BONSAI CLUB OF SANTA BARBARA

SINCE 1971

BONSAI CLUB
OF SANTA BARBARA

P.O. BOX 3703
SANTA BARBARA, CA 93130

SANTABARBARABONSAI.ORG

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

SEPT 1, 2026

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

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2026

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Dear BCSB members and friends,

All at once, summer is collapsing into fall, and I am grateful for it! The summer heat and sunshine - and lack of fog - forced me to be especially attentive to the needs of trees regarding watering and sun exposure on a daily basis. The shortening days and cooling temperatures bring some relief.

It's also been an especially hectic summer for the BCSB board, who have been working all season behind the scenes to continue to strengthen the club and grow the benefits for club members. Among those things, we were able to fix the glitch and all the confusion with Zelle payments. Now, our Bonsai Club of Santa Barbara Zelle tag functions with two email addresses – those are bonsaiclubsantabarbara@gmail.com AND bonsaiclubsb.treasurer@gmail.com. (Hooray!) Thank you for your patience while we resolved this problem.

What I am truly most excited about this fall is the upcoming lineup of speakers and workshop leaders. We owe a big "thank you" to Mark Britton and Jeff Sczechowski for arranging guest appearances by some of the most accomplished bonsai artists in the western US, to finish out our 2026 year. Each of these artists will provide in-depth training on specific techniques and species of bonsai – information that will be "new" to club members.

In my estimation, the very best benefit of being a BCSB member is access to incredibly talented bonsai artists and opportunities to learn from them. There is no doubt that my own skills and knowledge as a bonsai practitioner has vastly improved because of the time I've spent with master teachers the club has provided. Our meeting dates for the remainder of the year are September 17th, October 15th, November, 12th and December 5th. Please put these in your calendar, and plan to sign up for the Saturday workshops that follow.

This is also the time to start making your plans to attend the Pacific Bonsai Expo (PBE), held on February 6 - 7, 2027, at the Alameda County Fairgrounds in Pleasanton, CA. PBE is the west coast's premier bonsai event, and tickets go on sale on September 1st. For more information about PBE, read the article in this newsletter, and check out the PBE website, pacificbonsaiexpo.org. You can also ask some of our club's long-time members about their experience in attending and showing at PBE.

The last PBE was held in 2024, when Jeremiah Lee, our guest artist this month, was awarded the Directors' Choice Award for his coast redwood bonsai. If you have any interest in coast redwoods or yamadori, don't miss our September meeting!

Cheers and trees!
Gwen

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IN MEMORY OF

JOE OLSON

(FEBRUARY 19, 1938 – AUGUST 4, 2026)

It should come as no surprise that Joe Olson's chosen career path was with the Forestry Department because Joe Olson loved nature and trees, especially oaks. During one Bonsai Club of Santa Barbara meeting, Joe brought in 12 different varieties of oaks that he had cultivated as bonsai and he had a story about each tree and variety. A trip to his backyard and personal collection included some amazing 40-50 year-old California Coastal Oaks *Quercus agrifolia* and Cork Oaks *Quercus suber*. Some of these he had grown from acorns. Joe was a patient, soft-spoken guy and was always more than happy to help new members of our bonsai club. He was one of the first friends I made when I joined the club. I'm proud to say I own a few of his trees.

Joe and his wife, Mirella, travelled extensively in Mexico, where their son and daughter-in-law live, in search of cycads and other native species that he photographed and often shared with the Club. Joe also loved the desert. He had a small house near Joshua Tree that he and Mirella would visit several times per year. During these trips I often got to care for Joe's trees and feed his two 40+ year-old desert tortoises. Watching tortoises eat reminds us, like the art of bonsai, that not everything in this world must be hectic and fast-paced.

The Bonsai Club of Santa Barbara was formed in 1971. An early member, Joe joined in the late 70s and he held several offices over the years, including newsletter editor, and being the Club president for two different four-year terms.

Prune on, Joe.

