



Volume 34 November and December 2019

Marcus Juniel at the Sansui-kai
November Demo-Mitch comes up big



Marcus has been a guest speaker several times at SSK. He brings with him a refreshing point of view. "Keep the number of bonsai you work on below 10. Don't waste time on trees that are unlikely to amount to much. The eye will forgive foliage placement for contour and negative space filling no matter where the branch comes from."

Apparently his mother thought he needed a hobby and brought he and Harry Hirao together. They dug up amadori (natural trees in the environment such as California Junipers in the local mountains Harry was known for) with best luck 2 weeks after a rain. Marcus has stuck with juniper as his main bonsai material. Does he come down on the side of stylized bonsai or the natural art? Look at the pics above.

He likes fast draining pumice and black scoria as his soil as recommended by David nye and is hooked on Growbags to start his material rooting. He cuts his wire ahead of time for a demo to save a few minutes and move things along and is hooked on Growbags to start his material rooting.

Hank Fawcett Sansui-kai President's Message

New Year's is always a time for resolutions. I am planning on being thinner, younger, richer and eating healthier. Ok, that is every resolution that I have had for the past 40 years. However, this year, I am making a resolution to make better preparations for my bonsai. This is actually something that I can do and accomplish.

It was 38 degrees several night ago so I started some of my resolutions early. For those of us with tropical bonsai (bougainvillea, ficus and desert rose), it is important to move them into a warmer environment. Inside the house near a window is great if you have the room. Otherwise, putting them in a garage, back porch, greenhouse or other protected area is great. The object is to ensure that they don't get too cold and freeze. In the past, I have lost main branches and trunks on ficus salicaria because of the weather. I spent years creating an attractive bonsai but it just took a few days in cold weather to destroy it. True. Bonsai is a living art and subject to change but that was not the way I wanted to have it changed.

This year is another year for grafting. I have already sharpened my grafting knives, purchased the splicing tape and color coated cable ties. Most of my subject trees have been pruned to provide me with a concept for where to add the grafts. I have already purchased the bags that I use to cover the trees once they are grafted and I have designated a space to put them once they are bagged and ready.

But, not every one wants to graft. Understandable. However, there are other projects to consider. Soon, it will be time to repot and that requires soil. Things to consider purchasing should be:
SOIL: Akadama, Scoria and pumice. Your soil mixture will depend on the tree you repot. Kenji recommends 70% akadama, 20% pumice, 10% scoria. I tend more toward 40% akadama, 30% pumice, 30% Decomposed granite.
If you prefer, Roy Nagatoshi at Fuji bonsai sells a ready made soil mixture that saves you all of that trouble.

WIRE AND SCREEN: Depending on what I can find, I use 1/8" aluminum mesh or the plastic mesh that most nurseries carry to cover the drain holes. I use 2mm or 2.5 mm wire to secure the bonsai into the pots.

DRAINAGE: For the bottom layer of the pot, I use either a large Akadama or a large pumice. I find that this does a great job of assisting proper drainage for the tree.

Have fun with your trees and enjoy them.

Naka Notes

Lessons from a Master

by Jack Reynolds



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). On deciduous trees 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. Wire only for position and shape.

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 the foliage and woody branches is quite effective. Some will not use lime sulfur as an fungicide on conifers, olives and ficus. Do not use lime sulfur on azalea and camellia. Volk oil is also an effective non-toxic insecticide. Volk oil can be used on conifers instead of lime sulfur but keep the concentration LOW LOW LOW LOW if used at all.

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. 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. 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 Use slow release 5-5-5 is an effective fertilizer for winter.

Branches are BRITTLE. Start with lowest branches, proceed to the top, but only wire those branches that need to be repositioned. Make sure your the cuts by slanted to the back they are concave.



Jack giving a demo at SSK yearly show



Naka photo from Cheryl Manning



**Eric the Auctioneer along
with Josh Mike Steve and
Grace**



The December Auction and Pot Luck



Denny at SSK in November

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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Remember this character? Yup it's Denny Roche long time Sansui-kai member still holding out in Granada Hills with his bonsai collection. Jack brought him to our meeting in November. Denny was a mentor to many many of us. He introduced us to Kenji in workshops at his house. He'd fill our eyes and heads with bonsai and our stomachs with good chili, good cheer and maybe a shot of Jamison. When I met Denny he was editing a yacht magazine with help from his family. Before that he was a boxer and a jazz musician. Later he became a stock day trader. What a guy.