

# The Bonsai Wire

....in the Time of Covid-19

## President's Message Sue Carter, President and CEO



Hello Club Members. I hope you are well and safe. Like so many of you, I miss being able to enjoy the company of you all, to share our bonsai stories, to learn from the experts and from each other, and to get cool stuff from the raffle table. I know we are all anxious for that to happen. Meanwhile, here's some news about activities that are continuing.

The SDBC launched a Virtual Spring Show on our website last month. If you haven't had a chance to visit the show and take a virtual stroll through the various gates on the site, I encourage you to do that. There are over 70 stunning bonsai trees owned by SDBC members and by the club. You can admire more than 20 shohin, beautiful kusamono, lovely bonsai pots, and see interesting "behind the scenes" explanations of how some trees were trained and grown over a period of years.

Special thanks to Mark and Cathy Edgar, Ron Kaelberer, and all the club members who participated in putting on this show. Well done!

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

The San Diego Bonsai Club Facebook page got a new look and currently has 250 members. The page is open to club members as well as to the public. People request to become a member on our page and one of our Administrators will approve. Anyone who is a member on the page can post pictures, ask questions, and make comments on other posts. If you are not a Facebook user, but have been thinking about becoming one, our page is a great way to start. Or you can just look at the page to see what's going on in our bonsai community without joining.

The SDBC Board is currently working on a Safe Reopening Plan so that we will have all the protocols in place and can meet all the safety requirements when the governing authorities give us the OK to have our meetings again. As you can imagine, this is no easy tasks since the restrictions can be complex and things can change at any time. The

safety, health, and well-being of our club members are the most important factors and we will not compromise those, so stay tuned for updates.

## Education Bill Graham, VP

Welcome to June. I hope everyone is staying safe in these trying times! If you are essential and still working, please be safe out there! If you are staying home, I hope you are getting all of that work done on your trees you have to squeeze into your normal day. Personally, I have been working like normal, so, nothing extra is getting done at my house. Just my normal routine, which entails too much work and not enough time!

Due to the 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.

If you were signed up for the Beginner's Class in April, you have two choices. You can carry over your sign up to the August - September - November class or you can be issued a refund. This is assuming we are allowed to have a meeting in August. As of right now, this is up in the air. If we are unable to meet or follow whatever guidelines are in place at the time, we will make a decision at that time as to how we will proceed. Please email me at [wfgraham3rd@gmail.com](mailto:wfgraham3rd@gmail.com) with your preference. If you decide on a refund, I will pass your information on to our Treasurer, Jaya Kaelberer, who will get checks processed and sent out.

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](mailto: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 April. Please welcome Keith Ballard, Trudy Seeley, Dominic Murphy, Tai Nguyen, Serafin Zazueta, Carolyn Clemens, Chris Skalka. With these additions we now have 280 current members. An additional 193 individuals 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.

## *Bonsai Pavilion* *Lyn Stevenson* *SDBC-Safari Park Liaison*

The SDBC was to have its 9th Anniversary Celebration at the May 17th meeting at the Bonsai Pavilion with the traditional picnic and silent auction but the Safari Park and Zoo has been closed to visitors and volunteers during this Coronavirus pandemic. The Pavilion volunteers were granted limited special admission for a few hours each week after concern was voiced to the Administration. In turn, the limited crew of bonsai volunteers has been able to accomplish some incredible work while the Park is officially closed to visitors.

Our special thanks to Curator John Jackson, Assistant Dennis Wagner, Grant Writer Jim Kirchmer, Construction Materials Purchaser Mark Edgar, and Construction Team and Pavilion Volunteers: Julia Chow, Cathy Edgar, Chuck Fasilis, Sonya Holmquist, Jaya Kaelberer, Sue Kirchmer, Carla Marasco, Sandi Marasco, Charlie & Sylvia Mosse, and Ken Zito. Since we were limited to days and hours and numbers of volunteers, these special 15 have been carrying the burden for our entire cadre of

volunteers. Many, many kudos and thanks to each one of them!

