

The Bonsai Wire

....in the Time of Covid-19

President's Message Sue Carter, President and CEO



Hello Fellow Club Members,
I hope you and those you love are safe, healthy, and working on creative ways to adapt to this unprecedented crisis in our lives. I know we all want to see some

semblance of normal again so we can enjoy each other in person. Meanwhile, here's some news about past and upcoming activities.

Our VP of Membership, Uday, requested and received two grants totaling \$2250 from Qualcomm, his employer.

Qualcomm has a generous program to support nonprofits and these grants went toward the pedestal project at the San Diego Zoo Safari Park Bonsai Exhibit. Thank you, Uday, for taking the time to submit for those grants.

SDBC received some very nice donations last month. Maggie Crowell donated 30 assorted glazed bonsai pots and suiseki trays. While Gabe Ables donated 15 assorted plants to be used for bonsai stock. Thank you, Maggie and Gabe.

Our San Diego Bonsai Facebook page is active and growing with 313 members. The Facebook page has some great pictures of members' bonsais, interesting questions about tree care, pictorial updates on the Safari Park pedestal project, and other good information. The Facebook page is a great way to stay in touch with bonsai experts and newbies alike.

There's still lots going on with the SD Safari Park and the Japanese Friendship Garden which you can read about in this wire.

I know many of you would like to know when we will be able to meet again. The truth is we really don't know. I regularly visit the county website, sandiegocounty.gov, to see the latest information on Coronavirus Disease under Safe Reopening. Even with the information on this site, we know requirements and restriction can change overnight.

Education Bill Graham, VP

Welcome to July. I hope everyone is continuing to stay safe in these trying times! As the world is starting to open up, and you start going back out in public, take care of

yourselves. As the heat picks up, watch your trees. Make sure you keep them watered. Don't let them dry out! Due to the continuing uncertain status of the State and our ability to meet in person, all classes are cancelled until further notice. Once we get the green light to start meeting in person, we will start up classes. Until then, there is great information to be found on the web at sites like Jonas Dupuich's website and blog <https://bonsaitonight.com/>, Ryan Neal's website <https://www.bonsaimirai.com/> or Bjorn Bjorholm's website <https://bjornbjorholm.com/>. All three of these and many others are a wealth of information.

After much thought, consideration and discussion with the other Board members, I have sadly come to the conclusion that we will not be able to have a Fall Beginners Class. Due to the continuing uncertainty of the world we live in, the ability to meet and work together and maintain the social distancing rules, it is just not feasible to carry on. The Treasurer will be issuing refunds to all that have signed up. If you paid by credit card, it will be returned to your card. If you paid by check or cash, a check will be sent to you.

I look forward to when we can meet again and resume our classes!

If you have any ideas that can improve our programs or have skills that you would like to share please contact me at the Monthly Meeting or at wfgraham3rd@gmail.com

Membership Udaykant Pandey, VP

Hello to all! Hope you are safe and in good cheer during this trying time.

8 new members joined the club since last report. Please welcome Matthew Dickson, James McCann, LaRunce Moffett, David Miller, Michelle Notrica and Matt Jillson. With these additions we now have 288 current members. 193 members who have not paid for the current year are considered in arrears and are not eligible to participate in club activities. I encourage these members to renew their membership and enjoy all the perks and privileges that the club offers.

Renewals can be done online on the club website or in person during the club meeting. We accept payment by cash, check, and card. The dues remain at \$30 for an individual and \$35 for two members of a family. Any additional family members are \$5 each.

I would like to remind all readers that you must have active membership to be able to participate in club activities such as beginners' classes, workshops, and access to sale table during shows, bus trip, Club Picnics etc.

*Safari Park Bonsai Pavilion
'Lyn Stevenson, Liason
Mark Edgar, Construction
Crew*

The Safari Park has now reopened to visitors with some restrictions! Visitors are now able to stroll up to the Pavilion and have expressed their compliments to the volunteers about the beauty, the improvements, and the comfort of their leisurely visits there.

Construction of the new bonsai pedestals at the Safari Park Bonsai Pavilion continues in spite of the recent heat wave.



After completing the first 20 out of 44 bonsai pedestals, the construction team took a one-week break then began work on the next 8 pedestals. Work has proceeded smoothly, and we should come close to

completing the 8 pedestals on July 14.

