



Fresno Bonsai Society

Newsletter

November 2016

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.

Greetings!

The weather is finally cooling and rain is coming! Your bonsai have survived the most challenging part of the year in our valley.

The next meeting of the Fresno Bonsai Society will be Saturday, November 12, 9AM, at the Clark Bonsai Collection at Shinzen. At the meeting we will finalize plans for the Eighth Annual Bonsai Yard Sale on December 3rd. We will discuss a possible FBS Christmas Party.

Following the business meeting, John Wright will present a discussion of Care and Sharpening of Bonsai Tools. This is a very pertinent topic for the close of the pruning season for most species.

Following John's discussion and question period, we will work on our trees. Therefore: **BRING YOUR TREES!**

Our annual dues are payable now.

Have a wonderful Thanksgiving!

October Meeting of the FBS

The October general meeting of the bonsai society was well attended as the membership continues to expand. President Pete Schaffert discussed upcoming plans and events after new members were introduced. VP Dave Soho encouraged members to attend the GSBF Convention in Sacramento and the Fresno Fair bonsai exhibit. He reminded members that pre-mixed bonsai soil is available at \$30 per bag (limit two per member) and FBS caps and shirts remain available. Linda Jacobson invited members to become docents for the Clark Bonsai Collection as cooler weather is encouraging longer hours and more visitors.

Following the business meeting, Bob Wright presented a brief discussion of pot selection for bonsai. He noted that the container is intended to complement the bonsai, much as a picture frame may dramatically improve the presentation of a landscape painting. He suggested that subtle features of a pot, like texture of the surface may complement the bark of the tree; that feet on the pot may raise the tree and suggest a more feminine and lofty vision. He pointed out that some rules or guidelines are based upon common aesthetic observations: semi-cascade styles appear better in square but tall pots, while full cascades are often complemented by taller round pots. Literati styles almost always require exceptionally small, shallow and almost primitive pots.

Bob discussed the concept of masculine versus feminine bonsai and the corresponding pot features...heavy, simple, square pots for masculine trees and curved pots with more elaborate feet for feminine trees.



Bob pointed out that round pots are particularly more versatile for trees with two possible fronts (or an undecided front!)

He reminded us of a few other guidelines for pot selection; the depth should be approximately the width of the tree's trunk directly above the nebari and the length approximately 1 and 1/3 the height of the tree (if horticultural needs permit.)

He showed us an example of what NOT to buy...particularly irregular handmade pots with poor drainage and poor balance. Bob pointed out that although bonsai pots are usually best with muted colors, tropical bonsai, those with bright blossoms and indoor trees may be complemented by bright colored glazes.

When asked where to purchase bonsai pots, he noted that the annual GSBF Convention offered a big assortment and broad price ranges. He mentioned the Annual FBS Bonsai Yard Sale and the two fundraisers for the northern and southern GSBF collections as well as local and distant bonsai nurseries. Bonsai Fusion in Utah offers and broad range of better quality pots via the internet. He noted that he often searches second hand stores for pots with or without drainage. He will drill drainage holes if the pot has artistic merit otherwise.

A question was asked about how to best remove lime and calcium deposits on bonsai pots. Bob noted that sandblasting appears to be the most thorough method by not readily available. Members express various experiences with muriatic acid was.

In summary, Bob noted that pairing with the right pot will unquestionably raise the artistic level of any bonsai, but other issues like depth and location of planting are also crucial to the overall image.



November Schedule for the FBS

- General Meeting at Shinzen Garden, November 12, 9AM John Wright will discuss Tool Care and Sharpening.
- Shohin Study Group, November 16th, 5:30PM at Denny's Restaurant, Clovis & Herndon Ave.
- Bonsai Basics, November 19th, 9AM, at 2152 Carson Avenue in Clovis. More on wiring and the new Bonsai Team Competition!



October Bonsai Basics

Karen Baker hosted the October Bonsai Basics class at her spacious home in rural Clovis. There was a big turnout with 13 students between the beginners and intermediate group. Dave Soho and Gene Nelson discussed basic wiring with help from Ray Thieme. Genaro Cuan worked with the intermediate members. Sue Stevens graciously donated about ten bonsai from her brother, and these trees were dispersed among the beginners to be cared for before sale or other application this year. This is the large and enthusiastic beginner class, thanks to the skills provided by Dave Soho and the instructors, who were trained by Harold Mitchell. This is much



Left: Gene Nelson discusses plant physiology and tree growth while Ray Thieme listens.

