

*Serenity
Through Bonsai*



DAI ICHI
BONSAI KAI

第一分盆栽會
盆中平穩



THE DAI ICHI GAZETTE

SEPTEMBER 2015 | VOLUME 30, ISSUE 9

UYEN TRUONG
VISUALIZING PERFECTION
TECHNIQUE
WITH ALLAN SUGIMURA

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF DAI ICHI BONSAI KAI

DAI ICHI BONSAI KAI

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On the Cover | Artist and Bonsai Teacher Uyen Truong, visualizing and sketching the possibilities.
Inside Cover | Memorial to beloved sensei and master, Harry Hirao. Photo by John van de Wouw.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I want to relate to you all what a remarkable service the remembrance of Harry Hirao was last month. This photo was taken, after his service, and it shows how lovely everything looked at the Buddhist Temple. The service was well attended, with people coming from far and wide; Dai Ichi was well represented too. One feature of a Buddhist service is the giving of a Buddhist name to the deceased by the temple monk, based upon their perceived spirit and essence. Harry was remembered for his giving, jovial nature, and for his contributions to the art of bonsai, so needless to say these were great factors that lead to his Buddhist name; Ko Ju, or Light... Tree, but not just any tree, but the tree under which the Buddha himself sat. So the proper translation is Tree of Light, which is I think very fitting. I want to thank all in the club who attended the service, and a special thanks to: Doyle Saito for ensuring that the club was represented by a beautiful wreath of White Chrysanthemums; Tom Culton who made the special incense offering for the club; and Jason Saito for a great tribute to Harry in last month's newsletter.



I was not able to attend last month's club meeting, but I understand that Uyen Truong did an excellent job of showcasing his artistic skills in capturing portraits of our members' trees.

Our demonstrator for September will be Bob Pressler, owner of Kimura Bonsai Nursery.

He is a very talented bonsai artist, and having operated a bonsai nursery, will have many informative tips for keeping our trees growing and healthy. Please come support him and our club for this event.

John van de Wouw

John van de Wouw
President
Dai Ichi Bonsai Kai



UYEN TRUONG

VISUALIZING PERFECTION

IBK was fortunate to have Uyen Truong provide a demo and critique at our August meeting. Uyen is an artist, both traditionally, and with bonsai. he has the unique ability to see raw material, visualize the possibilities, and translate that vision onto paper, as fine art.

Several people brought in trees for Uyen to critique. Uyen explained, “I’d like to talk about design and stucture. Knowing good design is fundamental to identifying trees with potential. When you go to a nursery, you will be able to tell which trees have the best potential because you will understand their design requirements. The best time to shop for deciduous trees is during the winter, when the tree grows dormant and drops its leaves. It is then that you can clearly see which trees have the best structure for future design.”

Uyen then went through the various styles of bonsai; *bunjin*, *moyogi*, *chokkan*, *sharimaki*, raft style, cascade, semi-cascade, etc. “When looking at a potential tree, you need to know what classifications it would look best as, then you can better visualize the possibilities.”

“Looking at the trunk as a whole, you want to visually break the tree down into thirds. The top third can have one small branch that faces forward, but the remaining branches should point toward the left, right and back, all in complementary directions. You should also create foliage in the back of the tree. While it won’t be prominent, having developed foliage in the back is important as it will bring a sense of depth, a three dimensional view to the tree. Also make sure that there is no reverse taper in the trunk.

“*Nebari* is also very important. If your tree doesn’t have prominent *nebari*, lower the soil line to expose the largest roots to give a sense of *nebari*. Also you do not want any overly large roots exposed. They should all be in scale with the trunk.

Uyen also explained how octopus/exposed root trees are developed. “A specially made, very tall box is crafted so the roots grow down through it to the soil line. Over time, individual side panels, as well as a small amount of soil, are removed from the top, exposing and allowing more of the root to harden off. This allows for a dramatic effect of having the roots themselves, become the multiple trunks of the tree. Octopus style is not very popular at the moment.”



Uyen then moved on to a pink *shobin* bouganvillea brought in by a member. “With this type of bougie, when it flowers, the clusters will grow very dense and clumped. In this case detailed structure does not matter much, as when the tree is in bloom and full foliage, you cannot even see it.”

He went on to critique specific aspects of the tree. Proper placement and direction were detailed via sketches, and a general overall direction was shown.

“When you are ready to transplant, the pink flowers would complement a nice glazed, dark blue or dark green pot. These would be good color choices for this tree.”



“Next up is this very nice *bunjin* style tree. With *bunjin* style, you don't have to have very many branches, and the branches also don't have to be quite as long.

