

Serenity
Through Bonsai



DAI ICHI
BONSAI KAI

第一分盆栽會
盆中平穩

MARCH 2016 | VOLUME 31, ISSUE 3

THE DAI ICHI GAZETTE



FRED MIYAHARA DEMO
BONSAI-A-THON 2016
SHOHIN CONVENTION
BONSAI TOUR OF JAPAN

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF DAI ICHI BONSAI KAI

DAI ICHI BONSAI KAI

2016 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

John van de Wouw
President

Doyle Saito
1st Vice President

OPEN
2nd Vice President

Scott Pogolian
Treasurer

Judy Unrine
Recording Secretary | Historian

CJ Harmatz
Corresponding Secretary

Doyle Saito
Program Chair

Kei Ikari
Co-Show Chair

CJ Harmatz
Membership

Jim Morris
Librarian

Scott Pogolian
Website Chair

Kevin Sweeney
Benefit Drawing Chair

Jason Saito
Newsletter | Website | Social Media

OPEN
Hospitality

Tom Culton
Publicity

Doyle Saito
Past President

Club Founders

Leila Kusumi
Co-Founder | Sensei

Jim Tatsukawa
Co-Founder | Sensei

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

As president, I have been asked to shift focus on my opening statements for my message to the Dai Ichi Bonsai Kai community. And I mean that most sincerely, for Dai Ichi is a community of bonsai enthusiasts. What is the state of our club? What do we stand for? And how can we achieve our goals? Since this is my first message leaning in that direction it may be a little unfocused and rambling. I promise to do better.



As I said, we are a community with a special interest in bonsai. I also think we are more than that, for our club has a certain feeling of 'Ohana, or family, between our members. I look forward to coming to our activities to see all of you and learn what has been going on, and to talk story. But education in bonsai is our primary objective, and I believe it is Dai Ichi's mission to promote the knowledge and education to those who only have a mild inclination as to what bonsai is. Our club has a deep bench, as they say in sports, encompassing all levels of bonsai skill. Our club has consistently put our best foot forward when it comes to sharing our knowledge.

That is pretty much what I think we stand for. How can we achieve our goals? In the short term Dai Ichi has two very important activities on our horizon. The first is our show in May and this is the culmination of what we stand for. We are open to the public, conduct a beginners workshop, have two days of demonstration, and a pot-luck dinner with our families. I cannot tell you how important it is for all of us to pitch in over the two and a half days which are coming up fast. I like to see high participation by our club members in showing their trees and in volunteering to help.

As I said one of our goals is to educate, and the second activity the club is involved with to that end, is our participation with the bonsai exhibition at California State University Fullerton. This will last from mid-April through mid-June. Dai Ichi Bonsai Kai has agreed to staff the exhibit on two weekends, April 30th and May 1st (May Day, what a great day to hang out in a garden!), and May 28-29. There are other opportunities for our members to participate in this event. Doyle is our club representative on the event steering committee, and he can answer any questions you might have.

I didn't really get to the state of our club... We are doing well but there is room for improvement. So between now and the next issue I will think about what positive steps we can take as a club to be even better!

John van de Wouw

John van de Wouw
President
Dai Ichi Bonsai Kai

On the Cover | Last year, Fred Miyahara and Michael Sykes stopped by our club to give a repotting demonstration. They repotted three trees which Michael then styled and they generously donated to the club raffle. Here they are posing with the lucky winners.

Club Demonstration

“Michael and I discussed this and we both agree... we try not to do demos.

It is our feeling that demos are a detriment to bonsai.

It’s like saying someone could make a bonsai tree in three hours, and you just can’t. It takes time.

What we try to do is more of an educational type of presentation that will teach you the basic techniques that you would need to create bonsai.”

— Fred Miyahara



FRED MIYAHARA

GRAFTING TECHNIQUES

Fred Miyahara is no stranger to DIBK. He has been a friend, supporter and frequent presenter at our meetings. In February, Fred and fellow San Diego bonsai artist Michael Sykes, once again gave us a terrific presentation, this time on grafting techniques for bonsai.

“I studied grafting with Mas Ishii from Chikugo-En nursery. There he taught me that grafting combines the best traits from both variants. Mas found that while Kishu on their own tend to grow very leggy, when you graft them on to Prostrata or San Jose their foliage will grow much tighter and denser like Kishu.

