



DAI ICHI BONSAI KAI

*Serenity through Bonsai*

第一分盆栽會  
盆中平穩

# THE DAI ICHI GAZETTE

# 2016



## REFLECTIONS



# DAI ICHI BONSAI KAI

2016 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

## John van de Wouw

*President*

## Doyle Saito

*1st Vice President  
Program Chair  
Past President*

## OPEN

*2nd Vice President*

## CJ Harmatz

*Corresponding Secretary  
Membership  
Treasurer*

## Judy Unrine

*Recording Secretary  
Historian*

## Kei Ikari

*Co-Show Chair*

## OPEN

*Librarian*

## Kevin Sweeney

*Benefit Drawing Chair*

## Jason Saito

*Newsletter  
Website  
Social Media*

## OPEN

*Hospitality*

## Tom Culton

*Publicity*

## CLUB FOUNDERS

### Leila Kusumi

*Co-Founder | Sensei*

### Jim Tatsukawa

*Co-Founder | Sensei*



*On the Cover | Sargent Juniper by Gary Ishii - Chikugo-En.  
Inside Cover | GSBF Clark Bonsai Collection at the Shinzen Friendship Garden, Fresno.*

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

**A**s presi-  
dent of  
Dai Ichi

Bonsai Kai, I  
want to thank  
everyone for  
being a part of  
our wonderful  
club. In looking  
back over the  
past year, and  
our accomplish-

ments, I couldn't be prouder. The quality of  
our club activities are primarily due to two  
things: (1) our good name in the bonsai  
community, and (2) our solid foundation of  
educating the public, which enables us to  
draw high-caliber demonstrators to share  
their knowledge on the art of bonsai at our  
annual show and member workshops. Just  
check out this issue of our year in review  
and you will see for yourself.

Dai Ichi is a living organism, having  
sprouted 32 years ago in 1986. We need  
new leaves on our tree, we need members  
to step up in helping the club provide  
education to others, by volunteering or  
accepting leadership positions. We look  
to welcome more new members in 2017;  
please let me know if you have any ideas  
on how we might do this. As we look to  
elections for new club officers next fall,  
I'd also like to encourage more of you to  
get your hands dirty – both literally and  
figuratively. Please help to keep our club  
successful and alive.

I am excited for our club's prospects next  
year and beyond. Happy New Year!

*John van de Wouw*

John van de Wouw  
President  
Dai Ichi Bonsai Kai





# Reflections of 2016

ANOTHER YEAR PASSES. ADD ANOTHER GROWTH RING TO OUR TREES, AND TO OUR CLUB.

This year, we've been fortunate to have some incredibly gifted and talented people demonstrate at our club. Our annual show and sale was a great success, and we all look forward to doing it again in 2017!

This past year the bonsai community lost a few friends, but we've also gained many new enthusiastic beginners.

It is these beginners that will carry the art of bonsai into the future. Today's beginners will become tomorrow's masters, and that's why it is so important to our club to nurture and encourage the passion people have for bonsai.

In this issue, we will reflect on memories of 2016, and look forward to the new memories and experiences to come.



## It's time to renew your ANNUAL CLUB MEMBERSHIP

Individual Membership  
**\$25.00 per year**

Family Membership  
**\$35.00 per year**

Your dues enable the club to present activities such as our annual show, guest demonstrations, workshops, the *Dai Ichi Gazette*, club library, as well as refreshments and club raffles.

You can pay your dues at the next club meeting, or by check to:

**CJ Harmatz**  
2828 Allred Street  
Lakewood, CA 90712

Or via PayPal:  
[daiichibonsaikai.com/membership](http://daiichibonsaikai.com/membership)



## TOM VUONG

### GRAFTING TECHNIQUES

Tom Vuong has been a bonsai artist for many years. He brings with him a wealth of knowledge and experience, and at our January meeting, he shared some of his knowledge to teach us his grafting techniques.

Grafting is used for a variety of purposes: to add roots to enhance the *Nebari* (root flare or surface roots), to add a “missing” branch to a tree, or to cultivate a new tree. In any case, your tree should be very healthy and strong. Tom explains, “You have to inspect the tree and make sure it’s strong. If the tree is not strong, the graft may not take.

“You can graft any tree so long as they are within the same family. We’re working on a San Jose Juniper and you can graft any kind of Juniper on it... Shim-paku, Kishu, Itoigawa... so long as it’s the same family.

