



# Fresno Bonsai Society Newsletter

September 2019

## 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.**



## President's Message

I have the good fortune to step into this role at a happy time for the Fresno Bonsai Society. The club has grown. That is likely due to the community's discovery of the GSBF-Clark Bonsai Collection and in part due the Baby Boomers reaching retirement. The remarkable thing, however, is that we have also attracted several young and middle aged folks. The issue this creates for me is the need to provide meeting content for the broad range of skill levels, available time, and income for the wide spectrum of experience within our members. Trying to meet everyone's reasons for joining this club has been the motivation behind our diverse schedule of activities this year.

Our long range goal has been to develop all our members to an "intermediate skill level" (whatever that means) so that we can bring more beautiful and interesting trees to our exhibits. Ultimately, and more importantly, those skills bring us more personal gratification from bonsai.

Take a look at the 2019-2020 Schedule in the back of this newsletter. Notice that we have tried to bring some unique topics and quality speakers with broad appeal to all skill levels. We will try to devote some time to specific aspects of bonsai styling at each meeting.

We will continue to conduct Bonsai Basics after each meeting, according to our seasonal curriculum.

We have struggled with both the Shohin Study Group and the Intermediate Study Group for different reasons. Both of these subgroups offered something unique and valuable to the FBS. I am hopeful that there will be renewed interest and commitment to both. I'm open to suggestions.

We are going to have a really fun year and that's why we're here!  
Mike

## Officers of the FBS

President.....Mike Saul  
Vice President.....Vacant  
Secretary .....Marilyn Shelton  
Treasurer.....Bob Wright  
Past President.....Dave Soho  
Newsletter.....John Wright

## Upcoming Events

Sept. 14      General Meeting-Clark Collection, Shinzen  
                         Discussion of branch selection with Al Keppler

Oct. 12      General Meeting at Clay Hands Studio (\$20 fee)

Oct. 24-27    Golden State Bonsai Federation  
                         Annual Convention  
                         Marriott Riverside at the Convention Center

Nov. 23      FBS Annual Yard Sale at the  
                         Clovis Botanical Garden

## FBS at Art Hop in July

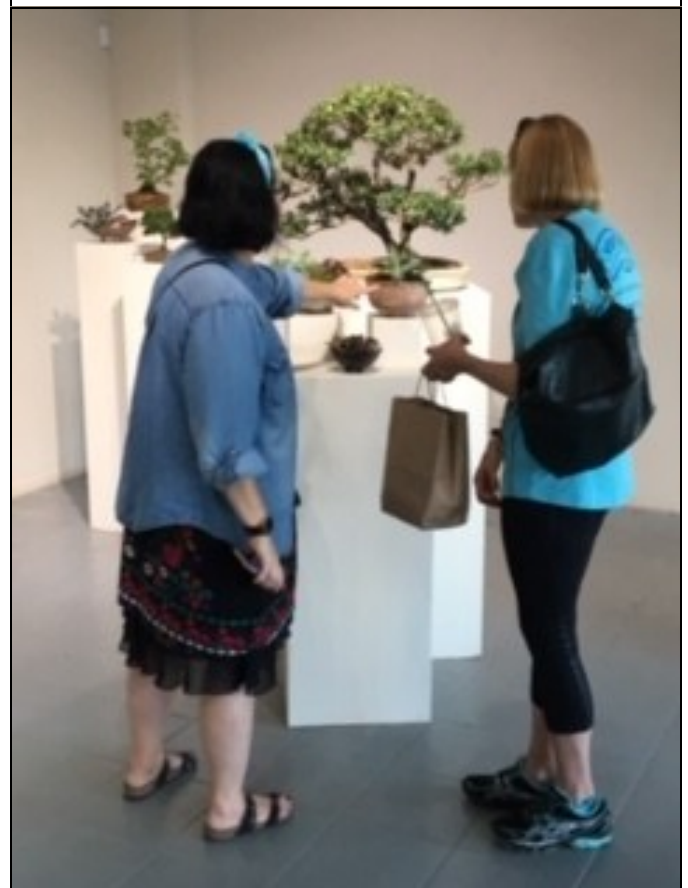
Art Hop is a project of the Fresno Arts Council. On the first Thursday evening, every month, several businesses, galleries, and restaurants in the Downtown and in the Tower District host different artists from our community.

Earlier this year we approached the Clay Hands Gallery on Van Ness Avenue in downtown Fresno, about organizing a “mixed art event” with bonsai, succulents, and pots for both. Several of the potters at Clay Hands have been producing pots for succulent plants for years. We all recall that April Grigsby had been a very popular local bonsai potter at Clay Hands until her departure last year.

On the evening of July 11<sup>th</sup>, four members of the FBS provided four or five of their favorite bonsai to display in the gallery, together with succulents displayed by members of Clay Hands.

The event was deemed popular and successful. The folks from the studio noted that they had a larger crowd than anticipated for a warm summer evening. Many visitors lingered to study the trees and ask questions. At least three people requested more information about the FBS. Several planned to visit the GSBF-Clark Collection.

