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THE BONSAI GAKUSEI

*Newsletter of the Modesto Bonsai Club
APRIL 2006*

PROGRAM

Date: Saturday, April 15, 2006

Location: Blue Oak Nursery, 784 Albers Road.

Program Schedule:

- 9:00a Executive Board Meeting
- 10:00a Members Arrive/Set-Up
- 11:00a Beginning/Intermediate Program – Sam Adina
- 12:30p Lunch Break/Business Meeting: Bring a brown bag lunch. Drinks/snacks available
- 1:00p - ? Doug Phillips Olive Demonstration

REMINDER: Each member is responsible for cleaning his/her work area/table before leaving.

A Message from your President...

You walk into the woods to enjoy the quiet beauty of the trees. Your breathing slows, your blood pressure lowers, your stress melts away, and you no longer feel alone. A sensation similar to peaceful a kinship settles over you.

Scott Chadd of the Placerville Lotus Nursery says that feeling of kinship, that good feeling is a result of the relationship of our molecular chains. The tree's chain of chlorophyll has a central atom of Magnesium and the identically structured human chain of hemoglobin has a central atom of Iron. Chlorophyll, the green part of the tree, miraculously takes sunlight and water and creates matter. Hemoglobin in the human takes oxygen and creates matter.

Bonsai reconnects the humans to their home, the Earth, with its life giving energy. So often we isolate ourselves from this energy by staying within concrete, glass, and steel buildings, traveling inside cars of steel, fiberglass, and rubber, and wearing insulating clothing preventing

the powerful life force of nature from transferring to our bodies.

The Japanese believe all of creation has a life force including trees, rocks, water, elements of nature, and the earth. One of Scott's teachers of Japanese gardening had to turn over and re-arrange stones in a garden as someone had placed them "face down" and they were uncomfortable in that position.

Bonsai is living art, constructed to suspend disbelief. It trips the triggers at the back of the brain: the "Dinosaur Brain" that has kept us alive for over 50,000 years.

Mr. Chadd brought us his 36 years of Bonsai experience with him to give his philosophy and techniques for creating a Japanese Maple grove. He enjoys working with the Japanese Maples as they remind him of the feminine Kabuki dancers, delicate, willowy, and sumptuous. Senually they rise from the ground as if by magic. He sees the Trident Maples as the football jocks, angular, muscular, beefy, sending the message of: "here I am, look at me".

In his grove he begins with "Bright Soil": 80% Red volcanic rock, 10% horticultural sand, clean Fir bark, and rice hulls (available at Redigrow on Keefer Blvd, Sacramento). Water runs rapidly through this mix. He doesn't like the Akadama and other baked clays as they decompose and impede drainage over time.

Placement of the trees is like arranging actors on stage. Trees #1, #2, and #3, have speaking parts and the other trees are like walk-on non-speaking extras. Bigger trees have more movement and are more elaborate. The #1 tree, the largest, is near the center of the pot. In any forest the largest tree is in the center and trees decrease

in size as they grow away from the progenitor. The center of the forest and the three most important trees is the highest part of the soil in the pot. As other trees are placed they are trimmed to be shorter with smaller diameter trunks leaning away from the center to catch nurturing sunlight on their leaves. Branches should not cross over another trunk. Any three trunks should not be found in a straight line. Keep the relationships of the trees in your mind's eye as you work. Of prime importance is the initial tree placement in the tray. You are striving to sculpt an asymmetric triangle as the arrangement of foliage. He likes 70% of the mass in 30% of the container. The weight of the trees should be concentrated in #1 and #2 trees.

Bonsai happens in less than one second! Your brain sees the scene immediately. The "Magic of Bonsai": only the most interesting aspects are focused on and other elements are barely noticed.

Bonsai, with proper care, can live longer in pots than in the earth. Aging is due to the increasing distance from root hairs to the branch tips. Consider the laws of Physics. There are no pumps to bring nutrients from the hair roots up to the tips of the branches. This capillary action in the Cambium layer decreases as the tree gets taller and branches grow longer. The life of the tree is at the bud tip of the branches. The trunk supports the leaves.

Care of the Bonsai includes feeding, root care, and shaping. Fertilizers include blood meal, bone meal, cottonseed meal, Thompson Miracle Grow, Osmocote, and Morebloom 0-10-10 (after August). Feeding is half-strength solutions every 2 weeks from April through August.

