



THE KAI WIRE



SANSUI-KAI OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

As I See It

*From Russell Benson
President*

Well the year is off to a very wet start. I hope everyone was well prepared for the onslaught of rain. Personally I was doing great till one of my mature, non -bonsai, 35 gal terra cotta potted trees was blown into the pool. We had quite a time fishing out the tree and recovering the broken pot from the bottom of the pool. I hope no one else had any unfortunate situations this month.

As some of you know Team Sansui-Kai; which consisted of **Hank, Jack and Michael**, competed in the **Baikoen Winter Silhouettes** team competition. While it was a "friendly competition" Team Sansui-Kai's completed tree went for the highest live auction price. (**See pics**) Congratulations guys!

I hope to see every Sansui-Kai member present at the February Meeting. We will be having New **Board Member elections**. If you are interested in running for any board position please contact me to volunteer. Please come out and support the club.

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MEMBER WORKSHOP IN JANUARY

By Jack Reynolds

Our winter tree clinic saw a broad selection of tree brought in for critique and work by members. My memory of everything that was done is fuzzy so I will have to mention the highlights as I saw them.

The first tree that I spent time on was an unknown species that resembled a privet with very small leaves. The branches tended to be extremely vertical in their growth pattern, something that is not favorable in bonsai so the temptation is to remove them and encourage more side branching. However without knowing more about the species one is reluctant to get too radical in pruning if you are not sure that back budding will happen from bare wood. It was possible to thin out the dense interior growth so that light could penetrate to the interior. A central trunk and leader were also chosen at this time.

A large Ginkgo received a much-needed cut back by Michael Jonas and the owner. It has a good base and when it fills out in the future will be quite an impressive upright tree.

Al Loman brought in a juniper that was a challenge to all of us who examined it. After considerable turning, tilting, hemming and hawing the consensus was that it should be a bunjin.

In thinking about that tree later I wonder if one couldn't perform a "Kimura miracle" on it by separating the lifeline from the dead trunk up high and shortening the tree by twisting the trunk into a more interesting and shorter form, just a thought.

Winter Silhouettes

By Dan Kashinsky

I slipped through the side door of the Arboretum unnoticed (ha-ha) into a room of several hundred bonsai enthusiasts.

On my right were gorgeous show trees. A Chinese quince from Jack and a crabapple from Hank were well shown.

Sansui Kai members were scattered in an audience to my left busily stuffing themselves with a wonderful free supper prepared for the show and watching three teams working on junipers given to them by lottery to create bonsai in an hour. Like iron chef. Michael Hank and Jack, the Sansui-Kai team was staring at the tree looking for inspiration. Bonsai tends to be a solitary rather than a team sport. How were decisions made? These trees were later auctioned.

Thanks to Kai Wire Editor Mary Tatro

Mary brought her experience as a reporter and her love of trees to the Kai Wire. Together with Jack Reynolds writing Naka notes and feature stories from club meetings and Michael Jonas' ever more professional photography, the newsletter has grown as an engaging and informative chronicle of Sansui-Kai activities and of the bonsai world.

We miss the meticulous meeting notes of Dick Beltran as well as his critical bonsai eye. Thanks.





Naka Notes by Jack G Reynolds

In general, February is much like January in terms of bonsai care. We have had some rain so you will have to be aware of the dampness of your trees. Sometimes we say, "let the rain do it". Then we may let the trees get too dry. On the other hand we may continue to water when we don't need to and over water as a result.

This is the month to spray deciduous trees with lime sulfur to ward off leaf curl and other insect pests. Read the directions before you spray. Not everything likes lime sulfur. Don't spray new tender growth or flowers that have opened with lime sulfur, as it will damage them. Any trees that were set in the shade to promote dormancy need to be watched. When they start new growth move them into the sun. If you leave them in the shade the growth will be spindly and weak.

Pruning of deciduous trees should be done this month. This is a good month to start cuttings. Grafting of deciduous trees and also conifers can be done this month. Ted Matson says that this is a good month to repot California junipers so their roots have adequate time to grow before the summer dormancy sets in.

