

The Kofu Kai Review

The Monthly Newsletter of the Kofu Bonsai Kai Club

MEETING TIME and PLACE

May 16, 2015, at 7:00 pm

Anaheim Methodist Church, 1000 South State College Blvd, Anaheim



MAY 16 DEMONSTRATION

JOHN NEILSEN



We are pleased to have **John Nielsen** back as the demonstrator for the May meeting. **John** is a licensed Arborist with 30 years experience in Bonsai. Over the years, he has studied with **Harry Hirao**, **Mel Ikeda**, and **Tak Shimazu**. His passion for the Art of Bonsai continues to give him great pleasure and rewards as he strives to perfect his art and share his knowledge with other enthusiasts at many levels of development. On a personal note, **John** has been my teacher and a friend for many years, and I always look forward to his demonstrations. He will be giving Kofu members strategies for developing and improving their material. He will also talk about propagation and overall health needs unique to Bonsai. As before, he will also be bringing a large amount of material for the raffle. This is a demonstration you do not want to miss. It is a great learning opportunity and chance to win some good material.

Ron Reekers

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April 18 Demonstrator

MICHAEL SYKES



Photo by Carol Upston

Michael Sykes was the April demonstrator, which was an interesting and informative event. He focused on the development of Foemina Junipers as formal uprights. He was introduced to this type of material more than 20 years ago when he saw a picture of **John Naka's** forest arrangement (called Goshin). The demo was started by reviewing nursery stock, which is best when it has a very broad base (*nebari*). One will probably need to dig down into the soil to find this material and most likely it will need to cut the stock material way down to Bonsai size (approximately 1 to 2 feet). After the tree is selected it is important to find the front, which is most likely facing the broadest view of the base. Note that at this time, the foliage is secondary and can easily be developed later. The foliage needs to be developed from the trunk out. Bare branches will most likely be used for *jin*. It is key to wire all primary branches down from the trunk, even the *jin*, to begin giving the tree an older look. Secondary branching is later developed by thinning and wiring. It was interesting to see **Michael** use tweezers to hold onto these secondary branches to trim them back. Note that the tree and the branches both need to develop an apex and triangulate down towards the base (for the tree) and towards the trunk (for the branch). In order to fill in the foliage and develop wood on the branches, continued thinning by pruning and wiring, will be necessary over the years (patience), which will give the tree the desired look that the bonsai artist is looking for.

Michael completed the demo with a very nice tree that **Joe Stubbe** won in the raffle. We hope to see this tree in a show one day.

We thank **Michael** for his outstanding demo and look forward to him demoing again for Kofu Bonsai Kai.

Ron Reekers

**Congratulations
to the winner of
Michael Sykes'
donated tree:**

JOE STUBBE



Photo by Carol Upston

KOFU BONSAI KAI at GREEN SCENE

Kofu Bonsai Kai is a non-profit educational organization, and part of our mission is to teach the public about bonsai. Even if they don't take up the art themselves or join our club, we want them to understand what bonsai is and to look at bonsai trees with a new appreciation. If the art of bonsai is to continue into future generations, it needs an audience as well as practitioners. To that end, and after looking for a while for an event, which would combine good public outreach, and fun for our members, we decided to try the Green Scene at the Fullerton Arboretum, which is held in mid-April each year. I'm happy to report that it went very well, we got a chance to talk to a lot of people, and it was easy to set up and get in and out of our booth location. The members who came to help out received free admission for the whole event and access to the numerous booths selling hundreds of varieties of plants. We will definitely do this again and I hope more of you will participate next year. Special thanks to members **Shari Religa**, **Mike Viljak**, **Michael Walsh** (and family) for explaining to eager listeners "How old is it?" There were several people who were quite interested in visiting our club, and you can do your part by looking for unfamiliar faces at the meetings and making visitors welcome. When I introduce new members and visitors at the beginning of each meeting, please take a minute during the break to say "Hello" to them.

Carol Upston

KOFU BONSAI KAI - BONSAI IDEAS

BY MARTY MANN

MAY

Different trees have varied needs, as one may be more vigorous than another. The soil mix, pot size, and the environmental exposure to wind and sun affect watering methods. Just follow the ideals: water deeply; keep your bonsai damp, not wet and never dry. Judge by the weather conditions. Daily routines might instead become patterns of early morning watering on alternate days, as needed.