We anticipate that we will repeat this event again, early next year.



# Ryan Neil Joined the FBS at the Clark Bonsai Collection in June



During the last weekend in June, Ryan Neil made his fourth visit to the Clark Bonsai Collection. Ryan is probably the most effective teacher of bonsai horticulture and styling skills in the country. In the past 8 years, since his return from apprenticeship in Japan, he has established himself as an icon of both the craft and the teaching of bonsai.

Seven new members of the Fresno Bonsai Society joined several senior members (and visitors from northern and southern California) during the second day of Ryan's visit. That Sunday was devoted to completing a huge scope of work on multiple huge bonsai, under the supervision of Ryan and Bob Hilvers, the CBC curator.

The anxiety of the new members was quickly replaced by excitement as they learned the skills and the decision processes for each new tree. In two days, the Fresno Bonsai Society and the Clark Curatorial Staff advanced important skills and confidence to improve the collection. The experience of that day seemed to enhance both knowledge and confidence of the new bonsai society members.

We anticipate that Ryan Neil will return to Fresno for a similar session in November this year.



## Fall Bonsai Care

In Fall, take all remaining fruit from fruiting/ flowering trees, and feed lightly to encourage good fat buds for next Spring. Some growers feed lightly all year in the Mediterranean-type climates (like Fresno). Because of the consistency, they are able to control and anticipate the growth better. October and November are good times to do heavier pruning, some creative wiring, and repotting for these trees, as well as the Beeches, evergreen oaks and olives.

While all that is happening, it's time to remove wire from maples and elms, and do some light pruning to retain the shape of the trees going into dormancy.

Black pines decandled in June need to be down to two buds per decandling site heading into Winter. This is a general rule. There are always exceptions, and if you don't know what those are, take your tree to a club meeting and get some advice from someone who has good healthy trees of that type.

By the time the leaves of deciduous trees lose their green color, they can be defoliated and sent to bed, because no more food is being made there. No point in wiring a tree that's not going to be growing. But the trees do fatten up a bit and the wire could end up scarring the bark.

The flush of warm weather in Fall common to Mediterranean climates is a rallying call for every bug, worm, fungus and ant, so be vigilant. There are numerous products both natural and chemical that will do a good job of protection and elimination, but obey the rules: Never when the day's sun is already getting too warm. Never when it's going to rain. A dormant spray now and in early spring to kill eggs and hibernating insects is advisable.

Autumn can be treacherous for watering bonsai. If the days are hot transpiration slows down, and on cooler nights there's very little evaporation. You can end up with a soggy pot, especially those that have grown a lot and are now draining poorly. Poke eight or ten holes through the soil deeply to conduct water through and oxygen into the soil. If fertilizer and akadama have broken down, such that the surface soil is soil is compacted and not draining, scratch off the top inch with a chop stick and replace it with fresh bonsai soil. When deciding on when to water, scratch the soil with a chopstick to make each tree prove it needs water. Breezy afternoons or evenings can dry the trees out quickly.

## September Meeting

Our meeting in September will include a presentation by Al Keppler on branch selection.

Just a reminder to club members that we need donations to make our September meeting raffle a fun and productive fundraiser for the Club. Please bring something you think would be of interest to members, bonsai related or otherwise.

## Membership Dues

Membership dues for the Fresno Bonsai Society are due at the September meeting.

The dues 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. Please complete a membership form with your name, phone number and email (printed in large clear letters) when you pay your dues.

Most authors advise against watering foliage because it encourages fungus, particularly with warm nights.

Clean up all the detritus, clean off the benches and stands, close up all the soils and containers, get ready for the pleasures of dormancy.

In our Mediterranean climate, evergreen species, both conifers and broadleaf, will continue to grow slowly. Most authors recommend continued light fertilizer for this trees through the winter. Deciduous trees are dormant and do not benefit from fertilization after leaf drop

(This general seasonal advice for bonsai care was paraphrased from a piece written by Chris Ross for Golden Statements)

## FBS Calendar 2019-2020

September 14, 2019	General Meeting (Raffle, Overview of Year, Collect Dues, and Discussion of Branch Selection with Al Keppler)
October 12	General Meeting (Bonsai Critique)
October 24-27	GSBF Convention Riverside Ca.
November 9	General Meeting (Deciduous Bonsai Fall Pruning)
November 23	FBS Annual Yard Sale, Clovis Botanical Garden
December 7	General Meeting, (Juniper Bonsai Creation)
January 11, 2020	General Meeting (Repotting Review)
February 1-2	California Shohin Society Convention, Santa Nella
February 8	General Meeting (Preparing Your Bonsai for Show)
March 6-8	Fresno Home & Garden Show (Exhibit and Sale)
March 14	General Meeting (Visit to Round Valley Nursery and Grafting with Ed Clark)
April 18	General Meeting, Bonsai Hop (Visits to Member Collections)
April 25	Asia Fest at Fresno City College
May 16	General Meeting (John Thompson on Oak Bonsai)
June 6	Annual Picnic, Clovis Botanical Garden