



THE KAI WIRE



SANSUI-KAI OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

As I See It

From Michael Jonas
Treasurer

We just came through a few days of 100+ degree weather here in the valley during the June 20 Summer Solstice, the longest day of the year. Some of my trees began to look like they were growing potato chips rather than green leaves, while the pines and California junipers seemed to be saying, "Ah, it is finally warming up around here." The shade cloth got side tracked by bonsai shows, board meetings, photography and life in general.

For our regular meeting on July 2 we will be working on the trees from the Japanese Garden Bonsai Collection. This is a great opportunity to work on mature trees under the guidance of Denny Roche, the curator of the collection with the assistance of some of the more senior members of the club. Bring your tools and your enthusiasm.

continued on page 3

Denny Appleseed Visits

by Dick Beltran

Sansui Kai's own Denny Roche was the featured demonstrator at the June 4, meeting. His program dealt with the propagation, cultivation, styling and care of ficus salicifolia bonsai.

Ficus salicifolia, whose common name is willow-leaf fig, is one of Denny's favorite bonsai materials. Because of his admiration for the species, he actively promotes its cultivation and would like to become the "Johnny Appleseed" of ficus salicifolia. As examples of appropriate bonsai styles for ficus salicifolia, Denny showed and discussed Jack Reynolds' banyan-style bonsai as well as his own clump-style demonstration piece.

Denny's demonstration plan was to split an 8- or 9-trunk clump, 22-inches tall, into two smaller clumps to be joined with another 4-trunk clump into one planting.

He separated the larger clump by driving a chisel into the basal mass to separate the two parts into a wider, shallower forest planting. This was to be combined with the smaller clump into a larger forest planting in which all trunks were visible from the front.

A good forest planting will have all trunks visible from the front with none obscured by any others.

continued on page 2

Denny Appleseed *(Continued from Page 1)*

As a side note Denny described how the new foliage growth emerges a soft red color, then turns bronze, and finally turns green. He said that the species grows best under shade cloth or other means to create a mottled sunshine-shade combination. He emphasized that, like most ficus, the salicifolia likes humidity but dislikes "wet feet".

Continuing the styling, Denny reduced the height of all the trunks proportionally to each trunk's diameter. He then wired several of the trunks (those small enough to bend) to better balance the overall grouping. No appreciable secondary wiring was done, as the clip-and-grow method is preferred for controlling the shape of ficus salicifolia.

After arranging the split clump into the desired shape, Denny decided not to add the smaller clump as originally planned, since the larger clump alone produced the grove effect he wanted to create.

The branch structure Denny then created by wiring a few side and back branches produced the support for a future canopy resembling an outdoor concert shell.

He securely anchored the tree structure into a shallow, oval bonsai container using wires previously inserted through the drain holes.

He then added potting mix (half-and-half pumice and scoria), settling the mixture among the roots using a chopstick

Denny donated the final demonstration piece to the raffle where a happy Mary Tatro won it.

-Dick Beltran



Sansui-Kai's resident Ficus Master Denny Roche opened a Ficus Salicifolia clump and created a forest grove June 4 at the club's monthly meeting and bonsai demonstration. Jack Reynolds assisted as Denny took a hammer and chisel to the root base.



The resulting nine-trunk forest arrangement was spread into a bonsai dish.



A very grateful Mary Tatro won the demonstration tree raffle.

Photos by Michael Jonas

From Michael Jonas (continued from page 1)

The ribbons awarded for distinguished bonsai exhibited at our recent Sepulveda Garden Center Show will be distributed at the July 2 meeting. Remember donations for the meeting raffle, especially plants, are invited.

And please plan your donations now for the August BBQ/potluck auction. It is the major fundraiser that supports the quality of our demos and functions.

Jim Gremel is doing better, after having some health problems. On Wednesday, July 16 we will have a special meeting for his workshop at Japanese Garden.