“I like Pines, but there are a lot of Pines unavailable in America. Red Pines, for example, do not do well in our climate, but when you graft Red Pine to White Pine stock, it grows much better. Then there’s Cork Bark Pine. Whenever you see Cork Bark Pine, you always see the line where the cork bark begins at the graft. I try to root graft my Cork Bark Pine so that you can’t see where it starts, but no matter how deep you make it, you never can get deep enough so that it starts from the bottom.

“I use grafting knives from Japan. Depending on whether you’re left or right handed, you need to buy the correct one. Since it’s beveled on only one side, the side which has the 40 degree bevel determines which hand the knife is made for. This is so that the knife will make a 40 degree opening in the branch. These are the knives I use, and actually use both. This is so I have the correct knife depending on which side of the branch I need to cut. It’s nice to have both. I also have grafting chisels that I use for cutting into harder wood and larger branches. It also makes cutting from certain angles easier.

“Making sure your scissors and knives are sharp is also very important. I have stones to do my chisels, stones to do my knives and stones to do my scissors. I keep them all separate. For my knives, I use synthetic water stones of 1000 and 6000 grit. I have higher grit stones, but this is probably enough for most people to get an ideal cutting edge. When I first started studying with Mas, I spent the first day just honing my knife. After about 6 hours, the blade was as sharp as I thought it could be. Mr. Ishii looked at it and said, ‘Not sharp enough. Use the 8000 grit stone now.’ After 2 more hours, it was so sharp I could actually shave with it.

“When I make a graft, I make 3 cuts. This is how Mas taught me to do it. Since the knife is so sharp, it’s very easy to make one deep cut into the branch, but by making 3 thinner cuts, what you get is one single point where the thin layers will stop and because it’s laminated, the grafts seem to take much faster.

“Once you’ve made the graft, you need to keep humidity high and there are a few ways to do that. You could bag the whole tree, you could bag just the scion (with some wet sphagnum moss), or you could also put it in a greenhouse. Mr. Ishii used to take a big bag and cover the whole tree, taking aluminum wire to

make a cage, turning the pot itself into a little greenhouse. When you bag the tree, you only have to water like once a week. The tree will transpire from itself, and it will be soaking wet inside. It’s pretty amazing that the tree will do that on its own.

“Once the graft has been made, you want to monitor them carefully. With individually bagged scions, when you see the new growth starting to push out, it’s getting close to transition the bag by poking small holes to allow air to get in. Normally, if you did the graft in February, you can start poking the bag in April. Then as the growth gets stronger (about

2-3 weeks later), you’ll want to gradually make the holes larger until you see that the graft has fully taken (about 3 weeks later) in which case you can remove the bag completely.

“Pines are much easier to graft than Junipers. The Needle Juniper seems way easier than Kishu. Kishu is easier than Itoigawa. The trees that have the flaky bark, Like California and Hollywood Junipers, are harder to graft. Their cambium layer is right next to the bark. On San Jose or Prostrata, you can almost see where the cambium lies, then all you need is to get the graft in that zip code, and you’re good.”



Michael Sykes skillfully styling the raffle trees.





GSBF BONSAI-A-THON

HUNTINGTON BOTANICAL GARDEN

The Golden State Bonsai Federation's annual Bonsai-A-Thon has grown into one of Southern California's largest and most anticipated bonsai event, and this year's show was no exception. Attendance was brisk as enthusiasts gathered from all over to enjoy the demos, sales, auctions and exhibits. There were also beginning workshops for children and adults, which were both well attended. Many items from Harry Hirao's collection were also on offer.



BEGINNER'S WORKSHOPS

The workshops were held in one of the garden's hot houses, which was a really neat (and humid) place to be. The students worked on pre-bonsai Juniper nana. Everyone had a great time (both students and teachers) and the participants went home with basic knowledge and experience in design and repotting, as well as a really great tree.



BONSAI BAZAAR

The best part of every show is the opportunity to purchase great materials and supplies from some of the best SoCal vendors. There was a wide variety of pots, pre-bonsai and finished materials and supplies in this year's bonsai bazaar.