The two pedestal bases in the picture will hold a very heavy five-foot rock slab for display of Melba Tucker's elm forest.



We celebrated Bastille Day by completing 8 more pedestals for the Safari Park Bonsai Pavilion, including setting the extra-large and heavy stone top to display Melba Tucker's elm forest.



Using our hydraulic lift carts, we manage to minimize lifting this top with muscle power. We used the lift cart to set the top on the 38" high pedestals, then we used the cart to lift each end of the stone to apply adhesive to secure the top to the pedestal blocks.



... and finally ...



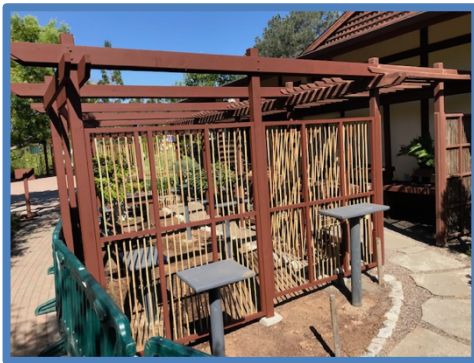
We have all of our materials secured for the remaining 16 pedestals and we will begin clearing the old wooden bonsai benches from the next section of 6 pedestals on July 14. Out of the remaining 16 pedestals, 8 are large pedestals which are a little slower to build

For the first six months of 2020, SDBC Pavilion Volunteers have donated almost 2000 hours to the Safari Park Pavilion even though the facilities have been closed for the last couple of months! The group of Pavilion volunteers who have donated 470 hours in June alone included: Julia Chow, Sally & Steve Dischinger, Cathy & Mark Edgar, Chuck Fasilis, Sonya Holmquist, Jaya Kaelberer, John Jackson, Jim & Sue Kirchmer, Carla Marasco, Sandi Marasco, Charlie & Sylvia Mosse, 'lyn Stevenson, Dennis Wagner, and Ken Zito. The Park has limited our days and numbers at the Pavilion, but the volunteers have taken advantage of their designated times on Tuesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays. A part of the Pavilion was closed occasionally while some construction was continuing but that construction is now finished. What a beautiful Pavilion once again!

Our limited volunteer times are continuing in July as we await further directions from the Zoo-Safari Park. The generosity of our core group of volunteers is continuing. We can never thank them all enough!

Japanese Friendship Garden Barbara French-Lee, Liaison Neil Auwarter, Curator

The new enclosure, created to protect our collection, in the bonsai display area is nearing completion. The trees will be back on display this week-end ! The display area has been reconfigured to work with the enclosure, and there will be some new trees never previously displayed.



Take advantage of our great San Diego weather, walk through this exquisite and peaceful garden and meditate on all the beauty and life in the

trees.

Check the JFG website - niwa.org -for the latest information on directions, ticket costs and garden protocol as these have changed based on recent government guidelines. The Garden is open from 10am to 6pm with the last entrance at 5pm.

Club Events Ignacio De La Torre

On June 20, we held our inaugural Facebook Live session featuring Fred Miyahara, one of our long-time club members. Fred is our resident pine expert and happens to be a nationally recognized expert. He has traveled to Japan for training and worked with some of the most notable bonsai teachers in the US. While a great teacher, Fred remains a student of bonsai.

The session took place from Fred's front yard. Fred covered the topic of general pine care and, specifically, needle de-candling methods. He stepped us through the theory behind different needle de-candling methods using his small pines and a yard pine to demonstrate the techniques. He also made his session a bit of a bonsai history lesson, sharing his thoughts on numerous teachers and individuals who helped to shape the bonsai craft in the US.

We extend a special thanks to Fred for his willingness to help our club during this time. If you have not yet watched the video, it is available on the club website via the link below.

<http://www.sandiegobonsaiclub.com/>

We plan to have more events of this type in the coming months.

Water - Not just H₂O in the pot Charlie Mosse

Proper, effective watering is one of the most difficult things to teach and learn in the plant arena and is even more complicated when dealing with bonsai. It appears straight forward and up to a point it is.....just add water to the soil and all is good? Wrong answer. Even very experienced bonsaists have to think as to how they are watering because of the numerous variables that need to be taken into consideration. We all learn how to do this on-the-fly, but still need to double check with a meter and/or the old-school finger and eye test. Since watering is so multifaceted, this article is limited to these two subjects: **Suggestions for watering in hot weather** and **How to protect the roots and pots from excessive heat**.