Below left; Dave Soho helps Sue Stevens, Susie Follett and Karen Baker.

Above: Genaro Cuan working with the Intermediate folks

Like the classic tradition of bonsai. In the coming months Dave Soho will introduce a new concept to class called "Bonsai Development Team Challenge." In this bonsai learning game, teams made up of Bonsai Basic students and Intermediate Students will be given a juniper and asked to style a bonsai from that nursery plant. At years end the best bonsai among them will be awarded.



FBS at the Big Fresno Fair

Only five members of the FBS participated in the fair this year, but they captured the bulk of the ribbons in all categories. Perhaps more importantly, Chris Saldana and Dave Soho, almost single handedly, raised the quality of the exhibit and public interest. Chris transported and assembled the CBCS Tokonoma and set up a focused display of shohin bonsai. Together the two set up the FBS backdrops and arranged a beautiful display of all the bonsai. Dave also set up a suiseki display. Fair visitors expressed a heightened interest this year and they enjoyed demonstrations by Dave Soho, Donald Hoisington, Mike Saul, and Mr. Vargas, a non-FBS member from Selma.

Special thanks to Jennifer Waite, an FBS member and manager of the Floriculture area at the



Fair for providing excellent care, watering and security for the bonsai. We are hoping for much more participation from the FBS next year.



Previous page: Bottom left, Steve DaSilva's root-over-rock won Best of Show!

Previous page, upper left: Dave and Chris assembling backdrops.

Previous page, bottom left: the CBCS tokonoma

Above: The shohin display from the Shohin Study Group and below the suiseki display. Chris Saldana won Six First Place Awards!

Premixed Bonsai Soil is available for sale from the club. It consists of 60% heat-treated Akadama, 25% heat-treated pumice, 10% Kiryu, and 5% Fuji-sand. 20 pounds shipping weight. The cost is \$30 per bag.

Contact Dave Soho or Bob Wright to purchase.



Cris Saldana Swept Shohin and More

Cris Saldana was awarded SIX FIRST PLACE RIBBONS, a second, a third and two honorable mentions in the Bonsai Division at the Big Fresno Fair, and the Sweepstakes Prize for Bonsai overall! Congratulations to the Michael Phelps of Bonsai!

Visit the FBS Website

If you are new to bonsai and if you are one of those people who learns from diagrams or even reading, visit the FBS web page and open the archived file on Bonsai Knowledge.

Read Dorothy Koreshoff's article on WIRING. It's an outstanding reference on this skill.

Bonsai Almanac for November

Like last month, November can be tricky in our Central Valley environment. Cold windy days may dry out soil but there is much less transpiration as the leaves disappear from deciduous species. Unexpected warm days may confuse budding and deciduous trees should be shifted briefly to shady areas. Trees may require watering due to wind losses. Water less but do not allow any species to dry out completely. Feel the soil, don't just look at it.

Remove dead leaves, fruits and seed pods. Remove moss from potted trees. Clean benches. Apply a final winter dose of insecticide or dormant spray.

Remove two year old pine needles, burned or distorted pine needles. This is the beginning of the season in which balancing of pine branches may be performed by needle pulling from vigorous black pines. This technique should be discussed with an experienced bonsai person.

Fertilizing with phosphate and potassium in half strength may be continued through November with conifers, but should be stopped for deciduous species.

Wiring and transplanting as not advisable until Spring.

This is the season to study forest plantings in particular as the trunk and branch structure is much easier to see when not obscured by foliage.

And this is the season to start evaluating your needs for the coming repotting season...soil components, supplies, wire or new pots?



A Generous Donation

Chuck Nelson is the very modest and shy bonsai artist pictured above. Chuck has been practicing bonsai for more years than he will admit and has been a long time member of the FBS. He was a the work horse of the Akatsuki Bonsai Society for many years before that. He trained with the famous Melba Tucker. He remains a devoted student to Kenji Miyata. Chuck has a truly spectacular bonsai collection. He has donated some outstanding trees to the Clark Bonsai Collection. Now he has generously donated 26 conifers to the Fresno Bonsai Society. These Foemina and Temple Junipers will be used in the Bonsai Basics class. Several of the trees



were originally grown from cuttings by Mike Nishitani, a long time Akatsuki club member and skillful bonsai artist for many years. Some were salvaged from an old forest plantings, including some from Irene Tamura's collection. Irene was also an old friend of ours and the Akatsuki club. Thank you, Chuck, for this generous donation!