Written by Ernie Witham

Joe with his impressive Cork Oak in his home garden

Joe with his remarkable Coast Live Oak at a club workshop

THURSDAY, SEPT 17TH MEETING

REDWOOD DEVELOPMENT WITH JEREMIAH LEE

This month's instructor will be Jeremiah Lee, bonsai grower, collector and host of The Black Pondo Podcast. Jeremiah's coast redwood received the prestigious Directors' Choice Award at the 2024 Pacific Bonsai Expo.

For his demonstration, Jeremiah will bring a redwood and demonstrate cutting it back while walking members through the process of developing bonsai from raw stock. He will also bring other types of trees for discussion, including shimpaku junipers started from cuttings, to show how they progress from young plants into future bonsai.

Jeremiah with his Redwood collected by Bob Shimon at the 2024 Pacifc Bonsai Expo

Jeremiah will also have shimpaku cuttings available for members to take home and grow.

Follow Jeremiah's work on Instagram: @jlee_bonsai

Thursday, Septmber 17
Doors Open at 7:00 PM
Meeting Begins at 7:15 PM

Location: Bethany Congregational Church
556 N Hope Ave, Santa Barbara

Jeremiah with his Sierra Juniper that he collected in 2015 at the US National Bonsai Exhibition 2021

SATURDAY, SEPT 19TH WORKSHOP

JEREMIAH LEE WORKSHOP

Jeremiah will also lead a bring-your-own-tree workshop where members can receive personalized guidance on their bonsai. His experience working with a wide variety of species, combined with years of high-quality training under his longtime teacher, bonsai professional Peter Tea, gives him a strong foundation for helping members make thoughtful decisions about styling, development and long-term tree health.

Saturday, September 19

Workshop Fee: $50 per person
All skill levels welcome! Bring at least 2-4 trees if not more, your tools, and your questions.

Session Times:
Morning: 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM (8 Spots Available)
Afternoon: 1:00 PM – 4:00 PM (8 Spots Available)

Location: Bethany Congregational Church
556 N Hope Ave, Santa Barbara

Reserve Your Spot:
Space is limited—please email **bonsaiclubsb.treasurer@gmail.com** to sign up ASAP!

Korean Hornbeam - 14 inches tall

Chinese Quince - 28 inches tall

BONSAI IN CALIFORNIA

PACIFIC BONSAI EXPO CALL FOR ENTRIES

The Pacific Bonsai Expo is now preparing for its 2027 exhibition. Members interested in showing a tree should begin preparing their submissions and photographs.

Important Dates

Submissions open: October 15, 2026
Submission deadline: November 15, 2026
Selection results expected: December 5, 2026
Pacific Bonsai Expo: February 6–7, 2027

Who Can Enter?

Entry is open to professionals and hobbyists, and there is no fee to submit a tree for consideration. You may submit as many trees as you like, but each exhibitor may have no more than three entries accepted.

What You Will Need

Each submission must include:

- The tree's common and botanical names
- The tree's height
- The names of the pot and stand makers, if known
- A clear photograph of the front
- A photograph looking upward into the branch structure
- A leafless photograph for deciduous species
- Additional views when needed to show the tree clearly

Use a plain background, diffused lighting and a camera position approximately one-third of the way up the tree.

Selection Process

Entries will be reviewed anonymously by Bjorn Bjorholm, Ryan Neil, Andrew Robson, Suthin Sukosolvisit and Peter Tea.

If Your Tree Is Accepted

Exhibitors will pay a fee for each display and receive one exhibitor pass plus one weekend pass for a spouse or guest. Exhibitors are responsible for providing their own stands, accents and other display elements.

Visit the Pacific Bonsai Expo Call for Entries page for complete submission requirements.