If the soil does not allow rapid drainage, loosen the soil with a chopstick or repot. Repotting should not involve disturbing the soil around the root. Mr. Chadd prefers to put the trees in a large container (like a cement mixing tray), put his red soil over and firmly around the root ball.

Another technique he recommends is to cut thin wedges 2 inches into the root ball. Cutting roots stimulates growth and increases leaf production to compensate for

decreased rootage. B1 is added to the soil after repotting.

Training Japanese Maples, and all deciduous trees, should be done with tweezers. To develop ramification, begin closest to the trunk, not at the branch tip. Tweeze the axil of the leaf to allow nascent buds to break out into two new leaf pairs will develop. You will get a much more believable tree. New leaves will be half as big, brighter in color in the fall, and more pink in the spring. Tweeze from spring through the fall when all the leaves drop off.

Defoliation should be done only to super strong or extremely well-developed trees.

Scott's beautiful grove of Japanese Maples will be auctioned off at our April show. Please stop by to enjoy his finished masterpiece. His forest is definitely calling out to you to both lose yourself in the woods and find your inner self in its quiet.

Your President, Richard.



Congratulations to club member Rob Ellett for placing the winning bid and taking home the Maple Grove!

CLUB INFORMATION

Welcome To Our New Members!

Ron Alves

Jerry & Blythe Stanton

Thank you Brad Coleman and Marilyn Myers for donating items for the March raffle!

Joyce Avila has signed up for the refreshment table for our April meeting. **Thank you Joyce!** We would really like to see at least three people sign up each month.

Did everyone get to see the wonderful gold and silver pendants created by club member David Glaister at the show? Truly **beautiful bonsai jewelry**. Thank you for your generosity David and Judy.

BONSAI CLASSES

The Modesto Bonsai Club has decided to offer a series of four classes to be held at Blue Oak Nursery in April. Sam Adina will instruct them with aid from our mentors. The cost will be \$80 covering all four classes plus a plant will be provided on the first night. Class will be from 6-9pm April 6, 13, 20, and 27. We are looking for the class to fill up quickly due to increased interest generated by the spring show. Call Richard for info. 577-4174



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Sam Adina

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Members-at-Large

Bill Hawley

Mary Miller

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Doris Gaberel

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Hostess

Hanna McKinstry

Librarian

Betty Bennett

Newsletter Editor

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*gakusei (gok-say) noun a student or scholar



Friends Ready For Day Two

2006 MEETING SCHEDULE

April15: Doug Phillips – Olives

May20: Janet Walters – Satsuki

June17: Sam and Mentors discuss:

1. Air-layering
2. Trimming Maples
3. Trimming Azaleas
4. How to Buy

July15 and August19: Member Workshop 10AM-1PM

September16: Johnny Uchida-Topic TBA

October21: Ruben Guzman – Juniper

November18: Pick trees for 2007 Show, work on styling.

December: Holiday Social

BLUE OAK NURSERY NEWS

Just In – More new plants and succulents from Lone Pine Gardens.

During the month of April – The Garden Gate (Blue Oaks retail store) will give away a free plant with any purchase.

Mention your membership for 10% discount at the Garden Gate as well.

MEMBER TIP OF THE MONTH

Try Something New!

Bonsai offers something for everyone. Not only are there hundreds of different trees and shrubs that will make nice bonsai. They will each lend themselves to different styles from upright to cascade.

In April, with things blooming and new leaves opening, be inspired to start something different. At our show, guests were interested in seeing the large junipers that Sam did such wonderful styling on, but they are not for everyone.

To me, Japanese maples say spring. They are graceful and easy to grow, and the blooming trees are just plain fun!

For me, a new interest has been saikai or tray landscapes. Creating and maintaining these can be fun and easy.

So, if you've been in a rut, try something new this spring!

- Doris Gaberel

Directions to Meeting Site: The **Blue Oak Nursery** is on the east side of Albers Road, 1 mile north of Hwy. 132 (Yosemite Blvd.). Watch for the big blue sign with the blue oak silhouette. Turn into the gravel lane and follow it to the end. Park in designated areas.

Modesto Bonsai Club Mailing Address:
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