“The trunk has really nice curves, and since there are many branches, we have options to decide which branches to keep and which to eliminate, in order to accent this trunk best.

“This tree would also look very good in a woven bamboo basket style, Japanese *bunjin* pot.

“You don't want to leave too many branches on this, unless you want to make a pine style, or *moyogi* style, but with this trunk, I think this will look best as a beautiful *bunjin* style tree. Very regal and truly impressive”



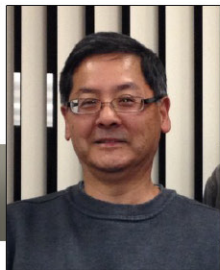


“When you choose a pot, you should think about not only the front view, but you need to accommodate the width of the tree too. Once you choose the front, you will develop the structure to best accentuate the trunk and the overall picture. You will also want to concentrate on refining the foliage. What you want to get away from is having the entire canopy appear as one large cloud. Creating definition along the structure you created will give the tree much more definition and an overall pleasing design.”

In all, it was a great critique. Members got great advice and we also got to hear tales of Uyen’s adventures of collecting junipers in Tehachapi, and hitchhiking rattlesnakes... but that is a story for another time.



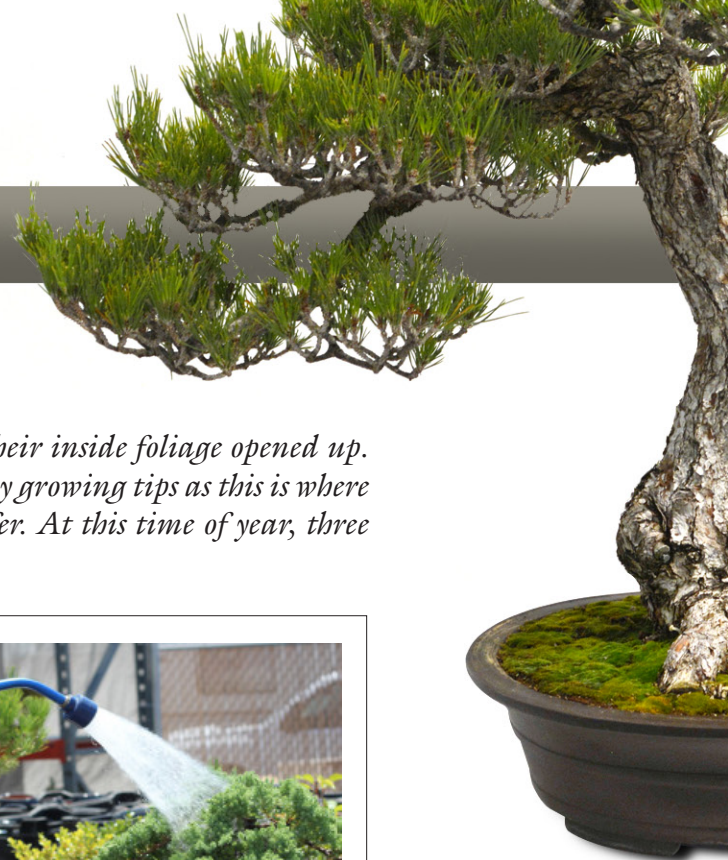




TECHNIQUE

TIPS FOR HEALTHY TREES

WITH ALLAN SUGIMURA | CONTRIBUTING EDITOR



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. Alan has studied with Jim Tatsukawa, Mel Ikeda, Leila Kusumi, and Bonsai Master Kenji Miyata.

If you have any questions for Allan, please let him know at Allansugi15@gmail.com, and he'll do his best to answer them here.

September is the time to prepare trees for the fall season. Junipers need to have their inside foliage opened up. You should be able to see through the tree. Also, make sure not to trim off too many growing tips as this is where the tree gains its strength, and eliminating too many will cause the tree to suffer. At this time of year, three things should be addressed, such as watering, fertilizing, and insect control.

WATERING

Watering is the most basic, and most important care item in maintaining bonsai. If not done properly, trees can become weak and susceptible to insects and fungus. Underwatering can cause trees to dry out, and possibly die back. Overwatering can be just as bad as underwatering. Too much water can cause the soil to become anaerobic, which will allow the soil to become laced with bad bacteria, resulting in root rot. Watering is best when done as needed, versus on a timed schedule, so check your soil daily to determine if watering is necessary before you water. I now use a moisture meter to check the moisture level daily. With a meter, I found that I was not giving my plants nearly enough water, so I adjusted the amount and frequency accordingly.

