



# Fresno Bonsai Society

## Newsletter

### February 2015

#### *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 All. The winter and the bonsai re-potting season are now upon us.***

The next general meeting of the Fresno Bonsai Society will be Saturday, February 14th, at 9 AM, at the Fresno City College Horticulture Lab. Al Keppler will discuss repotting, soil composition. He will briefly touch on display and preparation for the Annual Bonsai Exhibition in April. In addition to the educational topic, Harold Mitchell will update us on the plans for the FBS participation in the Fresno Home and Garden Show on March 6-7-8.

We will be updated on the progress and plans for the Clark Center Bonsai Collection at Shinzen Garden.

After the business meeting we will adjourn to work on bonsai. As always, members are encouraged to bring trees for discussion and advice regarding care and design.

The Fresno Bonsai Society owes a special thanks to Peter Schaffert Esq, the Vice President of the club, who very thoughtfully reviewed the FBS bylaws and made several recommendations to improve the clarity and efficiency of the organization. Those changes were approved unanimously by a vote of the membership at the January meeting.

Thanks also go to Dr Howard Latimer and Mr. Ray Thieme who judged the 3rd Annual Ugly Tree Contest at that meeting.

A special thanks to the charming children of Mr. and Mrs. Schaffert who conducted the Annual Bonsai Raffle very efficiently (with a little help from their father!)

Finally, VERY SPECIAL THANK YOU to JUDY SHAW who produced the beautiful embroidered trophy banner for the 3rd Annual Ugly Tree Contest. Thank you VERY MUCH!



### Third Annual Ugly Bonsai Contest Swept by Steve Da Silva at January Meeting

The competition for the most hideous and otherwise hopeless bonsai was ferocious again this year as eight trees vied for the dubious honor. Once again there were threats and jeers from the contestants as usually mild mannered Chuck Nelson bitterly complained that he had been “robbed” of the title once again. The judges, Ray Thieme and Dr Howard Latimer displayed a remarkable degree of optimism, which frustrated some competitors, as they declared that several trees “had some potential” and thus were out of the running. In the end, however, Mr. DaSilva’s frankly gruesome broom style Zelkova was the undeniable winner. Since none of the losing trees appeared as raffle donations thereafter, we assume that the advice for improvement and that vote of “some potential” must have been accepted by the losers. Unlike previous years, the judges did not recommend that any of the runner up contestants “find another hobby...” There were some good laughs as always!

Note the beautiful embroidered trophy!

*Above Left, Above, and Below: Ray and Howard evaluate Al Kepler’s, Steve DaSilva’s and Ralph Schroeder’s entries in the Third Annual Ugly Bonsai Competition. Far Below: Steve DaSilva with his prize.*





**Annual Bonsai Raffle Entertained  
and Delighted**

**We had a standing room only crowd for the January meeting and a huge number of really great donations for the raffle. Items included several pots, trees, books, hats, and various bonsai supplies. Ticket sales were brisk. Vice President Peter Schaffert and his daughter conducted the sales and drawings. Everyone seemed to come away happy.**

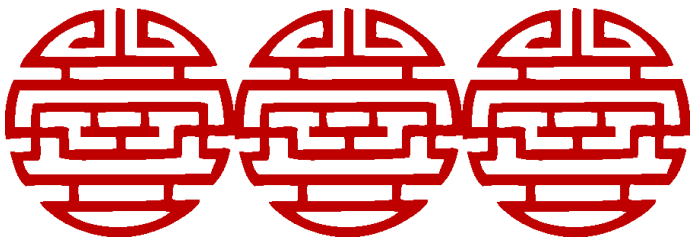
**Some new members obtained some excellent new material to work with.**

*Above: Dave Soho contemplates a raffle selection.*

*Below: Miss Schaffert reads a ticket number loud and clear*

*Below Right: John Wright sorts through his raffle tickets with Gene Nelson.*

*Corner Right: Ed Rendon worked on his big juniper bonsai after the meeting.*



### Bonsai Basics in February

The next meeting of the Bonsai Basics Study Group will be Saturday, February 21st at Harold Mitchell's home. The group will start at 9 AM.

The focus will be on repotting and bonsai soil preparation. Each student should bring at least one tree to be repotted.

