

GOLDEN NEWS



NEWS FROM AROUND THE WESTERN US BONSAI COMMUNITY

IN THIS EDITION

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Q3 'GIVE BACK' WINNERS!

The Third Quarter Give Back Program Club Winners will be awarded \$500 per club for their special projects to promote the art of bonsai within local communities.



Congratulations to our club winners:

- Chino Bonsai Club
- Mother Lode Bonsai Club
- San Diego Bonsai Club
- Santa Cruz Bonsai Kai
- Valley Bonsai Society

QUARTERLY CLUB SPOTLIGHT

SACRAMENTO BONSAI CLUB

The Sacramento Bonsai Club, was established shortly after WWII in 1946, and proudly stands as **the oldest bonsai club in the United States**. Founded by Japanese Americans returning from internment camps, eager to celebrate their cultural roots and proud heritage, they began meeting at the old Sacramento Buddhist Church on "O" Street. Between 1946 and 1965 their annual club shows were held at McKinley Park and the Nisei War Memorial Hall on 4th street in Sacramento. Then in 1966, and continuing through until today, their shows moved to the original meeting place at the Buddhist Church of Sacramento. Always true to our original premise of celebrating Japanese cultural heritage their club meetings were in the Japanese language before switching to English in the early 1990's, to welcome their newer English speaking only members.

Cont. on P2.

UP COMING EVENTS

Saturday Sept 26- San Diego Bonsai Club Fall Bonsai Show

Saturday October 3- Chino Bonsai Club 6th Annual Bonsai Exhibit

Saturday October 3- Midori Bonsai Club 63rd Annual Bonsai and Ikebana Show

Saturday November 14- East Bay Bonsai Society Annual Bonsai Show

Cont from P1...

The original founders and first officers were: Nobotoshi Sato, Toshimizu Nagae, George Fujimoto, Masao Ioka, and George Yamasaki. Both George Fujimoto (Who was known for making beautiful camp pots as well as teaching and growing bonsai): <https://50objects.org/object/fujimotos-cement-pots-bonsai-part-ii/>) and George Yamasaki (who was known for his world class bonsai and love of suiseki):

<https://www.legacy.com/us/obituaries/sacbee/name/george-yamasaki-obituary?id=21957367>) probably met and became friends at the Tule Lake Internment camp during WWII. Mr. Yamasaki was also one of the first instructors for the club (1946-late 1980's) along with Yoshio Nehira (1963-1976), Kato (1977-1985, and Mas Imazumi (1985-2003).

This past May, The Sacramento Bonsai Club celebrated it's 80th Anniversary Bonsai show by offering members with the original club logo pin and new Anniversary Collector's Pin which was designed by Chizuko Mary Sakaishi. Ms. Sakaishi is also known to have chaired the "Happi Coat Sewing Group" in 1996. The club now wears their maroon happi coats proudly at their shows and conventions. Since then, the club has had several sewing marathon weekends to keep up with new members. Club members also don "team maroon color shirts", aprons, and caps with gold name badges.

SACRAMENTO BONSAI CLUB



Today the club still enjoys a vibrant community of dedicated enthusiasts with meetings held on the second Monday of each month. They feature special guest instructors and hands-on workshops led by both visiting experts and knowledgeable members.

Sacramento Bonsai Club members enjoy several various activities beginning with their annual tree collection trip started by Mas Imazumi in the Mammoth-Bishop region in 1990. Over the years, this has become a much-anticipated yearly trip and social gathering. Other activities include transplanting workshops held at Yuzo and Mitsuko Maruyama's bonsai nursery which helps members care of their trees.

Also, knowledgeable members in suiseki (viewing stones) have organized summer collecting trips which are followed by dai-making workshops, along with bonsai workshops which are often held at Lucy Sakaishi-Judd's home with Sam Adina as the instructor. The club also holds a January winter silhouette and suiseki show with a light potluck meal and its popular Lunar New Year Luncheon at a local restaurant.

CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

The West Coast's Legacy... Both New and Old

Last quarter, I talked about how the West Coast bonsai community is beginning to see its future unfold. Here are a few glimpses of some of the artists who will help shape that future.

The end of August featured the annual John Naka Memorial Bonsai Exhibition at Nisei Week, a juried exhibition of 31 displays chaired by Japanese-trained professional Julian Tsai and Ryan Pitts (more about Ryan in a moment). The exhibition easily drew more than 750 attendees.

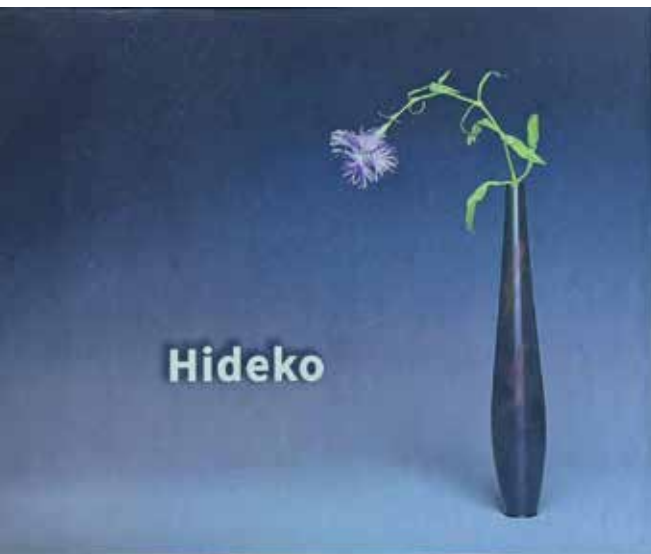
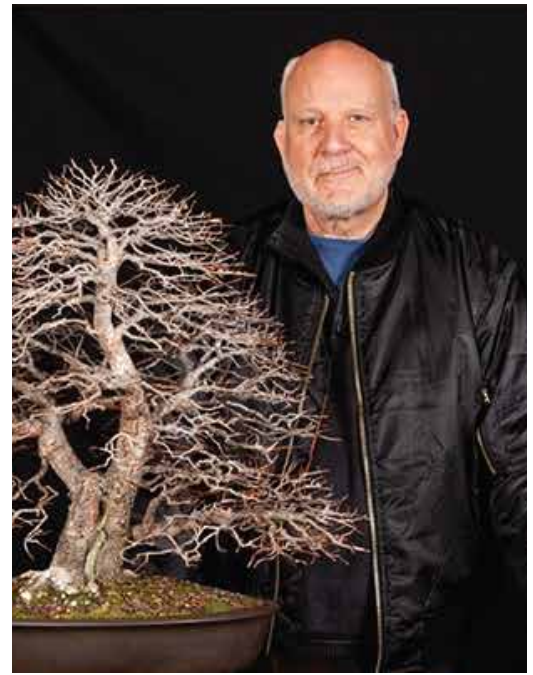
Club shows also kicked off the fall season. Redwood Empire Bonsai Society (REBS) welcomed more than 1,000 attendees, with former Joshua Roth participant Sam Tan as its headliner. The show drew rave reviews. The San Diego Bonsai Club will host its fall show at the end of September, also expected to attract more than 700 attendees. Former Joshua Roth participant and California Bonsai Society (CBS) visiting artist Ryan Pitts, along with Philippe Baron, Mauro Stemberger's assistant for over 9 years and a CBS visiting artist, will present "Show Case" demonstrations.

Chino Bonsai Club will hold its 6th annual fall show October 3–4, an event that generally draws more than 500 attendees. This year's show will feature prior Joshua Roth contestant, Marcus Juniel assisting recent GSBF Circle of Sensei award recipient David Nguy with demonstrations. Marcus also serves as GSBF Vice Chair.

I mention these events because the young professionals highlighted above are a big part of the West Coast's future—and represent a big part of the next generation of bonsai superstars. Congratulations to all of you!

