# BONSAI WIRE

January 2022 Volume 48 Issue 1

San Diego Bonsai Club

www.sandiegobonsaiclub.com

P.O. Box 86037 San Diego



Ignacio De La Torre, President

Dear members:

I hope the holidays provided time for you to spend with family and friends, even if virtually.

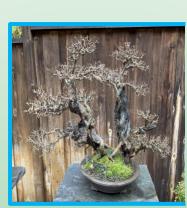
As we begin a new year, it is necessary to extend a warm-hearted thank you to our many volunteers who served the club in 2021. Volunteers offered their services at the Safari Park, Japanese Friendship Garden, member classes, monthly meetings, our kitchen, library, the Spring and Fall shows, picnics, and, of course, our newsletter. We are not the club we are without your dedication.

The thanks extend as well to our Board members, who met monthly during the height of the pandemic ensuring the business of the club was addressed, and our past president, Sue Carter. Sue held the reins of the organization during a difficult time while the club was not able to meet in the traditional way. In some regards, it was more difficult to oversee the club operation. She did so in a steadfast and thoughtful way. When you come across one of the many volunteers who keep the club on track, feel free to extend a warm thanks.

The new year offers us much to look forward to — exciting programs, well-planned and informative classes for all level of student, and enriching volunteer opportunities. This time of year provides an opportunity to reflect on why we choose to practice Bonsai. For some, it is the journey that comes with developing nursery stock material into something worthy of a show; for others, it is taking well-developed trees and adding their influence. And for many, it is the camaraderie that comes with participating in a club with members who share a common interest. There is no shortage of good reasons to be involved. I hope you will seek out opportunities to make new friends, share common stories, gain new knowledge, and provide your talents.

We return to our typical meetings for the time being. Please note that the California Department of Public Health, along with the County of San Diego, have instituted a mask requirement for all indoor public gatherings regardless of vaccination status. While such a requirement is in place, we will ask members to comply during our monthly meetings.

We're off and running. So, here's to our members and a great 2022!



Pomegranate at SPBP donated by Stan Childs

January 9, 2022: meeting at Balboa Park, Casa del Prado room 101

Classes: see page 2

#### Resources:

visit our website for information on private instructors and other resources to advance your bonsai skills www.sandiegobonsaiclub.com

## Write it on your heart That every day Is the best Day of the year.

Ralph Waldo Emmerson



## Education: Bill Graham, VP Education

**2022 Here we come!** The old year has ended with a winter bang and we got plenty of rain. Continue with your winter maintenance and get ready to start repotting season. I hope everyone enjoyed the styling competition. I think all 4 trees were very well done! Thank you to Steven, Carla, Christina, and Kyle for stepping up and putting themselves on display. Well done!

#### Beginning Class: - Ulmus parvifolia - Chinese Elm - Gary Jones January 9, February 20, March 13.

The 1<sup>st</sup> Beginners Class for 2022 is COMPLETELY SOLD OUT! This will be the largest class I have ever put on. Please try to be early to help set up the room so we can get everyone in and ready to work. Please pay attention to the dates. Our February meeting is late due to the Cactus Society Show. Gary Jones will be the lead instructor for the class. We have some very nice Chinese elms to work on.

#### Intermediate Workshops:

January – NO WORKSHOP – ANNUAL CLUB REPOTTING EVENT. Bring a tree and our many volunteers will help you repot it. Please limit yourself to two (2) trees. PLEASE clean and prune your trees before bringing them in. Soil and assistance will be provided both before and after the meeting.

**February – Grafting – Fred Miyahara** SOLD OUT! Our own grafting Master, Fred Miyahara, will be hosting a grafting workshop at the February Meeting. Understock, scions, tape and bags will be provided. You will need to bring a grafting knife. If you do not have a grafting knife, the club has them for sale on the tool table.

