

# The Kofu Kai Review

The Monthly Newsletter of the Kofu Bonsai Kai Club

## MEETING TIME and PLACE

August 15, 2015, at 7:00 pm

Anaheim Methodist Church, 1000 South State College Blvd, Anaheim



Photo by Eric Stoner for Kofu Bonsai Kai

## Remembering Harry Hirao

**Harry Hirao**, Kofu Bonsai Kai's founding president, passed away on July 23, 2015, with his family by his side. He was 98 years old. There are so many things to say about Harry. He was a fixture of the southern California bonsai community for many, many years. If I had to pick just one thing to say, it would be this: That it was his generosity of spirit and that of his friend John Naka that enabled the art of bonsai to spread beyond the Japanese community to all people, the start of a movement that has circled the globe. They believed that this beautiful art form should be shared by everyone, and they taught many, many people who then went on to become teachers and bonsai masters themselves. **Harry** was also generous with his collecting, taking with him into the Mojave Desert hills anyone who showed sincere interest and allowing our native bonsai material to be appreciated globally. He was known as "Mr California Juniper," and his masterpiece junipers are well known to you all. Up until this year, he was still traveling annually to Washington, DC, to demonstrate and to work on his trees in the National Bonsai & Penjing Museum.

Harry was also known for collecting magnificent *suiseki* (viewing stones) and donated many to gardens and parks including the collection in Washington, DC, and especially the Huntington Library, Art Collections, and Botanical Gardens here in southern California, where a number of his stones are beautifully displayed in the bonsai court.

**Harry** seemed sometimes to be indestructible, like the desert mountains he loved, but we knew that someday we'd have to give him back. We were so very lucky to know him and to participate in this chapter of the history of the art of bonsai.

Here are just a few of his additional accomplishments: In 1977, **Harry** and his longtime friend, Larry Ragle, formed Kofu Bonsai Kai in Orange County; In 1981, he was honored by Prince Takamatsu of Japan and awarded the *Ryoku Hakiju Yukosho* medal; The Japanese Agricultural Society awarded him with a plaque for his contribution to the art of bonsai in the United States; The Harry Hirao Reception Room was established at the John Naka Pavilion for Bonsai at the National Arboretum in Washington, DC; and, he was an honorary member of the Board of Directors for the National Bonsai & Penjing Museum in Washington, DC.

Our deepest sympathy goes to Harry's family at this sad time. --- Carol Upston

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jackdaw@earthlink.net

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#### Meeting Refreshments:

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**WWW.KOFUKAI.ORG**

August 15, 2015

# ANNUAL AUCTION

This is our chance to not only support our club, but to clear out material and trees that we're done with, tired of or just don't want to take care of anymore. The auction is a great opportunity for both newer bonsai enthusiasts and the more experienced to acquire good material at a reasonable price and is also an opportunity for all of us to support our club. The money we raise at the auction goes to pay for the things we enjoy all year long at our meetings, the cost of demonstrators, and materials as well as the general costs to put on exhibits and events. Even if you can't attend the auction in person, please consider donating something to the sale. Just contact one of the officers listed on the website, and we will arrange to get your donation to the auction.

Thank you very much for your support. We will have the area ready for donations at 6PM and wish to be ready to start **sharply** at 7PM. Cash, Checks, and Credit cards will be accepted for payment from those bidding on items.

Carol Upston

July 18 Critique

## ROY NAGATOSHI

We want to thank **Roy Nagatoshi** for taking the long drive down from Sylmar to spend some time with us at our last meeting. We would also like to thank all the members for bringing trees to the critique. **Roy Nagatoshi** had a chance to work on a good amount of member trees ranging from a succulent to multiple junipers. Due to the varying species of trees, all the members were able to get a general understanding of each type of tree. This was very helpful since we all love to have a collection of different species.

One of the highlights of the meeting was a boxwood tree that was cut back aggressively by **Roy** two years ago. **Michael**, the owner of the boxwood, brought the tree back, and **Roy** further explained how the tree was developing. He made a few branch cuts and kept what he thought were the essential branches for creating a well-balanced bonsai tree. He then went on to explain how to maintain the tree as it grew, and how to develop the pad layers on the boxwood. We hope to see the tree again as it further develops.



Photo by Carol Upston

We would also like to thank **Roy Nagatoshi** for donating his honorarium back to the club. We're grateful that we have such a talented and generous artist willing to share his knowledge.

---Jason Chan

**KOFU BONSAI KAI - BONSAI IDEAS**  
**BY MARTY MANN**  
**AUGUST**

Summertime, and the living is easy - so goes the song. August brings some respite from the busy spring chores. It is still a period of vigorous growth and greater responsibility. August brings higher temperatures that slows down new growth and reduces pruning requirements. Trimming, repotting and styling is still in order. Continue to pinch the trees that require it, daily.