Hot weather Watering

To mitigate the short comings of issues with different soil mixes, bonsai containers should be watered at least 3 times per watering. Just because water comes streaming out of the bottom of the container does not mean the soil particles have adequately absorbed enough water, especially the very dry particles which can be so dry as to become hydrophobic as can be seen with new soils. Old soil mix, old nursery soil left behind, or field soil left behind can also become so dry as to also repel water. Sometimes these old soil pockets can also become too wet leading to rot. Either too dry or too wet equals no roots which means less tree vigor but most importantly, when the soil particles are not adequately saturated with water, they dry out faster and salt can accumulate a bit faster when soil is not properly flushed.

Most people water with a nozzle of some sort. Over the years I have tried and seen all types used. The bonsai watering tools such as Masakuni, or one that's similar, are the best. One gets good even flow and coverage and, with a valve on the hose end, one can regulate the pressure. Turning the nozzle so that the spray goes up first and then comes down in nice soft rain is the best way to evenly apply water while reducing soil erosion. During hot weather when soils dry fast and furious, doing this at least three times with several minutes in between applications

will assure, not 100% guarantee, that the soil is well watered.

Effective watering of hard root balls during hot weather is a challenge. Here are two additional methods that are easily done to help prevent dry spots in the root ball. One method is to moisten the soil surface first to help break the surface tension of the soil surface. Next, drip or slow trickle water onto the soil surface for 15-45 minutes depending on the size of the root ball, then water normally with your nozzle/wand.

The second method is to physically improve the surface percolation. Ryan Neil has an excellent video detailing how. We have done this at the JFG, and others recommend this as well. Carefully remove the surface soil surface with a small rake, chop stick and broom. Remove about 1/8" to 3/4" of soil from the surface down to looser soil. The depth depends on the size of the container/root ball and the degree of compaction. The surface roots will be affected but that will only be a very small percentage of the root system. This removes salts, accumulated organics, broken down and compacted akadama and other fines that cause water to run off too fast. Replace the soil with fresh bonsai soil mix. The water will now percolate properly into the soil more effectively wetting the soil underneath.

If you have smaller trees in the kifu, shohin and mame sizes, sometimes submerging them is the best way to go. I use rainwater for this process. Every 3 to 4 weeks I'll add a mixture of fish emulsion and kelp at the minimum recommended concentration to the water. Full feeding is not recommended in the heat but a plant should not be underfed either as that weakens the tree. The pots are submerged into the water for several minutes, sometimes longer when the root ball is very hard and dense. When the bubbles stop coming out that tells me the soil is well saturated, except in extreme cases. Jonas DuPuich and others recommend up to 15 minutes for some trees. When the tree is removed from the water, allow it to drain at an angle. Shallow pots can hold excess water, so it's strongly suggested to tilt them 90° (hold the soil if needed) and you will find that more water will drain out.

Another handy way to help small trees and accent plants is to either get a shallow tray, or use a nursery flat lined with plastic, then add a layer of sand or pebbles in the bottom. You can add water to the tray to keep the humidity up around the trees but keep the water level below the roots. I've set up several trays this way and drilled a tiny hole (1/16"-3/32") in the tray. I water the trees and allow the water to rise about 1/3 of the way up the pot. The small hole allows it to drain in about 3 minutes. One caution, if you think you have a diseased plant, remove it from the tray. This usually is not a problem but just be aware.

There is lots of debate on whether to overhead water plants on hot days. Research and practical experience show there is no harm to the plant, and it does benefit in cooling the plant. If the soil is already wet, only lightly moisten the surface of the soil and pot and the foliage. Do not water the plant unless it needs it. Too much water in hot weather can easily cause root problems to develop.

Recent articles and books have stated that healthy trees can withstand heat better. So proper fertilizing, good soil and keeping insects under control work as a "team" to help you get through heat spikes.

To reduce watering needs and keep the pot cooler one can use some of the suggestions below.

