Volume 61 November | 2026 Issue 10

The Bonsai Wire

San Diego Bonsai Club

President's Message

John Holloway | President

When did you first get interested in bonsai?

I think it's interesting how often people's initial interest in bonsai was sparked by a chance encounter.

For instance, Bjorn Bjornholm was 13 when he discovered bonsai through the movie *The Karate Kid*. His interest really took off when he got a Japanese juniper tree as a birthday present.

Ryan Neil's interest in bonsai started at 12 when he saw a bonsai tree in a TV infomercial. He was even more inspired by an exhibition he went to at a local county fair soon after.

Kunio Kobayashi remembers the exact moment he became interested in bonsai when he was 28. At a Sakufu-ten exhibition, he was so impressed by Oku-no-kyosho, a 550-year-old yamadori Japanese white pine that had won the Prime Minister's Award that year, that he decided right then and there to pursue bonsai as a career, though it was a relatively late start by Japanese professional standards.

As for me, I can't pinpoint the exact moment I first got interested in bonsai, but for a college Asian art history course, we had to create an artwork inspired by what we had been exposed to during the semester. Unlike over a hundred other students' paintings, woodcuts, or ceramics, I presented a "bonsai," which was really just a pyracantha root-chopped to fit into a small terracotta pot. So I must have been at least aware of the concept of "bonsai" almost 50 years ago. Unfortunately, I had no idea how to properly care for one, and I'm sure that poor little pyracantha didn't last long.

These stories had me wondering if we, as a club, are inspiring people to start their own bonsai journeys. Do the trees we exhibit at our shows and in our

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Japanese Friendship Garden and Safari Park collections spark the imagination, leave a lasting impression, and maybe even ignite a passion for the art?

We often see a jump in memberships after our club shows, and at the Japanese Friendship Garden, we frequently get questions about how to get into bonsai and if beginner classes are offered. This shows that we are connecting with people, but do they follow through?

So I'm curious if anyone who reads this was inspired to try bonsai after seeing one of our shows or collections. I hope so, because it makes all the effort we put into them even more rewarding.

Bonsai has a beginning but no end. A bud today becomes a branch tomorrow ~ John Naka

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November Presentation

Twisting Up Bean Sized Bonsais

with Guilherme Barbosa | By Matt Jillson, 1st Vice President

Local member Guilherme Barbosa will join the San Diego Bonsai Club at this November meeting to demonstrate his technique for twisting juniper whips into complex "bean-sized" or mame bonsai. Using an adjustable branch-bending tool, aka Bonsai jack (link below to Jonas' web store), Guilherme contorts and twists junipers into material that develops very quickly and looks striking in small compositions or Ishizuki-style rock plantings. Having already seen this technique in action, I can say with confidence that this is a not-to-be-missed event for budding tree-smiths who want to create truly impressive bonsai.

Don't forget that November's meeting will be held in the War Memorial Building at the end of the San Diego Zoo parking lot.

We are twisting more Kishu juniper material than will be needed for a later club demonstration, so there will be an opportunity to purchase finished twisted "beans" at the end of Guilherme's demo.

Guilherme Barbosa is a passionate club member who stepped forward with a genuine interest in teaching bonsai to others. Originally from Brazil, he began his bonsai journey in 2018 under the guidance of well-known artist Felipe Dallorto of Nettai-en Bonsai. Locally, he manages the Brazilian steakhouse Galpão Gaúcho in downtown San Diego—feel free to stop by and say hello.

Bonsai Jack: https://store.bonsaitonight.com/collections/bonsai-tools/products/bonsai-jack

FEATURE ARTICLE

Weather – Potential for Heavy Rain, Fall Care Hints

By Charlie Mosse

The weather continues to challenge us. Very warm to hot 'winter' and spring, an incredibly hot summer with long periods of daytime, serious heat, and nights with higher temperatures than usual. Then we received significant, unseasonable rain this fall. The forecast is for particularly good chances of very wet periods for Southern California but more so for Central and NorCal. It all depends on where the storms track and whether or not the storm taps into the Pineapple Express. The amount of area with warm water off the coast will supply any storms with more water and energy.

The excessive heat and warm nights are going to challenge our trees. If your trees were not as vigorous or the color looked a bit off, the extended heat is probably why. Be patient with your affected trees. It is probably best not to make any significant changes in watering or fertilizing.