Our original construction plan for the Pavilion was to replace the temporary tables and stands for the bonsai on exhibition but financial constraints delayed that plan until this year. Now, several very substantial and permanent beautiful granite and stone pedestals and tops are being installed by several strong, hearty, willing volunteers. With the Pavilion closed to visitors, this became a most opportune time for this project and we look forward to the time when the SDBC and all visitors will see the results.

While this construction was going on, bonsai had to be moved to temporary areas in the back of the Pavilion but work continued on the grooming, trimming, and weeding as well as garden maintenance and transplanting, etc. With the tremendous amount of heavy rains earlier in the spring caused more than normal tree growth but fortunately our earlier, reconstructed paths and landscaping provided much success as compared with prior years.

The Park assisted with emptying the ponds for cleaning and algae removal and volunteers cleaned the ponds and stream areas more meticulously before new water was introduced. Our traditional fish banners needed replacements after a couple of years of wear and tear, so new ones were ordered. Dennis and a team of volunteers have also removed the candles from several bonsai and garden pines as needed in the springtime. Several photos were taken during this lock down time and show the work and the progress

Besides the time and talent needed for these improvements, additional funds beyond our current reserve will be needed to complete this latest undertaking. Thanks to Qualcomm, Udaykant Pandey's employer, for donating a grant and Sue Carter and Uday for preparing and submitting necessary paperwork. Jim Kirchmer has been in contact with San Diego County who has supported past requests from the Pavilion. With the current constraints on County finances due to the impact of the Coronavirus, we may not be as fortunate this year. A further request was made to the elected Officers and Board SDBC for additional financial support also. Support from SDBC members and friends is always appreciated!

The Pavilion volunteers look forward to the Safari Park re-opening and to share all the progress that has been made at the Bonsai Pavilion while the Park has been closed to visitors. More details will then be shared with photos and explanations and especially with visits by all!

## *Bonsai Pavilion Pedestal Project Mark Edgar*

The Bonsai Pavilion at Safari Park has been in existence for more than 35 years. Volunteers from the San Diego Bonsai Club built and maintained the current version of the Pavilion, working more than 2000 hours every year.

During the 10 years that the Pavilion has been open, the existing wooden bonsai benches used to display 43 bonsai trees have deteriorated and need to be replaced.

Bench replacement was approved and funded by the San Diego Bonsai Club and by separate funds from the Bonsai Pavilion. A grant from Qualcomm also provided funding for the project.



About two years ago, Pavilion volunteers began to search for table replacements that would be maintenance free, long-lasting, cost effective, and aesthetically pleasing. Many ideas and examples of benches were collected and evaluated. The design that best met the criteria above was a pre-cut stone top and a pedestal made of stacked column blocks that are filled with cement. Construction is relatively simple allowing it to be inexpensively done by volunteers from the San Diego Bonsai Club.

Safari Park closed temporarily in mid-March but opened in mid-April to a small number of volunteers which allowed the pedestal construction to begin.



The construction team is comprised of Ken Zito, John Jackson, Dennis Wagner, Mark Edgar and Jim Kirchmer. Since Safari Park is currently closed to the public, construction is progressing rapidly. Twenty pedestal bases have been completed and the stone tops are due for installation over the next two weeks.



We purchased a small cement mixer which has been worth its weight in gold. So far, "Big Red" has mixed 12,000 pounds of cement or about 132 90# bags. Just 17,000 pounds left to do.



The team has developed a smooth and efficient routine for pouring the foundations and setting the blocks in place. About 260 man hours have been spent building 20 pedestal bases.

We received a small shipment of stone tops and installed a couple of trees on the new pedestals. The only item missing is a stainless steel bracket that John made for the

tree information. The bracket is screwed into the bottom of the rock top.



## Japanese Friendship Garden Neil Auwarter, Curator

From the Japanese Friendship Garden, there is some disturbing news and some good news. Shortly after the JFG's COVID-19 closure on March 16, someone twice vandalized the bonsai display area at night.



Two trees were damaged: the large ficus nerifolia and the Chinese elm recently donated by Jim Barrett, which was pictured in the April JFG column. Two pots were also destroyed. Based on security camera footage, the suspect is a transient person who was jailed for a prior act of vandalism at the JFG, but was recently released under the COVID-19 release program.

