

# VALLEY BONSAI SOCIETY

FEBRUARY 2021 – A NEW YEAR BUT STILL A SHELTER IN PLACE VERSION...

*Livermore, California*

**MISSION:** To encourage and equip each other as we share a common interest and enjoyment of Bonsai and to encourage others to explore this art form.

HTTP://WWW.VALLEYBONSAISOCIETY.COM

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## WHAT IS THE VALLEY BONSAI SOCIETY?



50 weeks.

Founded in February 2008 by Charles Harder, this organization was established to create a group of local Bonsai enthusiasts with all level of expertise. Many of us started by taking one or more of Charles's classes, some received a plant as a gift and some had been struggling on their own. We currently have some people with extensive collections; some have trained trees as long as 50 years and some are still trying to get a tree to survive

## MEETINGS

The club usually meets at Alden Lane every third Saturday of the month at 2:00PM. Everyone is welcome! However, with current situation, we are now meeting on Zoom. Invites will be sent out prior to the meeting.

## NEWSLETTER, EMAIL LIST AND WEBSITE

An email list is maintained to release announcements and send out an electronic newsletter. Please send a request to be added to (or removed from) this list via e-mail to Charles Harder ([bonsainut@comcast.net](mailto:bonsainut@comcast.net)). We have a website! Visit us at [www.valleybonsaisociety.com](http://www.valleybonsaisociety.com)

## MEMBERSHIP

Membership is open to anyone who shares an interest in the ancient oriental horticultural art of Bonsai. The annual dues are \$30 a year for an individual or \$40 for couples or families. If you'd rather not pay for a membership, you have the option of paying \$5.00 per visit. If you have questions regarding membership or would like to join, please contact Bea Bauerly [BelgianBea@yahoo.com](mailto:BelgianBea@yahoo.com)

## FEBRUARY MEETING BY CHARLES

Our February meeting was once again a Zoom meeting. I whittled away at a juniper talking about how to thin and why I was removing specific branches. I know it was a little difficult due to the limitations of the laptop camera, but I think I was able to convey what I was trying to show. Thank you to those who attended.



## MARCH MEETING BY CHARLES

Our March meeting will be on Zoom (again), I will continue to try to get a hold of Akadama, so I will keep everyone posted. I will talk about and attempt to demonstrate repotting a tree – I hope that it will show up on video okay. Again, for those wishing to brave it, I will again open up my back yard if you want to stop by for an in-person meeting.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

Nothing is posted currently for CA

## SENPAI CORNER BY CHARLES

At the last meeting, we discussed fertilizing; and I apologize in advance for the long post.

I originally suggested putting together a fertilizing guide, and I can provide generalizations, but the more I research, the more I realize that I can only provide a general suggestion. I am concerned that if I provide a species-by-species guide, that you will adhere to that as “the rules” and then be astonished if one of your trees begins to show signs of distress.

Each tree requires its own levels of fertilization, and your tree will ‘tell’ you what it needs.

More is not necessarily better – fertilizers contain mineral salts and if there is a high enough concentration, then osmotic pressure will “pull” the water out of the root cells – which is commonly referred as fertilizer burn.

Also, using too high of a fertilizer N-P-K will cause a plant to feel young and although it will create prodigious growth, it will also quickly cause your tree to lose its shape, with long internodes.

Not to scare you off of fertilizing your trees, in fact I encourage you to be diligent however, I would recommend a single digit fertilizer. But remember or keep notes of which tree has received what and when. Avoid the “broadcast” option of using the same amount at the same time on every tree.

For specific trees like **Black Pines**: they will need a high Nitrogen from early spring and if you follow Japanese tradition, increase the Nitrogen provided, up to de-candling and then reducing to balanced levels immediately after. For **deciduous trees**, I would recommend a balanced fertilizer from early spring until late fall. Junipers will need a lot more fertilizer than say a White Pine, but as I said, your trees will tell you what they need.

For **young trees**, you will want to use higher numbers and/or more often, to generate the bulk and quick growth we are looking for. With **older well-established trees**, we want to reduce the levels (not necessarily the frequency) but you still need to fertilize.

#### **A couple of points to make:**

Too much Phosphorus will limit manganese and Iron uptake, manifesting as yellowing leaves – which we would likely misconstrue as the tree needing more fertilizer.

On the other side, Phosphorus is needed to develop the beneficial Mycorrhizae.

There is a lot of arguments that can be made for which type; organic or chemical but in the long run, chemical fertilizers will provide immediate nutrients, where organics will take longer.

As Michael Hagedorn states: “look at the how and why we use fertilizers, instead of what we are using”.

#### **Another interesting point:**

*Magnesium is one of the six macronutrients essential to the formation of Chlorophyll. Chlorophyl is a molecule that is eerily similar to another life-giving molecule we are most familiar with, Hemoglobin, from our blood. The structure of the two molecules is astonishingly close, with only one major dif-*

ference: in the center of the hemoglobin molecule is an iron atom, and at the center of Chlorophyl is a magnesium atom... (from Michael Hagedorn's Bonsai Heresy, 2020 - Suzuki and Grady2004,70)

## ELECTIONS

Positions on the Board are still available. Please contact Bea if you are interested.

## THANK YOU ALDEN LANE



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Thanks to Alden Lane for allowing us to meet for free at the nursery as we start up. Alden Lane Nursery has evergreen and blooming trained Bonsai specimens in many sizes for indoors and outdoor gardens. Stop in and let one of the Bonsai experts help you design your own Bonsai masterpiece from the selection of Bonsai pots and starter plants. They also carry Bonsai tools and enough useful Bonsai accessories to satisfy even the most dedicated bonsai tree hobbyist.

The nice thing about meeting at Alden Lane is that you have the opportunity to not only pick up bonsai stock and supplies but to shop under the oaks amongst one of the most extensive offerings for your home and garden. Inspiration and beauty abounds where ever you look along with the friendly, knowledgeable staff of Alden Lane. Don't forget to say THANK YOU for the incredible support!

## SOCIETY OFFICERS AND CONTACTS

<b>President</b>	Charles Harder	<a href="mailto:bonsainut@comcast.net">bonsainut@comcast.net</a>
<b>Vice President</b>	<b>Open Position</b>	
<b>Secretary</b>	Bea Bauerly	<a href="mailto:BelgianBea@yahoo.com">BelgianBea@yahoo.com</a>
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<b>Membership</b>	Bea Bauerly	<a href="mailto:BelgianBea@yahoo.com">BelgianBea@yahoo.com</a>
<b>Fundraising</b>	<b>Open Position</b>	
<b>Newsletter</b>	Charles Harder	<a href="mailto:bonsainut@comcast.net">bonsainut@comcast.net</a>
<b>Website</b>	Bill Bauerly	<a href="mailto:Bill46@pacbell.net">Bill46@pacbell.net</a>

If you need to contact any of the above, please make sure to reference "Valley Bonsai Society" in the subject line.