- Add bark or gravel to the soil surface. One does need to move the covering away a bit to check for soil moisture, but it will reduce water needs by blocking direct sunlight and reduce the effects of the wind. Gravel works best for this since it does not readily wash away. I use DG screened to 1/4" + or -. The light color of the local riverbed granite also reflects some heat.
- Placing sphagnum moss on and into the surface soil will reduce water evaporation by reducing the effects of the wind and sun, increasing moisture retention. Soil erosion is also reduced. The thickness of the layer determines the degree of effect. Overlap longer strands, keeping it in place with homemade wire staples or screen of some type.
- Installing drainage screen or gutter screen on top of the soil reduces moisture loss, soil erosion, and I found by chance that moss growth is improved under the screen. Screening helps to keep the sphagnum moss in place and lastly helps keep organic fertilizer chunks like BioGold in place when watering and keeps them from being taken by animals.
- Wrap the pot with white frost protection cloth. The cloth will allow the water and fertilizer to pass through the material into the soil. The entire tree and pot can be covered with this material on really hot days if you cannot get the tree into some additional shade. The cloth is available at Home Depot, The Greenhouse Megastore and other places. It is becoming more popular for many plant purposes.
- Wrap the pot with aluminum foil but leave it open enough, or at least openable, to allow for watering. I've seen this at Tak Shimazu's nursery working very effectively. Wear sunglasses when watering.
- Styrofoam is an effective cover for sun and water as many have seen at Roy Nagatoshi's nursery. Cut the

foam into equal halves with a hole for the trunk and nebari, then place around the tree. The halves can be held in place with some nails, homemade wire staples or wrap wire or green tie-tape around the foam and pot. You will need to remove the foam for watering or create holes in the foam for water. This requires more work than the other methods but has superior insulating value when it is hot.

- One must keep the plant/pot cool enough. During the heat spike of 2018, I was away so these steps to protect my plants were not taken. The trees in favorable spots were OK. The trees in too much sun for the 114^o day without protection suffered, not growing for the remainder of the year. One juniper did not grow until the next spring. Be careful not to overwater injured trees. They do not use as much water until the roots recover and the tree starts growing again. This could be a few weeks or many monthsbe patient. A heat spike into the low 100's is routine in my area, 114^o was a new experience.

Lesson learned.

It is wise to take the extra steps to keep the trees and pots protected from sun and heat. From experience and talking with others, 90°+ (depending on the humidity) is a good temperature to start thinking about protection, at least for the smaller trees and more heat sensitive trees. If you do not have shade cloth over your growing area, moving the plants temporarily to a shady spot or simply putting them under the tables for a few days works. Also, using the frost protection cloth as a temporary cover is very workable.

Bottom line: Know your soil to have a better idea on how to effectively water during hot weather to assure thorough watering of the entire root ball. Sheer volume of water is not always the answer. Protect container from direct sun during heat spikes.

Additional Sources:

Three excellent articles on watering bonsai were posted 7/10, 7/14 and 7/17 on Jonas DuPuich's web site.

<https://bonsaitonight.com/2020/07/10/watering-conifers/> and <https://bonsaitonight.com/2020/07/14/watering-deciduous-bonsai-part-1/>, and <https://bonsaitonight.com/2020/07/17/waterin-g-deciduous-bonsai-part-2/>.

You can always post questions on the SDBC *Face Book* page and get answers from members at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/119048901440758>. There is much information and insight within the club.

An excellent source on watering is Michael Hagedorn's book, *Bonsai Heresy*, just published with up to date information on many topics and myths. You can find this on his web site at <https://crataegus.com/portfolio/the-bonsai-garden/> or other book sources.

Ryan Neil covers the subject thoroughly on his web site at Bonsai Mirai, if you are a subscriber. See <https://bonsaimirai.com>