March – Accent Plants and Kusamono – Cathy Edgar – Morning Once again, we have a little different and exciting workshop scheduled for March. . Cathy has many years' experience creating these small and delicate designs. She provides many examples for sale at our shows, and they are always a hit, selling out quickly. Cathy has been propagating plants and has pots just for this class. You will make a total of 3 different compositions. It will truly be a treat!! DUE TO THE EXTREME DEMAND FOR THIS WORKSHOP, I WILL TAKE A PRE-SIGN-UP LIST AT THE JANUARY MEETING. AT THE END OF THE JANUARY MEETING, I WILL TAKE ALL OF THE SIGN-UPS AND DRAW NAMES FOR THE ACTUAL CLASS. THIS WILL GIVE EVERYONE THAT WANTS TO TAKE THE CLASS A FAIR CHANCE AT GETTING IT.

March - Juniperus chinensis shimpaku Itoigawa – Julian Tsai – Afternoon Those of you at the September meeting got to see an up-and-coming Bonsai Talent, Julian Tsai. He will be hosting a Juniperus chinensis shimpaku itoigawa workshop. The trees for this workshop came from Tak Shimazu. They are very nice and will make some good chuhin bonsai. THIS CLASS WILL BE HELD IN THE AFTERNOON, FROM 1:00 – 4:00 PM. This will be to allow for a solid 3 hours of work. This class will go on sale at the January Meeting and is limited to 7 attendees. The cost will be \$195.00.

**April – Urban Yamadori Buxus sp. Common Boxwood – Abe and Christine Far** We have some nice Urban Yamadori common boxwoods. These trees have been out of the ground since 2018, are very well established and ready for styling. They have nice trunks and a lot of potential. They will go on sale at the February Meeting. The cost will be \$45.00

<u>New members</u> are always excited about taking the beginners classes, and several have asked to be put on a waiting list for the next class. If you are a new member, 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. 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 or advice on from our excellent bonsai masters at the club.

<u>All members</u> Help is located in the back of Room 101 to the right of the stage. 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.

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## Special Projects: by Markel Farley



#### 58<sup>th</sup> annual Winter Silhouettes at Los Angeles County Arboretum on January 22, 2022.

Signup sheet available at the January meeting. Last day to pay is during the January meeting.

#### Pickup/Drop Off locations: Balboa Park and Mira Mesa

The Winter Silhouettes show is hosted by the BaikoEn Bonsai Kenkyukai Society. The show features bonsai trees that have no leaves to cover branches, the trees must be perfect in structure and form to be ready for show. This will be a wonderful experience and fun trip. It will be an exciting experience for all bonsai lovers. I encourage everybody to sign up. We are invited to dinner and to participate in their demo, auction, and raffle. San Diego Bonsai Club members always take bonsai related items and desert for the evening dinner. The bus picks up members and departs from Balboa Park (11am), stops for another pick up in Mira Mesa (11:30am). It is important to understand the trip will complete with a drop off members around 11:00pm at the previously mentioned pick up locations.

#### Golden State Bonsai-A-Thon at Huntington Gardens on February 26, 2022

Signup sheet available at the January meeting. Last day to pay is February 4<sup>th</sup>, 2022.

#### Pickup/Drop Off locations: Balboa Park and Carlsbad

For our bus trip in February 2022, we will visit the Huntington Library, Art Museum, and Botanical Gardens, which houses the Golden State Bonsai Federation Bonsai Collection in Southern California. In addition to the wonderful bonsai exhibits, there will be demonstrations, workshops, and a large vendor area. At the end of the day, an auction and raffle will be held. Breakfast is served from 7:00 to 9:00 am and lunch from 12:00 to 1:30 pm at a minimal cost. Meals are open for those who wish to partake. Garden tours are scheduled at 10:00 am on both days. The bus picks up members and departs from Balboa Park (7am), stops for another pick up in Carlsbad (7:30am). The trip will complete with a drop off of members around 7:00pm at the previously mentioned pick up locations.

#### Library: by Sonya Holmquist, Librarian



The library will be open on January 9<sup>th</sup> prior to the meeting. Located in Casa del Prado, room 104

#### Come on in...



### Membership: by Udaykant Pandey, VP

I would like to welcome following new members into the club:

Jordan Farar, Tony Lawson, Jana Crawford Kiena, Michael Acevedo, Brandon Kessler, Maddy Moltke, Anistacia Miller Paige Harrison Eric Brandt Gilberto Caro Ochoa Carl Gilbert Dan Kitchen

With these additions and renewals, clubs' membership stood at 510 at the end of 2021.