What can this mean for our trees and our workload?

Because we generally do not have cold winters anymore, quite mild actually, insects and fungal diseases are having a fun time. **More generations are being created and in shorter time periods. This means we all must be checking our trees more often and most likely will be spraying more often. Insects can still survive and propagate during mild winters, so we most likely will see infestations earlier and lasting longer.** Mites may be more of a problem this coming year due to the hot summer we had and mild winter due in 2027. A heat event this winter/spring will cause mite populations to increase significantly or even explode in a long, hot event. A mild winter will cause mealy bugs, white flies and scales will survive and can continue to spread very slowly. The same for fungal infections like Juniper Tip

Blight and mildew. **Prevention will be essential for all insects and fungal diseases on our trees and in our landscapes.**

When the climate gets milder over time, there are more problems with existing pests, as stated above. New insects and diseases can migrate into our area. Mother Nature rules.

Since the temperatures will be mild again in 2027, our trees will be watered more often and have more weeks of growing. We will be fertilizing more, especially if with extended periods of heavy rain. The trees will like the neutral pH of the rain and the flushing of salts to reduce the alkalinity of the soil. In SoCal the metabolism of most plants does not stop, so nutrient is needed. Light fertilizing is good.

Expect deciduous trees to keep their leaves longer. Chinese Elms most likely will not go completely dormant, as usual, but may retain even more leaves this year. Manual defoliation will need to be done if you want to work on a bare tree. Other deciduous trees should be defoliated manually once leaves are past their fall color and have dead areas. Evergreen broadleaf trees and conifers will likely keep growing slowly. If we have a long hot spell in December, even though the days are shorter, trees can keep growing almost at a normal rate.

Another potential problem is moisture retention during excessive rain events. Most trees should be ok. However, keep an eye on:

- Older soils that are compacted and have marginal drainage.
- Training containers with nursery soils that hold more moisture.
- Shallow containers that do not drain as efficiently as deeper containers.

What to do? Prevent excess rain from getting into a container by:

- Covering the surface of the soil with plastic sheeting.
- Place the tree under/in shelter like a plant bench or building.
- Tilt the shallow containers at about a 10–15-degree angle with a 1”-2” piece of wood.

Note: One heavy rain event is generally not a problem. If the heavy rain events are spaced out greater than 4-5-day intervals, no problem. But, if the rain just keeps coming every 3-4 days or so and/or each event is 2-3 days long, then we can have problems with wet roots. This pattern has occurred several times in the past. Add in cool days and nights, higher than normal humidity, and short daylight days resulting in less heating of the containers, then soils will have the potential to stay wet too long, not adequately drying.

As always, help can be obtained by posting questions and photos on the SDBC Facebook page, SDBC website under Resources and emailing SDBC. The best way to get advice and hands-on help is to bring the tree(s) to a club meeting about which you have questions.

EDUCATION | BOB HALE, VP EDUCATION

BEGINNER WORKSHOPS

Fall Beginners Class: - *Juniperus procumbens 'Nana"* Sold Out

Meeting dates: August 9 – September 13 – December 13

The fall beginner class sold out at the June 21st Club meeting. The class started at the August meeting. This session will be held in room 104 at 8:30 AM. These are small junipers. Past classes have been very successful in creating beautiful trees from this material.

Winter Beginners Class: - Boxwood Signup November Meeting

Meeting dates: January 10 – February 14 – March 7

The winter beginner class will go on sale at the November 8th Club meeting. The class will start on the January 10th meeting. This session will be held in room 104 at 8:30 AM. The cost is $60.00.

INTERMEDIATE WORKSHOPS

Bonsai Display Workshop (Fred Miyahara, Cathy and Mark Edgar) Spots Available

The Bonsai Display Workshop has spots available. The first session of the workshop occured at the August 9th SDBC meeting from 8:30 to 10:30 AM. A wait list is available and if you would like to add your name to the list, please email Mark Edgar at mark@mtedgar.com .

Juniper Grafting Workshop – Fred Miyahara- Sold Out

Workshop date: November 8th and February 14th

The first class will be held on November 8th at 9:00 AM at the War Memorial building in Balboa Park. During the first class, students will prepare their prostrata juniper for later grafting. We'll do practice grafts on the branches that are cutoff. Students should bring tools to prune their trees and a grafting knife. The second class will be held at the February 14th Club meeting. This session will be held in room 101 at 9:00 AM. During the second class, students will graft Kishu scions onto their prostrata juniper. Students should bring their tools including a grafting knife. The cost is $70.00.

