



# Fujii Notes

Newsletter of the Phoenix Bonsai Society

Vol. 18, No. 1 – Nov. 2013

## Letter from the President

For some time now, it has been my desire to bring back an old tradition which has had sporadic success over the past several years, that of bringing back the newsletter on a frequent basis. I would like to bring back that tradition and I would encourage all of you to participate. You may do so by submitting articles, photos, sayings that amused you or challenged you, or for that matter anything that you feel might be interesting to the club. I will edit the material provided and with Robert's help put it in the old **Fujii Notes** format. Upon discussing the idea of bringing back the newsletter with Robert, he shared the following with me:

*"And while the newsletter is named in HONOR of Leroy, that was it: we, his students, put it together, hopefully following his teachings and guidance and honoring his presence among us. When the 1995 version of a club newsletter was proposed, "Fujii Notes" was overwhelmingly voted on by the members as the new name. Leroy did not give us any hands-on input nor was he specifically asked to. I guess he was sufficiently amused and pleased by our initial efforts to just let us run with it."*

The newsletter will be dedicated to also answering some of those questions most often asked about bonsai – what is and is not. Our Society is now entering its 52nd year and continues to offer many stimulating and creative programs. We are extremely privileged to have a wealth of active past presidents and mentors and as such we actively participate in several worthy Phoenix public events, including Matsuri, and the Phoenix Museum of Art gala event, as well as our own annual Bonsai Show. Visitors and guests are always welcome to attend our meetings and workshops.

We are especially honored this year to have Ben Oki return for our annual show and David Nguy, Ted Matson, and Sam Adina for weekend workshops and demonstrations. These workshops are necessarily limited in size, and your early registration is encouraged.

This year has already seen our club become amerced into the technical and internet age with the vast improvements to our website and the monthly distribution of the **American Bonsai Association's** newsletters. You will see the emergence of greater use of the internet for instruction to supplement our monthly topics, which will offer a free forum of ideas and diverse viewpoints.

If you are not a member of our society, we urge you to join with us in a learning experience. There are many principles and techniques to be learned, and though most of them are Japanese inspired, American bonsai has come into its own in the most recent years. These principles capture ideas from Nature, and then create refinements of proportion or balance to please the human eye. No two bonsai are the same, because no two trees are alike.

Our monthly meeting format is designed to further our knowledge for the purpose of recreating, in a miniature scale, the vision of an alpine tree as it grows on a mountaintop, or a cascading pine growing tenaciously over the edge of a rocky precipice. Perhaps we see a windswept, lightning-blasted juniper withstanding years of ice, heavy snow and disease; or a brilliant bougainvillea basking in the sun. Nature is, as always, the best source of inspiration.

We seek to create living sculpture, properly framed with a carefully selected pot. Constantly changing with each passing season-never quite perfect, always becoming what we will it to be. With a little help from our friends and of course Mother Nature.

Bonsai, for you, may be a busy and complicated art form, never quite achieving the sublime results of the masters. Or, it can be a lifelong learning experience, providing immeasurable quietude and satisfaction of the Spirit. Each of us can achieve satisfying results from the most ordinary of material. We must rely even more upon our individual creative vision to attain desired results.

It is a truly unique art form, with unlimited possibilities for individual expression. There are rules and principles, to be sure, but no more so than those of the artist, the sculptor, the musician, the writer.

As our friend and teacher John Naka once observed, "Bonsai is very much like life itself, each of us walks the same path, but each in a different way. This is the way I walk."

Come walk with us.

Yours in the spirit of Bonsai,

Frank Harris

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## Pearls of Wisdom

*"Why should we be in such haste to succeed and in such desperate enterprises? If a man does not keep pace with his companions, perhaps it is because he hears a different drummer. Let him step to the music which he hears, however measured or far away."*

--Henry David Thoreau, from *Walden*

## Seasonal Care

The following article is in part a compilation of several articles written by Marty Mann and published monthly in *Golden Statements*.

Fall is generally the climax of growth of the summer and the last spurt of activity before settling down for winter dormancy and for most deciduous trees that is true. Do not be surprised when evergreens take on a second growth spurt as fall in Phoenix and southern Arizona is our second spring.

As leaves begin to drop, be sure to remove the dead ones on the surface of your pots. If clean-up is neglected, these areas become a refuse for slugs, sow bugs, and other undesirable pests. There is still time to give your bonsai a last good feeding, continuing using fertilizer with little or no nitrogen. Cottonseed and bone meal are great organic sources of potash and phosphorus for winter roots but blood meal is rich in nitrogen. Specifically, crabapples, umes (Japanese apricots) and pomegranates improve after late feedings.