Membership renewal for the year 2022 has started well. Members who joined on or after September 2021 will carry their membership to 2022.

Thanks to all who have renewed online or during the meetings in Nov/Dec.

You can renew

- in person at the meeting
- OR
- on the club website
- OR
- by sending a check to the club at P.O. Box 86037, San Diego, CA 92138

The dues will remain as: Individual - \$30 Family (2 Members) - \$35. \$5 for each additional family member

If your address or contact number has changed, please drop me an email (udaykant@gmail.com) to update the membership roster.

In the end a big thank you to all for putting your trust in me as the VP Membership for year 2022. Wishing you all a Happy New Year. May all your bonsais grow well 😊

## So what is the true definition??

I googled the definition of Chuhin Bonsai and got several results.

A Shohin is up to 8 inches

A Klifu is up to 14 inches

A Chuhin is up to 18 inches or maybe up to 24 inches depending on the web site.

What do you think?

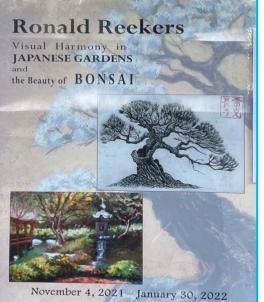
## Japanese Friendship Garden: by Neil Auwarter

Thanks to December volunteers Charlie and Sylvia Mosse, Yoichiro "Mori" Suimori, and Aaron Mathankeri. And thanks to Katie and Mike Boswell for their recent donation of a tall and twisted Chinese elm.

The trees at the JFG have been enjoying the bountiful winter rain. So has the luxuriant moss at the base of our foemina juniper forest. (See photo.) The welcome rain washes out much of the salts built up from months of tap water irrigation.



Rain-fed moss in the Larry Ragle foemina juniper forest



APANESE

The JFG is currently hosting an

exhibition of bonsai paintings, drawings, and etchings by artist Ronald Reekers. (See photos.) Reekers is an aerospace engineer by profession but studied bonsai in Japan and is a gifted and prolific visual artist. His exhibition will be in the JFG Exhibition Hall through January 30.



Flowering Plum, Paste on paper, by Ronald Reekers

If you come for a visit, make sure to check out our camellia bonsai, which has just burst into bloom.



Commission for Arts and Culture

Life Behind Bars: Camellia in bloom awaiting the daily opening of the JFG bonsai enclosure

Happy New Year!



## Bonsai Pavilion at Safari Park: 'Lyn Stevenson, Liaison

Another wonderful Bonsai Year for All in 2022!

The SDBC volunteers at the Safari Park will continue to actively participate and enjoy the Pavilion improvements of 2021: New construction and additions, improved hardscape, and the more mature and beautiful Bonsai! We are thankful that we have been able to stay healthy and share this beautiful location, avocation, and refuge with so many visitors too.

Volunteer hours for the last month of the year were added by: Alan Burrows, Newcomer Nate Chong, Julia Chow, Sally & Steve Dischinger, Cathy & Mark Edgar, Josh Frampton, Bob & Janet Hale, Jaya Kaelberer, Jim Kirchmer, Sonya Holmquist, John Jackson,

Udaykant Pandey, Clare & Ron Roberts, 'lyn Stevenson, Dennis Wagner, and Ken Zito. Many thanks to them and to all the volunteers through-out this last Pandemic year!

Volunteers and the Safari Park's Volunteer Office Staff also donated many enjoyable refreshments for our sessions. Over 2500 hours have been volunteered in the Pavilion by the SDBC volunteers during the 2021 Covid19 months. That is quite impressive!



New hardscape in upper level of Pavilion



Cork bark elm *Ulmus parvifloria* In silhouette Donated by Dave Woodall

It was decided to forego the end-of-year annual volunteer potluck and party due to the Covid 19 restrictions, but plans are to celebrate joyfully in 2022! December's schedule allowed the volunteers to get some transplanting started, much styling done, deciduous bonsai cleaned of some final fall leaves, and work accomplished on the large black pines in the garden. Our newest volunteer Nate Chong was introduced, and Cathy helped him get started working on a bald Cypress bonsai.

