

NEWSLETTER



Baikoen Bonsai Kenkyukai

Our next meeting will be on
November 21, 2019

Todd Schaffer - USA,
CBS Guest Artist

One-time Change of Location

10300 Key West St,
Temple City, CA 91780

Please bring something for the raffle

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Tom Vuong, October demonstrator

Tom Vuong does amazing things to plants. He can make bends in trees that most people would never attempt or think of doing. And he makes it look so easy. If you go to The Huntington to the bonsai area, you can see some of the big bends he has done.



Tom presented a talk that was funny, logical, educational and entertaining, and you must think to yourself, why didn't I think of doing this? Maybe it's from his auto mechanical



background? The tools and equipment he used are easily available at Home Depot or your neighborhood hardware store. Several sets of Snap-Loc Cinch strap with cam with 300-500 lb break strength were

used, zip ties by the handful, machine shop towels (WypAll above), but his special stainless-steel bending tool is custom made by himself. We tried to tell him to have some made for sale, but he just smiled.

Tom presented his technique to bend dead wood. He doesn't use raffia, instead he uses shop paper towels, WypAll because it is stronger, doesn't rot, and it keeps moist.

If you look at the picture on the left, you



can see some of the layers

on the deadwood that he will bend. On either side of the branch are guide wires, #4 copper wire (easiest to see on



the top), then he wraps a moist layer paper towels and electrical tape, yellow in this case on top (sticky side out). The live vein is always on the bottom (red line on drawing on the chalk board), so you can bend in, but not out (this can break the live vein).



The main reason to bend branches is to make the tree smaller or more compact using two main techniques, grafting or bending. One other huge piece of advice he had was to always have a Plan B. Things can happen unexpectedly.

One thing that he does not do is carve dead wood. He uses a knife and chisel.



And he feels that junipers look better if the dead wood is shaped by hand and not by carving. After, he power washes the wood to show different colors of the wood and then only uses lime sulfur if the tree has termites.

Here is more information about the paper towels Tom uses. They are easier to use, no prep needed, and they are cheaper than raffia. When you need them, just soak, and they will keep moist, do not rot and easy to work with. The thickness of the paper increases with the number, 60, 70, 80, 90 being the thickest. The moisture is important to keep the plant and lifeline alive and the dead wood pliable. For the

plant he used for the demo, the branch was wrapped with the paper and tape for 2 days prior to the demo day. A thicker branch may need to be soaked for a week or more before bending is attempted but with additional layers of towels. Also, the total bend does not need to be done in one day. With the demo branch, it was relatively thin so the final bend could be completed in about an hour, but a thicker branch or a branch that is more resistant may be completed slowly over a matter of a month or more, so the branch does not crack.



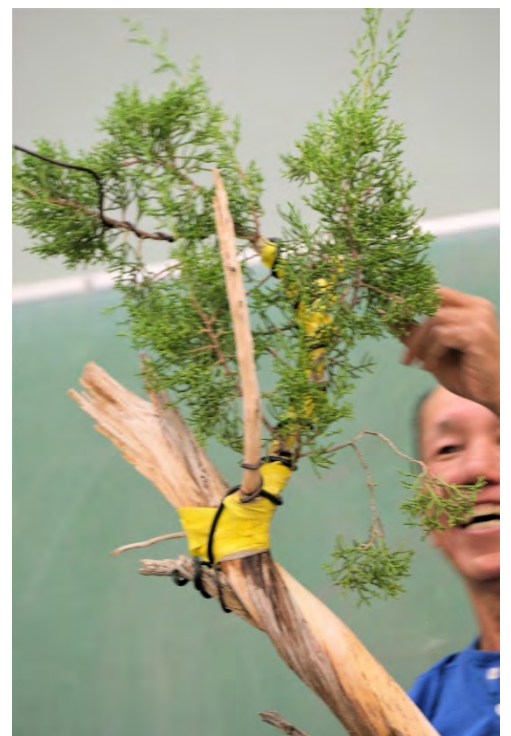
Tom tried several ways to anchor the cords and to test the flexibility of the branch. Also, these tentative bends helped the branch get used to bending before the big bend.