Honoring Those Who Came Before

Now, on to a few of the individuals who helped bring this culture to the West Coast community and to whom we owe a tremendous debt of gratitude.



Without these enormously talented individuals, who shared this cultural art form and generated public interest and respect through exhibitions and shows, we probably would not have the vibrant bonsai community we have today.

First is former GSBF Chair and Circle of Sensei award recipient Hideko Metaxas. Known simply as "Hideko" throughout Northern California, she not only created and exhibited world-class bonsai, but also helped pioneer the art of ikebana and suiseki at the highest level.

Last August, Samuel Edge, Kathy Edge, and Janet Roth published a gorgeous photo book titled simply *Hideko*, highlighting her many achievements. The book contains more than 150 pages of beautifully photographed suiseki, tokonoma suiseki displays, and legacy bonsai. I believe this book is a priceless addition to our community's legacy.

The book is currently available here: [Hideko – Lulu](#)

Finally, I recently received a paper from George Egert, written by his father, John Egert, titled, *Baiko and Barbed Wire*. John began his bonsai journey in the mid-1970s and in this paper, relates stories from his conversations and experiences with some of Southern California's most influential founding bonsai artists: Kahn and Kay Komai, Frank Nagata—who was instrumental in founding what became the California Bonsai Society and Baiko-En—and pioneers Ryoza Nomura and Sam Tameichi Doi.

This paper is filled with early American bonsai history, including the trees brought back from Japan by Larz Anderson, the U.S. Ambassador to Japan in 1913. American bonsai history is not readily available, and I suspect most practitioners, myself included, are unaware of just how rich our bonsai history is.

That is why documents like this are so important to preserve and share. I will talk about this more in the future

Please follow the link below to read John Egert's chronicles, [Baiko and Barbed Wire: The Art of Bonsai and the Japanese American Experience during the Second World War: Baiko and Barbed Wire – GSBF](#)

GOLDEN ZOOM



GSBF'S QUARTERLY
SPONSORED LECTURE SERIES
OCTOBER 26TH, 2026 @ 6:30PM



AN IN-DEPTH LOOK AT PAST AWARD WINNING DISPLAYS FROM THE PBE

Jonas will share insights into what submission jurors are looking for when selecting trees for juried shows, this year's submission process, the venue and what will be new for the PBE this year.

Join us on October 26th @ 6:30PM

The Zoom link will be sent to GSBF club reps for distribution 7–10 days before Jonas' presentation.



MARIN BONSAI CLUB

We want to thank the Golden State Bonsai Federation for selecting the Marin Bonsai Club for the Give Back Award. The club is deeply grateful for the opportunity to improve the accessibility and the technology available for our membership.

One small problem with bonsai demos that we often encounter is that the artist needs to see what they're doing to do what they're doing. For example, wiring is quite difficult to do away from you towards the audience. Also, pruning and wiring can sometimes involve very small details that might not be visible, especially for those sitting in the back of the audience. We have been dreaming of a projection system that can connect to a phone to use as a video feed. The camera can zoom in to where the action is and do it from the presenter's perspective. We did our research and landed on a system that is portable, can handle wired and wireless video streaming from a phone. We got a carry case, stand, and extension cords to complete the kit.

We used it with a camera for close up action during Sam Tan's Juniper demo, my talk on bonsai benches which made use of slides, and Eric Schrader's talk on bonsai soil.

We spent a total of 537.05 for the initial set of equipment. Then, after using it several times projecting on to a wall, we added a projector screen separately as an expansion of the kit. This improved visibility dramatically. The club loves it when we bring the projector. It brings that sense of wonder similar to when the teacher rolls out the TV into the classroom. Thank you again!



