

*Serenity
Through Bonsai*



DAI ICHI
BONSAI KAI

第一分盆栽會
盆中平穩

THE DAI ICHI GAZETTE

MARCH 2015 | VOLUME 30, ISSUE 3

FRED MIYAHARA
POTTING TECHNIQUES FOR ESTABLISHED BONSAI

BONSAI AROUND THE GLOBE

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF DAI ICHI BONSAI KAI

DAI ICHI BONSAI KAI

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

As we move into March our bonsai activity makes an uptick from the nearly dormant winter months. As Fred Miyahara and Michael Sykes presented at our club meeting and reported on in this issue, re-potting activities lay the foundation for all else that follows for a healthy tree. Fred and Michael's demonstration really brought the concept of repotting home, by giving a number of club members hands on experience with the repotting of several junipers. This was great for our more novice members to work with more mature root-balls than one would see with nursery cans. Thanks Guys!



Another sign of increased bonsai activity is the start of show season. The Dai Ichi Bonsai Show is not until the first weekend in May, but you should begin to think about your bonsai presentation. As I have mentioned before, the Huntington Gardens is a strong and important patron of the art of Bonsai. This weekend (2/29 - 3/1) the Huntington is the site for the Golden State Bonsai Federation's Bonsai-A-Thon XIX, and in the last weekend of March (3/28 - 29) is the California Bonsai Society's annual show. The Bonsai-A-Thon will feature bonsai displays, bonsai sales, vendors, auctions, and raffles; it's also a good time to see old friends or make new ones. See CJ at the Bonsai-A-Thon reception desk, as a Dai Ichi member, she will hook you up with a name tag which will help to get you in. For the CBS show here is an insider tip... Come to the reception Saturday night (3/28, 7pm) and meet club members and supporters, it's a great time to see the show.

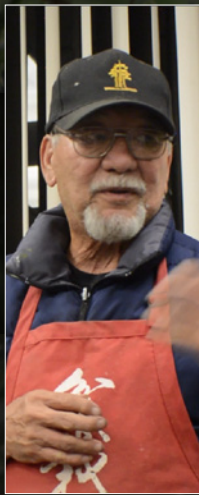
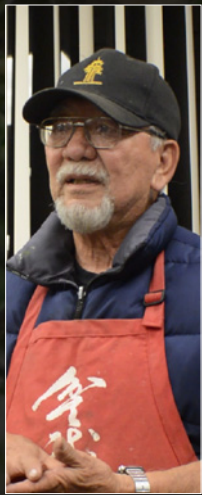
Next month's demonstrator will be Ryan Nichols. He is one of my favorite speakers because he gets all technical regarding the horticultural aspects of soil science and tree physiology.

And finally, don't forget to pull those weeds!

John van de Wouw

John van de Wouw
President
Dai Ichi Bonsai Kai

On the Cover | Fred Miyahara's Shimpaku Juniper
Inside Cover | Michael Sykes working the roots of a Juniper for a repot.



"Michael used to be my student, and now he is my teacher."

"...these techniques work for us and they work for people in Japan, and they have trees that are over 500 years old. If it works for them, we should try to emulate their techniques instead of reinventing the wheel."



Michael trims the roots in preparation for the repot.



FRED MIYAHARA

REPOTTING TECHNIQUES

As part of DIBK's ongoing educational mission, we were fortunate to have Fred Miyahara and Michael Sykes, demonstrate repotting techniques on established bonsai.

The demonstration started out with Fred discussing fundamentals and philosophy. Fred explained, "One thing we tend to do is overpot our trees. People notice that trees from Japan are usually in very small pots and by comparison, in Southern California, and perhaps even the entire US, we tend to use larger pots. My hypothesis is that at some point, people started using larger pots and were repotting less often. With larger pots and infrequent repotting, the roots tend to grow very long, so the fine feeder roots get cut too much. That's not how to keep a bonsai happy. I think the secret to healthy trees is to repot often. Deciduous trees should be repotted every year and no longer than two years. The roots grow out, you cut it back, keep repeating this and the tree stays alive and healthy for a hundred years."