In the next few weeks, the final bonsai pedestals will be constructed and placed since all the parts are now available and have been delivered to the Pavilion. Also, the Horticulture Staff at the Safari Park will continue to carefully remove the bothersome Sumac shrubbery around the waterfall.

Perhaps your New Year's resolutions will include volunteer hours at the Pavilion. . .New SDBC members are always welcome. Come and join in the special activities!

## Feature Article : Repotting by Charlie Mosse, edited by Sylvia Mosse

#### To Repot or not to Repot?

At this time, we are about at the middle of the dormant season repotting period. We started repotting conifers in the late fall and will continue through February and in some cases into March. Deciduous trees like Elms, Maples, Crape Myrtle and Pomegranates are also repotted in late winter and early spring. Busy time!!

The upcoming January club meeting will be the annual repotting event, a sure sign that now is the time to repot. There will be lots of information to be had and techniques to learn with hands-on help available. Do not miss this meeting for sure.



Does a tree need to be repotted? If so, how can one tell if it needs repotting?

- Water is running off the soil surface very quickly and does not appear that much is absorbed due to a hard crust. The crust is usually a combination of salts, accumulated organic material from improperly applied dry organic fertilizers and/or the breakdown of akadama on the soil surface. Bark fines can accumulate too, but to a lesser degree than akadama.
- 2. The soil takes longer than the usual time to drain, it may be becoming too dense.
- 3. The only way to properly water the tree is to submerge the pot in water over the top of the root ball. This can take up to 15 minutes depending on the size and density of the root ball.
- 4. The tree is not responding to fertilizer with good growth as well as before.
- 5. Compacted soil generally does not promote good root growth that will show up as lesser quality foliar growth. Usually there are fewer new active root tips, or the ones that are there are less active.
- 6. The tree is off-color, not as green as normal but still grows OK. Same as in 5...less absorption or water and nutrient results in reduced foliar color.
- Improper draining due to soil density by the build-up of soil fines is causing off-color foliage and lack of plant vigor.
  Same as in 6, but here the off-color is due more to improper drainage with root hairs struggling to stay active/alive in lower oxygen environment.
- 8. White salt crystals have accumulated on the soil surface from the high mineral content of our water. They can be readily visible later in the year on exposed roots, pot edges and larger pieces of soil particles. Some plants will be fine like Junipers and Ficus. Maples and azaleas are very sensitive, while Oaks, Elms, Crape Myrtles and others are somewhat sensitive to salt accumulation.
- 9. You notice that the leaves on a tree are small, which is desirable, but they are off-color. Again, the cause is poor root tip growth and absorption of water and nutrient due to compaction...lack of water and air getting to the roots.
- 10. The root ball is being pushed up inside the pot, and in some cases the root ball has been pushed up to and even past the rim of the pot. The soil has pretty much been displaced by the roots and the organics (or akadama) are gone, or so broken down, so as to not be beneficial any longer. Deciduous trees and ficus are famous for this.
- 11. When was the tree last repotted? Different species have different repotting timing. Some species put out a lot of roots like ficus and may need annual repotting especially those trees in development. Some species of older trees that are in refinement may not need repotting for over 3 years, some as long as 5-7 years.
- 12. If the tree is not healthy, then repotting is not necessarily a good idea, <u>unless</u> the roots are in poor condition and the tree needs an urgent or emergency repot.





Note that some of the issues above can cause root rot to start and persist. This is usually the harder soils and/or soils with too many fines, both of which can cause poor drainage. So along with the lack of soil, poor aeration, and poor water absorption affecting the general health and vigor of the tree, now you have root rot piling on. The time to repot is most likely when any of these issues exist.

Even if it is not time to repot a tree, you may have a tree that may not be growing like it should, it may show a lack of good foliar color or may actually be in poor health. You may need to unwire the tree from the pot and visually inspect the roots, even poke around with a chop stick. You may find nothing and can wire the tree back into the pot. Or, you may find root rot or dry areas. With minimal disturbance of the roots, you can cut out the rot or dry areas and then put the tree back into the pot with a bit of new soil as needed. This avoids the full repot which is a good idea if the tree is not healthy and vigorous.

