

Fresno Bonsai Society Newsletter

April 2020



Our Mission

The purpose of the Fresno Bonsai Society is to expand the knowledge and skills of Bonsai within its members while offering opportunities for appreciation of this art form to the broader community. We do this through the inspiration of the beauty of the natural world and the rich cultural heritage of Bonsai.

Officers of the FBS

President.....Mike Saul
Vice President.....Vacant
SecretaryMarilyn Shelton
Treasurer.....Bob Wright
Past President.....Dave Soho
Newsletter.....John Wright
Carol Wright

President's Message



I hope this missive finds every one of you well and comfortable. I will not bore you with the clichés about how our lives and plans have been disrupted. I hope however that you have found solace in your bonsai and some joy in this beautiful Spring.

At the time that I write this, the end point for our state shut-down is unknown. I have already announced that we had to cancel our meeting with Jonas Duprich in April and our open workshop. I anticipate that we will be forced to cancel our workshop with Peter Tea in May. If the prohibition against groups larger than 10 continues, we will cancel our Spring BBQ on May 30th.

We have traditionally not met during July and August because many trees are dormant and most suffer from the stress of our summer heat. If we are fortunate enough to have the epidemic slow by then we may conduct indoor meetings during those months. That would depend upon both availability of a venue and the reduction of the restrictions.

The Fresno Home & Garden Show is a distant memory now, although it was just three weeks ago. From our perspective, the Home & Garden Show was a wonderful success. Almost 60 people signed up to express interest in the Fresno Bonsai Society. Our bonsai exhibit was perhaps the best quality show that we ever assembled. The demonstrations provided by several members (and almost all narrated by Tim Robinson) were very well attended. The demos drew enthusiastic observers and active questions. Those who offered bonsai for sale sold virtually everything they had.

I should note that the viral epidemic was well estab-



lished by the date of the Home & Garden Show and a couple of our members had very appropriately expressed their concerns about this big event. At that moment we had not had any cases in Fresno County. I decided not to cancel. The first case of Covid19 was reported in Fresno County on the second day of the show. We are now a week past the incubation period, and I am extremely relieved that we have no members reporting Covid19, to my knowledge. In retrospect, I feel very lucky.

I want to express my gratitude to the many members of the FBS who devoted many hours to helping with the Home & Garden Show. The list is too long to mention every name and task. Thank you to everyone!

Given the uncertainty of the duration of our state-wide shutdown, I have two questions that I would like to pose to you all:

Would you be interested in watching an internet-based meeting of the Fresno Bonsai Society and if so, what should that meeting look like? There are a multitude of YouTube videos on bonsai as well as Bonsai Mirai available to us. I don't believe we could conduct business, such as a vote on our by-laws, because our existing bylaws limit the vote to paid members. Conducting a vote would be awkward at best. I would like to hear your opinions about such a "virtual meeting".

My second question is about conducting meetings in July and August if the restrictions regarding group meetings are lifted and if meeting rooms were available. Please respond to me about both these ideas by email (tinytreeme@sbcglobal.net).

The trivial downside of the current pandemic is that numerous bonsai events over April and May have been cancelled. More will likely be cancelled over the coming months. Both the Redwood Empire Bonsai Show in August and the GSBF Annual Convention at Santa Nella remain "on the books". The later event requires months of advanced planning and the organizing committee is uncertain, at this moment because of the shutdown and the worrisome state of the economy. These two events are always very popular with our members, but remain precarious. The upside, if there is one, is that many of us have been forced to shelter in place and prevented from doing other tasks in public. We have much more time to work on our trees. Several members have told me how much better their trees look for this reason. Their trees have given them some relief from the endless grim news cycle. We will be featuring a few of our members' trees they have been working on and would like to share more in our next newsletter.

Particularly for those who work in essential jobs, and for all of you: Stay well.

Mike Saul



Crab Apple in full bloom by Mike Saul



Fresno Home & Garden Show:

A beautiful Shohin display by Al Keppler. Do you remember the fine points of his presentation at our February FBS meeting?

Melon Seed Banyan owned by Pat Galle. Next month look for a picture of this tree when Pat started to work on the tree.





**Fresno Home &
Garden Show**

California Juniper
By Al Keppler →

A special thanks to Bob
Wright for organizing
the plant sale table. He
is the Wright on the
right below.