The path of the pully-cable system and the direction of the movement (on the left).



Showing the shape, the foliage will be arranged (triangle), after the bending is done. Wiring on the right to hold the bent shape.





View of anchors of the tree to the pot

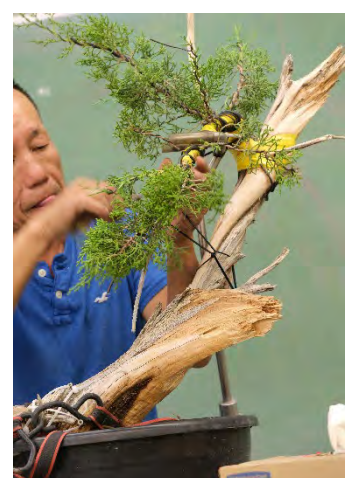
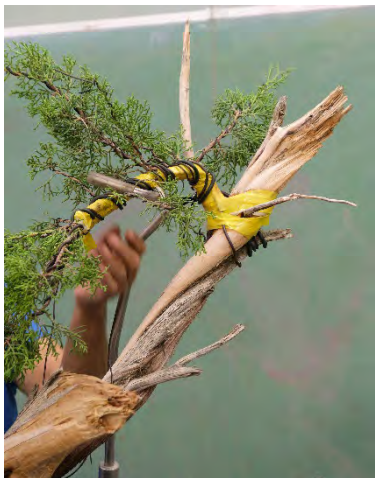


Series of pictures showing the sequence of pullies and techniques to make the bends. See the change in direction and angle of the branch. Before it was straight and now it is curved and bent. Slow and methodical is the name of the game.





The idea is to twist and bend the branch using his “Magic Tool.” The bends are held with wire and when the position is the right one, zip ties are used to hold the bend in place anchored to the tree.





When the bends are done, Tom trims the leaves and positions the branches. The wires, tape and paper will stay on the tree for a year. Keep the tree in the shade for one month. When it starts to grow, put out in the sun. Fertilize once a year. Removing foliage makes it easier to do bends and relieves stress from bending, and it allows the sun to penetrate and allows us to see the bends and dead wood.





The tree will be cared for by Lindsay and will be auctioned off at the club show this coming January.

We had a real treat at this meeting. Joe brought in a tree. Joe won a California Juniper from Harry Hirata in a raffle at Kofu Kai Bonsai Club. The plant was approach grafted with Kishu Shimpaku in 2014 and allowed to grow freely. Roy Nagatoshi worked on the tree in October 2016 (below), then Joe

brought the tree to Tom Vuong for his signature bends.



The original tree on the top far left showing the

scion (dark foliage). Middle, Roy Nagatoshi trimming the tree, and far right, the finished tree, at that time.

Bottom, the tree, present day: You can see the big difference in the form and shape of the tree. In this case, the only difference was the branch was wrapped with two layers of paper towels. All the wires, paper towels and tape will stay for a year before they will come off. It's a beauty!



About Todd Schalfer, November demonstrator

Todd Schalfer comes to us as part of the California Bonsai Society Visiting Artist Program.

My obsession with collecting trees formed shortly thereafter, as Jerry Morris, another regular at Colorado Bonsai, invited me on a collecting trip to Utah. I learned very quickly that basic design principles did not necessarily apply to collected material with sparse foliage and unconventional branches. Therefore, in 2012, I decided to further my studies with Ryan Neil to learn how to style and develop material of this caliber.



My study with Ryan focused on the advanced techniques of setting tree structure, which is the most difficult skill set to achieve in bonsai and refinement. I've pushed myself to become proficient those techniques. With my skills well rounded, I was inspired to pursue bonsai practice full-time. And when others began to seek out my expertise, I started to instruct professionally.

People often ask me, "Is working on bonsai relaxing and Zen-like?" Refining trees and maintaining foliage most certainly is. But while

setting the initial structure of a collected tree isn't remotely relaxing, when done correctly it's one of the most fulfilling aspects of bonsai design. Watching the tree flourish following such work can be unbelievably rewarding.