Transplanting is permissible at this time of year, specifically boxwood, conifers including pines, hornbeams, cotoneaster, podocarpus, privets, pyracantha, wisteria, and most varieties of deciduous trees. (Ref.: Naka, John. *Bonsai Techniques I*. Whittier: Bonsai Institute of California; 1973.) The key to safe repotting is to minimize root disturbance and severe pruning. Trees can be transferred into larger or different containers. If in doubt about the health or condition of a tree, wait until spring to repot.

Cut back on your watering schedule, but don't allow the trees to dry. As the length of day's sunshine is shortened, the trees require less water. A balance must be maintained between minimal watering and the loss of moisture by transpiration during intermittent hot spells.



As cooler nights approach, complete defoliation begins. Remove brown leaves and the remaining dried fruit and flowers from the trees. Note the twiggy structure of elms, maples, and other deciduous trees. Wherever you see a cluster of twigs, they should be cut back

to pairs of twigs forming a "V" to encourage the spring formation of new branch divisions. With the cooler days of fall, continue to inspect for insects (such as aphids and scale) and fungus.

Fungus is identified by dark spots on the upper or lower leaf surfaces. There will also be tell-tale signs of a white powdery substance on the leaves and at the base of the needle clumps on conifers. Fungus can be prevented by providing sufficient light and dry conditions. Regular spraying with fungicides such as **Daconil®** or the use of **Bayer Advanced™ 3 in 1 Rose and Flower Care** for root and soil fungus. When damage becomes apparent, it's generally too late to fix the problems.

The following is extracted from an article written by Jane Nelson of Seattle, WA for *Bonsai: Journal of The American Bonsai Society*.

## **Vitamin B-1: Useful or Not?**

Vitamin B-1, Thiamine hydrochloride, has been reported to be of great use in root stimulation, thus reducing transplanting shock and stimulating new root growth. This should enhance planting and transplanting. Reading recent articles from horticultural magazines has created doubt in my mind. Science has shown so many of our beliefs to be folklore.

*The Journal of the American Society for Horticultural Science* has published the results of numerous investigations by scientists on the efficiency of Vitamin B. Cuttings have not shown any better results with the use of Vitamin B. The California citrus trees transplanted with the use of this vitamin have not shown better than the untreated. Chrysanthemums and roses have shown no significant differences in the treated and the non-treated. A 1982 University of California experiment on snapdragons used the vitamin with a synthetic plant hormone and a 3-10-3 fertilizer. This did make the plants grow larger, but not any more so than those treated with fertilizer alone.

Vigor, height, color and root development were factors being considered in many other experiments. Neither B-1 nor Vitamin B-Plus has shown any significant difference in any of the criteria used for evaluation. The researchers did conclude that the addition of nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium did show a significant difference, concluding that the result was that of nutrients, not the vitamin.

**Suggestions in several of the articles led to the conclusion that use of a 4-12-4 fertilizer dissolved in water would be more effective for transplanting, or the use of a 10-20-20 fertilizer mixed at one tablespoon per gallon of water and used sparingly could be tried.** These articles did not include or research the use of the popular **SUPERthrive®** product that contains vitamins-hormones including .09% Vitamin B4; .048% 1-naphthylacetic acid, or **Hormodin®** that contains Indolebutyric acid.

Here is another Bonsai pearl of wisdom, a tidbit of knowledge from John Southworth, "The Secret of the Superior Smile," *Bonsai* (British), Summer, 1990.

A thought provoking and clearly stated article from Great Britain discusses "piston action."

*"Ideally, watering should be done by immersion, i.e., by lowering the pot into a container of water and holding it below the surface until no more bubbles rise. The reason why this is a better way of watering plants is simple: as water rises from the bottom it acts like a piston, forcing all the gases ahead of it up and out. As the pot is lifted out of the water and allowed to drain down, the water level descends through the pot and again acts like a piston and sucks fresh air in. That piston action explains the superior growth rate of plants grown in a hydroponic unit using the 'enema' method.*

## Phoenix Bonsai Society Upcoming Calendar

Nov 5 Tuesday, Demonstration: "Carving" by Chuck Journey. He will bring an example of his carved trees and also bring carving tools to exhibit.

Nov 13 Wednesday (**nonstandard day**), Critique of Trees and Club Business.

Nov 16-17 Saturday-Sunday, Workshop with *Sensei* David Nguy at Baker Nursery, 3414 N. 40<sup>th</sup> St., with show of trees for the public.

Nov 19 Tuesday, Club Auction of trees, pots and tools.

Dec 3 Tuesday, Critique of Trees and Club Business.

Dec 7 Saturday, Bonsai In the Garden (B.I.G.) at Ken and Carol Roberts' home.

Dec 10 Tuesday, Lecture and Demonstration on "Radical Branch Bending" by Frank Harris.

Dec 17 Tuesday, Holiday Party and Gift Exchange at location TBD.

