



### SANSUI-KAI PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Jack G. Reynolds

HERE IS OUR CLUB SCHEDULE  
AS ARRANGED BY JOSH MILLER

Wednesday July 12 demo Tom Vuong

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August 9 Wednesday: Barbecue/Auction

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September 12 Wednesday: Tom Vuong continues

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December 13 Wednesday: Holiday Pot Luck/Auction

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January 2018 Roy Nagatoshi

The GSBF convention is accepting registrations for the Riverside Convention Center, Oct. 25-29. You can register on line.

THIS IS OUR ANNUAL BBQ POTLUCK AUCTION MEETING IN CASE YOU HAVE BEEN LIVING IN A CAVE FOR THE PAST FEW MONTHS. We will have it at the regular meeting location instead of the Berkus home. Alas they are gone and the home has been sold.

Mary has volunteered to get the chicken from Whole Foods, Sonja will bring paper plates and plastic ware and Steve is handling the drinks (water and sodas (no alcohol in our meeting location)). Members should bring a dish that will feed 6-9. Spouses are always welcome. **FOOD WILL BE SERVED AT 6:30** so there will be time for the auction.

AUCTION ITEMS ARE DONATED TO THE CLUB. Now is an opportunity to help the club and also ease your overcrowding. This is the biggest fundraiser the club has each year so be generous with your donations of material, pots and bonsai related stuff. Also be generous with your bidding. Josh Miller has gathered up a number of Don Berkus' trees and tuned them up for the sale. One of them, a California juniper was the carving demo tree last month. If you would like to own one of Don's trees for sentimental or artistic reason this will be your chance. Thanks to Josh. material.



## Tom Vuong *(continued from above)*

For an ideal appearance of age and movement untouched by human hands, he addresses “human issues as his first order of work, to restore natural lines and harmonize the best of the dead wood with the best of the living material.

“Chewing back” old human cuts with a branch cutter can take a full day to accomplish, he says, to arrive at a desirable dead wood design proportional to the whole composition in size, form and taper.

He carves back dead wood according to its placement on the trunk’s taper, and carves some places deeply to create more movement in the design. He chisels out dead wood in the direction of the grain, to improve taper, and remove “human marks” on the trunk line. The artistry in the movement of the dead wood is the beauty of the tree he says. Creating the dead wood design precedes styling the foliage masses.

Over the coming weeks, he recommends a continuation of dead wood styling. He recommends “branch bending” as another stage of development in another year after cuts and carving marks heal and the tree is stronger. Likewise, grafting is another two years away.





## Refreshments Wolfgang Puck and all members attending the auc- tion

The bonsai are in their summer slump. By now most of their growth has slowed or stopped completely. What should we be doing? Be very water vigilant. Check everything at least once day and make sure that nothing is going too dry. Water in the morning and spray everything including trees, benches and surrounding walls and ground beneath them. The humidity is good for the trees. Keep your pots from getting hot by covering with shade cloth and perhaps moss. Check again about sunset and water anything that looks too dry.

If you have nerve enough to go on a vacation, make sure that someone reliable will take over the watering. Organize your plants in groups to make it easier for the person to water correctly. Ask them to come before you leave to demonstrate competence. Consider a drip system, but even that needs to be checked daily to see if there are any clogged drippers or if the cat has knocked it out of a pot. John Naka says that automatic sprinklers are not completely accurate because there is a tendency to over-water. In addition, every tree requires different watering.

Pinch trees to shape and contour and cut shoots back but avoid hard cutting, which will promote tender growth. Trees may be trimmed for shape, to remove dead leaves and unwanted (crossing) branches, but no drastic pruning should be done on most trees because it will promote new tender growth that will tend to either burn off in the heat or freeze off this winter.

Rotate trees regularly every two to three weeks to prevent one-sided growth. Don't transplant or repot anything at this season. Possible exceptions would be olives, pomegranates and bougainvilleas, bamboo and ficus that love the heat. Bougainvillea should be cut back hard after the bloom but do not over water them.

Wiring can also be done. Look for ingrown wire. Remove so the green layer (cambium) is not disturbed and the wire falls off. Fertilize as usual. Why fertilize if growth has stopped? The answer is that growth hasn't really stopped. Everything is pushing its root growth now. And fruits may be growing on the fruiting varieties. To be safe and not "burn the roots" use dilute low nitrogen fertilizer. Cut pine candles may now be having shoots, which can be limited to two for branch ramification. Those at the top may have the verticals saved.

Be on the alert for infestations. See July Naka Notes for suggestions.





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.

### Administration

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Refreshment  
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**Dan Kashinsky**  
Editor  
Kai Wire

[www.Sansui-Kai.org](http://www.Sansui-Kai.org)



## Tom Vuong Demonstration July 12, 2017 by Mary Tatro

Tom Vuong made a return visit to San Sui Kai in July to demonstrate his carving artistry.

Working on a juniper from the Berkus Family Estate to be auctioned at the August Barbecue, Tom gave a clear review of bonsai carving technique, the most difficult, he says, of all the bonsai arts to accomplish, honoring the tree's natural integrity untouched by human hands.

He shared his favorite tools necessary for the strong arm tactics of carving away the thick branches of hardened mature juniper dead wood – re-purposed tools that are stronger and cheaper than traditional bonsai tools. He recommends cut-resistant gloves to protect the hands from heavy duty sculpting movements. He prefers to do his carving by hand to achieve a more natural appearance than he could achieve with dremel or machine carving.

In preparation, he recommends making note of the life line – nature's live vein that courses through the trunk to living branches and foliage. Revealing and protecting the life line while shaping the dead wood into the composition, he cleans out material that values the live vein in the design and protects it during dead wood styling.

He belts down the tree to its pot with wood blocks as anchors. During his demo, club members stepped in to help hold the pot stable while he made major blows sculpting hard dead wood harmonize the best of the dead wood with the best of the living material.

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