According to Fred and Michael's teacher, Kenji Miyata, the most important thing in bonsai is watering. Fred explains, "This is probably true because in Japan, no apprentice can water until their third year. Apprentices may wire and prune, but must first learn how the trees roots grow, before being allowed to take on the responsibility of watering. The second most important thing is repotting.

"Here, we tend to pay more attention to what is above the ground. In Japan, they concentrate on everything below the ground. If you take care of everything below the ground everything will take care of itself."



At this point, Fred let Michael masterfully demonstrate a repot of a grafted Kishu.

“Our first step is getting the tree out of the pot using sickles, saws, and other root pruning tools. It’s a very simple process that we use. We start combing out the top, to see where the viable roots are. You can’t cut the bottom until you know how much rootball you have on top. If you cut too much off the bottom and don’t have enough roots on top, you will have a problem, especially when putting

it in a shallow pot. As you comb through the roots, you shape the top into a conical pyramid. This allows water to easily drain down into the pot.

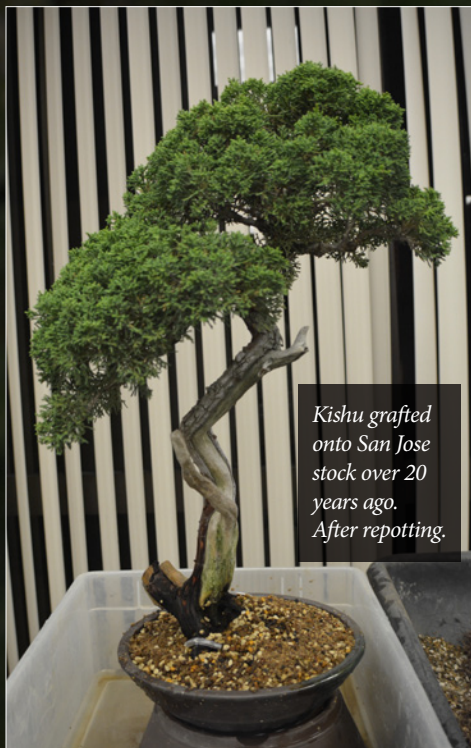
“When we repot, we do use a drainage layer. Courser soil on the bottom allows the roots to ‘air prune’ themselves, which leads to better drainage, which is beneficial for health and growth.

“If you look at the root system, it mirrors the top of the tree. We know how the top of the tree grows; the top branches are

the strongest and most vigorous, the bottom branches are the weakest. If you take the top part of the tree and turn it upside down, the root system mirrors the top of the tree. Meaning the roots on the bottom are the most vigorous, and the roots on the top, the weakest. It is exactly the same. You also want to take the biggest roots out of the bottom, because the fine feeder roots are what feeds the tree.

“You also want to tie the tree down well, because it’s critical as the rootball starts

to grow, that the tree and the roots not move. If it moves, it will break the newly formed roots, and that will set the growth back. While you can remove the wire after a year or so, I almost never cut my wire out. Only in fast growing deciduous and tropical trees, do I sometimes remove the wire; because the roots grow so fast, otherwise, I just leave them in until the next repot.”



Kishu grafted onto San Jose stock over 20 years ago. After repotting.



Fred’s Soil Mix Recommendations

“I’ve switched from pumice to perlite as pumice tends to be powdery and it retains a lot of dust and turns to sludge. Perlite is sterile, clean, and leaves no dust.”

Pines

7 parts Akadama
2 parts Perlite
1 part Lava (Scoria)

Junipers

8 parts Akadama
2 parts Perlite or Pumice
1 part Lava (Scoria)

Deciduous

9 parts Akadama
2 parts Perlite

"To finish off the repot, we take fine sifted sphagnum moss, or very fine soil, and spread a thin layer over the tamped down topsoil. This holds moisture in as well as protecting the fine roots that are close to the surface. You can also mix bamboo charcoal dust into the top dressing. It must be organic and wood based. This helps filter the water, and also helps change the organic compound of the soil. There was a study in South America, where they found that in areas where wood was burned often, the soil was very rich and fertile. They determined this was due to the high charcoal content in the soil.