To view my portfolio and see a sample of the collected material I have to offer, please visit my site - www.FirstBranchBonsai.com

He will be working with a Hinoki cypress.

Cookie / Snack sign-up for the November Meeting.

Refreshments by Shirley and Charlene Quan

Announcements

November 9, 2019 Las Vegas, Nevada, Las Vegas Bonsai Society: Viva Las Bonsai: A Bonsai Exhibit and Show at the Nevada Garden Center, Northwest corner of Lorenzi Park, 800 Twin Lakes Drive from 10 AM to 4 PM. Bonsai Demonstration by Jan Culek, professional bonsai artist from the Czech Republic. Discussion on Zen and the Arts by Zen Master Ji Haeng. Bonsai Exhibit of Society member trees. Local vendor sales of bonsai related items and club tree sale. Parking and admission is free

but donations are welcome. Raffle and silent auctions immediately following the demonstration. For further information contact irasisson@hotmail.com.

November 15-17, 2019, Thousand Oaks, California Bonsai Studio, 4015 N Moorpark Rd, Thousand Oaks, Ca 91260, 1-805-616-2271, 10am to 5pm. Huge nursery sale at California Bonsai Studio! Up to 70% off on bonsai, pre-bonsai, tools, and supplies. Free raffle to win a beautiful Bonsai tree! Retail value \$600. Come join us for fun, snacks, and a free Bonsai demonstration. No purchase necessary, need not be present to win. Raffle entry and discount prices only available in person at the nursery sale.
www.californiabonsai.com

November 23rd, 2019 Clovis, California, Fresno Bonsai Society will conduct their eleventh consecutive bonsai yard sale from 8 AM until 2 PM at the Clovis Botanical Garden. The garden is located at 945 North Clovis Avenue in Clovis. The sale will be held under and around the big tent area. The event is free and the parking is free. Vendors of bonsai, pots and all related items are welcome free of charge. Everyone is welcome to buy, sell, or trade. There will be bonsai from both private collections and from the GSBF Clark Bonsai Collection. There will be used pots, hand-thrown pots from local potters. Look for books and magazines and display stands. The coffee is free and sandwiches will be available for \$10. Come early for the best deals. Vendors are very welcome. Please contact Mike Saul (tinytreeme@sbcglobal.net) for assistance. This is an entertaining event every year and a wonderful opportunity for new bonsai hobbyists to acquire better quality material for very reasonable prices.

December 1, 2019, California Bonsai Society Sale, Yamaguchi Bonsai Nursery 1905 Sawtelle Boulevard, Hours: 9 AM – 1 PMA variety of material will be on sale from CBS members. Come early for best selection. **NO SALES BEFORE GATE OPEN**

January 18 - 19, 2020 Arcadia, California, Baikoen Bonsai Kenkyukai, Winter Silhouettes, 56th Annual Exhibition, at the Los Angeles Arboretum, Ayres Hall of Environmental Education, located at 301 North Baldwin Ave., Arcadia, CA 91007. Show hours on both days are 10am to 4:30pm. Deciduous bonsai in all their leafless glory are featured from club members and invited guests. The Nagata-Komai award winner will be announced, and there will be a demonstrator at 1pm on both days. There will be a sales area with club and vendor plants, pots, tools and more. For more information, please visit baikoenbonsai.com or email Ken Teh at kenwteh6@gmail.com.

January 31-February 2, 2020, California Shohin Society, 17th Biennial Shohin Seminar, Hotel Mission De Oro, 13070 S. Highway 33, Santa Nella, CA 95322. Show, workshops and vendors.
<http://www.calshohin.org/>

February 22-23, 2020, Bonsai ~ A ~ Thon XXIV, Huntington Library, Art Museum and Botanical Gardens. Workshops, vendors, displays, auction and raffle. <http://www.gsbfhuntington.com/>

2019 Demonstrator List

November 21

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December 2019

No meeting/Happy Holidays

Shirley Quan

Baikoen Bonsai Kenkyukai

10300 Key West St.

Temple City, CA 91780