



SANSUI KAI PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by
Jack G. Reynolds

Well here we are at the end of 2017. It has been a ride. Bonsai is alive and well and our little club carries on but sadly with a few members who have passed on; Don Berkus, Marshall Winer and Gloria Downy. We have welcomed new members as well. I hope that Sansui Kai is all you want it to be in your bonsai journey.

At the last meeting there were generous donations made by members. Sue Winer donated a bonsai book from Marshall's library as well as three trees (two Ficus microcarpas and a Ginkgo clump formerly owned by Al Loman) which will be in the December sale. Four pots from Don Berkus' collection and a pot and Ficus salicaria pre-bonsai were donated by me.

The GSBF convention was Oct, 26-29 and Sansui Kai was well represented. I went as the club representative but other members were there as well; Hank Fawcett, Michael Jonas, Emma Janza, Sonja Kobler, Dan Mel and Michael Kelly. HANK entered his huge olive bonsai in the judged competition and won for BEST BROAD LEAF EVERGREEN. This is the same tree that was in our show last May. Congratulations Hank!

DON'T FORGET TO BRING SOMETHING FOR THE POTLUCK THIS MONTH. ALSO BRING TREES POTS ETC. FOR THE AUCTION. AS USUAL THE CLUB WILL GET 20% OF THE SALE PRICE AND THE MEMBER 80%. THIS IS A GOOD TIME TO SELL OFF ITEMS THAT YOU DON'T HAVE TIME TO WORK ON OR WANT TO CLEAR OUT TO MAKE ROOM FOR NEW TREES. BRING MONEY AND BE PREPARED TO BID ON NEW TREASURES.



Al Rivera at Sansui-Kai in November

Al Rivera Demo *(continued)*

Al noticed a reverse taper in demo tree's trunk development and allowed that condition to guide his choices for "cleaning out the junk." Carving out nice shari will disguise the trunk's shortcoming, he said. And crafting branch removals for jin placement adds another disguise and is a good aging technique. His favorite tool for jin making is a scraper. He suggests very tightly wound wet raffia to stabilize branches during styling and wiring so they don't break. Copper wire is the medium of choice for junipers. Keep an eye on lifeline and dead wood for the overall design. He recommends that branch styling be done in phases and cannot all be done in one session.

"Encourage the apex," he says, "it will encourage the trunk to thicken. Never trim the apex." On branches, "wimpy" tips suggest weak growth potential. Allow that to support choices of which branches are candidates for reduction. Bear in mind that junipers will back-bud and jin is always an option to fill in open spaces. It is difficult to find good nebari on procumbens juniper, he said, another design consideration to bear in mind. Akadama, pumice, scoria, 60-20-20, is his planting medium of choice. He envisions an older, non-glazed pot "The tree decides," he said.

Naka Notes *(Continued)*

Over watering can easily damage all but especially bougainvillea. Dormant trees use very little water but do not let them dry out. If a tree freezes do not water it until it thaws out. It is better to thaw the tree in an environment that is only a few degrees above freezing.

Evergreen trees can be given fertilizer that is high in potassium and phosphorous but low in nitrogen. Bone meal and blood meal and cottonseed may not decompose fast enough to be effective. Slow release 5-5-5 is an effective fertilizer for winter.

Branches are brittle and can easily break. Start your wiring with the lowest branches, proceed to the top, but only wire those branches that need to be repositioned. Strive for a delicate graceful appearance with Japanese maples and a more rugged ramification on trident maples. Hide the cuts by making them slanted to the back, making sure they are concave. Seal all raw scars over 1/4 inch diameter. This a good month to graft conifers with Shimpaku.



All deciduous trees should be dormant now. If you have not removed their leaves and fruit, do it this month. Japanese maples, Trident, and Chinese elms can have all leaves removed, including those that are still green (not Caitlin elms). Prune all of the twiggy tertiary growth having more than two nodes. Remove thick top branches leaving fine secondary and tertiary branches to form the crown and the top one third or one quarter of the tree. Open up the structure of the tree to allow better light penetration.

Pinch or cut excess evergreen growth to create tight, colorful new spring growth. Pull all moss off of the very base of the trunk and main roots and brush these.

Prepare supplies of potting soil mix, clean pots tools and screens to be ready for spring repotting. Label the trees that will require repotting.

When trees are bare, a VERY dilute dormant spray of lime sulfur may be used as a fungicide. To avoid root damage cover the surface of the pot with plastic to prevent run-off or drip of the spray. A light mist of DILUTE lime sulfur on the top and bottom of woody branches is quite effective. Some will not use lime sulfur as a fungicide on conifers. Do not use lime sulfur on azalea and camellia. Volk oil is also an effective non-toxic insecticide but not for buttonwoods. Volk oil can be used on conifers instead of lime sulfur. For bleaching and to prevent rot apply lime sulfur at half strength on wet, aged deadwood such as jin and shari. A few drops of black ink or black acrylic tones down the usual orange color. Some say not to mix but apply after. Cover the soil to protect the roots. Be sure to protect any semitropical such as ficus and bougainvillea by placing them under a bench or inside.

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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 & \$27 for Families.

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www.Sansui-Kai.org



Help I need somebody!!



Al Rivera Demo *by Mary Tatro*

A single trunk procumbens juniper took center stage for Al Rivera's November demonstration where he approached the challenge of how to design junipers generally and making a young tree to appear old.

Working with raw nursery material, he prepared the beginning stages of design for the demo tree by looking at apex, taper, branch integrity, nebari, foliage growth separations, dead wood and lifeline for deciding what to keep and what not to keep in design. Pot selection also contributes to the overall picture for the tree's design destination of advanced old age, he said.