General Information & Reminders

New members are always excited about taking the beginners' classes, and several have asked to be put on a waiting list for the next class. **Please note that sign-up sheets for all classes and workshops are first available at the Bonsai Club meeting TWO months before the classes/workshops are held unless otherwise specified.** We do not start a waiting list until after the sign-up sheet has been put out at the meeting and filled.

A reminder that all beginning classes, workshops and skills classes are taught from 8:30 am to 10:15 am on club meeting days at Balboa Park unless otherwise specified. Also, don't forget to bring any trees that you would like some help with or advice from our excellent bonsai masters at the club. Help will be at the back of Room 101 to the right of the stage.

SAFARI PARK BONSAI PAVILLON | MARK EDGAR, LIAISON WITH SAFARI PARK

The bonsai are usually very stable during a wind storm, but during the recent storm we had a bonsai that fell from its bench. The cause was something we did not anticipate – the shade cloth was torn loose by the wind and fell on a big oak in the training area. The shade cloth acted like a big sail and pulled the oak off the bench and knocked over a few smaller bonsai. The oak was undamaged but the pot broke. We had a challenging time finding a replacement pot and we had to remove some roots to get the bonsai into the pot we had. Hopefully, the oak will be OK. The Park fixed our shade cloth and we are back in business.

Camille donated this lantana to the Safari Park Bonsai Pavilion and maintains it as a volunteer. Its orange/yellow flowers are fitting for fall.

Mori and Beth repotted a shohin olive while Dennis gives us a good view of his finger.

Andrew Norbeck is making a video for KPBS TV station that follows preparation of bonsai for display. At Safari Park, Andrew is filming a foemina forest that is undergoing a reset of the structure. So far, six volunteers have invested 33 person hours in this project.

Keith trims the cork oak donated by Larry Upp. He needs a bigger stool. The top of the oak is over 8 feet from the ground.

Cathy cleans up the irises. Good thing that she has healthy knees.

MEMBERSHIP | CINDY PECILE, VP MEMBERSHIP

Welcome to fall! Hopefully the hot weather will be gone for this year.

Starting in December, the club will no longer be responsible for maintaining the name tag cases at the membership table. Members will be responsible for their individual name tags. The cases will be available over the coming months for members to pick up their name tags when attending a meeting but should not be returned after that. During a discussion at a recent Board meeting, other Board members stated that other clubs they belong to did not maintain name tags for members. With the club again approaching 650 members, the name tags have been an issue to maintain. The only name tags that will be available at the membership table will be for new members to pick up.

Please welcome the following people who joined the club in October 2026.

Kathleen Owen	Valarie MacDonald	David MacDonald	Jennifer Suarez
Jania Tung	Kamal Ummed	Miguel Carranza	Jesus Bustamante

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

You can renew your club membership for the 2026 calendar year online on the San Diego Bonsai Club website or at a club meeting. Your membership must be current to participate in club events – taking classes – beginner or intermediate, traveling on bus trips, volunteering at the Safari Park or Japanese Friendship Garden, and volunteering or selling items at the shows. **NOTE TO CLUB MEMBERS WHO HAVE JOINED SINCE SEPTEMBER 1, 2026** - You do not have to renew your membership until the start of calendar year 2028. If any existing or new member is unsure about the status of their membership, please see me at the membership table or contact me through the club email, sandiegobonsaiclub@gmail.com.

You can renew your membership or become a new member:

- In person at a club meeting. You can pay with cash, check, or credit
- On the San Diego Bonsai Club website using the payment portal

  (https://www.sandiegobonsaiclub.com/membership.html)

Club dues will remain at $30 for a single membership and each additional family member is $5.