Our full and updated calendar is available at <http://www.phoenixbonsai.com/PCalendar.html>.

We are also now accessible to mobile devices at <http://www.phoenixbonsai.com/Mobile.html>.

The Members only portion of the site is through <http://members.phoenixbonsai.com/members/>.

### Current Officers

President	Frank Harris
Vice-President	Carol Roberts
Treasurer	Susie Kingston
Librarian	Kathleen Mosher
Event Chair	Val Engermann
Education Committee	Elsie Andrade
Raffle Chair	Barbara Gray
Webmasters	Robert Baran, Eric Zimmet
Valley Garden Center Club Liaison	Alex Gray

### Current Mentors

Elsie Andrade	Joan (Hozy) McCarter
Penny Schneck	Robert Gustafson
Frank Harris	Jamie Sims
Alex Gray	Jim McEown
Ken Roberts	Ernie Hasan

## Upcoming Workshops and Conventions

Our upcoming weekend of workshops with David Nguy, November 16-17 are a must see to appreciate, either as an observer (free) or a participant. David and June (his wife) have recently created a wonderful website:

<http://www.bonsaijidai.com/contactus.html>

David is well known for his work with California Junipers and Black Pines. His experience includes studying under Harry Hirao, Ben Oki, Ernie Kuo, as well as Masahiko Kimura in Japan. David is known for his skills and advanced techniques found in his signature trees and has been referred to by the GSBF as "Mr California Juniper II".



David is very active in the bonsai community traveling throughout the United States acting as a workshop leader for many clubs and conventions, most notably as a headliner at the Golden State Bonsai Federation annual convention and workshop leader for the California Bonsai Society convention.

Education is one of the underlying principles in which David believes in. Mastery of the art is an ongoing learning experience.

This year's Golden State Bonsai Federation's Convention in Burbank will be a treasure of an experience if you are able to attend October 31 – November 3. If you are not able to, and you do need tools, pots or trees, be sure to get with those going so they can bring them back for you.

<http://www.gsbf-bonsai.org/convention/>

## Internet Musings, All Things North American, plus

If you have not already visited these sites, they are a must view:

<http://crataegus.com/>

<http://bonsaimirai.com>

<http://www.absbonsai.org>

<http://www.ibonsaiclub.forumotion.com/>

Michael Hagedorn

Ryan Neil

American Bonsai Society

Internet Bonsai Club

## Other Arizona Clubs

\* **Scottsdale Bonsai Society** (est. 2000, <http://scottsdalebonsai.weebly.com/>) activities are held on the FIRST Saturday of the month from 1:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the Via Linda Senior Center, Room 8, 10440 E. Via Linda, Scottsdale, AZ 85259. And on the THIRD Saturday of the month (except in June, July, & August) from 1:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the Granite Reef Senior Center, Room 10, 1700 N. Granite Reef Rd. (cross streets are McDowell and Granite Reef), Scottsdale, AZ 85285. Contact Araxi Hovhannessian to check the schedule at (480) 965-0030 or Mike Grier at (480) 948-5836.

\* **Tucson Bonsai Society** (est. 1972, <http://tucsonbonsaisociety.org/>) meets at 12 noon on the Third Sunday of every month at the NEW location of Catalina United Methodist Church, 2700 E. Speedway, in Building H, Room H230. Turn in on Treat Avenue, park in lot on your left, and just follow the signs a short ways. Contact Ray Noseck @ (520) 760-0128, or Gregory (Greg) Baumgartner @ (520) 661-4746 or (520) 762-1572.

\* **Southern Arizona Bonsai Enthusiasts** (est. 2001) is a study group which generally meets on the SECOND Saturday of each month, 10:00 am (until about 1:00 p.m.) at the Desert Gardens Cumberland Presbyterian Church, 10851 E. Old Spanish Trail (cross streets S. Avenida Los Reyes and E Old Spanish Trail), Tucson, AZ 85748. These meetings are usually hands-on workshops and/or viewing of bonsai-related videos. For information contact: Doris Cavanaugh, (520) 290-0522, [doris\\_c6@q.com](mailto:doris_c6@q.com) / (520) 290-0522 or Loveda Petrie, (520) 886-2446, [veda27@earthlink.net](mailto:veda27@earthlink.net).

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This newsletter is named in recognition of Hideo "Leroy" Fujii (1925-1998), student of bonsai for nearly fifty years, a founding member of our club, and our *sensei* / teacher for more than twenty-five years. Our club logo, courtesy of grandmaster John Y. Naka (1914-2004), is based on one of Leroy's trees. Two pages of some of Leroy's other fine creations can be found on our web site at <http://www.phoenixbonsai.com/LeroysTrees.html> .

**"Learn from your trees: they are a reflection of you."**

-- Leroy Fujii

### PHOENIX BONSAI SOCIETY

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