"After the repot, you can fertilize within two weeks if you use organic fertilizer. If you use chemical fertilizer, you must wait at least a month and a half. You need to be real careful with fertilizers.

"The first watering, you should run water over the soil until it runs clear through the bottom. This ensures that all of the fine soil and debris is gone.

"I'm just trying to teach you what we've learned, how we do things and what works for us. It is not gospel. All of these techniques work for us and they work for people in Japan, where they have trees that are over 500 years old. If it works for them, we should try to emulate their techniques instead of reinventing the wheel."

At this point, the club got some hands on experience by repotting a few trees Fred brought with him. With the guidance of the demonstrators, as well as senior club members, participants repotted these trees. Thanks to Fred and Michael for making the long journey from San Diego, to generously educate our club members.

To see Fred Miyahara demonstrate grafting techniques, please check out Bonsai Artisans video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bG1vZzEhn-w>



MARK YOUR CALENDARS AND GET YOUR SHOW TREES READY!

If you need guidance on how to present a bonsai in a show setting, club founder, Leila Kusumi will be providing a demonstration on displaying your trees at our April meeting. All club members are encouraged to participate, and to show their best trees!



DAI ICHI
BONSAI KAI

*Serenity
through
Bonsai*

30th ANNUAL BONSAI EXHIBIT & SALE

May 2 and 3, 2015
Ken Nakaoka Community Center
1670 W. 162nd St., Gardena

SATURDAY • MAY 2

- 10:00 A.M.-4:00 P.M. Show & Sales Area Open
- 10:30 A.M. Beginner's Hands-on Workshop
(free tree to first 15 newcomers to sign up Saturday morning)
- 1:00 P.M. Round Robin Bonsai Demonstration
- 6:00 P.M. Reception & Entertainment

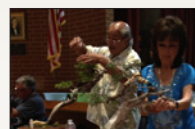
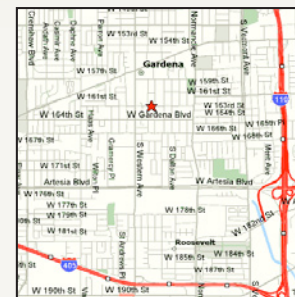
SUNDAY • MAY 3

- 10:00 A.M.-3:00 P.M. Show & Sales Area Open
- 1:00 P.M. Mr. Frank Goya, Saikei Demonstration

Novice to master exhibitors, daily demonstrations and drawings, bonsai plants, tools, and accessories on sale throughout the show. Free admission and parking.

For more information, please call Doyle Saito at (310) 539-9265.

Directions:
405 Freeway or Artesia Boulevard (91 Freeway) to Western Avenue. Western Avenue north to 162nd Street. Turn east (right) on 162nd Street to the Ken Nakaoka Community Center, located on the south side of 162nd Street at 1670 W. 162nd Street.



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Photo by Jeremy Norbury

In a lot of ways, we are extremely blessed to live in Southern California where the sun shines brightly pretty much all year long. In other ways, we are at a real disadvantage, such as when it comes to acquiring really good bonsai stock. On the East Coast, they regularly enjoy working on species that do not do well in our dry, arid climate. In Los Angeles, we have our share of quality nurseries, with caring and knowledgeable owners, who oftentimes are exceptional teachers with great horticultural and bonsai techniques, but if we wanted to purchase quality, imported bonsai stock from Asia, we are pretty much out of luck.

Unless you are fortunate enough to travel the world, you never really get a sense of what the international bonsai scene is like. This month we take a glimpse into what is available outside of California. Amsterdam is known more for its beautiful sights, bicycles, canals that go on forever, and a culture rich in heritage and lore, but what has this to do with bonsai?

Jeremy Norbury and Arian V. are friends and bonsai enthusiasts from Amsterdam, and they agreed to share with us pictures of their visit to one of the largest bonsai importers in Europe, Lodder Bonsai. Lodder imports many of their trees from throughout Asia and Europe, and their selection of quality bonsai and pre-bonsai stock is impressive, to say the least. Jeremy explains, "Lodder exists for many decades - it is a family business, but they moved to these modern premises about 12 years ago. The old nursery had a lot more character - but they had to move to make way for a new train line from Rotterdam to Utrecht."