“Before you graft any tree, you have to clean out the foliage from the inside branch, and keep the foliage on the outside. You need to make sure the new grafts get enough sun to allow it to take.

“When grafting a branch, you want to leave a majority of the foliage at the ends of the branch. This allows the energy to travel upwards through the branch, bringing energy and growth to the graft sites lower down.





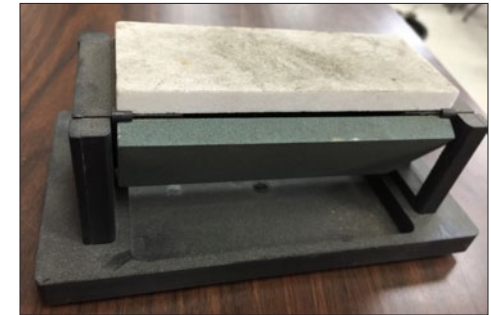


• When you cut the scion, make sure all fingers are behind the blade. With the blade in your right hand, you push down on the blade with your left thumb to the right hand and blade - then gently, but firmly, pull back on the scion towards you. This creates a very straight cut. My right hand never moves, it just holds the blade straight and the left hand does all the work. Then I do the same for the other side.

- When grafting Juniper, I use Scotch brand 130c Linerless Rubber Splicing Tape (see picture). It seals out moisture by stretching, then sealing itself tightly.
- Once the tape is applied, I use zip ties to create a tight lock around the graft, then finish off with black tar tree seal.
- Once grafting is complete, cover the entire tree with a clear plastic bag. White plastic bags do not let enough light in.

• Aftercare is most important so the bagged tree needs to be kept in the shade or under 75% shade cloth. You water the tree once a month. Don't overwater as the bag will keep moisture inside. Also keep the pot on the ground so it benefits from the cool moist earth.

"I grafted Shimpaku on this Prostrata two years ago, and it is growing very strong now. Since Prostrata is much harder than Shimpaku, now that the grafts have taken, any scion taken from this tree will be a lot stronger than the original Shimpaku scion since it has a mixture of both now. These new scions will also take much easier than the original."





*“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.





## ALLAN SUGIMURA



### PINE & JUNIPER

Allan Sugimura was our featured presenter and he went over growing and styling techniques for Juniper and Black Pine.

“If I touch the tree too much, it could cause adverse effects; some of the trees I grow, I have not touched them in years. With JBP, if you candle cut them too much, they stop growing. Once you get little tiny buds, don’t touch them - let them grow. You’re good for a year. Another thing with Pine is you should cut the roots every three years. Some people are afraid to cut the roots, but we whack them back. By doing this, within six years, you’ll get a nice pancake root-ball that will stand up by itself.

“I always tie roots down to the pot, but remove them after one year. As the tree grows, the root-ball grows higher, and the tiedown wire hinders that process, puts a load on the root system and it chokes itself. If you do it right, you only have to replot every three years.

“One of the faults of American trees from what I hear, from artists from Japan, is that branches are too big in relation to the size of the trunk. By cutting the roots short and keeping them tapered, you don’t have to work so hard pruning the tree. When the rootball is large, you end up with lots and lots of pruning discards, but when the rootball is manageable, you end up with very little. Work smart, not hard.”





Allan then began the task of wiring the JBP. "This is the first time I'm doing an initial wiring on the primary branches. When we started these trees, we only wired the trunk, then let it grow wild. Once you wire the trunk, you start forcing it back down to size. Many years later, you'll start to have material to work with. You also have to be careful not to knock off the undeveloped buds, when you wire, as that will really set you back in developing the structure.



"Don't take too many branches off at one time, as you may kill part of the waterline. Each root has a branch and as Mel Ikeda says, 'any good bonsai is alive all the way around.' That's going to make a difference long-term, in the health and styling of any tree. You have to be careful when you start reducing the number of branches. You may even have to keep an unwanted branch in order to keep the tree alive all the way around. I'll be quite frank with you; sometimes, you have to sacrifice the looks for today, for the tree, after you're gone. This tree isn't going to be anything good until after I'm dead. If you look



at the really impressive trees from Japan, those trees are 200 - 300 years old or more. Who knows who originally started them. That's my function, to create the long-term foundation for a good future tree.

