



VALLEY BONSAI SOCIETY

www.valleybonsaisociety.com

Newsletter vol 5: May 1, 2009



What Is The Valley Bonsai Society?

We are a group of folks who share a common interest in this ancient oriental horticultural art form. It is our goal is to encourage and equip each other as we share our common interest and enjoyment of Bonsai and to encourage others to explore this art form. We have a diverse range of experience and interest. Many of us started exploring their interest level by taking one or more of the classes Charles teaches thru Alden Lane, some have had a plant they received as a gift and some had been struggling along on their own. We even have some people with extensive collections and trees they have trained for as long as 50 years. We also have people who are still trying to get a tree to survive 50 weeks. It doesn't matter. So join us and explore and grow your interest to the extent you desire. All are welcome. We are all learning together!

Meetings

We meet the third Saturday of each month at 1pm. Currently we meet at Alden Lane Nursery in Livermore. See the last page of the newsletter for Alden Lane Info. Our next meeting is May 16th. Details are included in the April 18th meeting recap.

Newsletter, Email List & Website

An email list is maintained to release announcements and send out an electronic newsletter. Please send an email request to be added (or removed) to this list to Bill Boehner per the contact information at the end of the newsletter. We have a website! It's just getting going but it's looking good. Thank you Neema Koppole for your hard work. Visit us at www.valleybonsaisociety.com

Membership

Membership is not required, but if you have been visiting with us for a while we do ask you to consider supporting the society by paying annual dues of \$30 a year (\$40 for couples) or \$5 a meeting. Celeste and Bob Wilson are always happy to receive your dues. If you have any questions regarding membership please contact Bob Wyckoff. Their contact information is at the end of the newsletter.

Bonsai Show

Our first show will be June 6 & 7 at Alden Lane. This will be in conjunction with a Carnivorous Plant Show, an Orchid Show and a Koi Show. Alden Lane is arranging for Bonsai vendors such as Lone Tree to be selling at the show. We will have demonstrations, trees on display, sales tables and members available to answer questions.

We will be very fortunate to have a guest speaker, Sam Adina, to do a demonstration on Saturday. Sam is the Sensei for the Modesto Bonsai Club and does Bonsai training and design for Blue Oak Nursery, a bonsai nursery in Modesto (www.blueoaknursery.com). He is highly respected for his remarkable abilities and design talent.

April 18th Meeting

Demonstration: As a follow up to last months topic of Jin and Shari, Charles discussed carving tools and techniques to continue the process of styling age into your trees. His tools included the traditional chisel, a power chisel, electric drill with abrasive disk and a grinder. Other tools mentioned were a wire brush and rasp. As we learned last week a brushing of lime sulfur will help hasten the whitening of the wood. His specimen was a California Juniper that followed him home from the Mojave 3 years ago that he is just beginning to work on. At the end of our meeting Charles fired up his grinder and got to work to begin eliminating the flat edges from his original pruning in the desert.

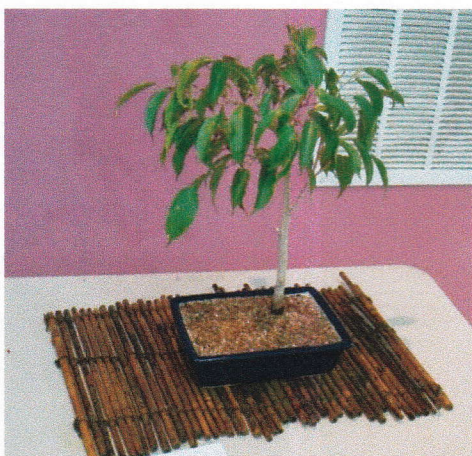


Bonsai Show: The show is less than two months away. The show will run June 6 & 7 from 10-4. We will need to sign up for 2 hour shifts as greeters, and to take care of the trees and answer questions. Please come to the May meeting and be prepared to sign up. We will have sprayers so the trees can be misted to keep them from drying out. Current plans are for basic setup to be done Friday afternoon with remaining trees brought early Saturday morning.

It's coming together quickly! If there is interest we will have a sales table to allow members to sell trees, some of their surplus pots, etc. A portion of the sales will go toward the fee we pay Alden Lane for the sales space. We are considering raffling off the demonstration trees and perhaps some ongoing "door prize" drawings for supplies.

We discussed displaying tips and techniques as well. It is recommended pots be cleaned to remove deposits. You can clean them with some mineral spirits which will help remove water spots and restore the pots shine. You can top dress your trees as simply as screening some soil to put a nice layer of even soil over the top, using aquatic plant mix, or even kitty litter as well as planting moss you collected outside, using stones, etc.