There are times when a tree looks healthy but the soil looks like repotting is needed, or the tree may be stressing just enough for you to notice. Inspect the soil on the surface to determine if it is fairly hard, showing definite signs of crusting and water is running off too fast. Note that water can be coming out of the bottom of the pot but that does not mean water is being absorbed by all of the root ball. Dry areas can happen and even persist, becoming areas of poor or no root growth. You can counteract this by resorting to submerging the root ball in water. If it still takes too long of a time to water the root ball, then it is time for corrective action as stated below.

When the tree is not a good candidate for repotting, then the following can be done.

- 1. You see that the soil surface has become mineralized, full of fines and hardened or some like the term crusted. Most of the time this leads to the soil surface being hydrophobic, the infamous and dangerous crust has formed.
- 2. On further inspection (by carefully digging down into the soil), you see soil particles that are in good condition. Here is where improving soil percolation in the soil surface layer is a great thing to do.
- 3. You remove the top layer of hardened soil down to the soil that looks in good condition, the soil particles that are still individual particles, not a mass of fines hardened into a layer.
- 4. Add fresh soil mix to the surface working it into the old soil a bit. Add soil as needed, pressing the soil mix into the pot until the desired level is reached. If you use a soil cover mix, add it at this time or any other protective screen to keep birds and rodents out.
- 5. Water it thoroughly with fine flow water wand or by submergion to be sure any dry areas are now wetted.

Ryan Neil of Bonsai Mirai has a great video in his archive on "Improving Percolation". It is an excellent teaching tool for this. Replacing the top layer of soil saves the time and expense of a full re-pot and helps the tree by not stressing it through a full re-pot that it does not need. Sorry for no photos of this process because they are in my old PC back in San Diego. Will do this later as it is such a simple but good thing to know. A few FYI's. ---Jonas DuPuich of BonsaiTonight just wrote in his regular blog about what one can do when obtaining akadama as it gets more expensive and gets too expensive and availability is erratic. Reduced availability of the supply of akadama has been slowly coming about, so people have been experimenting with other components like diatomaceous earth and other things that can possibly replace akadama. Stay tuned. ---Michael Hagedorn's of Crataegus Bonsai has a book called 'Bonsai Heresy'. It is a great resource for accurate and updated bonsai growing information. ---Eric Schrader, of Bonsaify, has developed a very good archive of bonsai information. ---And just for fun, is it rootball or root ball...it can be spelled either way.



## December Notes: By Keith Carter

One of the SDBC's most eagerly anticipated holiday traditions is the annual **bonsai decorating contest.** 

Although the club was forced to hold last year's competition online, we fortunately were able this year to return to in-person judging by members at the December meeting.

All the entries were well-done and did a great job of capturing the festive spirit of the Christmas holiday season.

Congratulations to the winners and to all who participated.



First place went to Cathy Edgar, who was awarded the \$50 top prize.



Second place finisher was Shirley Kavanaugh, who won \$40.



Third place was captured by Susan Mae Hull, who took home \$30.



## **Styling competition features a different twist**

There was an unusual twist to the SDBC's annual end-of-the-year style competition held at the December meeting.



Steven Bleeke gets help (briefly) from Gary Jones.



Carla Marasco hard at work on her juniper

Rather than three-member teams working on each of the four junipers, competition organizer Gary Jones assigned a solo designer to each tree. The idea, Gary said, was to allow each of the participants to show what they have learned during their time in the club.

Volunteering to demonstrate their skills as bonsai artists were Steven Bleeke, Carla Marasco, Christina Far and Kyle Icke.

Fortunately, they didn't have to compete the task alone. Gary gave every competitor three tickets, each of which entitled them to one minute of expert advice from some of the club's most experienced bonsai practitioners.

Helping out as mentors for the competition were John Jackson, Fred Miyahara, John Voss, Louie Montecillo, Cathy Edgar and Dan Sola.