"I improved my soil mixture, fertilizer and insecticide regimen recently, and now my trees backbud all the way down the trunk. Ideally, you want branches to form all the way down the trunk, then along the way, you can remove branches two at a time and develop the structure that way. This again, is a part of the long-term development of the tree.

"When you wire branches, you want it tight, but not too tight; you kind of learn that with experience. With tiny branches, it's easier to wire because they're pliable. Certain times of the year the branches are harder so you learn not to wire trees around that time of year. You soon learn to recognize that sweet spot."





## KEN FUENTES

### WILLOW LEAF FICUS AND MORE

Ken Fuentes has been a long time bonsai artist, and is one of the founders of the Conejo Valley Bonsai Society. Originally from Florida, it's no wonder that Ken's specialty and passion is the Ficus.

"Ficus are very forgiving trees; they'll take any water, they'll take any fertilizer, and they'll take almost any soil that doesn't stay wet. Being a tropical, they compress a bunch of growing seasons... unlike the once a year seasons of conifers and pines, Ficus' growth will all depend on how much fertilizer, direct sunlight, and humidity it receives, and it will keep growing.

"I repot Ficus every year, whether it needs it or not. I'm currently using EB Stone Cactus mix consistently in each pot. It holds water, yet dries pretty quickly. If you use different soils in your various trees, they will dry at different rates making it hard to recognize over/under watering, so I like to keep my soil mix consistent. You can usually tell when a Ficus is getting too much water, as it will never get a full flush of growth.

"I try to cut out any root that is too thick. Since all of my pots are shallow, I only keep the outer surface roots. Any roots that grow down, or right below the surface, get cut. When I'm developing the tree, I don't plant them high in the container. I'll put about  $\frac{1}{2}$ " of soil at the bottom of the pot, place the tree and fan out the roots, then add soil over the top to bury them. The reason is that when surface roots get full sun, they tend not to develop quickly, so for maximum surface root development, I temporarily bury them and then gradually bring them to the surface over time.

"Sacrificial branches are important to grow thick trunks. I used to let them grow large which left a huge round scar that diminished the beauty of the trunk. Now, what I'll do is cut them off earlier, but not before I've already allowed a new sacrificial branch to start developing."





“Often, the sacrificial branch will become stronger than the main tree itself. I watch for this constantly, and when it happens, I’ll defoliate the sacrificial branch. If that doesn’t balance the growth out, then I’ll start removing parts of the branch, an inch off each branch at a time. After a week, if it’s still unbalanced, I’ll do another inch. I do this until the energy growth moves back to the tree.

“Choosing the right sacrificial branch placement is important. If I have a tree that needs root development in a certain spot, I’ll try to create the sacrificial branch on that same side, so as to develop corresponding roots there as well. It’s all energy flow - you’re just picking and choosing where to direct the energy.”

Ken then spent some time at the end of the demo to speak to members who brought in trees. Great advice and direction was given.

In all, Ken spent the entire two hours regaling us with great information and terrific anecdotes. Definitely more information than can be captured in a newsletter article.

*Editor’s note: For the full story, you really should attend our meetings, and experience the demonstrations yourself. You can get questions answered, as well as network and hobnob amongst other enthusiasts, just as passionate about bonsai as you are.*

*You will not regret it.*







*Michael Ryan Bell (left) and the lucky raffle winner of Ryan's Tokoname pot, Louis Carillo.*

## MICHAEL RYAN BELL

### A WALKING ENCYCLOPEDIA OF JAPANESE POTS

When it comes to presenters, there are few individuals who possess the ability to take a subject matter and present it in a way that captivates the audience's interest, and convey that knowledge and experience in a dynamic and entertaining way. Michael Ryan Bell is one of these individuals.

Ryan has been collecting bonsai pots since 2011, a year after he began pursuing bonsai seriously, and now has an extensive collection. After coming across a container without any information, he decided to research bonsai containers, and has since made it his specialty.

