



# THE KAI WIRE

SANSUI-KAI OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

## As I See It

*From Russell Benson*

We have our usual beautiful California weather. This is a perfect time to start that Spring Cleaning of our bonsai trees and garden.

I welcome and encourage everyone to attend the Odyssey Brunch on March 7 from 11 am – 4pm (no regular meeting in March). At only \$25.00 per person it is a major bargain. As always we will have a great selection of raffle items, as well as a fine mini show of members trees on display (contact Michael or myself if you are interested in bringing a tree to display). Bring a friend, all are welcome. If you have not confirmed please call Michael today.

I want to welcome the new board members, and thank them for all their hard work:

Dan Kashinsky, 2<sup>nd</sup> VP & Newsletter (returning and new newsletter editor)  
 Michael Jonas, Treasurer & Web Guru  
 Karyen Cavanagh, Secretary  
 Alan Loman, Librarian  
 Gloria Downie, Raffle  
 Sonja Kobler, Refreshments  
 Jack Reynolds, Show & Program  
 Frank Cuva, Sunshine Person  
 Eric Percifield, Membership (New board member)  
 Summer Wilson (New board member assistant with raffles)

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## THE FINAL STAGE

*By Ted Matson and Dan Kashinsky*

### REPOTTING

The old overgrown prostrate juniper has been refined to a bonsai by Ted over the last 4 years. The tree was overgrown and required cleaning and reduction of foliage bulk to form a more compact asymmetric triangular shape. Overlapping and T branches were removed or jinned. It was repotted in a demo last September. Because the root ball was so dense and compacted only part of the old soil was removed. Now that the tree is healthier with more budding and thus better growth of new white roots, the remainder of the compacted old soil is replaced by a gritty mixture of pumice, scoria (lava) and caladama (a harder form of akadama). I am amazed to see how strong and healthy the root ball was after the first repotting.

Ted added diatomaceous earth and some charcoal to sweeten the soil. The tree is tied into pot with the 4 tie technique using the non symmetric drain holes in the pot. The tree was off center and was realigned with the apex over the base during this repotting. Add fertilizer when buds start to pop. This tree should be left in this pot for 2-3 years.

### FOLIAGE MANAGEMENT

Ted's foliage management technique is used by Japanese and European bonsai artists. He reminds us not to cut back so hard that the tree is stressed and juvenile foliage is stimulated. Do not over pinch the new buds.

Shape the branches for their future contour by removing the distal bud and allowing the internal buds to elongate until they reach the future silhouette line of the branch and only then remove these buds as well.

Since the tree is nearing completion Ted used copper wire that blends in better. Use the proper size wire, not too large or small so as not to crack the branch while bending. Copper is more rigid than aluminum so good technique and good judgment of copper wire size and application is important to branch health.

The club is very appreciative of the work by bonsai master Ted Matson. The bonsai will be auctioned during the August fundraiser. **Pictures are on page 2.**



REPOTTING IS  
A SERIOUS BUSINESS.  
ALL PREPARATIONS SHOULD  
BE MADE IN ADVANCE.  
LOOK FOR THE NEW WHITE THIN ROOTS.  
KEEP THINGS MOIST. HERE TED IS REMOVING  
THE OLD HARD INNER ROOT BALL.  
*Photo by Dan Kashinsky*



THE CLUBS TREE GETTING READIED  
FOR THE AUGUST POT LUCK.  
THANKS TO MICHAEL JONAS  
WHO CARED  
FOR THE TREE OVER  
THESE YEARS.  
*Photo by Karen Decker*

## CALIFORNIA SHOHIN CONVENTION

*By: Sonja Kobler*

Once again we had our California Shohin convention On February 5th 6th and 7th, which is held every other year in Sentanella. I think I can say we all had a good time. In attendance from our club were Gloria, Marshall, Emma, Alan and myself.

Demonstrations were done by Ted Matson, Kathy Shaner, Scott Chadd, Sandy Planting, Kora Dalager, They were all very interesting and informative.

24 workshops were offered. Gloria, Marshall, Alan, each took one workshop, Emma took two

and I am sorry to say I had none because my workshop instructor Bill Valvanis broke his leg and had to cancel.

There were lots of vendors and you could buy just about everything from raw stock to bonsai jewelry and everything in between.