SANTA CRUZ BONSAI CLUB

Bus Trip to Sacramento Area

The Santa Cruz Bonsai Kai received one of the \$500 awards from the Golden State Bonsai Federation (GSBF) for a "special project" through the July 2025 Third Quarter Give Back Program. Our project invited members to take a bus tour of three bonsai nurseries in the Sacramento area, with particular interest in visiting Peter Tea's nursery. We are also grateful to the Black family for donating additional funds in honor of their son, who passed away. Together, these gifts helped keep the cost low for members making the long trip from Santa Cruz to Sacramento, Auburn, and Placerville.

On June 28, 2026, a hardy group of 21 bonsai enthusiasts left Santa Cruz at 7:30 a.m. The group included 15 Santa Cruz Bonsai Kai members and 6 members from nearby bonsai clubs who were invited to join the outing.



First Stop: Maruyama Bonsai Nursery, Sacramento

After a two-and-a-half-hour bus ride, the group arrived at Maruyama Bonsai Nursery in Sacramento. Open to the public, the nursery features acres of raised beds filled with four-inch pots, many azaleas, and a wide variety of bonsai materials.

- Akadama and Kanuma azalea mix
- Pots and trees at reasonable prices
- One-gallon azaleas
- Trident maple seedlings

Second Stop: Peter Tea's Nursery, Auburn

The next stop was Peter Tea's nursery in Auburn, which is not open to the public and requires a reservation. The entrance was stunning, with many impressive trees on display. The nursery includes both Peter's own trees and boarding trees cared for on behalf of clients.

Visitors were especially impressed by the extensive drip irrigation system used to water the trees. The nursery also offered a range of material for sale, from large developed trees to smaller junipers and other starter trees, along with a variety of pots. Peter's assistants were knowledgeable, welcoming, and helpful throughout the visit.

Final Stop: Cedar Rose Nursery, Placerville

The final stop was Cedar Rose Nursery in Placerville. Although it is primarily a mail-order nursery and is not open to the public, the group had the opportunity to explore its greenhouse-style beds, four-inch and one-gallon plants, and trees growing in the ground.

Several unusual species were available for sale, including different types of Oaks, Hackberry, Korean Hornbeam, Redwoods, and Persimmons that bear orange fruit.

A Rewarding Day for Bonsai Enthusiasts

The group returned home tired but excited, with the bottom of the bus filled with newly purchased trees and pots. Throughout the trip, participants saw a wide range of material, from finished trees to promising starter trees. Everyone found something to support the next step in their bonsai journey.



CINDY GOLD



Summary of Learning

My focus for the Give Back Grant was to develop my skills in carving and creating deadwood. I went straight to the source and visited the Ancient Bristlecone Pine Forest with Roy Nagatoshi and a group of fellow students. It was truly inspiring! I refer to my photographs of these magnificent trees often. I really jumped into carving when I took a workshop at Kimura Nursery with Will Badeley and worked on a Boxwood. He helped me carve down the trunk, reducing the tree size to less than 50% and learning to regrow the branches. Ted Matson gave me a valuable private lesson where we worked on Olives, creating shari and jins. We talked about tools and I learned how to care for wounds to achieve the best healing. Marcus Juniel generously came to my home, and we carved an Itoigawa Shimpaku building on my developing basic skills. It was valuable discussing strategies, watching him carve, and then getting pointers as I worked on the tree. He continues to advise me as I face new situations. It's important to monitor the health of your trees carefully afterwards to learn how carving affects them. I am grateful to these amazing teachers who so generously shared their time and expertise and encouraged me. I still have a long way to go but I'm developing some interesting deadwood on my trees.

A challenge I face is that I've developed arthritis in my hands and don't have the same strength I used to. So, I've had to figure out strategies that don't require lots of hand strength. Using a Dremel and sharp carving tools and a mallet helps, but there are times when ripping and twisting off chunks of wood is needed. So, it may take me longer to strip away wood, and grind areas out, but my determination wins in the end! I want to encourage everyone who is interested in carving to grab your tools, don't be afraid to make mistakes and you'll find your way.