Al Keppler working on a literati



Jack Green working on needle junipers



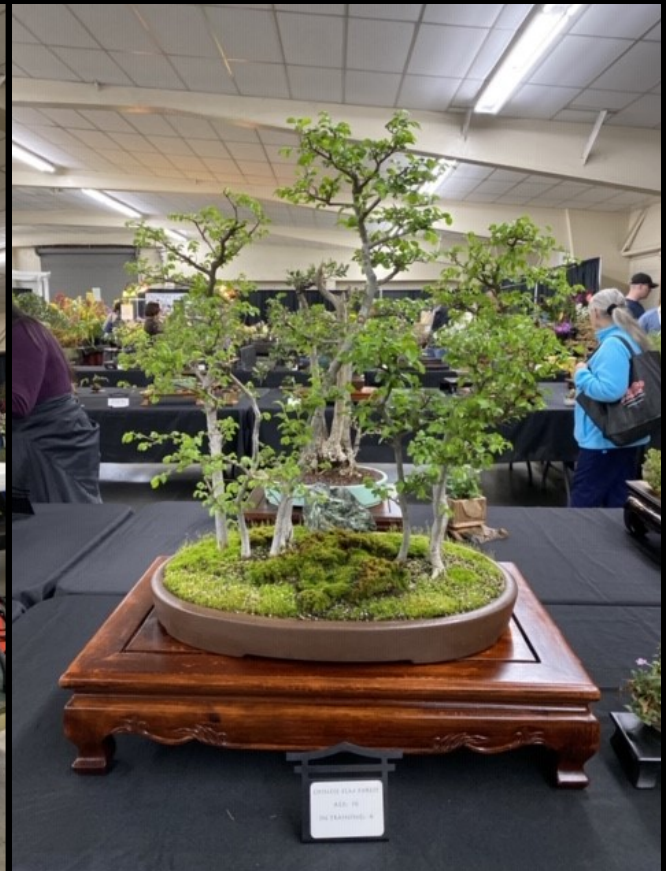
Dave Soho working on his large juniper, assisted by John Wright.



Genaro Cuan and Tim Robinson teamed up for a demonstration on this Juniper.

Tim Robinson and Mike Saul teamed up to work on a Juniper (bottom left).

Below is a Chinese elm grove by Chris Saldana.





7TH U.S. NATIONAL BONSAI EXHIBITION SEPTEMBER 12-13, 2020

Bonsai Almanac for April

All healthy bonsai should have new growth and should be out in the sun with air circulation. It is wise to rotate bonsai 180 degrees monthly, so the foliage gets equal sun exposure throughout the year.

Warm and breezy days will require more careful watering. Watering will remain challenging as foliage development (transpiration), wind, temperature and rain will lead to varying water needs.

At the same time, that fresh spring foliage is more delicate and subject to sun and wind damage. Try to keep black pines a bit on the dry side, as this will keep the new needles shorter and strong. Long shoots on deciduous trees should be allowed to harden off before they are cut back to two or three buds. While cutting or pruning must wait for foliage to harden off, now is the season to pinch back leaf shoots on maples to reduce internodes.

Pines and conifers may still be transplanted in early April. Remember to preserve some mycorrhiza from the old soil and add it to the new soil mix, particularly for black pines. April (or late March in our zone) is the first month to fertilize conifers and broad leaf evergreens. Maples and other deciduous species should not be fertilized until May (to reduce internode length.) The key point is to establish a schedule to fertilize at regular intervals depending upon the stage of each tree's development. Use a slow release organic fertilizer. It is preferable to use frequent feedings with light applications (less than manufacturer's recommended dose) and utilize relatively low nitrogen, and higher phosphate and potassium. Do not feed newly transplanted trees for at least 4-6 weeks after repotting.

This is also the month to begin spraying with Neem oil for aphids, scale and spider mites. Again, establishing a regular schedule to spray conifers for mites every 2-4 weeks (in the cool early morning hours) of summer will protect scale juniper species from spider mites.

Most importantly, enjoy the beauty of your bonsai in Spring!

How to make lemonade from lemons: FBS Member Pat Galle has been using his time a home to good advantage this month. These are three of the trees he has worked on.

Upper right a Needle Juniper

Bottom left a Shimpaku Juniper

Bottom right a California Juniper

Take pictures of trees you are working on with a description and send them to me for next month's newsletter.





Dave Soho's five-hour repotting of a large redwood. This tree had nearly exhausted the soil in its nursery container. Sawing off the bottom only started the root work!



FBS Calendar 2020

January 31– Feb 2		California Shohin Society Convention. This event occurs every other year. Hotel de Oro Conference Center, Santa Nella
February 8		General Meeting Al Keppler will provide information on “Preparing Your Bonsai for Show” 9 a.m. Clovis Senior Center 850 Fourth St. Clovis
March 6-8		Fresno Home & Garden Show (FBS Exhibit and Sale) Fresno Fair Grounds, All hands needed.
March 14	Cancelled	General Meeting (Visit to Round Valley Nursery including a grafting demonstration with Ed Clark) 24022 Ave 230, Lindsey, CA 93247
March 23	Cancelled	Open Bonsai Workshop 8 a.m. to noon, Clovis Police Community Room 1033 Fifth St. , Clovis
April 11`	Cancelled	General Meeting, with guest speaker Jonas Dupuich
April 18	Cancelled	Shinzen Spring Faire & Koen Nai No
April 25	Cancelled	Asian Fest at Fresno City College.
May 23	On Hold	General Meeting, Peter Tea - Yearly Schedule of Bonsai Tasks Followed by a bring-your-own bonsai tree work shop
May 30	On Hold	Annual FBS Picnic, Clovis Botanical Garden, 11AM
Sept 26-27	On Hold	Central Valley Koi Show at Woodward Park