If any of your contact information has recently changed, please let me know at a club meeting or email me at sandiegobonsaiclub@gmail.com

SDBC Board Meeting Minutes | October 13th, 2026 06:30pm Start

- The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by President John Holloway.
- Following a discussion of club expense protocol and expenditures exceeding the budget, Phaedra Ehring presented the following motion:
- At future shows, demonstrations will be conducted by current club members, who will be given precedence over guests, and will not be paid.
- Guests will be permitted to present when no member is scheduled, and any payment to guests must be approved by the Board of Directors prior to scheduling.
- This motion was seconded by Susan Ronan and passed unanimously.
- Regarding the cancellation of the picnic due to inclement weather, the City of Poway will reimburse the club's payment, excluding a $68 processing fee. Susan Ronan made a motion to apply the refund to the fee for next year's picnic, which was seconded by John Barsanti and passed unanimously.
- Regarding a request from the Pacific Bonsai Expo for the club to make a $1,500 donation to sponsor an award for their 2027 show, John Barsanti made a motion to proceed, which was seconded by Susan Ronan, and passed unanimously. President John Holloway will respond to the request by contacting the organizers to select an appropriate award and arranging payment.
- Regarding club investment strategies, Treasurer Tom Cylkowski has an appointment with US Bank to discuss Certificates of Deposit (CDs). Square has also offered the club a 4.25% interest account if a minimum balance of $10,000 is maintained. Tom will investigate and provide recommendations regarding these alternatives.
- Regarding the previously approved $5 per family member dues increase, a notice will be distributed to the membership prior to November 1 to comply with bylaw requirements.
- First Vice President, Matt Jillson, has secured a presenter for December who will demonstrate root-over-rock technique. The silent and live auctions originally scheduled for the October picnic will instead also take place at the December meeting.
- Vice President for Special Projects, Phaedra Ehring, is assembling a party committee to assist with the tasks of planning and executing events such as club meetings and shows.
- Phaedra proposed moving the November Board meeting one day earlier than usual to November 9, 2026, which was seconded by Tom Cylkowski and unanimously approved.
- The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 p.m.
- *(Note: An October general meeting was not held as the Poway Picnic was canceled due to inclement weather.)*

Meeting adjourned at 7:30 PM

TREASURER'S REPORT | TOM CYLKOWSKI, TREASURER

SAN DIEGO BONSAI CLUB - TREASURER'S REPORT							
T Cylkowski as of 30 Sep 2026							
Accounts have been reconciled with US Bank statements							
All accounts are separate. Expenses/income cannot be moved between them							
BANK ACCOUNT BALANCES (Balance sheet)	**Current**						
Larry Ragle Scholarship Fund	$38,718						
SDBC Checking	$71,034.58						
Japanese Friendship Garden	$3,850.61						
Bonsai Pavilion Checking	$22,744.57						
SDBC Reserve Fund	$0.00						
Ragle Reserve Fund	$0.00						
TOTAL FUNDS:	**$136,348.05**						
SDBC Income	**1/1 - 9/30**	**1/1 - 8/31**	**Change**	**Description**	**Budget**		**Budget - Remaining**
SDBC Reserve Fund Income	-	-	-	SDBC Reserve Fund investment account results	750		750
Ragle Reserve Fund Income	-	-	-	Ragle Reserve Fund investment account results	750		750
Total Donation Income	1,226.80	724.00	503	Total Donations	2,100		873
Total Education Income	6,164.00	6,364.00	(200)	Total Education Income	15,150		8,986
Total Grant Qualcomm	500.00	500.00	-	Total Grants	1,500		1,000
Total Larry Ragle Scholarship Income	1,017.03	1,017.03	-	Income from services or assets	1,000		(17)
Total Membership Income	9,002.51	8,253.83	749	Total Memberships	11,000		1,997
Total Monthly Program.	3,445.00	3,245.00	200	Monthly program income	3,000		(445)
Total Raffle & Auction	6,591.97	6,419.97	172	Raffle table or meeting auction income	10,900		4,308
Total Show Income	41,935.82	24,324.82	17,611	Show income	40,000		(1,936)
Total Special Projects Income	4,040.00	4,040.00	-	Special projects income	2,920		(1,120)
Total Tool Sales	2,676.13	2,879.64	(204)	Total Tool Sales income	6,000		3,324
Total SDBC Income	**76,599.26**	57,768.29	18,831	**Total:**	**95,070**		**18,471**
SDBC Expenses	**1/1 - 9/30**	**1/1 - 8/31**	**Change**	**Description**	**Budget**		**Budget - Remaining**
Total Bonsai Pavilion	4,055.50	4,055.50	-	Safari Park Bonsai Pavilion Expenses	2,750		(1,306)
Total Education	8,380.11	8,011.88	368	Education program expenses	10,600		2,220
Total Japanese Friendship Garden	543.20	543.20	-	JFG operational expenses	350		(193)
Total Larry Ragle Scholarship Fund	2,000.00	-	2,000	Ragle Scholarship Fund expenses	2,000		-
Total Library	137.91	137.91	-	Library expenses	120		(18)
Mas Takanashi Grant	-	-	-	Grant award expenses	500		500
Total Donations/Contributions			-	Donations to other supported organizations			-
Total Membership	2,076.18	2,014.22	62	Membership badges or other expenses	3,050		974
Total Monthly Program	10,200.16	10,200.16	-	Cost to host monthly programs	11,000		800
Total Newsletter	989.41	907.77	82	Newsletter expenses	1,650		661
Total SDBC Club Expenses	6,970.35	6,412.58	558	Club operational expenses	9,980		3,010
Total SDBC Fall Show	13,929.20	-	13,929	Fall Show expenses	16,500		2,571
Total SDBC Spring Show	22,213.36	22,213.36	-	Spring Show expenses	18,565		(3,648)
Total Special Projects	7,440.00	7,440.00	-	Special projects expenses	8,850		1,410
Total Taxes	2,950.00	2,900.00	50	Taxes	5,155		2,205
Total Tool Table Expenses	1,508.51	1,502.34	6	Tool Table expenses	4,000		2,491
Total SDBC Expense	**83,393.89**	66,338.92	17,055	**Total:**	**95,070**		**11,676**
Money accrued to pay Sales Tax (Other Income)	**3,772.44**						
Net SDBC Operating Income (Loss)	**(3,022.19)**	(8,570.63)	5,548				