No lunch is planned for this meeting. Contact Harold at 297-8207 for more information.

### Annual China Town New Years Parade

The annual Chinese New Years Parade will take place in China Town in Fresno on Saturday, February 7th. The organizing committee has invited the Fresno Bonsai Society to set up a presentation table at the parade to promote the FBS (and perhaps the Clark Bonsai Collection at Shinzen.) This would be an opportunity to introduce both the club and the CBCS to more of the community, and perhaps expand membership as well as interest in the new collection. This event does fall during the Fresno Home and Garden Show which we are committed to again this year. If you are interested in manning an information booth at the New Years Parade, please contact Mike Saul or Steve DaSilva for help and information.

**Upper left on far page: Dave Soho was gratified to hear that his boxwood "had no place being in the Ugly Tree Contest!"**

**Right: Harold Mitchell advises Al Keppler on a California Juniper. For much better images (and funnier commentary) of the Ugly Tree Contest, go to Al's Blog, "California Bonsai Art". The Rag of Shame?**

### Fund Raising Needs Noted

At the January meeting of the FBS, Harold Mitchell rose and noted that the FBS and the CBCS will have very significant needs for bonsai plant material for both fundraising and teaching inside and outside the club. He noted that simple bonsai might be sold at the Shinzen, for example and might be an effective fundraising tool. These trees will be needed within the next 2-3 years if not sooner. He pointed out that this material takes years to develop and we need a plan to decide what trees, how many, and where they will be grown.

There was a concensus in the room that his observations were correct (and several possibilities of acquiring inexpensive pots, for example, were offered,) but no specific action plan was established. A subcommittee is needed to develop an action plan for this need. If you are interested, please contact Ralph Schroeder to volunteer and set up a meeting.





## Update on Clark Bonsai Collection at Shinzen

Over the past six weeks, since mid-December, we've made huge progress toward a permanent bonsai collection at the Shinzen Garden.

Landscape architect Robert Boro provided the completed the plans and after several meetings with the City and Parks Department they were approved.

The City of Fresno, with volunteers from Fresno State, have prepared the site and cleared the way for the "reserve area."

Volunteers from the FBS, Hanford Bonsai Society and Shinzen, led by project manager Sid Mukai, relocated 10 tons of stone, disassembled and moved 150 feet of roofed fencing and all the exhibit benches from the Clark Center. By the time of this writing, the entire existing structure should be disassembled and moved to Woodward Park.

The chain link fencing should be around the new site by February 1st. Bids for the surveillance security system are forthcoming.

The roofed wood fence and gates, landscape planting and infrastructure for the two separate irrigation systems (landscape and bonsai) are next.

See images on page 6.

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*Above: The new home of the Clark Bonsai Collection is declared.*

*Below Left: One of the gates at the Clark Center in Hanford is taken down by the volunteers on December 17th*

*Below Right: The first section of fencing is re-erected in the Shinzen Garden in early January. The deconstruction in Hanford should be complete by the time of this publication.*



## Bonsai Events Coming Soon

**February 21 – 22, 2015 Oakland, CA**

**GSBF Bonsai Garden at Lake Merritt: The annual Mammoth Fund Raiser** will be held at 666 Bellevue Ave. (Garden Center Building). Saturday: Auction preview at noon with Auction starting at 1 PM. Sunday: Vendor Sales start at 9 AM, Plant Sales start at 10 AM, and Demonstrations at 1 PM. Also on Sunday help us celebrate our 15th Anniversary! The Bonsai Garden at Lake Merritt will celebrate the many bonsai clubs who have created and supported the Garden by inviting Bonsai Clubs from all over Northern California to showcase their best trees. Bonsai Garden will be open 10 AM to 4 PM on Saturday and Noon to 4 PM on Sunday.

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*Again, Special Thanks to Judy Shaw (above) for creating the "towel of shame" prize for this year's Ugly Bonsai Contest!*



*Above: One of our new members asked about using Rosemary for bonsai. I came across this image in one of the many bonsai websites. Rosemary often produces twisted and contorted trunks that are well suited to Bunjin Style. Small plants are readily available, inexpensive and very heat tolerant. If things don't work out...buy some lamb chops.*



*That's all folks...*