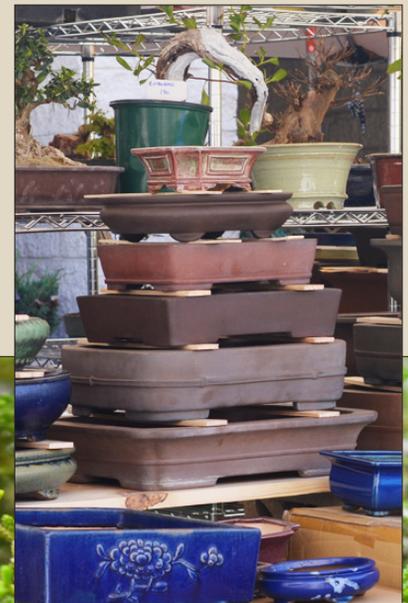


EXHIBIT AND DEMOS





Photo by Doyle Saito



GOOD THINGS REALLY DO COME IN SMALL PACKAGES

2016 SHOHIN CONVENTION SANTA NELLA, CALIFORNIA

BY DOYLE SAITO

The California Shohin Society organizes a *shohin* convention every 2 years. This is the only event of its kind held in the United States. Bonsai Masters and teachers donate their time to help teach and educate anyone who is willing to attend. The instructors donate their time for the demonstrations and the workshops held during the convention, enabling the costs to remain reasonable.



Dai Ichi members Mark Levinstein and CJ Harmatz participated in various workshops. Mark was lucky to get a spot in Kenji Miyata's workshop, the tree was a beautiful 30+ year old Shimpaku. CJ took a workshop instructed by East Coast Bonsai artist William Valavanis. The workshop material was a dwarf Hinoki Cypress with lots of interesting foliage.



Photo by CJ Harmatz



Our own Allan Sugimura presented a workshop on shohin Black Pine.

All photos by Doyle Saito unless specified.



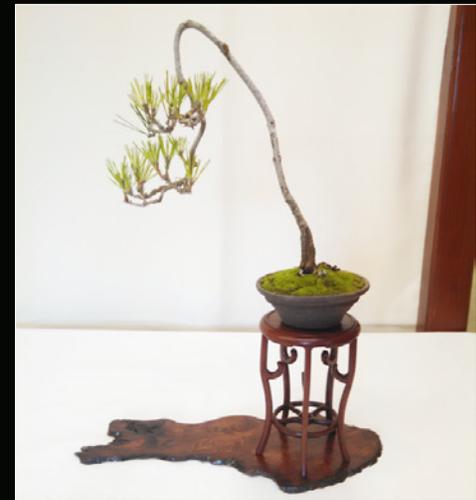
Photo by CJ Harmatz



The demonstrations and workshops took up most of each day, followed by the happy hour or hospitality hour which was hosted by the Ko Yu Kai shohin group, with bartender Giacomo Rivera. We really don't have many pictures from these events since, what happens at Shohin Convention, stays at Shohin Convention. Dinner and additional demonstrations followed.



Photo by CJ Harmatz



We had over 100+ bottles of wine, great Scotch and lots and lots of goodies and snacks. Spanning Friday and Saturday nights we went through 650+ glasses. It seems once you get bonsai people in the middle of farm country, all they want to do is party and talk bonsai. I highly recommend the *shohin* convention the next time it rolls around. The event is always fun, great material at a reasonable price, great teachers, and an exceptional vendor area.



California Shohin Society
2016 Shohin Seminar





BONSAI TALES FROM THE RISING SUN

BY BARRY MILLER

This past January, DIBK members Barry Miller and Kei Ikari, along with their lovely wives, had the opportunity to join renowned bonsai artist Bjorn BJORHOLM, on his inaugural bonsai tour to Japan. Barry graciously agreed to share his pictures and memories from the trip.



Our uneventful 14 hour flight landed on a Wednesday night at Kansai. We were pleasantly surprised to find our luggage & the man with the Barry sign waiting!



We then had an eventful 45 minute shuttle ride. Our driver entertaining us by timing the toll gates perfectly at 50mph. We were greeted at the hotel by our gracious hosts Bjorn & Cathi.

Thursday morning was bonsai time! We arrived in time for a *shohin* opening, the most popular *shohin* exhibition in the world. The trees were amazing & the vendor area was just as amazing. Exquisite stands, pots & trees. Our group photo will be used for an upcoming magazine.



All photos by Barry Miller





We caught the tail end of the new year with many homes & businesses displaying a traditional Black Pine arrangement.