Continue to pinch and trim but hold off on wiring soft deciduous growth until it hardens. Direct your attention to the upper portion of most bonsai since this is the area that tends to grow fastest. Allowing this growth to develop too freely will deprive the lower branches of strength and nourishment. Check your wiring during this fast growing period. Don't let it cut into the tree.

Eliminate spurts of new branch growth. Cut back young whips to two or three leaf clusters to encourage fine twiggy branching and shorter internodes. Remove opposite branches that tend to form on many species naturally. Avoid bar branches throughout your design, however, this is not too important in the upper structures.

May's mild weather conditions encourage the population of undesirable insects such as aphids, white flies, spider mites and that nasty scale. Particularly, if you failed to spray the wintering trees with a dormant spray application then you will have to be attentive to the presence of a new crop of insects. Pay attention to regular applications of insecticides such as Malathion, Sevin, Isotex, etc. Maples are particularly susceptible to fungus diseases such as mildew when kept in the shade. Apply general-purpose fungicides such as Ortho Garden Disease Control at this time to ward off early summer damage. Avoid watering the foliage and allow air circulation and good light exposure.

Continue your repotting schedule into early May, if you have not already begun. Don't overlook the deciduous material that has already opened; however in these cases care should be taken to retain more of the old rootage and soil ball to prevent transplant shock and dieback. Be sure to provide good after-care. Protect from too much strong sun and wind for at least 2 to 3 weeks. Maintain the schedule of trimming and plucking as you repot. Prune the Elms, Maples and Ginkgos.

We still hear criticism by many Japanese Masters about the timid habits of underfeeding American trees. The best all around fertilizer is still the basic mix of 70% cottonseed meal and 30% bone meal or, if you have it, rape seed cakes. Foliar feeding with Miracle Gro is excellent. In all cases it's important during this fast growing period to feed as the new growth emerges. As this growth increases in size and diverts its sugar production from photosynthesis to woody growth, keep your eyes open for wire damage from earlier training efforts.

Azaleas require special care during this period. Some varieties may have completed flowering while others may still be in full bloom well into June. Wait until the blooms are faded before trimming, shaping, repotting or feeding. May and early June are excellent air-layering months since this fast growing period encourages the formation of new roots much more easily.

It's also a good time of year to sit back and enjoy your trees.

HAIKU POEM:

*May your trees grow well
Beauty and visual joy
From strength and good health*

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. May 2012

CALENDAR of EVENTS

- June 13-14 **Descanso Bonsai Society** 46th annual exhibit, 9 am to 4 pm and demonstrations at 11 am and 1:30 pm both days, in Van De Kamp Hall, Descanso Gardens, 1418 Descanso Drive, La Cañada Flintridge 91011. Reception on Saturday night 6 pm to 7 pm with raffle at 8 pm. Bonsai trees, pots, bonsai stock and accessories will be for sale. All events are free with garden admission.
- August 15-16 **Nanpu Kai** annual bonsai exhibit as part of Nisei Week, 10 am to 5 pm both days, at the Japanese American Cultural Center, 244 South San Pedro Street, Los Angeles. (*Editor's note: Thanks to sharp-eyed Gary Castagnola, the dates have been corrected to August 15 and 16.*)
- 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 22nd. Further information will be forthcoming.
- October 29 - November 1 **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.com.

SPECIAL THANK YOU

April Refreshments:

Justine Keller, Bob and Kim Warner, Dr.
Walt Johnson, Tish Miya, and Wendy Tsai.

Raffle Donations:

Manny Martinez, Dan and Wanda Danesi,
Larry Ragle, Justine Keller, Bill and Lois
Hutchinson, Ryan Cali, and Bill Vincent.

PRE-MEETING WORKSHOP

There will be a pre-meeting workshop from 4 pm – 6 pm before the March 21 meeting. Let expert Kofu members **Ryan Cali**, **Paul Vasina**, and **Harley Newman** help you with your bonsai questions and objectives. Bring your tree in to get it spruced up for the annual exhibit.