Be reminded that summer vacationing puts an additional burden on your 'bonsai sitters'. A suggestion would be to let them water your trees for you for a few days before you leave to be sure that they are following your instructions. Trees requiring special care should be grouped together to simplify attention. Don't trust your automatic watering system without the back-up of someone who can check from time to time to audit its functions.

Try forming a mutual watering pact with fellow bonsaiists. You do for them when you can and they will do for you. It's a great working arrangement and considerably safer than trusting your 'babies' to strangers.

With the arrival of summer most of the formal bonsai shows have passed and the bonsaiist has the pleasure of displaying their own trees. The objective of a good hobbyist is pride in the finished tree. This is achieved by maintaining good health, continuing a selective feeding routine and paying attention to weather conditions that set the guidelines for proper watering requirements. Summer maintenance prepares the trees for fall and winter. Plan ahead.

Start with the constant surveillance of fast summer growth. Warm days and cool nights encourage the development of new tip growth, long internodes and lush foliage. Maintenance must include pinching and plucking of the growing tips as well as cutting back the branches. Reducing the branch extensions encourages shorter internodes, tighter evergreen formations and develops desirable twiggytness on deciduous trees. Trim and shape unwanted growth. Maintain form and design.

A regular program of feeding during the summer months is important. Reduction of the nitrogen content of the fertilizer mix inhibits excessive green growth and allows the formation of chemical changes that produces the best fall colors. The basic mix of cottonseed meal (70%) and bone meal (30 %) can be altered to increase the bone meal, thereby providing more potassium and phosphorus to harden the woody growth. It also induces the development of fruit and flower buds for next year. Do not feed plants that appear to be suffering from summer stress due to oppressive heat or moisture deprivation.

It's too late and risky to leaf prune in the hot summer months. If you wish, you can do selective pruning of large leaves, burnt leaves and the obvious unwanted elongated branches and crossing branches. Keep your pots from getting too hot. Roots are easily damaged by excessive heat. Be sure your soil stays damp at all times. Keep the humidity high and the air moving around all of your trees.

Watch the wires. You would be surprised how fast spring training wire can cut into growing branches and leave permanent scars. Turn your trees to give them equal light exposure and even growth. Avoid placing trees on display benches next to hot reflecting walls. Be sure to rotate frequently.

Unfortunately, the restful summer period of bonsai enjoyment is also the most active period of pest proliferation. *Bugs* love the combination of warmth and moisture. They grow and attack your trees with relish. Keep up with regular spraying of Malathion, Isotex, Sevin, Orthorix Dormant Spray (Lime Sulfur), etc. You pick what works best for you. Apply under and over the leaf surface but out of the hot sun and not just before you water. Don't apply any chemicals when temperatures are too high.

No transplanting during the summer months. However certain materials such as Pomegranates, Ficus, Buttonwood, Cotoneaster, Pyracantha and most Bamboo can be repotted or transplanted at this time. Trees that were defoliated late in June are vulnerable to damage during the heat of the summer. Keep these trees in partial shade until they start growing again.

HAIKU POEM

A smile brings good thoughts  
Of days that are forgotten  
But memory stays

By Marty Mann

**This article has been extracted from the recently published book called ' Bonsai Ideas'. © By Marty Mann. Material is not to be copied without publisher or author's permission. 8/12 August 2012**

# CALENDAR of EVENTS

August 22-23 **Nanpu Kai** annual bonsai exhibit as part of Nisei Week, 10 am to 5 pm both days, at the Japanese American Cultural and Community Center, 244 South San Pedro Street, Los Angeles.

**September 22-27 Kofu Bonsai Kai** annual exhibit at Bowers Museum, 2002 North Main Street, Santa Ana. Set up and photos will be on the 22<sup>nd</sup>. Further information will be forthcoming.

October 29 - **Golden Statement Bonsai Federation (GSBF) 2015 Convention 38** "Bonsai Fusion: Where Tradition Meets Innovation at the Riverside Convention Center, 3637 Fifth Street near Main, Riverside. Headliners: Bjorn Bjorholm and John Wang. Guest Artists: David Nguy and Tak Shimazu. Demonstrations, seminars, critiques, workshops, benefit drawings, vendors, and much more. Additional information available at [www.GSBF2015.co](http://www.GSBF2015.co)  
November 1

## SPECIAL THANK YOU

### August Refreshments:

Wendy Tsai, Debra and David, and  
CJ and Mark Levinstein.

### Raffle Donors:

Wendy Tsai and Manuel Martinez.

*All donations are appreciated.*

## PRE-MEETING WORKSHOP

THERE WILL ***NOT*** BE A PRE-MEETING WORKSHOP FROM 4 PM – 6 PM BEFORE THE AUGUST 15 MEETING DUE TO THE AUCTION.

COME TO THE AUCTION. THERE WILL BE LOTS OF BONSAI MATERIAL TO BID ON.