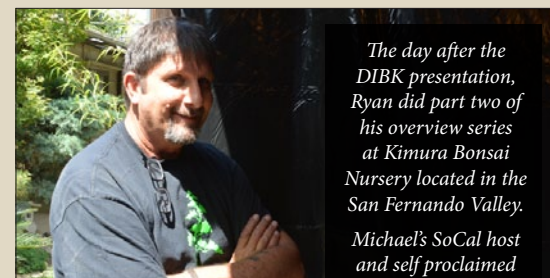
Passion for Japanese pots runs deep with Ryan, so it's no wonder that his presentations are so anticipated and well attended. He offers several different presentations, all tailored towards the group's level of interest. His Bonsai Pottery Overview Lecture Series comes in 3 parts: Introduction, Intermediate, and Advanced. It covers a range of topics including history, appreciation, classification, discernment, identification, and selection. Each lecture is 2 hours long, with a PowerPoint presentation, followed by a Q and A, where he identifies and appraises members' containers, or discusses selection for specific trees.

At our May meeting, MRB gave us part one of the series, explaining in great detail, specifics and anecdotes of all aspects of pottery. Many members did indeed bring in their finest pots for identification and appraisal.

Ryan is also the creator of one of the most in-depth, and comprehensive Japanese pot websites around. There, he catalogs and identifies pots and chops from most of the Japanese potters and is an invaluable resource for accurate pot identification.

You can visit Michael Ryan Bell's website at [www.japanesebonsaipots.net](http://www.japanesebonsaipots.net)





*The day after the DIBK presentation, Ryan did part two of his overview series at Kimura Bonsai Nursery located in the San Fernando Valley. Michael's SoCal host and self proclaimed Uber driver, Robert Pressler looks on.*







## TED MATSON

Our feature presenter for June was Ted Matson. He brought along with him a few Crepe Myrtles to demonstrate his techniques. Along with the trees, he brought his wisdom and years of experience to share.

“One of the things that happens in bonsai, is that you come across certain techniques that are universal – wiring, pruning, trimming, etc., but in order to apply the techniques properly, you really have to understand your particular tree and its needs.

“Crepe Myrtles have an exfoliating bark. Especially with tropical and subtropical varieties (like Crepe Myrtle), that have an exfoliating bark, they will heal in a pristine fashion after exfoliation. A Crepe Myrtle will actually, in some cases, leave some deadwood exposed, but the relationship between the live wood and the dead, will display ribbons of colored trunk, which many find attractive. This time of year is when the tree grows and expands, pushing the old bark out. There will also be a large canopy of foliage, so the new bark will be protected. It is a good time to remove the loose bark.

“Crepe Myrtles are like Pomegranates. They will put their flower on the tips of summer growth, and here, they typically flower between mid July, and September. What that means is when Crepe Myrtles pop in the spring, you prune them. Give them as many prunings as you can, until mid July, and then stop. They flower the best in summer, so if you find flowers off season, it’s usually not worth holding on to, as they tend to be smaller, disfigured and generally not very healthy.”



“You can also dial in when the tree will flower. In general, from your last prune till the growth and bloom pop, is about a month, so if you want to show your tree in bloom in August, you would do your last pruning in mid July.

“Crepe Myrtles are relatively pest free. There’s not a lot that will affect them, maybe aphids a little bit... but the one thing you will definitely have to deal with is powdery mildew. It’s an easily controlled fungus that leaves a white powder on the foliage. I use oil spray to control it. It also helps to water the foliage down, as this fungus does not like standing water.”

Ted then went on to prune the Myrtles he brought in. He even had enough hardwood cuttings to share with everyone that wanted one. It was an interesting and educational demo, and we thank Ted for taking the time to share his knowledge with the club.





## BOB HILVERS

A few months back, we covered the first annual Kōen-nai no Bonsai (*Bonsai in the Park*) event to benefit the GSBF Clark Bonsai Collection at the Shinzen Friendship Garden in Woodward Park, Fresno.

The GSBF Clark Bonsai Collection is expansive and beautiful, and is in no small part due to the efforts of the collection's long time curator, Bob Hilvers. This month, we were fortunate to have Bob take the three (turned five) hour drive down to Gardena, to give us some insight on what it takes to develop and nurture such a beautiful collection.

"The collection came about through a chance meeting with Bill Clark, who was an avid collector of Japanese art. Bill utilized his extensive private collection to create the Clark Center for Japanese Art & Culture in Hanford.

"After the construction of the reserve area, calls for donations of bonsai went out to collectors throughout the state. Local bonsai clubs were enlisted to assist in getting the project off the ground and the Center bonsai collection was launched. Slowly the collection began to grow in numbers and quality of bonsai.

