



September 2026

The Bent Twig

A monthly newsletter of the American Bonsai Association of Sacramento
<https://www.abasbonsai.org/>

Arboreal Abstractions

Ian Baker

This is a short one, folks. September is a busy month with the fall auction and I know (ask me how I know) we are all working hard to keep up with our bonsai work as the days cool off. It's easy to let a few days pass and days quickly become weeks. There is a lot of technique and timing in bonsai, but at the end of the day it's about making cuts and working trees. An unworked tree in a pot is a bonsai not. So please read through this newsletter and then go into your studio and keep up your practice!



Above: Scenes from the Yuba and Bear Rivers as summer winds down. Bottom right: ruins of a 19th century narrow guage logging railroad bridge.



Last Meeting

Bonsai Design and Progression w/ Sam Tan

The August meeting featured a presentation from Sam Tan, bonsai artist based in the San Francisco Bay Area. Sam led a discussion of bonsai design methodology through a series of case studies from his own collection. The talk touched on some of the more advanced visual design language of bonsai like balance, perspective, proportion, etc but in an accessible way using examples of trees he has worked on over the years. The design portion of bonsai can be a very subjective topic of preference for certain elements and styles. Sam's talk very much brought to life the more naturalistic style he has developed over the years working primarily with native species. Sam is an articulate presenter and was fully engaged with the audience throughout the night. Congratulations to Lyubou Karashchuv for winning the key raffle prize, a lovely native juniper.



Above: Prize winner Lyubou and Sam Tan working his redwood



What to Work on September

The Fall equinox is a few days away! Daylight hours and temperatures are noticeably decreasing. It is time to evaluate placement of bonsai for optimum growing conditions. Depending on the microclimate in your yard, shade cloth over conifers can be removed sometime in the next couple of weeks. Deciduous trees may need protection into October if temperatures stay above 90 degrees. Temperatures in September and October can be extremely variable.

Trees are starting the transition to winter dormancy. Aggressively growing deciduous and broadleaf evergreens may need a little more cut back otherwise wait until just after leaf drop in November for major pruning and thinning.

Now is the time to begin work on single flush pines (white pine, Scots pine, lodgepole pine, and other high mountain pines) and continue work on other conifers. It is too late for de-candeling Japanese black and red pines but fall clean up work can begin, as well as working trees that have not been de-candled.

Remember that foliar growth may be slowing but trees continue to add tissue to trunk and branches. Pay close attention to branches with wire!

Checklist:

- Check to make sure wire is not cutting in on deciduous/broadleaf evergreens
- Stay vigilant monitoring for pests and disease - refer to the [pest control chart](#) and rotate active ingredients.
- Adjust watering as temperatures cool. Mention equinox for a raffle ticket. Pay close attention!
- Fertilize as necessary, (see yearly care sheet on [ABAS website](#))
- Keep track of the need for shade over the next few weeks as temperatures drop.



Right: Scenes from the 2025 Fall Sale

ABAS Annual Live Auction and Consignment Sale

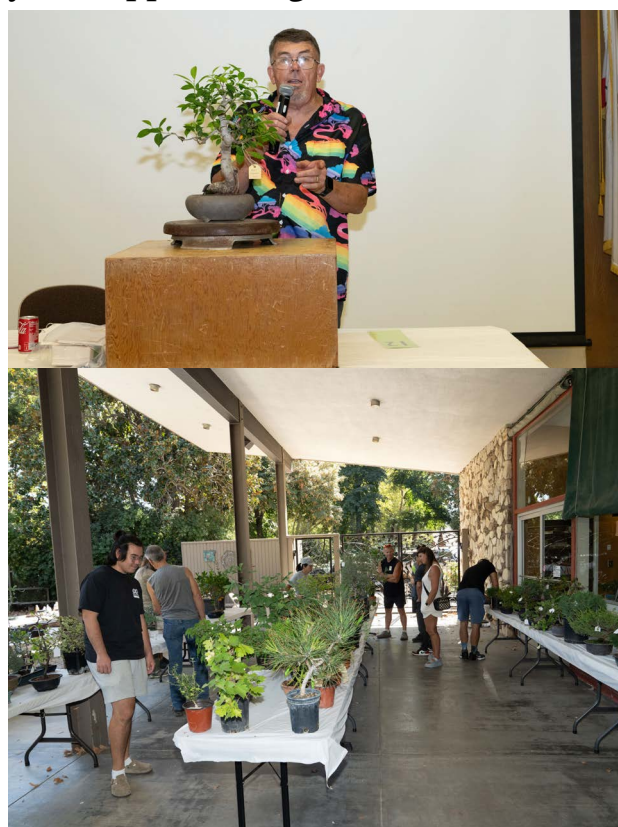
The annual ABAS Live Auction and Consignment sale is just around the corner on Saturday September 19 from 1:00 to 4:00 PM.