Sue Stevens: Another Wonderful Donation

Sadly, Sue Stevens lost her brother, unexpectedly, very recently. His name was Mr. Mike Schmitt. Mr. Schmitt had enjoyed bonsai for more than 20 years. Following his death, Sue inherited a large number of bonsai. She donated a large number of those trees to the FBS and the Bonsai Basics class. The trees have been placed in the care of Bonsai Basics student for care and restoration. They may be offered at the Kōen-Nai fundraiser in April.

Sue joined the FBS this past year and is a docent for the Clark Bonsai Exhibit. She began her study of bonsai several years ago with the famed student of John Naka, Kan Komai. In her early years of bonsai in Southern California, she met both John Naka and Melba Tucker.

Thank you, Sue, for this kind donation that will provide both experience and resources to the FBS.

FBS logo caps and polo shirts are still available for sale. Please see Dave Soho if you would like to purchase these items.



Above and Below: Two nice junipers donated by Sue Stevens to the Fresno Bonsai Society.



Officers of the FBS

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Some Images from the GSBF Convention in Sacramento:

Below: Sam Adena explaining a shohin black pine. (Sam will do a workshop with FBS February 11th, 2017)

Below Bottom: John Thompson demonstrating with Boxwood at the Round Robin Demo. ("JT" will conduct a workshop with FBS May 6th, 2017)

Right top: a portion of the huge pot selection in the vendor area.

Right middle: More of the large vendor area

Bottom Right: Our own Ed Clark shows a big juniper to a customer. Ed and Linda were vendors, as was Donald Hoisington from Bullseye Bonsai.

See next page...



More Images from GSBF Convention:

Below: Bob Hilvers wiring a Pygmy Cypress in the Round Robin. In this demonstration, ten bonsai teachers worked on different species and simply discussed their work with onlookers.

The other images are of the two separate bonsai exhibits at the convention.

We are showing these photos to encourage our new members to attend the convention next year (in Riverside California) because this event offers the finest examples of Bonsai Art in California and a multitude learning opportunities for all levels of bonsai hobbyists.



Fresno Bonsai Society Calendar for 2016-2017

DATE	EVENT	ACTIVITY	LOCATION
September 10	First General Meeting	Book Sale and Bonsai Work	Shinzen Garden
September 17	Bonsai Basics	Introduction to Bonsai	Shinzen Garden
October 5-16	Big Fresno Fair	Bonsai and Suiseki Display	Fair Grounds
October 8	FBS General Meeting	Pot Selection- Bob Wright	Shinzen Garden
October 15	Bonsai Basics	Wiring, styling and growth	Kareen Baker's
October 26-30	GSBF Convention	Exhibits, Workshops, etc	Sacramento
November 12	FBS General Meeting	Tool Care- John Wright	Shinzen Garden
November 19	Bonsai Basics	First Annual Bonsai Development Team Challenge	2152 Carson Ave Clovis
December 3	Bonsai Yard Sale	Bonsai, pots, books etc for sale	736 West Browning Ave
December	FBS Christmas Party		TBA
December 11	Bonsai Basics	Students encouraged to attend David Nguy Workshop	Round Valley Nursery
January 14	FBS General Meeting	Raffle <i>Bonsai Exhibition Preparation And Display</i>	Woodward Park Library
January 21	Bonsai Basics	Bonsai Development Team Challenge and Discussion of Growth and Soils	TBA
February 11	FBS General Meeting	<i>Workshop with Sam Adina Olive Bonsai</i>	Woodward Park Library
February 18	Bonsai Basics	Repotting Conifers and Bonsai Development Team Challenge	TBA
March 2-5	Fresno Home & Garden Show	Bonsai Exhibit, Demos, Bonsai Sales	Fair Grounds
March 18	Bonsai Basics	Bonsai Development Team Challenge Repotting Deciduous Species	TBA
April 8	FBS General Meeting	TBA	Shinzen Garden
April 15	Bonsai Basics	Bonsai Development Team Challenge	TBA
April 22-23	Koen-Nai & Blossom Festival	Bonsai Show, plant sales, Bonsai Auction, Demos	Shinzen Garden
May 06 8AM	General Meeting & Workshop	<i>Oak Bonsai- JT Thompson</i>	Shinzen Garden
May 20	Bonsai Basics	Bonsai Development Team Challenge	TBA
June 10	FBS General Meeting	TBA	Shinzen Garden