"Since the inception of the bonsai exhibition in 2006, a hallmark of the bonsai collection has been the relentless march toward excellence. The Clark Center started to collect bonsai and could add major holdings of aesthetically and historically important bonsai. The Clark Center's bonsai collection is now considered one of the finest in California even to the extent that the quality of the bonsai outpaced that of the exhibition area in which they were displayed.





**B**ill Clark was born in Hanford on October 2, 1930. After studying at UC Berkeley and UC Davis, he entered the Navy and eventually returned home to the family dairy in Hanford.

From 1958 to 1971, Mr. Clark operated the family ranching and dairy operation, Cal Clark Holsteins. During that time, he helped develop the family's herd into one of the nation's top 10 Registered Holstein Herds.

A passionate world traveler, Mr. Clark fell in love with Japanese art while he was in the Navy.

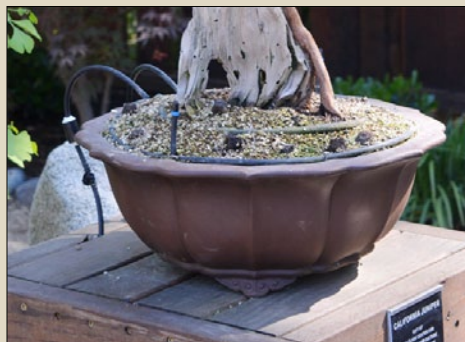
In 2009, the Japanese government awarded him a high honor in recognition for his "accomplishments in contributing to the introduction of Japanese art and toward the promotion of cultural and educational exchange" between Japan and the U.S.



"As the bonsai collection became more visible to the public, its growth continued and increased in quality. Through donations, very fine, and in some instances historically significant, bonsai were acquired. A large number of trees were donated by Kathy Boomsma, who donated her entire collection. Another example is the addition of a large portion of the remaining Kawaguchi Collection that included two important bonsai, the legendary

bonsai of the late Sam Kawaguchi, and the other a major work by the late Harry Koga, Sam's teacher.

"After Bill's passing last year, the Clark Center closed, and the antiquity pieces were sent to the Minneapolis Institute of Arts. The bonsai collection was gifted to the GSBF, and currently resides in the newly built Shinzen Friendship Garden in Fresno."



The exhibit utilizes two separate, mirrored, double redundant watering systems throughout its collection. Every bonsai has two sources of water, just in case one system fails. Each system has their own set of valves, and their circuits have their own computer controller. This is very important as the weather in Fresno, at times, can be quite unforgiving.



The gate, as well as the fencing, came from the original center in Hanford. The granite plaque greets visitors as they approach the collection.



The courtyard features beautiful Toko-kazari (Tokonoma + Kazari-meaning decoration and display), where the finest trees are displayed. The area also serves as a venue for events. Our wine and cheese event at Kōen-nai was held here. These benches were also brought over from the Clark Center.



Once inside, there are a number of trails to stroll through. We came up with the concept of a stroll garden, where the viewer strolls through paths, and at each turn, discovers a new section hidden from the original path. Traditional Japanese landscaping concepts were merged with bonsai aesthetics to design the garden.

For more information, please visit [www.shinzenjapanese garden.org](http://www.shinzenjapanese garden.org)  
or call 559.840.1264 (Ext 1)





JASON CHAN  
PROSTRATA JUNIPER

Our featured presenter at the August meeting was Jason Chan. He brought with him a Prostrata Juniper, which he explained had been acquired from a nursery where it was completely overgrown.

“What we do is we find material that is leggy and overgrown, and we repair it. In this case, we cut back the leggy growth, and allowed it to regrow with the shape and foliage that we can work with. Prostrata grows really fast so we could even cut this back again and let it regrow, but we have enough here to develop a really nice tree right now.”

Jason then queried the attendees, getting opinions on front of tree, as well as angle and foliage choices. He went through his thought process on each suggestion, and explained his game plan for the tree.

*“As you start doing bonsai and going to shows, you begin to learn what works, and what looks good.”*

“The three things you want to look for is taper, movement and nebari. If you have all three, or a clear way of creating them, you can make a really good tree.”





“When I wire, I always wire from bottom, to top. When I wire a single branch, I’ll usually go from the outside of the branch, and work my way inward. Placing the roll of wire on your arm makes this easier to do. This way you don’t waste wire by cutting too much.

“The most important thing when wiring, is to bend the branch to where you want it to sit, then wire it. This way, you don’t add too much tension between the branch and the wire, and there’s also less chance of the wire cutting in. If you don’t do that, and you wire the whole branch, it may not even go into that position.