You can join Barry and Kei on their bonsai tour of Japan in this 23 minute video courtesy of the Bjorvala Bonsai Studio. www.bit.ly/BonsaiTour

MARCH ALLAN SUGIMURA JUNIPER AND PINES



Friday March 18th

Allan Sugimura has been practicing bonsai for over 20 years. He specializes in Japanese Black Pine, and has hundreds of trees in various stages of growth.

Allan has studied with Jim Tatsu-kawa, Mel Ikeda, Leila Kusumi, and Bonsai Master Kenji Miyata.

Allan is also a frequent contributor to the *DIBK Gazette*, where he shares his knowledge of bonsai.

Please join us at our next meeting, where Allan will discuss the growing and styling of Juniper and Japanese Black Pine.

UPCOMING

April 15, 2016
Ken Fuentes

June 17, 2016
Ted Matson

July 15, 2016
Bob Hilvers

September 16, 2016
Kathy Benson

EVENTS

March 19-20, 2016
California Bonsai Society Show
The Huntington
1151 Oxford Road, San Marino
Hours: 10:30 AM – 4:30 PM
There will be more than 50 bonsai on display as well as some viewing stones. Reception on Saturday at 6pm in the Brody Botanical Center.

March 20, 2016
LA Community Bonsai Swap Meet
Jesse Owens Park
7100 White Oak Ave. Reseda
Hours: 10:00 AM – 3:00 PM
Come out and enjoy a day of buying, selling or swapping bonsai trees, tools, pots and paraphernalia with the Los Angeles bonsai community. EVERYBODY is welcome and there is no charge to attend or to participate.

April 16 – June 19, 2016
Bonsai Exhibit at
The Fullerton Arboretum
1900 Associated Road, Fullerton
Hours: 10:00 AM – 4:00 PM
Weekends Only
The exhibit will be staged with participating clubs and individuals cycling their trees throughout the two month event. For more information, please visit www.fullertonarboretum.org

May 14 – 15, 2016
Dai Ichi Bonsai Kai: Annual Exhibit
“Serenity Through Bonsai”
Ken Nakaoka Community Center,
1670 W. 162nd St., Gardena
Hours: 10:00 AM – 4:00 PM
Admission is free. For more details about our club and show please visit: www.bit.ly/DIBK-Web or www.bit.ly/DIBK-FB.

For more event information, please visit
www.bit.ly/GSBF-Events

GRATITUDE

*Thank you to all of the members who contributed.
The club truly appreciates your generosity and giving spirit.*

Benefit Drawing Contributors
Jim Harlow, Gary Ishii, Doyle Saito,
Michael Izumoto, Louis Carrillo

Refreshment Contributors
Judy & George Unrine, Doyle Saito,
Tom Vuong, Michael Izumoto

Refreshment Signup for March

Please feel free to bring your favorite refreshments!

Please remember to sign the contribution sheet so that we may acknowledge your generosity.

Special thanks to

Fred Miyahara, Michael Sykes, GSBF, Keith Martin, CJ Harmatz, Doyle Saito,
Barry Miller and Kei Ikari

For their contributions to this issue of the DIBK Gazette.

ABOUT DAI ICHI BONSAI KAI

Dai Ichi Bonsai Kai (“Number One” Bonsai Club) was established in January, 1986 and takes great pride in its family-oriented character. Our club is dedicated to promoting the art of bonsai.

The club meets on the third Friday of each month at the Ken Nakaoka Community Center, 1670 W. 162nd St., Gardena, at 7:00 P.M. Each meeting features a bonsai demonstration, benefit drawing and is open to the public.

Our annual bonsai show is held on the first weekend in May at the Nakaoka Community Center.

PLEASE VISIT AND “LIKE” US ON SOCIAL MEDIA

 **WEB**
www.bit.ly/DIBK-Web

 **FACEBOOK**
www.bit.ly/DIBK-FB

 **YOUTUBE**
www.bit.ly/DIBK-YT

 **GOOGLE+**
www.bit.ly/DIBK-GPlus



*Please feel free to forward this publication to friends, family
or anyone with an appreciation for bonsai.*

Do you have any comments, questions, or submissions? If so, please contact:
Jason Saito ph 310.909.4598 | email jason@zenpalace.com