Photo by Arian V.



Photos by Arian V.



Lodder appears to be the perfect nursery with its large quantity and selection of trees, wide concrete aisles and shopping carts. However, one might miss the sense of history and culture found at nurseries like Chikugo-En, or Fuji Bonsai Nursery; but that's OK, because a lot of people enjoy shopping at Costco, and Lodder is like the Costco of bonsai nurseries.

For more of Jeremy's Lodder pictures, please visit his Flickr album at <http://bit.ly/jerry-lodder>

Photos by Jeremy Norbury

Most clubs only meet once a month and schedules can get pretty hectic; so where can you go to get a quick bonsai fix, or to learn and provide information and experiences with your bonsai peers? One of the most frequented and active bonsai forums on the web is Bonsai Nut.

Here, the posts run the gamut, from newbies looking to style their first Juniper, to artists with many, many years of experience. Forums are broken down by categories such as general topics, trees by species, trees by style, tree display and accessories, as well as special interests categories like grafting, deadwood, soil and fertilizer and advanced topics.

Whether you have a specific question you need answers to, or you have a few hours (or a lifetime) to kill, or you just want to check out some really cool trees, Bonsai Nut is the perfect forum to check out.

Become a member, share your experience or learn from others at:

www.bonsainut.com

BONSAI NUT FORUMS

MARCH DEMO RYAN NICHOLS



Ryan Nichols is a dedicated horticulturist and bonsai enthusiast. Originally determined to be a landscape architect, Ryan shifted his focus to plant science so he could have a firm grasp of his media for design, plants. Naturally, bonsai was the perfect fit for Ryan as it combined artistic design and scientific knowledge. Ryan received his bachelor's degree in plant science at Cal Poly, and is currently a Ph. D. student in plant physiology at UC Riverside. As a student of Ryan Neil, and Al Nelson, Ryan has gained a considerable amount of knowledge on bonsai in a relatively short period of time. Particularly, Ryan is dedicated to applying and sharing his scientific knowledge to discover the best ways to cultivate difficult bonsai species in Southern California, such as the coast redwood and many others.

At the March meeting, Ryan will be discussing bonsai care in relation to above ground growth.

EVENTS

March 7, 2015

**Palos Verdes
Cherry Blossom Festival
South Coast Bonsai Association Show**
South Coast Botanic Gardens
26300 Crenshaw Boulevard
Members of the South Coast Bonsai Association will be displaying their trees at this event. Check out out!
Hours: 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM
See website for details and admission.
www.southcoastbotanicgarden.org

March 28 – 29, 2015

**San Marino
California Bonsai Society
58th Annual Show**
1151 Oxford Road
San Marino, CA 91108
Hours: 10:30 AM – 4:30 PM

Discover the timeless appeal of an ancient horticultural art form as the California Bonsai Society presents its 58th annual show, featuring more than 100 beautiful specimens created by bonsai masters. General admission. Brody Botanical Center. For more information please visit: www.huntington.org

May 2 – 3, 2015

**Gardena
Dai Ichi Bonsai Kai: Annual Exhibit
"Serenity Through Bonsai"**
Ken Nakaoka Community Center,
1670 W. 162nd St.
Hours: 10:00 AM – 4:00 PM
Admission is free. Novice to master bonsai exhibits, sales, auction.
Saturday - Hands-on workshop at 10:30 AM, round-robin demonstration 1PM. Sunday - Saikei demonstration by Franks Goya at 1PM.
For more details about our club and show visit: www.bit.ly/DIBK-Web or www.bit.ly/DIBK-FB.

GRATITUDE

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

Benefit Drawing Contributors

Paul Minerich, Scott Pogolian,
Doyle Saito

Refreshment Contributors

Doyle Saito, Barry Miller, Michael
Izumoto, Leila Kusumi

Refreshment Signup for March

Jim Morris, Scott Pogolian, Jason Saito

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

Special thanks to

Fred Miyahara, Michael Sykes, Jeremy Norbury and Arian V.

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. Other club activities include: bonsai digs, annual auction, potting parties, outings to nurseries and private gardens.

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DAI ICHI BONSAI KAI

*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

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