Members voted for their favorite, with Christina's tree drawing the most votes, however, each of the participants was awarded \$50 for their efforts. After the competition, the four styled trees were auctioned off to members. The bonsai designed by Christina Far brought the highest total of the four, \$165.

The December meeting saw the **swearing-in of the new 2022 board of directors** of the SDBC by outgoing president Sue Carter. Taking the oath of office were (left to right) Bill Graham, vice president education; Uday Pandey, vice president membership; Jaya Kaelberer, treasurer; Ignacio De La Torre, president; Kyle Icke, first vice president; Carla Marasco, secretary; and Markel Farley, vice president special projects.



Thank you to those donating to the December raffle. They are Ken Bross, Cathy Edgar, Dan Sola, Kathy and Dennis Wagner, Shirley Kavanaugh, John and Margaret Jackson, Charlie and Silvia Mosse, Keith and Sue Carter and Gary Jones.

**Thank you to those bringing treats** to share for the December meeting included Sue and Keith Carter, Susan Mae Hull, Wayne Lord, Cathy and Mark Edgar, Pilar De La Torre, Shirley Kavanaugh, Brenda Crann, Mark Shane, Jaya Kaelberer, Sandi Marasco, John and Margaret Jackson, Bill Graham, Linda Macray, Kathy and Dennis Wagner, Phaedra Ehring and Jeff, Calliope and Calypso Hall.

#### Bonsai: Journal of American Bonsai Society. Winter 1989 volume 23 Number 4

The most important thing in bonsai Is one's personal satisfaction in the practice of the art. And not whether one's bonsai win a popularity contest.

By Bruce Baker



## Treasurers Report: by Jaya Kaelberer, Treasurer

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## San Diego Club Board

President:	Ignacio De La Torre igdltx5@gmail.com
1st Vice President :	Kyle Icke Kyle.Icke@sdcounty.ca.gov
Secretary:	Carla Marasco adorebycarla@yahoo.com
Treasurer:	Jaya Kaelberer jaya.littletree@cox.net

VP Special Projects :	Markel Farley Mr.Farley.M@gmail.com
VP Education:	Bill Graham wfgraham3rd@gmail.com
VP Membership:	Udaykant Pandey udaykant@gmail.com
Past President:	Sue Carter susangcarter2004@att.net

## Appointed Positions

Refreshment Coordinator:	Matt Jillson
Publicity:	Keith Carter kcarter315@att.net
Sunshine Chair:	Susan Baker baker@susanMbaker.com
Librarian & Historian:	Sonya Holmquist sonyaanneh@gmail.com
Tool Sales Manager:	Darryl & Christine Elmer droadie@sbcglobal.net

#### Japanese Friendship Garden

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

The Bonsai Wire Editor:	Sally Dischinger disch002@umn.edu Steve Dischinger sdischi@hotmail.com
The Bonsai Wire Postal Distributor:	Shirley Kavanaugh, Jr
Instagram Coordinator:	Christian Reha <u>christianreha@gmail.com</u>
Audio Visual:	Bryan Schroeder bryan.e@gmail.com
Webmaster:	Ron Kaelberer rkaelberer@coxnet

#### Safari Park Bonsai Pavilion

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

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# **SDBC Upcoming Events:** *MEETING TIMES ARE SUBJECT TO CBANGE*

Month	Date(s)	Location	Rooms
January meeting	09	Casa del Prado	101 and 104
February meeting	20	Casa del Prado	101 and 104
March meeting	13	Casa del Prado	101 and 104
April meeting	10	Casa del Prado	101 and 104
April Spring Show	21 - 24	Casa del Prado	101
May meeting	15	Safari Park	
June meeting	19 (Father's Day)	Casa del Prado	101 and 104
July meeting	10	Casa del Prado	101 and 104
August	7	Casa del Prado	101 and 104
September meeting	11	Casa del Prado	104 - only
Sept Fall Show	15 - 18	Casa del Prado	101
Oct Picnic and Auction	9	Lake Poway	
Nov meeting	13	Casa del Prado	101 and 104
Dec meeting	11	Casa del Prado	101 and 104

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JANUARY 2022 The Bonsai Wire

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

Return Service Requested