We still need more **volunteer assistance** with the hold area and checking receipts at the door. Please reach out to [Gina Chaput](#) if you are able to lend some time. Volunteers are able to select an item from the consignment tables for purchase prior to the opening of the sale, as a treat.

Sellers, you should have obtained a seller number from [Derrick](#) by now. If not, reach out ASAP for your number. You can print out auction and consignment forms from the website [here](#). Remember to bring two copies of the auction form filled out and one copy of the consignment form. Instructions for filling out are on each form. Sellers are limited to selling 5 auction items and 30 consignment items. Appropriate auction items are more developed trees, higher value pots, and stands; pre-bonsai and training pots should be sold as consignment items. Sales of items is limited to ABAS members, but anyone from the public may purchase auction or consignment items (invite your friends!)

- Auction and consignment items need to be checked in between 11:45 - 1:00. Once your trees are checked in, you will be asked to wait outside until the doors open.
- Auction items will be brought in through the main room doors
- Consignment items will be brought in through the patio doors.
- All items need to be checked-in with a volunteer prior to placement on a table.
- No pre-sales, holds or previewing prior to 1:00 PM. Please exit the building after your items are checked in.
- Sales for consignment will start at 1:00 PM. Live Auction will start at 1:30 PM.
- We will have a holding area for items that you have decided to purchase while you are still shopping. These items need to be paid for by 2:30 pm or they will return to the consignment tables - it's a balancing act to be fair to the seller and the buyers.
- Once items have been paid for, they need to be taken to your car. Receipts will be checked at the door.
- All unsold items need to be checked out with a volunteer prior to their removal from the building by 3:45 pm. This ensures sellers will receive proper payment for their items sold. If the seller does not follow the check out procedures, ABAS is not responsible for any discrepancies between items sold and not sold.

We are looking forward to another successful Fall Sale and Auction! Thanks for your support and good luck.





Welcome New Members: Diana Stewart, Celeste Breese, Matt Sorensen, Ryan Carrillo-Kovach, Shawn Singh, Roberto Toffoletti, Roger Strickland

New members are connected with their area liaison and will receive a welcome letter with a free pass to one of our member workshops. Liaisons are listed on our website under '[Member Resources, Club Liaisons](#)'.

Member Workshop - October 10

Member workshops serve members of all levels - beginner to advanced!

The next member workshop is Saturday, October 10. Contact Renee Seely, breadcrust@comcast.net to reserve a spot for the August workshop. Please specify morning, 8:30 am - 12:30 pm or afternoon 1:00 pm to 5:00 pm. Each workshop session is \$20 payable to ABAS. Reminder that the club owns a set of tools for more advanced work like tools for grafting, wood carving, and heavier bending.

2026 Events Calendar

Saturday, September 19, 1:00 - 4:00 pm, ABAS Annual Live Auction and Consignment Sale [In-person](#)

Saturday, October 10, Member Workshop [In-person](#)

Tuesday, October 27, Shohin Pines w/ Adam Toth [In-person & Zoom](#)

Saturday, November 14, Member Workshop [In-person](#)

Tuesday, November 24, Mugo Pines w/ Roger Steel [In-person & Zoom](#)

Saturday, December 12, Member Workshop [In-person](#)

Wednesday, December 16, Holiday Party [In-person](#)



Above: Scenes from the September member workshop



Above: Tree jazz @ the Shunkaen Bonsai Museum Tokyo

Wire Recycling

Reminder that ABAS has a wire recycling program every month, so remember to bring in your sorted and debris-free aluminum and copper wire to be collected by Debbie and Steve Ballanti. The wire is recycling and all money earned goes back to the club.





Featuring sales of:

- pre-bonsai
- finished bonsai
- pots

SATURDAY
SEPT
19

AMERICAN BONSAI ASSOCIATION SACRAMENTO
**LIVE AUCTION &
CONSIGNMENT SALE**

Saturday, September 19, 2026
1 pm - 4 pm

Join us for our annual live auction and consignment sale

- 1:00 pm - Start of consignment Sale and Preview of Live Auction Items
- 1:30 pm - Live Auction begins
- Open to the public

Shepard Garden and Arts Center
3330 McKinley Blvd, Sacramento