

Fresno Bonsai Society

Newsletter

May 2021



Our Mission

The purpose of the Fresno Bonsai Society is to expand the knowledge and skills of bonsai within its members while offering opportunities for appreciation of this art form to the broader community. We do this through the inspiration of the beauty of the natural world and the rich cultural heritage of bonsai.

Officers of the FBS

President.....Mike Saul
Vice President.....Cris Saldana
SecretaryMarilyn Shelton
Treasurer.....Bob Wright
Board Member Suzanne Follett
 John Wright
Past President.....Dave Soho
Newsletter ...Carol & John Wright



President's Message

Hello everyone. I am really looking forward to seeing you all at our outdoor meeting on May 8th and again at our annual exhibit in the Home & Garden Show.

Our next meeting will focus on Black (multi-flush) pine foliage management. Two of our most knowledgeable members (Steve DaSilva and Tim Robinson) will explain their own techniques. Their pine bonsai testify to their skills and understanding of JBP. Bob Hilvers will discuss "What Makes it a Bonsai". I encourage anyone who would like guidance with a tree or help working on a tree to bring it. Please do not repot or leave a mess in the park, but we will clean up and discard cuttings.

I sincerely hope that everyone of you has identified one or two of your favorite bonsai to display at the Home & Garden Show. You will need a stand or mat and an accent plant for each of your trees. Each displayed tree must be pruned, free of weeds and the pot cleaned and oiled.

Our annual bonsai exhibit points up an important issue for the Fresno Bonsai Society: we depend on committed leaders and volunteers to make our events fun and successful. May is the month when we call upon members to step up and run for office. Our annual election is in June. In truth, most officers run unopposed. Cris Saldana has graciously agreed to be Vice President this year. He is now President elect. John Wright has consented to be one of the two new members of the Board of Directors. He will serve for two years, starting in June. John and I will share responsibility for the newsletter. We will need a new Vice President, and a new Board member to serve for one year. At the time of this writing, I am unsure if Bob

Upcoming Events

May 8th, FBS meeting, at 9AM, at Tice Park, in Fresno (Southwest corner of Cole and Millbrook)

May 21-23rd FBS participation at the Fresno H&G Show
May 21, 22, and 23 (set up on the 20th)

Wright and Marilyn Shelton will continue to serve as Treasurer and Secretary. (As Past President, I will remain on the board as an ex-officio member.)

We have kept our bylaws intentionally simple. We have not defined the responsibilities of the two at-large Board Members. I believe that the two Board Members should be committee leaders for the Annual Bonsai Yard Sale and Home & Garden Show Exhibit. Cris and I have agreed that the Vice President might be responsible for identifying meeting topics and speakers. Either the President or the Vice President will have to take leadership for the Bonsai Basics groups.

The members who volunteer for these jobs do not need to know the nuances of bonsai. They need to be willing to communicate and participate in planning. They need to be organized. They need to care about the success of the club and satisfaction of our members.

I urge you all to consider volunteering for a position in June. Please contact me if you have questions or interest. We have forty members. We have some very bright and capable people. Step up.

Mike Saul

Recap FBS April 10th meeting

About 35 FBS members and guests gathered at Tice Park in Fresno on a sunny Saturday for informative instruction and good old fashion socializing. Vice President Cris Saldana filled in for President Mike Saul. Cris discussed the upcoming

Home and Garden Show, which will be held on May 21-23 at the Fresno Fairgrounds. Set-up for the show will be on Thursday. Sign-up sheets were available and members were asked to sign up to help. Members were also asked to identify two trees for display at the show.



Newer members were also invited to show trees, even if they were a work in progress. A special area in the display will be set aside for trees in development.

Bob Hilvers provided a discussion on how to take a nursery stock juniper and start it along the road to becoming a bonsai. Bob discussed initial steps in cleaning out the tree and opening it up with the removal of branches that likely won't be used.



This process allows the trunk to be seen and the best front and movement to be identified. Working from the top of the root ball, loose soil is removed to see where the roots start and if there is a flare in the trunk. Primary branches are identified and additional cleaning takes place. Circling roots and long roots can be removed but use caution in the amount of foliage and root removal done at one time. Bob will provide some follow up instruction on these plants in the future.