If you created a tree with Jim last time he was in town, fertilize it and bring it along to get his evaluation. If you did not get a chance to create one last time, come prepared to create one this time.

Milt says his wife, Marilyn, is doing much better. The cast is off her leg and she is in a physical fitness program to help her get her strength back.

At the time of this article, Don Berkus is still in the hospital recovering from recent surgery. We wish him a speedy recovery.

Naka Notes by Jack Reynolds

Carefully tend your trees during the heat. Rotate them every week or two. Hot pots can cook roots so protect the pot by covering it with sphagnum moss or burlap. Put up shade cloth on an overhead frame. Water overhead in the morning so as to dampen the benches and surrounding ground. The higher humidity is good for the trees except for pines. High humidity promotes needlecast disease in pines, so spray pines infrequently. However, Junipers and deciduous trees all seem to like a good wash.

Fertilize everything. Frequent dilute fertilizer is better than infrequent heavy applications. Trees can be defoliated this month but not later. Remove all leaves and set the tree in a shady place for a couple of weeks until the new leaves pop. Cut down on the water because without leaves there is little transpiration and the soil will remain too wet.

Remove any remaining buds from flowering trees and most of the fruit. Leave a few for fall enjoyment but don't leave all the fruit on one branch. If you left fruit on the tree last year it is a good idea to strip it all off this year. Fruits are very taxing to the tree.

Don't transplant this month. Exceptions are pomegranates, olives, bouganvillias, willow, and tamarix. Shaping of trees can go on, but no more pine candle pruning. Air and ground layering can be done this month. Check for insect pests. Woolly aphids might show up in any apple relative. Spider mites are a potential problem in junipers. Mealy bugs are always a problem. Spray with a mild combination of malathion and Volk oil or malathion and Ultrafine. Don't spray anything in the sun. Wait till sunset or move the tree into the shade.

Events of Interest

Wednesday, July 16

Lecture, workshop and demonstration with Bonsai Artist, Ceramacist and teacher Jim Gremel. Jim will demonstrate the procedure for making Yamadori style shimpaku.

Jim will give a talk and demonstration prior to the workshop. Those who wish to participate in the workshop can purchase a kishu shimpaku tree from Jim, \$20 for a small or \$26 for a larger tree.

Call Hank Fawcett at 310-283-2144, or send him an email at hankf@playboy.com to save a place in the workshop.

Saturday, August 2

Member Reminder: Plan your dish and your auction donation for the Annual Sansui-Kai Potluck Benefit Saturday, August 2.

See Karyen Cavanagh at the July 2 meeting to let her know what dish you will be bringing for the potluck table. Don't forget to set aside items to donate for the auction.

The Potluck Benefit preempts the meeting on the first Wednesday of August.

SANSUI-KAI Administration

PRESIDENT

Position Open

1st VICE PRESIDENT:

Hank Fawcett (818) 705-1272
hankf@playboy.com

TREASURER:

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

SECRETARY:

Karyen Cavanagh (818) 491-0774
karyenc@aol.com

MEMBERSHIP CHAIR:

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

KAI WIRE EDITOR:

Mary Tatro (818) 885-0180
emteechicago@yahoo.com

SUNSHINE GUY:

Frank Cuva (818) 363-1344
cuvafitness@sbcglobal.net

PAST PRESIDENT: Milton Huckaby

REFRESHMENTS: Sonja Kobler

LIBRARIAN: Alan Loman

BENEFIT DRAWING: Gloria Downie

WEBSITE

www.sansui-kai.com

What's Ahead

**Wednesday
July 2**

7:30 PM MEETING

Japanese Garden care
With Denny Roche

Refreshments: Grace, Al Espinoza, Selma Stokols, Frank Cuva

Niche: Grace

**Wednesday
July 16**

7:30 PM MEETING

Demonstration Workshop
With Jim Gremel

**Saturday
August 2**

4:00 PM

Annual Pot Luck
Barbecue Benefit

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.