The police have referred the matter to the City Attorney with a recommendation to prosecute for trespass and/or obtain a restraining order banning him from Balboa Park. To prevent any further damage in the meantime, the bonsai



trees have been relocated to safe places, some within the JFG and others at the homes of our volunteers.

That's the disturbing news. The

**good** news is that these events spurred the JFG to develop plans for enclosing the bonsai collection. The enclosure will consist of wood-framed bamboo panels that will be put up each night and removed and stored each morning. To provide a structure to affix the panels to, the existing arbor structure over the benches along the building will be extended outward to the edge of the bonsai display area. There will be wooden slats overhead, as with the existing arbor, but they will be widely spaced to allow essentially full sun. Also, the existing set of benches under the outer edge of the existing arbor, which are a bit dilapidated, will be rebuilt with a cleaner "footless" design. The materials cost for the project is \$3000. By late May the JFG had raised \$1700; the SDBC board then authorized a contribution of the remaining \$1300. Thank you, SDBC! The project broke ground June 5 with the pouring of post footings. Hopefully, the project will be complete, and the trees returned to their benches, in time for the JFG's reopening in the coming weeks.

It's too soon to say whether the planned SDBC July meeting at the JFG will go forward. But if it does, we look forward to showing off our new display area.

Finally, the JFG bonsai collection was featured recently in a Bonsai Around the World blog series by the National Bonsai Foundation. The NBF is the organization that supports the bonsai and penjing collection at the National Arboretum in Washington, DC. Here is a link to the piece: <https://www.bonsai-nbf.org/blog>.

## Bonsai Basics Charlie Mosse

The GSBF has a beautiful collection in Fresno, California, called the Clark Collection.

In their June newsletter, 'BONSAI TOMODACHI', Bob Hilvers, curator, wrote a very good article about traditional styling vs contemporary styling with two excellent photos of a beautiful old Olive.

The first photo is of the tree in its traditional style. The second photo is the **same** tree after being styled by Ryan Neil in the contemporary style. This is a perfect comparison of the two schools of styling.

<https://gsbfclarkbonsaicollection.org/assets/june-newsletter--2.pdf>

## *May 19 SDBC Board Meeting Minutes*

A Zoom meeting was called to order by President Sue Carter at 6:36 p.m. Board members present were Ignacio De La Torre, Bill Graham, Jaya Kaelberer. Barbara French-Lee and Uday Pandey, Also present were Mark Edgar, Jim Kirchmer and Keith Carter (acting secretary)

### **I. Request for San Diego Bonsai Club to Match Member Donations to the Pedestal Project at Safari Park**

Mark said the Zoo Safari Park Bonsai Pavilion has spent the \$8,000 it had in its account to cover the initial work on the pedestal construction project. They are waiting for delivery of 13 pedestal tops but had no more money available to buy additional tops. They also are working on more pedestals, but are discussing ways to raise more money, including an appeal for donations from members and supporters.

He said another \$14,000 of the total cost of \$22,000 is needed to finish the project. Mark requested that the board agree to match all individual donations up to \$7,000. Time is essential, he said, because the park is now closed and it makes the construction work easier to complete. Mark said it now appears a grant from the county is less likely because of the pandemic. Jim said he has been in contact with county officials who told him to check back in September. And while the pavilion does have additional funds in its club account, it has other expenses and he prefers not to run that account down too far.

Bill suggested that the pavilion consider installing plaques on the pedestals (which Mark said average about \$500 each to build) to honor donors. However, Mark and Jim both said that the Safari Park officials had refused to permit the pavilion to provide such individual donor recognition in the past and that they had opposed a plan to seek Go Fund Me donations for pavilion improvements.

Jaya said the pavilion currently has about \$1,500 in donations now and that the SDBC has \$58,000 in its checking account. She suggested that the club could move some money from its checking account into the pavilion account.

Sue said that \$58,000 is a lot of money and that she would like to see the club be doing good things with it; even committing \$7,000 would still leave the club with \$51,000. She would like to see the board move forward with providing matching funds.

Mark said that the pavilion provides a high-visibility promotion for the club with the general public and encourages new members. He also said it provides members with a place to work on high-quality trees and to improve their bonsai skills.

