November 2022

The Bent Twig

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

Arboreal Abstractions

A Note from the Editor

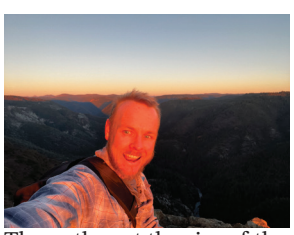
I hope you all had a chance to visit the Pacific Bonsai Expo. Having volunteered and visited myself, I can say without question this show was exceptional - and this was only the first one! Seamless, impressive, and inspiring are a few words that come to mind. The logistics, the vendors, the venue, the bonsai, everything was outstanding. Kudos to Jonas and Eric, the steering committees, the volunteers, the vendors, the exhibitors, the security, the venue, everyone.

Being part of the setup crew was a great example of community in the truest sense. This word gets tossed around often, but community is the magic that happens when people come together around a common cause. It cannot be forced. Through the organizer's leadership, the vision of the Expo was executed by a small army of dedicated volunteers. From constructing four massive backdrops from hundreds of 2x4s to pressing every linen, every detail was considered and we had a great time making it happen.

For two days, the show was open to the public in a large warehouse, previously used for electric train car maintenance, now converted to a bright, open venue near the Bay Bridge toll plaza. Seventy three bonsai were selected for the exhibit, with diverse representation across sizes and styles. ABAS was represented by five members with trees in the show: Greg MacDonald, Paul and Dodie Newman, Renee Seely, Chris Rumery, and Peter Tea. Congratulations on making the cut!

The best part was seeing the enthusiasm of the general public studying the trees on display. You could feel the energy and inspiration humming with all of the visitors. Many of us are now tvhinking about the work between us, our trees, and the next show. The only way to get to those show quality bonsai is to commit to a life of diligent practice, so let's get busy on our Fall/Winter work and treat our trees like a show is always just around the corner.

Ian Baker



The author at the rim of the American River canyon, Alta CA

Pacific Bonsai Expo Exhibitors From ABAS

Dodie Newman with her Ginkgo, started from seed in 1975 by Walt Brainerd and later developed under Peter Tea.

Peter Tea and his Western Juniper, collected in 2007 and styled in homage to his teacher Mr. Junichrio Tanaka.

Greg McDonald with his Washington Hawthorn in fall foliage, one of his first collected trees.

Renee Seely with her Chinese Quince carefully developed since 2003.

Michael Roberts

Growing Techniques to Maximize Rapid Rammification in Deciduous Trees - November 22 6:00 PM

We are pleased to welcome Michael Roberts to our monthly meeting Tuesday November 22 to present Growing Techniques to Maximize Rapid Ramification in Deciduous Trees. Michael Roberts has a BA in painting and sculpture and MS in painting. He has been an abstract painter for over 30 years. Professionally Michael has worked as an engineer, VP of Production in a multi-media company and VP of Marketing and New Business at a credit union. He has been a practicing bonsai artist for over 30 years, conducts workshops and private sessions helping younger enthusiasts and is well known throughout the state as a serious practitioner. He has studied for 15 years with sensei Kenji Miyata as well as George Yamaguchi, Gary Ishii and Mas Ishii. He is a member of Baikoen Bonsai Kenkyukai. Michael is a master of developing intensely ramified deciduous trees with decades of experience, so this is a meeting not to be missed.

Christopher Rumery's Blue Atlas Cedar, passed from Jim Gremel to Gary Tom to Christopher, developed recently under Peter Tea

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Meeting Recap
Paul Hotlzen and Greg McDonald - Urban and Wilderness Collecting

At our last meeting in October, Greg McDonald and Paul Holtzen shared their techniques for yamadori (and urbandori!) collecting with the club. Greg and Paul have extensive experience in the art and a wealth of experience, which they shared. They discussed collecting across a broad range of species and environments, from high in the Sierra, to the desert, to neighbor's front yards, with ample advice for each situation based on their experience. In addition, they gave feedback to members' collecting questions, tools to use, planning, aftercare, and yamadori philosophy.

Top: Greg McDonald, Middle: Paul Holzen, Bottom: Diverse range of developed yamadori and urbandori

The first person who remembers the secret code when Dodie asks at the next meeting will receive a free raffle ticket. The code for November is: princess persimmon

Annual Holiday Party
December 15 6:00 PM

The ABAS annual Holiday Party will be on Thursday December 15 at 6:00 PM at the SGAAC. The event will be a pot-luck and we ask members to bring their own dishes, glasses and silverware. There will be an optional bonsai related gift exchange with a price limit of $25. Each participant will receive a raffle ticket and will pick a wrapped gift as their ticket number is called. If you are up for it, bring a decorated, holiday themed bonsai, or just your best December silhouette to spruce up the garden center. This will surely be a fun event after a long hiatus, so mark your calendars.

Upcoming Workshops

Member Workshop

The next member workshop is this Saturday November 19, with two sessions: Morning 8:30 AM - 12:30 PM and afternoon 1:30 PM - 5:30 PM. Both sessions are currently full. Paul and Dodie host this month at their home in North Natomas; the address will be sent to the signup list. Bring 3 - 4 trees to work on and tools if you have them (tools will be available to borrow also). Copper and aluminum wire, coffee and a bite are provided by the club for a mere $10.

Grafting and Bending with Tom Voung

Open spots remain in Tom Vuong's technical workshops for bring-your-own-tree grafting and bending conifers. These sessions will be held on February 27 (bending) and 28 (grafting) from 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM (or until 4:00 PM if needed). Cost is $85 assuming six participants. The fee will be divided by the number of participants with the maximum cost being $125 per person. Sign up sheets will be on the back table during our meetings. Please pay Sylvia $85 to reserve your spot(s).

