono workshop, 10:00 AM – 1:00 PM Sunday. Bonsai exhibit by Baikoen Bonsai Kenkyukai honoring Jim Barrett, Marge Basingame, and Ted Matson on lower level of Banta Hall both days. This is a fundraiser for the Golden State Bonsai Federation Collection.

April

April 13 – 14, 2024, 10:00 AM – 4:00 PM, Sacramento, California

American Bonsai Association Annual Show, 3330 McKinley Blvd, Sacramento, CA 95816. Headliner, Tyler Sherrod, Professional Bonsai Artist/Teacher from Georgia, will conduct a live demonstration each day at 1:30PM. A large Exhibit of beautiful bonsai developed by our members. Northern California vendors selling all things bonsai. Member Concession Tables • Beginner's Workshop: Sunday, 10 AM-12 PM, includes tree, pot, and instruction. (Call Dodie Newman at (916) 799-9575 to reserve a space.) Daily Benefit Raffle will include each day's demonstration trees and many bonsai and related items. Check out our website www.abasbonsai.org for more information. Phone: (+1) 916-799-9575.



President's Message (Continued from page 1)

around the corner. It will be at the Huntington Library, Art Collections, and Botanical Gardens on the weekend of February 24th and 25th (see item in Coming Events, above). This event is the GSBF's annual fundraiser to support its bonsai collection at the Huntington. CVBS is a member of the federation, so please plan to come out and support it.

Our December 2023 meeting was our annual Holiday Potluck, Raffle & Auction, and it went very well. About 20 club members and families attended, the food was great, and between the raffle and the auction we raised \$953.00 for the club! I also want to send out special thanks to Sue



Falkin for organizing the event so well and Jim Falkin who served as our excellent auctioneer. And thanks to everyone who helped with the set up and clean up.

It's January, which also means it's time for annual membership dues, so please bring a check or cash to the next meeting. (Members who joined recently please contact me before sending your check.) See the box on page 1 and Membership on page 3 for details.

In that connection, I am happy to announce that Jim Falkin has agreed to take over as chair the Membership Committee. Please join me in thanking Jim for assuming this important role.

This month's meeting will be on January 18th and will be a workshop so bring your trees!

See you at the meeting! 🌲

Barrett's Bonsai Tips (Continued from page 3)

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.

Detail wiring is a tedious and boring chore, but is a must if you want your trees ready to exhibit. 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. 🌲