Pat Galle provided a discussion of Satsuki Azaleas, a species he has worked with for years. Satsuki's



are popular but have some different aspects of care and soil needs because of their root structure. Pat discussed the leaf change in Satsuki's and similar species and how they look sickly but it is just the natural process

of shedding old leaves. Pat extended an offer for members to come to an (continued page 3)

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open house of his garden after the FBS meeting in May. For those that haven't been there Pat has some beautiful trees and a number of Satsuki's.

A large number of items were contributed to the meeting raffle in April. Items included pots, plants, magazines, rocks, etc.. Most everyone



seemed to take something home. Bob and John Wright did the calling and ticket drawing.



Thanks to all those who contributed or bought tickets. The raffle generate several hundred dollars for the club. Get next month's meeting on your calendar.







Working on trees at Cris Saldana's . No that isn't Cris kneeling in the middle of the group picture!



JT's Tree Tips May 2021

The days are longer and warmer, and the sun angle has been sneaking up on us, so we need to get into watering mode now, in earnest, as the growing season is in full swing. I am putting my shade cloth up next week.

May is a big time in bonsai. For all **except** the refined trees, we want to wire the first few inches of the new shoots **once they have hardened off**. This is the area that we will cut back to in the fall. This is the beginning or continuation of ramification for the branches and will pay big dividends later on if we do the work now.. Don't cut back and pinch these shoots now. *(The exception is if the longest shoots reach out past where you want, pinch the terminal shoot but not the inside shoots behind it. We need those to fill our branch with secondary and tertiary branches and twigs.)* This will help to thicken and set the movement of the branch. Watch the wire so it doesn't cut in. You may need to remove the wire and rewire with a larger size to keep the shape. If you didn't cut back to where you need the branch to start, do so now and then when a new shoot appears and then hardens, wire it and follow the above procedure.



On trees that have the shape you want, let the shoot extend to four or five leaves and then cut back to two. Or when there are shoots extended, cut back beyond the beginning of the shoot and into the woody branch and wire any new shoots that pop from there into the new branch tips. Many times we need to do this to get the taper back under control.

On developing trees that need thickening of trunk or branches, loosely wire the beginning of the branch and let the tips run wild. This should give you a section of branch that you can cut back later that will have shape and girth. But watch out for the wire digging in. It may only take a matter of a few weeks while it sets.

Black Pine: Don't worry about **overly long** candles. We will cut the candles from the end of this month through June depending on when the needles come about half an inch out and pull away from their sheaths. Feed up to the time you candle cut.

White Pine: Pinch off all but 4 sets of needles on succulent healthy candles and none on weaker ones. We will **not** be cutting the candles entirely off as in Black Pines.

Spruces, cedars, Redwoods and the like: Pinch off 2/3 of the succulent new shoot as it emerges with the fleshy parts of your finger tips (not the nails).

Azaleas: if you wish to enjoy the flowers, wait until they have finished about 3/4 of the blooms before stripping all the buds off and cutting back to two shoots and two leaves.

I have noticed that sometimes on the same branch, there are shoots with short internodes and some with longer internodes. Sometimes the shorter ones don't extend out. If they don't extend, don't bother to pinch them. But if they are elongating, do pinch them short. Shoots are elastic. The buds contain all of the new leaves when they first push out, but as they grow out into a shoot, the inter-nodal distances between the leaves stretch out like a rubber band. Before the internodes get too long, you can pinch them. This will stop the elongation process and start the hardening process of lignification (wood formation). After they have elongated they form wood and can no longer be pinched and must be cut with scissors.

This is a big time for pest and weed control so be prepared to do battle with everything from aphids to snails and dandelions to oxalis. Spray and bait for those critters. I would suggest something with Merit (imidacloprid) in it like Bayer's 12 Month Tree and Shrub or Bayer's Merit 0.5g granular insecticide. While pinching, examine your tree for any signs of stress, disease or insects. Remember to look on the underside of the leaves, as there are many sneaky pests that hide there. Mealy bug, spider mites, moth and beetle – a small number of bugs can wreak havoc and ruin the foliage before you know it. Scale, aphids, beetles, etc. are best dealt with now before they burrow and suck your tree dry. When watering, spray from the bottom and all around the tree to wash as many as possible away. Pick off those that are stubborn. If you still see signs of their presence, spray with a solution of Malathion®. On healthy trees in pots fertilize continuously with organic fertilizers like Dr. Earth 5-5-5 with an intermittent shot of Dyna-Grow, Miracle-Gro, or some other water soluble, full spectrum fertilizer.

Special Thanks to John Thompson for use in our FBS Newsletter