



THE KAI WIRE



SANSUI-KAI OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

As I See It

*From Michael Jonas
Treasurer*

Isn't the weather great? It's warm enough to gently awaken some of the trees while letting other ones sleep. This gives us time to do some repotting and to enjoy our trees as they wake up. Soon it will be a full time job just to keep up with all of the usual chores associated with healthy trees.

While we have some time, remember that this weekend is the Bonsai-A-Thon, one of the most enjoyable events that we can attend all year. Each day there will be five demonstrators each working a tree that will be available for purchase through the live auction process. There will be tours of the new Bonsai Court and the Chinese Pavilion by Jim Fulsom, vendors galore, raffles, display trees and inexpensive and tasty food. What could be better?

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It's Sunday Brunch!

by Mary Tatro

The Sansui Kai Annual Meeting this year, for the first time, is Sunday Brunch, March 8 from 11 am to 4 pm at the Odyssey Restaurant. As is the custom, the Annual Meeting takes the place of the regular monthly March meeting.

Make your reservation for the Brunch before March 1 with Treasurer Michael Jonas.

The Annual Meeting is the election and installation of club officers and recognition of last year's accomplishments. The roster of candidates for club officer positions is unopposed: Russell Benson, president; Dan Kashinsky, 2d vice president and membership chairperson; Karyen Cavanagh, recording secretary; Michael Jonas, treasurer. The First vice president position is open.

By popular vote, the Annual Meeting is being held again at the beautiful hilltop Odyssey Restaurant. This year's event will take advantage of the Sunday Brunch Buffet, which includes a vast array of choices. The Odyssey is located in Granada Hills. Directions are included on your brochure and reservation form mailed with last month's newsletter and posted on the club website at www.sansui-kai.com.

Bring along your favorite display trees for the banquet room. Also remember to bring a contribution to the raffle table. The club's raffles are a good source of income that helps support the high quality demonstrations by local, national and international bonsai teachers. And, if you haven't done so, plan to pay your membership dues, which this year were due January 1.

Graft Exposed

by Michael Jonas

Kaz Murai is one of the quiet masters of grafting, achieving excellent results using the scion technique. This is where a small length of donor material, in this case Kishu Shimpaku, is inserted into branches near the trunk, while leaving the original foliage on the ends of the branches to continue to grow. This original foliage continues to draw nutrients past the inserted scions and thereby provides them with nourishment.

Kaz selects elongated whips from Shimpaku junipers growing in his yard. He harvests 10 to 12 inch lengths of these branches and wraps them in plastic. He refrigerates them for a week. He says that this cold storage results in successful unions with the understock.

Start grafting from the top of the tree and work downward so that you don't bump the grafts that you just placed into position.

He says to match the thickness of the graft to the original branch so that you can align both sides of the cambium of the donor to the recipient.

Tying the graft into place with grafting tape takes great care so that you tightly hold the graft in place without moving it out of alignment with the branch. Sealing the tied grafts should be done after all of the grafts are done, because it is messy to work with the sealing tar. Seal the base of the tape and the outward cut end of the scion to minimize moisture loss.

The whole tree should be watered and placed into a greenhouse or covered with a clear or semi-clear plastic bag and kept in part shade.

The bag will cover the top of the growing pot so you won't have to water in again.

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A successfully grafted Tree



Kaz Murai prunes and prepares the stock to be grafted.



Holding a prepared scion in a warm, moist place.

Photos by Hank Fawcett



Naka Notes

by Jack G Reynolds

In March many trees will break dormancy. This presents some problems because it is possible that we will get more frosty nights and it is also possible that we will get some warm spells as well. This means that you must be on top of things. 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. Over watering will promote large leaves and long internodes.

Many flowering trees will be in bloom. When they have bloomed out eighty percent, remove the remaining buds and all of the bloom to prevent oversteering 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.

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. The decision to change soil should be made when the tree shows signs of slowing down or is root bound. Remove large unsightly roots but leave enough fine feeders to sustain the tree. Remove some foliage to maintain a balance between water uptake and water loss.

Check early and often for insects at this time of year, particularly aphids and scale. It is better to use slightly dilute insecticides because trees in pots tend to be more sensitive to them. 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.

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.

As I See It

From **Michael Jonas** (continued from page 1)

Remember to fill out and bring the Bonsai-A-Thon "ticket" to speed free entrance into the event and you can also view the Huntington grounds for free once you have gotten a sticker.

See the flyer for full details or look at the Sansui-Kai website www.sansui-kai.com in the Announcements Section.

It is not too late to start grooming your trees for our annual show in May. Ask for help if you would like some advice on preparing your display tree(s).

And please let me know who and how many will attend the Annual Meeting Brunch because we need to tell the restaurant so they can plan for the food and set up a room for us.

Graft Exposed

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The moisture that rises from the soil will be trapped in the bag and will return to the soil. Periodically Kaz recommends that we open the bag and inspect the grafts. Then spray them with a water mist and tie the bag again.

When the light green tips appear on the grafts you will know that they are starting to grow. As they begin to extend, they can be exposed, a little at a time, to the air and given more light. Eventually they can be placed in full sun until the very hottest part of summer arrives. At that time I recommend that all Shimpaku receive early morning or late afternoon sun and be protected from the intense heat of the day.

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-Michael Jonas

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Position Open

1st VICE PRESIDENT:

Position Open

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WEBSITE

www.sansui-kai.com

What's Ahead

**Wednesday
March 4**

NO MEETING

**Sunday
March 8**

**BRUNCH &
ANNUAL MEETING
11 AM to 4 PM**

Odyssey Restaurant
 15600 Odyssey Dr., Granada Hills

**Wednesday
April 1**

7:30 PM MEETING

*Presentation: David Nguy
 Black Pine Demonstration*

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.