Another thing to keep in mind is that different plants require different levels of moisture. For example, Junipers require more moisture than Pines.



Photo courtesy of Jason Chan

To simplify your watering, you might want to group your trees according to their moisture needs. Hand watering is best and always use a nozzle specifically designed for bonsai. You should also water from at least two different directions, to ensure that the roots become completely saturated.

This year I began utilizing a wetting solution to help with the drought situation. Wetting solutions are detergent based water additives that assist in breaking the surface tension of water and allows it to penetrate soil more effectively. For more information about wetting solutions, please visit: www.igin.com/article-257-making-water-wetter.html



FERTILIZING

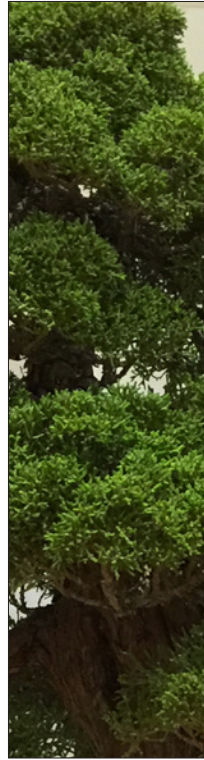
There are two types of fertilizers: organic and chemical

Organic fertilizers are made from unprocessed materials, such as animal waste or plant material. The nutrients are released slowly into the soil by decomposition. The resulting benefits take some time.

Chemical fertilizers are made from refined or processed materials. The nutrients are immediately available to the plant. The resulting benefits are much quicker than with organic fertilizers. Care must be taken when using this type of fertilizer as applying too much can damage the plant.

Fertilizers often state 3 numbers representing N (nitrogen), P(phosphate), K(potassium). The first number is nitrogen percentage by weight. Nitrogen produces rapid growth, green foliage. The second number is Phosphate percentage by weight. Phosphate helps produce roots and flowers. The third number represents Potassium percentage by weight. Potassium helps protect plants from disease. It also aids plants against drought and cold weather. It's also good for plants damaged by disease or insects.

For my bonsai, I generally use a fertilizer mix that has an NPK of 666. I also find it best to use different fertilizers over time.

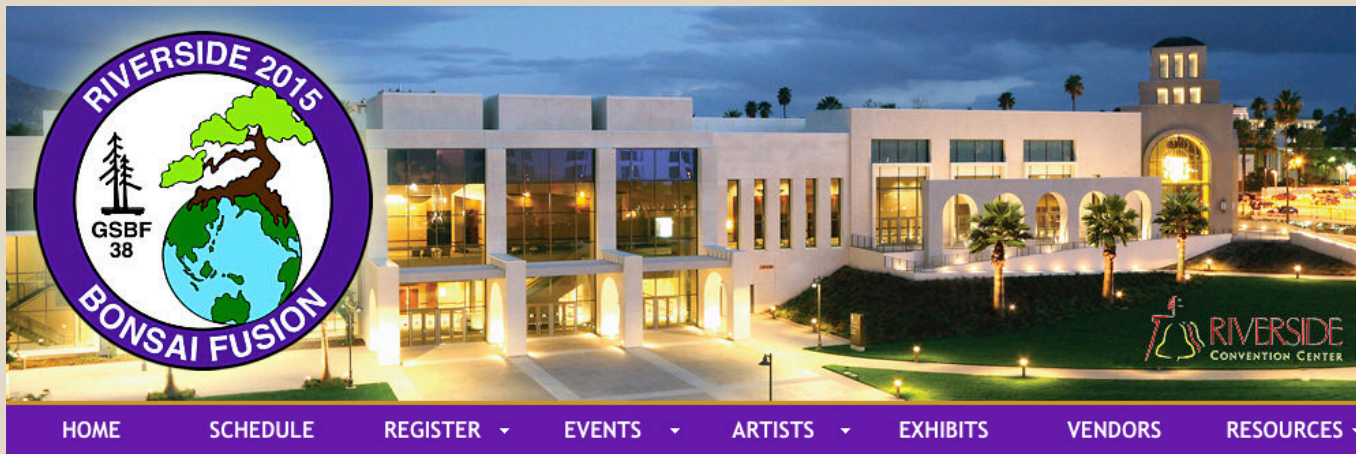


INSECT CONTROL



The last task is insect control. The first step of insect control is to keep your trees as healthy as possible, through proper watering and fertilizing. Insects seem to infest weaker plants more readily. If your trees become infested, try using organic methods first. Spray a solution of neem oil first. Evening time just before it gets dark is the best time to apply pesticides. Rinse plants the next morning. If all else fails then apply chemical pesticides. Use a different pesticide weekly for 3 weeks, to get rid of an infestation.