November Raffle

Watch out for a couple of handbuilt training boxes coming from our presenter this month in the November raffle. Roger Steele has also acquired an Elm for the big box and a princess Persimmon for the small one, so make sure to get your raffle tickets to get in on these great prizes!

Hand built training boxes to be paired with an elm and a persimmon for the raffle

Walt Brainard
100th Birthday

ABAS Past President and retired Pediatrician, Dr. Walt Brainerd will be celebrating his 100th birthday on November 24th, 2022. Walt was a very active member of the club, when not serving as club president. Walt was given a bonsai as a gift in 1958 and his desire to learn to care for it led him to join the newly formed bonsai club. The Shepherd Garden Center was built that same year. The foundation and spirit of our club come from groundwork he and others laid. He studied with all the greats of his time and generously shared his knowledge with newer members. Walt resides at Oakmont of Carmichael 4717 Engle Rd. Carmichael, CA if anyone wants to brighten his day by mailing him a birthday card.

Top: Walt leading a demonstration at the Garden Center on Satsuki Azalea, Bottom: Renee, Peter, and Walt visiting Peter's nursery in Auburn, CA

ABAS on Social Media

What makes ABAS such a wonderful and welcoming community is our passion to share our knowledge and love of bonsai with each other as well as to newcomers. To reach out into the Sacramento area more we are hoping to kick start a stronger presence on social media. This includes our Facebook page, Instagram, and Twitter accounts. If you are on any of these platforms, please follow ABAS and use these hashtags to connect all of our posts together as one big community. This can include photos of ABAS workshops, meetings, events, and even your own bonsai as members!

Our accounts:
Instagram : @american_bonsai_sacramento
Twitter: @BonsaiAmerican
Facebook Group: American Bonsai Association, Sacramento

Hashtags
#AmericanBonsai #ABASbonsai
#SacBonsai

John Uchida
In Memoriam

On November 3, 2022, we lost another pillar of the bonsai community. With the passing of Bonsai Master/Professional John Uchida, the Yamato, Sekiyu Kai and Sierra Bonsai Clubs, of which he was Club Bonsai Master, and the ABAS and other clubs in the bonsai community have lost a truly talented person. He was the owner of Grove Way Bonsai Nursery, Hayward, where for many years, he provided quality bonsai, plants, pots, tools, supplies, and classes/guidance to many who visited his nursery. In addition to on-site instruction at his nursery, Mr. Uchida traveled throughout California and the country, illuminating all with his talent and lightning speed as he transformed plant material into bonsai. Because of his aptitude, skill, and speed he was affectionately dubbed, “Fastest Hands in the West,” a label that was readily obvious to everyone who attended his demonstrations. Mr. Uchida was the recipient of the Green and White Award from the Agricultural Society of Japan on November 22, 20221. In past years Mr. Uchida visited ABAS and other Sacramento area clubs several times a year, where his friendly and caring personality was always welcome at workshops and demonstrations. And even though Mr. Uchida was an extremely gifted talent, he was very humble and was often seen attending presentations by other bonsai professionals. To those of us who knew Mr. Uchida, we will sorely miss him. To those who did not have a chance to meet him, you missed knowing a truly unique person.

For more biographical information on Mr. Uchida’s remarkable life, please see https://tinyurl.com/4k6r2cnd

Above: Late bonsai master John Uchida, Right: Korean Hornbeam donated by John to the Lake Merrit collection

Welcome New Members!

Welcome to new members: Charles Hildebrand, Thomas Wright, Wayne Schermerhorn, and Pat Flynn. All new members are welcomed by Renee, connected with their liaison, and offered a free pass to a member workshop. Make sure to say hello at the next meeting.

New Member Liasons

We’d like to remind our new members we have a Mentor Program available for you. The mentors are listed on our website under ‘Member Resources, Club Liaisons’, with contact information. We can help with specific and general bonsai related questions, setting up your display benches, watering options and anything else that comes to mind. This is a one-on-one opportunity for you to get off on the right foot with this fascinating endeavor. Please reach out.

Above, Right: Members and Teachers hard at work at the most recent member workshop.

Events Calendar

Saturday AM & PM, November 19, Member Workshop Two Sessions In-person

Tuesday, November 22, Michael Roberts Growing Techniques to Maximize Ramification In-person + Zoom

Thursday, December 15, Holiday Party 6:00 PM In-person

Saturday, December 17, Member Workshop In-person

2023

Saturday, January 14, Dig In Workshop Session 1 In-person

Tuesday, January 24, Phong Nguyen, Bending Black Pine In-person + Zoom

February 3-5, 18th Biennial Shohin Seminar, Santa Nella, CA

Saturday, February 18, Dig In Workshop Session 2 In-person

February 18-19, Annual Mammoth Auction and Sale 2023, Lake Merrit, Oakland, CA

February 27-28, Tom Vuong Grafting & Bending Workshop In-person

Tuesday, February 28, 2023 Tom Vuong, Grafting Collected Junipers In-person + Zoom

Tuesday, March 28, 2023, Jonas Dupuich, Shohin Basics In-person + Zoom

April 8-9, ABAS’ 63rd Annual Spring Bonsai & Suiseki Show, SGAAC In-person

Tuesday, April 25, 2023, Regular Meeting: Club Defoliating Party In-person + Zoom

Tuesday, May 23, 2023 Sam Tan, Post-Spring-push Pruning and Wiring of Pygmy and Monterey Cypress In-person + Zoom

Tuesday, June 27, Summer Splash In-person

Tuesday, July 25, Hands On Juniper Work with Renee and Carmen In-person (Zoom TBD)

Tuesday, August 22, Viewing Stones and Geology with Don Dupras In-person + Zoom