“Wiring is just repeating a pattern. There’s four or five patterns that you’ll repeat over and over again. If you think of it that way, it’s easier to get the hang of wiring.







Above: Jason putting the finishing touches on the tree as Jason's sensei, David Nguy, looks on.

Jason then went on to style the tree. He spoke about his philosophies in styling and foliage development, as well as aftercare and future development ideas for the lucky winner. The club wishes to thank Jason for his great demonstration.



Above: Club members taking in the info at the August demonstration.



Right: Jason and the lucky winner Alor, strike a pose next to the finished tree.

## EASTERN LEAF

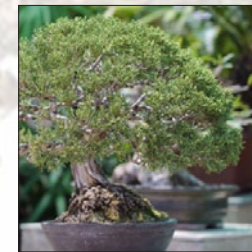
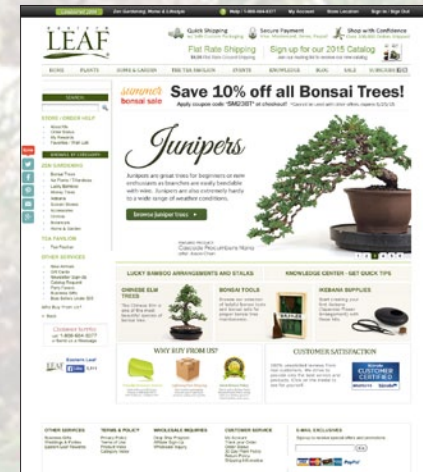
IBK member Jason Chan owns Eastern Leaf, an online store selling everything from tools and supplies, to pre and finished bonsai material.

The site is clean and easy to navigate, and features a knowledge center with an extensive collection of articles and videos that teach basic and advanced techniques to hobbyists and artists of all skill levels.

You can visit Jason's site at:

Website | [www.easternleaf.com/](http://www.easternleaf.com/)

YouTube Channel | [www.bit.ly/EasternLeaf](http://www.bit.ly/EasternLeaf)





For nearly 40 years, Kathy Benson has been widely known throughout Southern California's bonsai community, as an instructor and demonstrator. Kathy brought to her demo a very leggy Prostrata, once owned by Harry Hirao.

"I got the tree at Bonsai-a-thon, and have been nurturing and loving it, and it has grown quite a bit. I've been thinking about this tree for a long time, and the obvious thing to do is to make a *bunjin*, but there are other options as well.

"Based on a picture I found in a book, another option would be to make a wind-swept style tree. A third option, is to take the really simple approach, and make a shohin... but then the demo would only be 5 minutes long."



Kathy then sketched out her ideas for different directions for the tree: *bunjin* or windswept; and the attendees voted for a *bunjin* style. After cutting about half the tree's height, she stripped the bark to make a *jin* at the tip of the cut. It really complemented the tree well, as the trunk on this tree was nice and thick. She then started on cleaning and trimming the tree in preparation for styling.



KATHY BENSON  
PROSTRATA JUNIPER



“I’ve been learning a lot more about Junipers lately. They really don’t like being pinched all of the time. It’s something we’ve been taught for years to do, but are now finding out they don’t take well to it. The practice now is to let them grow out all lush and thick, then trim (not pinch) the shoots that grow past the foliage, once, maybe twice a year. Apparently if you cut back the foliage, the roots won’t grow as much, so you want to encourage the roots to grow by letting the foliage grow as well.

“When you take a strong growing shoot off a branch, it redistributes the energy (growth) to other areas of the tree, so the goal is to balance the energy of the tree so that all branches become strong, and none of them are weak.

“Since Prostrata grow very slowly, you don’t have to repot very often; maybe 5-8 years depending on how well it is growing. They do like a well draining soil. You can use pumice, decomposed granite, perlite, hard akadama, and even bark depending on your area. They like full sun and are prone to spider mites. Most any takedown spray can be used to get rid of these mites, but you will have to repeat a few times to end the cycle. Watering the foliage also helps to get rid of them as well.

Kathy then went on to wire and style the tree into a nice starter *bunjin* that with a few years and development, will turn into a nice showpiece for the lucky winner, Joe Ortega.