Fertilizing will not be done this month except for conifers, which are not dormant. It is a good time to apply soil amendments such as Ironite, gypsum and sulfur.

Get your soil mixtures made up and sharpen tools for the coming repotting season.

A NEW ENTHUSIAST

Eric Percifield

As a novice bonsai enthusiast with almost a year as a Sansui Kai member, I have learned a lot in the past 9 months from many different people in the southern California bonsai community. My interest started after I visited the Fuji Bonsai Nursery in Sylmar with a friend, and saw all the beautiful trees Roy had created. I chose a Brazilian Rain Tree. After taking a couple of Roy's classes, I learned the basics of shape pruning, wiring, and repotting. Soon after visiting Fuji, I found out about Sansui-Kai while visiting the Japanese Garden and speaking with a few members who were working on trees. They offered the opportunity to learn and meet other people interested in bonsai. I have tried to collect a variety of species of trees to somewhat match the types of trees worked on in the club demonstrations, I have also flipped through various books, attended a few shows, and spoken with as many other bonsai enthusiasts as possible.

One of the best learning opportunities I had was the recent Walter Pall event. There are a few key points that really made sense, and that I try to think about when I look at or work on a tree.

Eric Percifield
Sansui-Kai Member since April 2009

Events of Interest

GSBF HUNTINGTON BONSAI-A-THON

This amazing event will be held at the Huntington February 27-28 2010. Hours are 7:30-4:30. Admission is free with a pass. There are both workshops and demonstrations. Tours of the new bonsai courts will be guided at 10AM each day. The exhibit of masterpiece trees is not to be missed. Vendors will be there.

TED MATSON IN FEBRUARY

Ted will continue his project by repotting and continuing refinement and repotting of the prostrada juniper chosen by the club in 2007. You can follow the progress in the Kai-Wire of August 2007, March 2008 and September 2009. **The tree will be auctioned at August meeting.**

As I See It *From Russell Benson*

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Speaking of volunteering, as you may have noticed **Dan Kashinsky** has taken over the Editor position of the Kai Wire.

This month we have an article from new member **Eric Percifield** talking about his experiences learning about bonsai.

I hope to see everyone this coming year participating and staying active in the club.

Don't miss **Ted Matson's Demo** this meeting.

Regards, Russell

SANSUI-KAI Administration

PRESIDENT

Russell Benson (323)633-3461
rb2step@aol.com

Program Chair

Jack Reynolds (760)379-8292
jrbonsai@verizon.net

2d VICE PRESIDENT & Membership Chair

Dan Kashinsky (310)455-2185
kaptankaiser@gmail.com

TREASURER

Michael Jonas (818) 776-0813
mjonas48@hotmail.com

SECRETARY

Karyen Cavanagh
karyenc@aol.com

KAI WIRE EDITOR

Dan Kashinsky (310)455-2185
kaptankaiser@gmail.com

SUNSHINE GUY:

Frank Cuva (818)342-8909
cuvafitness@sbcglobal.net

REFRESHMENTS: Sonja Kobler (818)784-8765
BENEFIT DRAWING: Gloria Downie (818)848-1112
LIBRARIAN: Alan Loman

WEBSITE

www.sansui-kai.com

What's Ahead

Wednesday
February 3

7:30 PM MEETING
Demonstration: Ted Matson
Resident Juniper Revisited
Refreshments: Karyen Cavanagh, Eric Rogger, Alan Loman
Niche: ?

Sunday
March 7

BRUNCH & ANNUAL MEETING
11 AM to 4 pm
Odyssey Restaurant
Granada Hills

Note:

Please pay your dues!

MEMBERSHIP

Sansui-Kai is dedicated to the learning, use and teaching of the horticulture techniques and artistic principles needed to grow, design and care for bonsai. Regular membership is \$22. Family membership is \$27. Corresponding membership is \$7 limited to any previous club member now living outside a 50-mile radius of the meeting place.