OBITUARIES

IN MEMORY OF JOE OLSON

(FEBRUARY 19, 1938 – AUGUST 4, 2026)

It should come as no surprise that Joe Olson's chosen career path was with the Forestry Department because Joe Olson loved nature and trees, especially oaks. During one Bonsai Club of Santa Barbara meeting, Joe brought in 12 different varieties of oaks that he had cultivated as bonsai and he had a story about each tree and variety. A trip to his backyard and personal collection included some amazing 40-50 year-old California Coastal Oaks *Quercus agrifolia* and Cork Oaks *Quercus suber*. Some of these he had grown from acorns. Joe was a patient, soft-spoken guy and was always more than happy to help new members of our bonsai club. He was one of the first friends I made when I joined the club. I'm proud to say I own a few of his trees.



Joe and his wife, Mirella, travelled extensively in Mexico, where their son and daughter-in-law live, in search of cycads and other native species that he photographed and often shared with the Club. Joe also loved the desert. He had a small house near Joshua Tree that he and Mirella would visit several times per year. During these trips I often got to care for Joe's trees and feed his two 40+ year-old desert tortoises. Watching tortoises eat reminds us, like the art of bonsai, that not everything in this world must be hectic and fast-paced.

The Bonsai Club of Santa Barbara was formed in 1971. An early member, Joe joined in the late 70s and he held several offices over the years, including newsletter editor, and being the Club president for two different four-year terms.- by Ernie Witham

IN MEMORY OF BENNY KIM

It is with great sadness that I share that my father passed away peacefully September 6.

Many of you knew him through his lifelong love of bonsai. His trees were more than a business—they were an expression of his patience, artistry, and deep appreciation for nature. He spent countless hours tending, shaping, and caring for them, and I know how much it meant to him to share that passion with others in the bonsai community.

As his daughter, I had the privilege of witnessing not only the beautiful trees he created, but the years of devotion behind them. Each one carries a little piece of his hands, his vision, and his life.

Thank you to everyone who followed his work, admired his trees, exchanged knowledge with him, or simply shared in his love of bonsai over the years. It brought him great joy. His hands may no longer tend these trees, but what he nurtured will continue to grow.

Rest peacefully, Dad. Your legacy lives on. 🍀❤️



UP COMING EVENTS

Saturday Sept 26- San Diego Bonsai Club Fall Bonsai Show

Beautiful bonsai will be on display. Bonsai of various sizes and species as well as other bonsai-related items will be for sale by club members at attractive prices. All sales are cashless so bring cards or phones. Come early for the best selection. Hours 10-5 on 9/26 and 10-4 on 9/27.



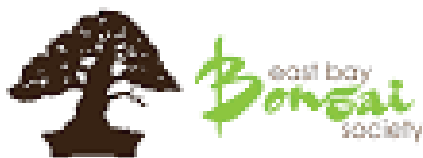
Saturday October 3- Chino Bonsai Club 6th annual bonsai exhibit

Don't miss our bonsai exhibit, daily afternoon demonstrations by David Nguy, Saturday evening live auction and consignment sales, Sunday morning kids workshop (limit 10). See flyer below for more details.

Saturday October 3- Midori Bonsai Club 63rd annual bonsai and ikebana show

This year's theme is a celebration of the beauty of two classic Japanese arts: Bonsai and Ikebana. Bonsai is the Japanese art of living trees in miniature form. Ikebana is the Japanese art of flower arrangement.

Free admission. Demonstration. Beginner's Workshop. Dr. Bonsai. Club and Vendor Sale.



FREE
ADMISSION

BONSAI SHOW

November 14-15, 2026

Lakeside Garden Center
585 Bellevue Ave, Oakland, 94610

Saturday November 4- East Bay Bonsai Society Annual Show and Sale

The East Bay Bonsai Society is hosting a two-day free show November 14th (10am - 5pm) and 15th (11am to 4pm) at the Lakeside Garden Center. Headliner is renowned bonsai artist, author and teacher, Dave De Groot. The show includes a sale of bonsai trees, pots, tools and related materials.