Saturday dinner was very good! We dined on either Chicken or Prime Rib, and then came the Big Raffle and Auction.



## *Naka Notes* by Jack G Reynolds

March many trees will break dormancy. This presents some problems. We may get more frosty nights. It is also possible that we will get some warm spells as well. Bring dormant trees out into sunny locations to stimulate the new growth but be ready to move them back into protection if the weather should turn cold.

Watering needs to be handled carefully as well. Over watering will promote large leaves. Many flowering trees will be in bloom. When they have bloomed out eighty percent of their flowers, remove the remaining buds and all of the bloom. This will prevent overstressing the tree. Leave a few blooms on fruiting trees so that a few fruits will develop for the fall. The same should be done with berries.

It is too early to use high nitrogen fertilizers but sulfur and iron can be added for good leaf color. Conifers can be fertilized with organic fertilizers such as cottonseed and bone meal. Very dilute liquid fertilizers can also be used such as one half or one quarter strength Miracle Grow.

From March until June is the time to transplant. There are two reasons to transplant; the first is that the tree needs to be moved to another pot for aesthetic reasons; the second is for reasons of health of the tree. When transplanting into a new pot there will probably not be much of a size change and roots will not be disturbed too much. Some root pruning will undoubtedly be necessary. Remove large unsightly roots but leave enough fine feeders to sustain the tree. Remember to remove some foliage if you remove a significant number of roots in order to maintain a balance between water uptake and water loss. Trees that are vigorous such as willows may have to be potted every year but in general the decision to change soil should be made when the tree shows signs of slowing down in growth or signs of being root bound.

Insects can be bad at this time of year particularly aphids and scale. Check early and often. Spray with Ultra Fine and Malathion or other insecticide as directed. It is better to use slightly dilute mixes due to the fact that trees in pots tend to be more sensitive to insecticides than those in the ground. A second spraying with lime sulfur can be done now if you did not do it in Feb. Do not spray lime sulfur on new growth or flowers unless you are willing to suffer some damage to same.

This is the perfect time to start deciduous cuttings, especially large ones. Grafting of deciduous trees can also be done but it is too late for junipers.

## **A NEW ENTHUSIAST**

*Eric Percifield*

As a novice The Walter Pall tree critique was a unique and very informative opportunity, especially with the great turnout and number of various trees critiqued. 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. First, is look at the tree as a whole, then as three main parts: the trunk, sub-trunk, and branches. This helps me to see the overall shape and style of a potential bonsai specimen. Walter also stressed the importance of wiring every branch (especially Juniper and Pine) from trunk to tip, and treating deadwood at the same time as the initial shaping, rather than waiting for later. Doing this helps develop features early that enhance the aged effect of the wood. He suggested using a torch and wire brush on deadwood.

Another technique is a way to make the trunk appear thicker by reducing the number of horizontal branches, and lowering the apex of the tree. This changes the proportions of the tree to help create the appearance of age. Finally, Walter spoke of the importance of physical and optical pot size when choosing the final container to hold your prized tree. A pot that's too big can make the tree as a whole look bulky, and a pot that's too deep can make a tree look disproportionate. Overall, I have learned a lot this past year and greatly increased my knowledge and appreciation for the art and beauty of bonsai.

## 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.

**SEND YOUR DUES TO DAN KASHINSKY  
210 MUERDAGO  
TOPANGA, CA 90290  
310-455-2185**

## As I See It From Russell Benson

(continued from page 1)

And a special thanks again to Mary Tatro for doing a great job as the Kai Wire newsletter editor for the past two years.

Also we should all be planning on displaying a tree at the upcoming May Sansui-Kai show at the Sepulveda Garden Center.

March 7th Sansui-Kai Brunch Odyssey Restaurant 11am- 4pm

May, 2010 Sansui-Kai Annual Bonsai Show Sepulveda Garden Center

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#### WEBSITE

[www.sansui-kai.com](http://www.sansui-kai.com)

### What's Ahead

#### NO MEETING IN MARCH

Sunday  
March 7

#### BRUNCH & ANNUAL MEETING

11 AM to 4 pm  
Odyssey Restaurant  
Granada Hills

#### CLUB DUES PLEASE

#### 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.*