

(Presidents Message Continued)

John has an encyclopedic knowledge of bonsai in general. He is a marvelously well organized, clear and humorous speaker. Everyone will learn a great deal, but particularly, I hope, our more experienced members. We are trying to bring some educational opportunities to members who have mastered the fundamentals, as they have asked us.



John has asked that everyone who has an oak in their personal collection ***to bring those trees to the meeting.*** He will help with planning and development of your trees. This will be an excellent opportunity for us all.



For those who would like to take advantage of Steve's sifting machine, you can bring your lava rock, mocha lava and akadama to his place on January 18th. We will have empty buckets (kindly provided by Jay Louie) for you to mix and transport your soil. Steve will also have many pre-bonsai trees in the ground at his ranch. You may be interested in purchasing some of this material.

A special thanks to all those who helped with the soil pick up and with the distribution in December.

December FBS Meeting Recap

The Clovis Senior Center was again the location for our December general meeting. The meeting opened with a discussion of incorporating the FBS as a 501c3 non-profit. The discussion by President Mike Saul included comments about the larger sum of money now in the organization's checking account and the idea of educational scholarships to further knowledge in bonsai. Questions included the governance structure under the 501c3, qualifications for board members, and terms of service. Past President Peter Schaffert, who is an attorney is assisting with the process. He will review best practices for similar organizations and return with draft documents for the FBS members' consideration and vote.



FBS member and curator of the Clark Bonsai Collection at the Shinzen, Bob Hilvers, provided a highly informative presentation on the subject of "soil and bonsai". He stressed the interconnectedness of soil composition, tree species, pot configuration, climate and the time you have available to attend your trees.

Membership Dues

Yearly membership dues for the Fresno Bonsai Society are \$40 per year for individuals or a family. Students are free. Checks should be made out to the Fresno Bonsai Society and given to Bob Wright, our treasurer.



Ultimately it is about the balance of water and oxygen and the ability of the soil to impart water and nutrients at the molecular level that matters. Bob discussed a range of soil component options, including: akadama, lava, pumice, and bark.

The value of akadama is in its self-scaling nature as it breaks down. This creates a finer and finer root structure. Most soil mixes don't contain nutrients. This allows complete control of what is fed to the tree. There are mixes which contain organic material, such as fir bark, which contain nutrients. The advantage of the fir bark is that it has a higher cation exchange than akadama.

If you are new to bonsai, talk with an experienced member about the species of tree(s) you want to grow and what would be a good mix to begin with. There is no single right soil mixture. Learn what is needed for successfully growing trees in a container and how much time you have to monitor your trees. These and material availability will shape what to use.



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

National Bonsai Exhibition

The world bonsai community will once again be enriched by the display of bonsai gathered from across the United States at the 7th U.S. National Bonsai Exhibition in Rochester, NY. Over 200 of the finest Bonsai in the country will be on display.

Like Japan's Kokufu Bonsai Exhibition, people from around the world attend the U.S. National Bonsai Exhibitions to appreciate and study the diversity of the unique and distinctive species displayed by accomplished bonsai artists from



Bonsai Almanac for January

Our bonsai are dormant or nearly so in January, but this is not an idle time for the bonsai artist! This is the season to do clean up chores. Remove dead leaves from pots and benches which may harbor insects and fungus. Wash empty pots with a dilute mixture of soap and bleach. Scrub lime deposits with Sandflex or other coarse textured sponge. Rinse and dry in the sun.

This is the best season to study the design of each bonsai by carefully reviewing the branch structure, trunk line and pot placement. Make a list of the trees which require repotting in a few weeks. Take a few photos to get a more objective view of the tree.

It is too early to fertilize (except lightly for some conifers) but the right time to add trace elements.

January is the time to apply Dormant Spray and insecticide to kill mites and pest insect eggs.

This is the time to remove some (but not all) old needles and to reduce shoots to improve balance and interior light to black pine bonsai. A few alternating old needles should be left on the branches in the horizontal position to offer a chance at interior budding.

Now is the time to evaluate your needs for bonsai soil components, obtain those components and to begin sifting and mixing bonsai soil based upon your repotting plans. Most bonsai texts suggest not to repot in January, but our climate zone will permit repotting of some species (pines and junipers) by late January in temperate years. Deciduous species should be kept in shady and cooler areas to avoid early budding during unexpected warm periods. If a deciduous tree does sprout early, however, its should be moved into the sun, because new growth that develops in shade tends to be weak and leggy.

During December FBS member Gene R. Nelson passed away. Gene was highly regarded among those who knew him. He taught biology for 30 years at Bullard High and was recognized with a California Teacher of the year award. His skill as a teacher became part of his life, which he carried into bonsai. Many remember Gene working with bonsai basic groups, patiently helping us learn the science behind the successful growing of trees. He was a major contributor to the construction of the Clark Bonsai Center at the Shinzen Garden. His tireless work on the irrigation system was an important part of the garden's development. We will miss his smiling face, his warm friendship and his willingness to give to others. Gene added to life and those around him. We will miss you Gene.



Gene was always a teacher.





FBS Calendar 2020

- January 11, 2020 General Meeting with guest speaker John Thompson
“Collecting Native Oaks of California” and “Care and
Repotting of Oaks”
9 a.m. Clovis Senior Center 850 Fourth St. Clovis
- Jan 18 “Sift and Mix and Dig” at Steve Da Silva’s
6470 E. Manning Ave., Fowler
- January 31– Feb 2 California Shohin Society Convention,
<http://www.calshohin.org/register/>
Hotel de Oro Conference Center, Santa Nella
- February 8 General Meeting (Preparing Your Bonsai for Show)
9 a.m. Clovis Police Department Community Room
- March 6-8 Fresno Home & Garden Show (Exhibit and Sale)
Fresno Fair Grounds
- March 14 General Meeting (Visit to Round Valley Nursery in Lindsay
including a grafting demonstration with Ed Clark)
- April 11` General Meeting, with guest speaker Jonas Dupuich
9 a.m. Clovis Senior Center 850 Fourth St. Clovis
- April 25 Asia Fest at Fresno City College
- May 9 General Meeting (details to be announced)
9 a.m. Clovis Senior Center 850 Fourth St. Clovis
- May 30 Annual FBS Picnic, Clovis Botanical Garden, 11AM
- Sept 26-27 Central Valley Koi Show at Woodward Park