Ignacio suggested the club commit \$7,000. Jaya proposed that the club give \$14,000 to the pavilion to let them finish the work.

Mark said that he believes there are a core group of people who will donate and that they should be able to raise at least \$4,000 or \$5,000 easily. Bill said that while the club has plenty of money, he does not want to take away from people who would like to donate. People like to feel like they're contributing. He does not want to eliminate the potential for donations for pedestal project.

Ignacio said that the pavilion should continue fund-raising for pedestals with the money added to the account to cover the cost of the pedestals. Barbara agreed that it's a good idea to go ahead and finish the project.

**ACTION ITEM:** Ignacio made a motion that the club guarantee \$14,000 for the project. There was no second, so he withdrew the motion.

**ACTION ITEM:** Jaya made a motion that the club move \$14,000 from the SDBC checking account to the Bonsai Pavilion checking account to cover the cost of the pedestal project. Ignacio seconded the motion. The board vote was 5-0 in favor of the motion.

**ACTION ITEM:** Jaya made a second motion to increase the pavilion budget by \$14,000 to allow the pavilion to spend against it. Ignacio seconded the motion. The board vote was 5-0 in favor of the motion.

### **II. Status of Future Speakers and Presentations**

Ignacio said that because the SDBC may not be able to have formal meetings for a while, he is concerned about losing membership.

To continue momentum that had been established earlier in the year, he asked for discussion about whether to have a live Zoom presentation by a demonstrator or if having an expert do a prerecorded video and put it on the website would be better for the club's education efforts.

Currently, Fred Miyahara had been scheduled to do a presentation on pines at the June meeting and Jason Chan was scheduled to speak in July. Ignacio said he preferred the live presentation as it is more dynamic and can provide a chance for viewers to ask questions.

He said that there would be technical issues that need to be resolved and that it might cost as much as \$100 to use the Zoom platform and to get their technical assistance in setting up a live presentation. He has not yet talked to Fred about doing it as a live performance. He said Jason Chan already does videos and would likely be comfortable doing it this way.

Bill said his experience in using online meeting platforms was that it is difficult with a large audience and that it's best to do it so that only the speaker gets to talk. Barbara said it would be worth paying the Zoom fee until the club gets comfortable with the process. The board consensus was in favor of proceeding with investigating doing a live presentation on the regular club meeting date of June 14 and Ignacio said he will start working on it tomorrow.

### III. Facebook Page Access

Sue reported that the Facebook page had been revived, thanks in large part to Eric Jacobson's efforts. The issue for discussion is whether posting on the page should be limited to members. Sue said she favored allowing anyone who requested to join but that there should be oversight to make sure that inappropriate content is removed. She sees the Facebook page as a way to promote dialogue within the larger bonsai community.

Uday said the page shouldn't be restricted to members and allow people who are interested in bonsai. Bill said he runs several Facebook groups and took over as a moderator on the SDBC page because it had been dead. He lets everybody in and if they do bad stuff kicks them out. To get people interested in bonsai, let them join. They have to ask and be approved but the page needs to be monitored. The board consensus was that membership should not be requirement for posting on the Facebook page.

Sue also expressed concern about not being able to make contact with newsletter editor Katie Borton because she's the only one with access to MailChimp. Barbara said there have been instances in the past that Katie has been difficult

to reach. Ignacio said he would be willing to help out with the newsletter if Katie needs assistance.

Sue said there needs to be an email to go out to members quickly to promote the virtual spring show that starts on May 23. She said she would write something to go out right away and Uday said he would distribute it to the membership.

Jaya said she will go to Union Bank this week to arrange for a club credit card so additional names can be added to the club's MailChimp account. (The board in March had authorized adding the names of the president and membership director to the account.)