Treasurer's Report - the Fine Print Jaya Kaelberer

SAN DIEGO BONSAI CLUB - TREASURER'S REPORT		
Jaya Kaelberer as of June 30, 2020		
Accounts are reconciled with Union Bank statements		
BANK ACCOUNT BALANCES		
SDBC Checking	\$42,673	
Japanese Friendship Garden	\$2,343	
Bonsai Pavilion Checking	\$18,338	
TOTAL FUNDS:	\$63,354	
The following income statements have been split between SDBC and Pavilion.		
This highlights the \$14k moved from SDBC to Pavilion - an expense in the SDBC and an income in the Pavilion account		
SDBC Income	Actuals	Comments
Total Donation Income	\$70	amazon smile
Total Education Income	\$1,999	
Total Monthly Program.	\$0	
Total Membership Income	\$3,592	
Total Raffle & Auction	\$728	
Total Special Projects Income	\$1,461	
Total Tool Sales	\$912	
Spring Show Sale	\$0	
Total SDBC Income	\$8,764	
SDBC Expenses		
Moved to Pavilion checking	\$14,000	Transfer from SDBC checking to Pavilion Checking
Total Education	\$3,167	trees, books, pots,...
Total Japanese Friendship Garden	\$1,957	pumice, akadama, security fence
Total Library	\$122	bonsai focus, Intl Bonsai
Total Mas Takashi Grant	\$110	printed material
Total Membership	\$401	badges
Total Monthly Program	\$1,079	Perez demo/tree; Pressler demo, kitchen supplies
Total Newsletter	\$257	Printed copies
Total SDBC Club Expenses		
Total GSBF Liability Insurance	\$1,760	insurance
Other non-discretionary	\$248	licenses,,dues, PO box,office supplies
Discretionary	\$491	bat/sil donations,brd mtgs, raffle
Total SDBC Spring Show	\$154	fliers
Total Special Projects	\$1,560	bus rental
Total Taxes	\$380	Sales tax, SOI
Total Tool Table Expenses	\$225	
Total SDBC Expense	\$25,910	
Net SDBC Income (Loss)	(\$17,146)	Includes \$14k transfer to Pavilion
Pavilion Income	Actuals	Comments
Donations to PPP 2020	\$6,000	Qualcomm grant, member donations
Moved from SDBC checking	\$14,000	Transfer to Pavilion checking from SDBC checking
Total Pavilion Income	\$20,000	
Pavilion Expense		
Total Maintenance & Improvements	\$289	Pavilion cement mixer, redicrete
Total Pavilion Pedestal Project	\$14,396	Pedestals, tops, cement
Total pavilion expense	\$14,685	
Net Pavilion Income (Loss)	\$5,315	(\$20,000 -\$14,685)
Net SDBC and Pavilion Income (loss)	(\$11,832)	(\$17,146+\$5,315)
Net SDBC Income (loss) w/o Pedestal project	(\$3,146)	(\$17,146+\$14,000)
Net Pavilion Income (loss) w/o Pedestal Project	(\$289)	(\$0+\$289)
Net SDBC and Pavilion Income (loss) w/o Pedestal Project	(\$3,436)	

We are running negative income for each month this year. Normally this is covered by our major fundraisers - the Spring Show, the Safari Park Bonsai Pavilion Silent Auction and the Lake Poway Picnic which together used to bring in about \$7k of income, but this year has been very different.

Without the \$14k withdrawal from SDBC checking (SDBC expense) and the corresponding \$14k deposit into Pavilion checking, we would have been at -\$3,436 as of m/e June. Our only sources of income have been membership dues and donations (for the Pavilion Pedestal Project). Fortunately, we have a decent bank balance that will help us weather this COVID crisis - fingers crossed!

I submitted the Sales Tax Return for the 2nd quarter of 2020 (April, May, June).

GOOD NEWS - We had no sales tax obligation in 2Q 2020!

BAD NEWS - We had no sales this quarter.

SDBC Board Meeting *Jack Graham*

The SDBC board held a Zoom meeting on July 7. The following items were discussed, and actions taken, as needed.

- The JFG is offering free admission to SDBC members. Susan will check to see if that includes family members
- There was a discussion with Bill about the face book for the SDBC. Bill will check with Eric to see if there is a log in number.
- Bill encouraged that more people would post on the face book so that we can get more activity. Showing different aspects of Bonsai trees so that people accessing this face book page can get more excited about doing Bonsai.
- There were discussions of the live demonstration by Fred working on Japanese Black Pines. There were many comments by board members about how this first video demonstration was well done.
- There were discussions of having a plant sale sometime in the future at the JFG. We decided that it's something to consider but sometime in the future if situations with the Coronavirus get safer.
- There were discussions with Uday about trimming down our email lists removing non active members. We now have approximately 300 paid members and 180 unpaid members. We have been sending out

approximately 700 emails in each email blast. Uday will work to trim this list.