Bonsai Show (cont'd): It is preferred that trees be displayed on stands or on mats. Inexpensive stands and pots are available at Oriental Vase & Furniture in San Leandro. But you can also use Bamboo or stick placemats or chargers, Slats of wood or pebble tile squares. These are great ideas for displays at home as well



Placemat of Sticks



Pebble tile (left) & offset slats of wood (right)
Note the various stands in rear



Plant stands



Even a candle holder can work

Please Note: Please bring the trees you are thinking of displaying to the May meeting. At the meeting we will be able to provide a helpful critique for final styling or display ideas. This is our first show. We will have trees that are quite advanced in age and technique as well as trees that reflect that some of us have trees that we have only styled in the last year or even this year. Our hope is that the show helps stimulate interest in Bonsai to people of all levels of skill and experience and even encourages some to try it for the first time!

Eye Candy: Martin brought in this 5 year old Bougainvillea "Raspberry Ice". He winters his over in his greenhouse and it obviously liked it. No drooling please!



This Wisteria was started from seed last year by Charles. It will be a few years before it flowers but it's a looking good!



Pots & Stands: As requested I am reprinting the information on Oriental Vase & Furniture in San Leandro, a great place to get inexpensive pots & stands. The bonsai pots are in the back on the left side and it could be better lit but you can't beat the prices. Bring some will power. You'll need it!

Oriental Vase & Furniture

2756 Alvarado St
San Leandro, CA 94577
(510) 351-9223

Take the 580 to Castro Valley and bear left to the 238 connector to the 880 North toward the Oakland Airport. Take the first exit (Marina) and make a right. Go 1-2 miles to Alvarado and make a right. They are in a warehouse just past the train tracks on the left about 2 miles down Alvarado.

Alden Lane also had quite a few reasonably priced small to medium pots in their bonsai section that are worth a look as well. They are getting in some new stock soon so be warned, temptation abounds. Its Bonus Buck season at Alden Lane so there are even additional savings to be had this month that can be redeemed in August. See the Alden Lane newsletter or website for more information.

Bonsai Classes At Alden Lane!

Charles has begun another series of Bonsai Classes. If you didn't get Charles email the information is below. Feel free to spread the news with friends who have expressed an interest. Alden Lane also includes information on the E-Newsletter. You can signup for the newsletter on their website. www.aldenlane.com It's a very informative newsletter from our friends at Alden Lane.

The classes precede our monthly meetings and are at 10:00-1:00 on the 3rd Saturday of each month, Alden Lane is charging \$40.00 per class and says that all classes must be signed up for and pre-paid in advance to allow for planning and supplies. **Please call Alden Lane at 925-447-0280 to reserve your spot.** This is quite a deal. For \$40.00 you get the training and leave with a tree in a pot you began to train in the class.

Remaining Classes:

May class: *Cascade or Root in Rock style: Cotoneaster* 5/16

Students will be provided with the techniques needed to style their tree in the cascade, semi-cascade and root in rock styles. Class will consist of a basic overview of bonsai so you need not to have attended any of the previous classes, with a demonstration, then students will have an opportunity to try out their knowledge and style their own tree. A tree, pot, wire, soil and all materials will be provided. Some tools will be available to borrow, however, if you have your own, feel free to bring them.

June class: *Introduction to Bonsai: mixed* 6/20

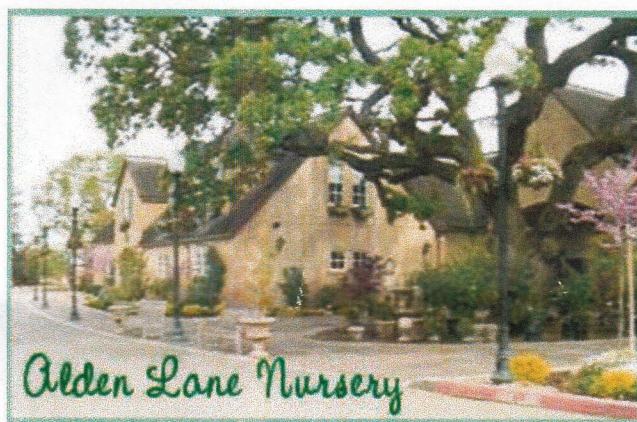
It's Fathers day! This would be a perfect gift: Either send dad to a class on bonsai or take the class yourself and make dad his gift! This class will provide general information on the care and styling of bonsai. You will explore some of the basic tree styles used in bonsai and you will be provided with the techniques needed to get started. The class will consist of an introduction to bonsai with a demonstration, and then you will have an opportunity to try out your knowledge and style your own tree to take home. A tree, pot, wire, soil and all materials will be provided. Some tools will be available to borrow, however, if you have your own, feel free to bring them.

For those of you taking a class we will have our monthly meeting immediately following each class at 1pm.

THANK YOU ALDEN LANE

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 our Bonsai experts help you design your own Bonsai masterpiece from our selection of Bonsai pots and starter plants. We 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 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 visit the Coffee Bar! More importantly don't forget to say THANK YOU for their incredible support!



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Valley Bonsai Society Officers & Contacts

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