The Golden State Bonsai Federation presents its 38th convention:

Bonsai Fusion · *“Where Tradition Meets Innovation”*

Riverside, California · October 29 → November 1, 2015

Registration is **NOW OPEN!**

HEADLINERS



Bjorn Bjorholm



John Wang

GUEST ARTISTS



David Nguy



Tak Shimazu

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER, PLEASE VISIT:

www.gsbfcconvention.org

PLEASE HELP SUPPORT THE GSBF WITH YOUR DONATIONS

With the 2015 convention right around the corner, the GSBF is asking for your help. We are asking for your “tax-deductible” contributions of bonsai related items (plant material, tools, gardening supplies, Asian arts etc.), cash or gift certificates. Your donation will be included in our Auction or our popular benefit drawing. This drawing is the major fundraising activity for the convention and for the GSBF, a 501(c) (3) non-profit corporation.

In return for your support, we will acknowledge your generous contribution by listing your name among our Benefit Drawing contributors, as well as announcing your contribution and your place of business (if applicable), during the drawing activities. In addition, we will provide you with documentation of your contribution for tax purposes.

If you are interested in donating physical goods, or for more information, please contact:

Doyle Saito
Benefit Drawing Chair
Home 310.539.9265
email: doylesaito@yahoo.com

Jason Saito
Benefit Drawing Co-chair
Cell 310.909.4598
email: jason@zenpalace.com

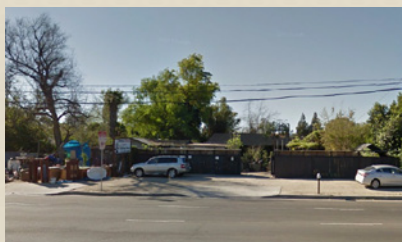
For monetary contributions, please contact:

GSBF c/o Fred Seeley
27124 Crystal Springs Road
Canyon Country, CA 91387
email: fred@fredseeley.com

Donation forms will also be available at our meetings.

We want to thank all that have donated in the past and also, thank you in advance for your generosity and support. Your tax-deductible donation(s) will help to ensure the success of our convention.

SEPTEMBER DEMO ROBERT PRESSLER



Robert Pressler is a fixture on the bonsai demonstration circuit. Since 1996, Bob has owned Kimura Bonsai Nursery located in the San Fernando Valley.

Bob has studied with a variety of teachers, including Frank Okamura, Brooklyn Botanical Gardens and Kenji Miyata, amongst others.

Bob is a member of Nanpu Kai and the California Bonsai Society.

Come join us at our next meeting on September 18, where Bob will school us on advanced bonsai techniques.

EVENTS

September 23-27, 2015

Kofu Bonsai Kai
2015 Bonsai Fest at the Bowers Museum "The Bonsai Tradition: Cultural Arts of Japan"

John M. Lee Court, 2002 N. Main St

Hours: 10:00 AM – 4:00 PM daily

Featuring bonsai trees of the members of Kofu Bonsai Kai and special presentations by noted speakers. Free to Bowers Museum members or with paid museum admission. Final speaker and presentation schedules will be posted at www.bowers.org/ and www.kofukai.org/

Questions? Call the museum at (714) 567-3695 or email Michael Walsh at michaeljwalsh@outlook.com.

September 26-27, 2015

San Diego Bonsai Club

50th Anniversary Exhibition & Sale

Casa Del Prado, Room 101, Balboa Park

Hours: 10:00 AM – 5:00 PM

Demos at 11 AM and 1 PM Daily. Free admission. For more information please visit sandiebobonsaiclub.com

October 3-4, 2015

Conejo Valley Bonsai Society:
12th Annual Bonsai Exhibition

2001 Thousand Oaks Blvd.

Hours: 9:00 AM – 4:00 PM

Demonstrations at 11 AM (Saturday) and 2 PM (Sunday) in the Bandstand. Free Admission. For information, call Marj Branson at 805-373-1330 or visit our web site at www.cvbs-bonsai.org.

October 29-November 1, 2015

GSBF Convention 38

See Page 9 for more information.

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

GRATITUDE

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

Benefit Drawing Contributors

Doyle Saito, Miya Family,
Elaine Pine

Refreshment Contributors

Jason Saito, Doyle Saito,
Allor Cole

Refreshment Signup for September

Kevin Sweeney, Jason Saito

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

Special thanks to

Uyen Truong, Allan Sugimura, Jason Chan
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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