- There were discussions on how we can get people to become current on their annual membership dues.
- Ignacio will write up a review of Fred's presentation for the July wire.
- Bill Graham discussed that we will cancel all 2020 classes and the club will refund these payments back to these people who signed up.

Things to watch, read, digest

[Bonsai Detail Wiring - YouTube](#)

[Bonsai Beginner Series - Structural Wiring - YouTube](#)

If you have ever had a question about the proper technique for wiring bonsai, Ryan Neil has YouTube videos that go into great detail on the subject. He breaks down not only the How but the Why. It is one of the best primers I've seen. He recommends starting with his brief Structural Wiring video .

Looking for a Newsletter Editor

San Diego Bonsai Club is looking to fill the Bonsai Wire editor position for the remainder of 2020. There are 5 more editions scheduled. The Wire editor's responsibilities include collecting the articles and pictures submitted by the newsletter's contributors, then formatting the content into the existing newsletter template. The writers are prompt about submitting their articles to meet the deadlines, so the editor does not have to do any writing or generating content. Some re-arranging of material and corrections are usually necessary. The June and July versions of the newsletter are in straight Microsoft Word format - nothing fancy! It takes about 3-4 hours to put the Wire together. The most difficult part is getting the correct placement of the pictures!

Jaya Kaelberer has filled in as editor for the June and July issues. This is in addition to her duties as SDBC treasurer and her active participation as a volunteer at SDBC Safari Park Bonsai Pavilion. Thank you, Jaya, for keeping this important communication tool going.

If you have been thinking of volunteering for the club and this job sounds like a good fit for you, please send an email to Sue at susangcarter2004@att.net

Club Website

View our virtual Spring Show and watch the talk on de-candling Black Pines on our website at www.sandiegobonsaiclub.com

Who We Are

Address: P.O. Box 86037
San Diego, CA 92138
Email: SDBC01@gmail.com
Website: www.sandiegobonsaiclub.com

Board Members

President :	Sue Carter susangcarter2004@att.net
1st Vice President :	Ignacio De La Torre igdlt@att.net
VP Education :	Bill Graham wfgraham3rd@gmail.com
VP Special Projects :	Abe Far abe_far@yahoo.com
Treasurer :	Jaya Kaelberer jaya.littletree@cox.net
VP Membership :	Udaykant Pandey udaykant@gmail.com
Secretary :	Jack Graham jgraham@drammechter.com
Past President:	Barbara French-Lee barbflee@hotmail.com

Japanese Friendship Garden

Bonsai Curator:	Neil Auwarter neilauwarter@hotmail.com
Liaison:	Barbara French-Lee barbflee@hotmail.com

Bonsai Pavilion, Safari Park

Curator:	John Jackson bonsaijohn@cox.net
Assistant Curator:	Dennis Wagner denisW@cox.net
Liaison:	'lyn Stevenson inthegrove@cox.net

Appointed Positions

Webmaster:	Ron Kaelberer rkaelberer@cox.net
Tool Sales Manager:	Darryl/Christine Elmer droadie@sbcglobal.net
Historian:	Sonya Holmquist sonyaanneh@gmail.com
Benefit Drawing Manager:	Paul Lawrence jplawrence99@gmail.com
Sunshine Chair:	Susan Baker baker@susanMbaker.com
Librarian:	Sonya Holmquist sonyaanneh@gmail.com
Refreshment Coordinator:	Christina Vargas
Publicity:	Keith Carter kcarter315@att.net
Audio Visual:	Wayne Lord wayne832@gmail.com
The Bonsai Wire Editor:	Open
The Bonsai Wire Postal Distributor:	Shirley Kavanaugh, Jr
Social Media Coordinator:	Christian Reha christianreha@gmail.com

Please Note

The Bonsai Wire (TBW) is published monthly by the San Diego Bonsai Club (SDBC) except for May. TBW and the SDBC logo are properties of SDBC. Articles are provided by SDBC members. Any articles submitted by non-SDBC members—if published—become property of SDBC. All submitted articles are subject to editing. No part of this publication may be reproduced without written permission from the SDBC Board.

Closing Thought

Early morning mist
the old pine tree feels the drops
Remembers her youth



*July 2020
The Bonsai Wire in the Time of Covid-19*

San Diego Bonsai Club
P.O. Box 86037
San Diego 92138

Return Service Requested