*“I like the Chinese  
description of  
bunjin/literati...”*

***The tree  
that is a brush  
stroke.”***







Below left: The finished tree, and the inspirational sketch on the left.



On the right: the inspirational windswept sketch and the photo that inspired it.  
Bottom right: Kathy and the lucky winner, Joe Ortega.







Our October event was a workshop meeting, so DIBK members came prepared with their tools, materials, and a lot of passion. Members brought in everything from established material in need of minor refinement, to nursery stock that required full, initial styling. Advice and inspiration was given freely, and members went home with trees that were vastly improved.

## CLUB WORKSHOP















Bringing back an old tradition, DIBK has reinstated our annual Holiday Potluck Party at our November meeting. This year's party, was well attended by friends old and new. After munching on some really delicious food brought in by members, the crowd was then treated to a rousing night of Bonsai Bingo. The game is your standard simple Bingo game, with the exception that instead of calling out letters and numbers, the card was filled with bonsai terms. DIBK Club president John van de Wouw served as bingo caller, and he did a great job... he even pronounced *most* of the Japanese words correctly! ; ).

# HOLIDAY PARTY BONSAI BINGO







*Lots of tasty dishes...*



*Bingo is serious business...*







*Om nom nom nom...*



*Many great prizes were won ...*



*Everyone had a blast!*



## JANUARY SEAN SMITH



### January 20, 2017

Sean Smith lives in Marysville Pennsylvania, where he owns and operates Custom Oriental Wood-craft. He currently creates Bonsai display tables, and carves Daiza for renowned Bonsai and Suiseki enthusiasts all over the world. Currently, Sean lectures all over the United States as well as Central America and Europe on Bonsai, Suiseki and Daiza carving, Formal display.

Sean will be styling a Shimpaku, as well as presenting a Q&A session at our January meeting.

### UPCOMING

All events are tentative and subject to change.  
Please subscribe to our Facebook page  
for current information.  
[www.facebook.com/DaiIchiBonsai/](http://www.facebook.com/DaiIchiBonsai/)

FEBRUARY 17, 2017

**STEVE IWAKI**

*Repotting Demonstration*

MARCH 17, 2017

**FRED MIYAHARA**

*Repotting Workshop*

APRIL 21, 2017

**NATHAN SIMMONS**

*Tree & Pot Selection Seminar*

MAY 2017

**NO MEETING**

*CLUB SHOW & SALE*

## EVENTS

**Dec 26 – 30, 2016**

**California Aiseki Kai 27th Annual Show**

The Huntington Library and Botanical Gardens  
1151 Oxford Road, San Marino

Hours: 10:30 AM – 4:30 PM

For more information, visit:  
[www.aisekikai.com](http://www.aisekikai.com) or contact  
[sashaichris@gmail.com](mailto:sashaichris@gmail.com)

**Jan 21 – 22, 2017**

**Baikoen Bonsai Kenkyukai**

**53rd Annual Winter Silhouettes Show**

Arboretum of Los Angeles

310 North Baldwin Avenue, Arcadia

Hours: 10:00 AM – 4:30 PM

Exhibit, sales area, Saturday night reception  
featuring entertainment, food, giant raffle and  
auction.

For more information, visit:  
[www.baikoenbonsai.com](http://www.baikoenbonsai.com)

**February 25-26, 2017**

**Bonsai-A-Thon XXI**

The Huntington Library and Botanical Gardens  
1151 Oxford Road

Hours: 8:00 AM – 4:30 PM

Admission to the event is free with Bonsai-A-  
Thon "early bird" registration between  
8 AM – 9 AM. Pancake breakfast, demonstra-  
tions, lunch, bonsai exhibits, large sales area,  
raffle and auction.

For more information visit  
[www.gsbfhuntington.com](http://www.gsbfhuntington.com)

For more event information, please visit [www.  
bit.ly/GSBF-Events](http://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

Please support the club by donating your  
bonsai related items to raffle.

### Refreshment Contributors

Please feel free to bring your favorite treats to  
the next meeting!

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

### Special thanks to

Members and friends of Dai Ichi Bonsai Kai  
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.  
Our club is dedicated to promoting the art of bonsai, and takes great pride  
in its family-oriented character.

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 the public is welcome.

[www.daiichibonsaikai.com](http://www.daiichibonsaikai.com)

***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](mailto:jason@zenpalace.com)

©2017 Dai Ichi Bonsai Kai. All rights reserved.