The meeting was adjourned at 8:18 p.m

## Treasurer's Report

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.

| SAN DIEGO BONSAI CLUB - TREASURER'S REPORT   |                 |  |
|--|-----------------|--|
| Jaya Kaelberer as of May 31, 2020  |                 |  |
| Accounts are reconciled with Union Bank statements   |                 |  |
| <b>BANK ACCOUNT BALANCES</b>   |                 |  |
| SDBC Checking  | \$43,070        |  |
| Japanese Friendship Garden   | \$1,835         |  |
| Bonsai Pavilion Checking   | \$25,682        |  |
| <b>TOTAL FUNDS:</b>  | <b>\$70,587</b> |  |
| The following is a condensed income statement<br>It shows our year-to-date revenue and expenses<br>A detailed version is available on request. |                 |  |
| <b>Income</b>  | <b>Actuals</b>  | <b>To-Date Comments</b>                        |
| Donation   | \$70            | amazon smile                                   |
| Education  | \$1,999         |  |
| Donations to PPP 2020  | \$3,500         |  |
| Xfer to Pavilion account   | \$14,000        | Income in the Pavilion checking account        |
| Monthly Program.   | \$0             |  |
| Membership   | \$3,437         |  |
| Raffle & Auction   | \$728           |  |
| Special Projects   | \$1,461         |  |
| Tool Sales   | \$912           |  |
| Spring Show Sale   | \$0             |  |
| <b>Total Income</b>  | <b>\$26,109</b> |  |
| <b>Expenses</b>  |                 |  |
| Bonsai Pavilion  | \$203           | cement mixer, redicrete                        |
| Xfer to Pavilion account   | \$14,000        | Expense in the SDBC checking account           |
| Pavilion Pedestal Project  | \$4,639         | pedestals, tops, cement                        |
| Education  | \$3,167         | trees, books, pots,...                         |
| Japanese Friendship Garden   | \$1,957         | pumice, akadama, security fence                |
| Library  | \$122           | bonsai focus, Intl Bonsai                      |
| Mas Takanashi Grant  | \$110           | printed material                               |
| Membership   | \$401           | badges   |
| Monthly Program  | \$1,035         | Perez demo/tree;Pressler demo;kitchen supplies |
| Newsletter   | \$257           | Printed copies                                 |
| SDBC Club Expenses   |                 |  |
| GSBF Liability Insurance   | \$1,760         | insurance                                      |
| Other non-discretionary  | \$248           | licenses,dues, PO box,office supplies          |
| Discretionary  | \$491           | fliers,bat/sil donations,brd mtgs, raffle      |
| SDBC Spring Show   | \$154           |  |
| Special Projects   | \$1,560         | bus rental                                     |
| Taxes  | \$380           |  |
| Tool Table   | \$225           |  |
| <b>Total Expense</b>   | <b>\$30,708</b> | budgeted expense is \$63,579                   |
| <b>Net Income (Loss)</b>   | <b>-\$4,599</b> |  |

## Club Website

View our virtual Spring Show and check out our website at [www.sandiegobonsaiclub.com](http://www.sandiegobonsaiclub.com)

## Who We Are

**Address:** P.O. Box 86037  
San Diego, CA 92138  
**Email:** [SDBC01@gmail.com](mailto:SDBC01@gmail.com)  
**Website:** [www.sandiegobonsaiclub.com](http://www.sandiegobonsaiclub.com)

## Board Members

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

## Japanese Friendship Garden

|                 |   |
|-----------------|---|
| Bonsai Curator: | Neil Auwarter<br><a href="mailto:neilauwarter@hotmail.com">neilauwarter@hotmail.com</a> |
| Liaison:        | Barbara French-Lee<br><a href="mailto:barbflee@hotmail.com">barbflee@hotmail.com</a>    |

## Bonsai Pavilion, Safari Park

|          |  |
|----------|--|
| Curator: | John Jackson<br><a href="mailto:bonsaijohn@cox.net">bonsaijohn@cox.net</a> |
|----------|--|

|                    |  |
|--------------------|--|
| Assistant Curator: | Dennis Wagner<br><a href="mailto:denisW@cox.net">denisW@cox.net</a>          |
| Liaison:           | 'lyn Stevenson<br><a href="mailto:inthegrove@cox.net">inthegrove@cox.net</a> |

## Appointed Positions

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

## Upcoming Events

**June 20, 2020 at 11:00 a.m.** Facebook Live Instructional Session with Fred Miyahara on Japanese Black Pine care. Contact Ignacio De La Torre or Susan Carter if you have questions.

## 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.

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

**Return Service Requested**

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