PACIFIC BONSAI EXPO 2027

BONSAI CLUB OF SANTA BARBARA

SEPT 2026 NEWSLETTER

CLUB MEETINGS

LOCATION:
BETHANY CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
556 N HOPE AVE,
SANTA BARBARA, CA 93110

TIME:
7:00 PM - 9:00 PM

CALENDAR

BCSB PROGRAMS 2026

MEETINGS + WORKSHOPS + EVENTS

OFFICERS

PRESIDENT
GWEN STAUFFER

VICE PRESIDENT
MARK BRITTON

MEMBERSHIP COORDINATOR
JOE BALDASSINI AND
CINDY DRAZYNSKI

SECRETARY
DANIEL OHLINGER

NEWSLETTER
SEBASTIAN FRAYE

WEBSITE
DANIEL MARTINEZ

WORKSHOP / PROGRAMS
MARK BRITTON

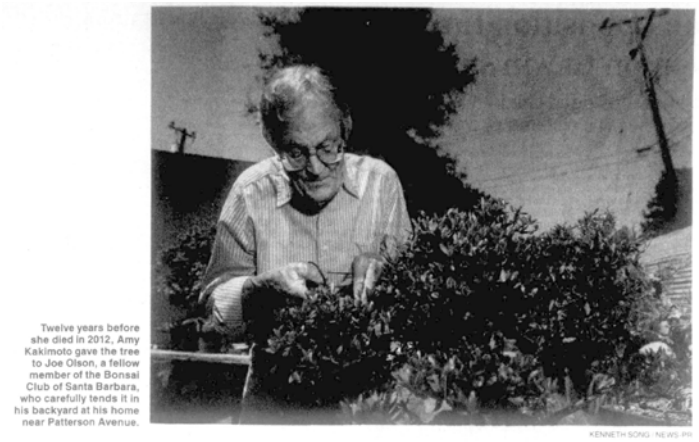
DATE	TIME	DESCRIPTION
SAT - AUG 8	9:00AM – 12:00 PM 1:00PM – 4:00PM	SUMMER POTLUCK
THURS - SEP 17	7:00PM – 9:00PM	MONTHLY MEETING: JEREMIAH LEE – REDWOODS PRESENTATION
SAT - SEP 19	9:00AM – 12:00 PM 1:00PM – 4:00PM	WORKSHOP: JEREMIAH LEE – BRING YOUR OWN TREE
THURS - OCT 15	7:00PM – 9:00PM	MONTHLY MEETING: SEBASTIAN FRAYE (OAK FORM BONSAI) PRESENTATION
SAT - OCT 17	9:00AM – 12:00PM 1:00PM – 4:00PM	WORKSHOPS: CLUB WORKSHOP – NO FEE
THURS - NOV 12	7:00PM – 9:00PM	MONTHLY MEETING: TODD SCHLAFER PRESENTATION
SAT - NOV 14	9:00AM – 12:00PM 1:00PM – 4:00PM	WORKSHOP: TODD SCHLAFER – BRING YOUR OWN TREE
THURS - DEC 3	7:00PM – 9:00PM	MONTHLY MEETING: RYAN NEIL (MIRAI) – PRESENTATION
SAT - DEC 5	9:00AM – 12:00PM 1:00PM – 4:00PM	WORKSHOP: RYAN NEIL (MIRAI) – BRING YOUR OWN TREE
SAT - DEC 12	11:00AM – 3:00PM	HOLIDAY POTLUCK

HIGHLIGHTS

WE LOVE AND WILL MISS YOU JOE!
THANK YOU FOR EVERYTHING!

Joe leading a presentation on different species of oaks he has grown from acorns

Joe with his amazing olive that was displayed at last years John Naka Memorial Show



Twelve years before she died in 2012, Amy Kakimoto gave the tree to Joe Olson, a fellow member of the Bonsai Club of Santa Barbara, who carefully tends it in his backyard at his home near Patterson Avenue.

KENNETH SONG / NEWS-PR

Joe was featured in a news article with the olive bonsai he later donated to The Huntington

Joe with Wally, our earliest and founding members at our annual show last year

FOLLOW AND TAG US ON SOCIAL MEDIA FOR A CHANCE TO BE FEATURED

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