Upcoming Meetings and Activities

EVENT	DATE(S)	LOCATION	ROOMS
November Meeting	Nov. 8th	War Memorial Building	
December Meeting	Dec. 13th	Casa del Prado	101 & 104
January Meeting	Jan 10th	Casa del Prado	101 & 104

**SDBC meetings are subject to availability of the rooms in Casa del Prado. Our preferred date for the second Sunday of each month sometimes conflicts with other clubs' shows or special event, so we choose an alternative day.*

Reoccurring Activities

- Japanese Friendship Garden bonsai workdays: Tuesdays & Saturdays; contact Neil Auwarter for volunteer information.

- San Diego Zoo Safari Park Bonsai Pavilion workdays: First and third Saturdays of each month; contact Mark Edgar for volunteer information.

Resources

- Statewide events. See the Golden State Bonsai Federation
- SDBC Resources
    - SanDiegoBonsaiClub.com
    - Email BonsaiWire@SanDiegoBonsaiClub.com
    - Social media platforms

VOLUNTEER TEAM | SAN DIEGO BONSAI CLUB

BOARD MEMBERS

President:	**John Holloway**	VP Special Projects:	**Phaedra Ehring**
1st Vice President:	**Matt Jillson**	VP Education:	**Bob Hale**
Secretary:	**John Barsanti**	VP Membership:	**Cindy Pecile**
Treasurer:	**Tom Cylkowski**	Past President:	**Susan Ronan**

APPOINTED POSITIONS

Refreshment Coordinator:	**Open**
Publicity:	**Keith Carter**
Sunshine Chair:	**Susan Baker**
Librarian & Historian:	**Sonya Holmquist**
Help Corner:	**John Voss**
Tool Sales Manager:	**Geramie Shaver** **Jake Shaver**
YouTube & Photographer:	**Carla Marasco**
Audio Visual:	**Michael Bird**
Webmaster:	**Janice Hale**
Coordinator of Education Curriculum:	**Bob Hale**
The Bonsai Wire Editor	**Jonathan Devera**

Questions ~ Comments ~ Concerns

BonsaiWire@SanDiegoBonsaiClub.com

JAPANESE FRIENDSHIP GARDEN

Bonsai Curator:	**Neil Auwarter**
Liaison:	**Barbara French-Lee**

SAFARI PARK BONSAI PAVILION

Curator:	**John Jackson**
Assistant Curator:	**Dennis Wagner**
Liaison:	**Mark Edgar**

Japanese Friendship Garden Bonsai workdays:

Tuesdays & Saturdays
contact Neil Auwarter for volunteer information

San Diego Zoo Safari Park Bonsai Pavilion workdays:

1st & 3rd Saturdays of the month
contact Mark Edgar for volunteer information

The Bonsai Wire

November - 2026

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

Return Service Requested