



SAN PU KAI

February 2009

Editor: Joanie Berkwitz
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President's Message

Who doesn't enjoy sharing good food, good conversation, and good fun? We had a pleasant and well-fed Holiday Party for January's meeting, at the Chin's in San Marcos. The staff was attentive and the food was divine, and we most likely will be going back there again next year. Thank you to everyone who attended.

In February, we will hold a Bring Your Own Tree meeting, since this is an excellent time to start trimming and pruning deciduous trees. Your trees are beginning to wake up now, so while you can still see their bare structure, make your pruning decisions and improve them before they leaf out. Our long-time bonsai experts will be in attendance, helping you if you have any questions. Here's a little tip, too: in order to prevent spreading fungus or disease, clean your tools between each tree. Dip them in alcohol or another disinfectant and wipe them with a clean rag.

Cary Sullivan will bring the goodies for February. In all of the excitement of my first meeting as President, I forgot to pass around the treat list, so you will get your chance to sign up at the next meeting. Thank you, **Cary!**

We had a productive and interesting Board meeting on January 27th, and we have discussed most of the new and old business for the next few months. If you would like to have a financial report, or are interested in business in front of the Board, you are welcome to ask me about it. The club is in a firm financial position, and we go into the New Year with everything that we need to fulfill the club's goals.

There won't be a bus trip to **Bonsai-a-thon**, but I do urge you to consider going. Unfortunately, the **Bonsai Pavilion Gala** is the same weekend, which is February 28th and March 1st. Both the Gala and the Bonsai-a-thon are detailed in this newsletter, and they are both worthwhile events for us.

An important reminder: Please pay your club dues soon! This newsletter contains a form for you to send to Tom, along with your check. Anyone who hasn't paid by, or at, the next meeting, may not get the newsletters any more. Since we have some really terrific demonstrators coming up this year, you won't want to miss a single issue!

Our next meeting is February 10th at the Senior Center, don't forget your tree!

Joanie Berkwitz, President
760-431-1014

SAN PU KAI BONSAI – BONSAI IDEAS

BY MARTY MANN

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This is pot clean-up time. Remove accumulated layers of soil and lime deposits. Some chemicals may help but elbow grease works best. Try one of the new abrasive Japanese erasers that are usually available at convention bazaars and many bonsai shops.

Soil mixes should be prepared in advance. A good standard mix must be suitable to your climatic area and watering procedures. A basic mix must contain a combination of at least three types of materials to permit free drainage and provide sufficient moisture retention. These materials include some sandy garden loam mixed with portions of humus such as fir bark, redwood mulch or peat moss, and an aggregate such as decomposed granite, perlite, pumice or river sand. The proportions of this material in your mix is best determined by your own regional requirements. Proportions should vary for different types of growing material. Organic matter stimulates soil microorganisms. Important minerals and other trace elements necessary for healthy plant growth is provided by your fertilizers.

Don't be misled by the apparent lack of insect activity during quiet winter months. Snails and slugs are still active. The destructive habits of sucking insects continue. The application of a mild winter spray of a fungicide and an insecticide will help you get rid of mealy bugs, soil worms, mildew and fungus that may be attacking your trees. Spray deciduous trees with a dormant spray (lime sulfur) before signs of new growth appear.

When trees are dormant, slowed down and resting, they allow us to see them as twiggy silhouettes (deciduous) or in full form (conifers and others). Whether potted or still in training, now is the time to critique your own trees. We often attend conventions or club meetings to hear well-informed sensei or senior bonsaiists survey a tree and make an educated and constructive observation that may improve or change it. We fail, however, to take the spirit of these programs and apply them to our own material.

Wires should be well exposed on most of your trees since foliage dropped and new growth is not obstructing your inspection. Remove all of last year's wire. Severe bark cuts may have occurred during the slow winter months when the woody portions of the trees lignified. Early spring spurts will quickly engulf old wire and cause damage.

Watering routines must be continued--but curtailed. Most bonsai can be maintained on minimal schedules however don't allow anything to become completely dry. Don't rely on possible light winter rains.

Don't overlook the last step in your spring dress-up program. Look at all the finished trees. Are the pots clean? Is the surface of each planting clear of winter trash and properly surfaced with fresh soil or dressed with the beginning of moss color? Are the edges of the pots trimmed to allow a channel along the rims for drainage?

A good bonsai technique is to "rotate, rotate and rotate" your trees regularly. Exposing them to the light (sunny) side encourages budding development and balanced new growth.

This article has been extracted from a recently published book called 'Bonsai Ideas'© By Marty Mann. Material is not to be copied without publisher or author's permission. February 2009

The Fundraising Gala for the Bonsai Pavilion at the Wild Animal Park is being held on February 29th, 2009 at the Crowne Plaza Hanalei, 2270 Hotel Circle North, San Diego. **Bruce and Sharon Asakawa** are the honorees. For more information, and to RSVP, please see www.sandiegobonsaiclub.com. The Gala is held to raise funds for the Pavilion, and a major benefit drawing and auction are held after dinner. Donations for the drawing and auction are gratefully accepted. If you don't have access to a computer, you can call Cary Sullivan at (760) 431-1014 for more information

BONSAI PAVILIONS at the WILD ANIMAL PARK

The New Year at the Wild Animal Park started with much visible progress in the construction area. Our volunteer construction manager, John Jackson, directs all the details when any new fence poles are being placed or the horizontal boards are attached. We all then follow his directions and are satisfied with the results. Thank, once again, to Jim Kirchmer, Ray Lish, **Marty Mann**, Terri & John Petrescu, Harlan & Mary Ann Price, **'lyn Stevenson, Cary and Steve Valentine**, and **Dave Woodall** for being available on different Saturdays in January. Another new volunteer, **Mike Coghill**, joined us this month also.

Our regular workday in the bonsai area was postponed a week due to the SDBC's bus trip to Los Angeles but we will again be back on the third Saturday of each month to care for the bonsai. This month involved some winter cleaning of the trees and the show areas around the pavilion along with visiting with WAP guests. The kiosk at the entrance to the Pavilion always needs to be refilled with our SDBC brochures and we have now added the informational flyers for our February Gala there too.

Curator Steve is monitoring the automatic water timers with WAP staff since power failures and winter rain schedules are always causes for concern. Since we are not there on a daily basis, we depend on the WAP staff to do the daily checks of the watering system as well as securing the gates at the end of each day. Our bonsai "babies" love all the attention that they get!

We hope your 2009 resolution included volunteering at the WAP! Please give me a call if your name is not on the list already for admission at the service entrance. We need volunteers in both pavilion areas this year especially as we get nearer to completion of the new pavilion. Also, the Pavilion finance and construction committees would appreciate anyone who wants to volunteer their expertise in those areas. We look forward to "new recruits" always!

'lyn Stevenson
SDBC-WAP Liaison
858-486-4805



Bonsai-a-thon at the Huntington

Filled with demonstrations, exhibition trees, and vendors, the Bonsai-a-thon is an annual event at the Huntington Gardens. February 29th and March 1st. Hours are from 10:30 am to 4:30 pm, and a live auction begins at 3 pm. There are always great deals on trees, tools, and pots.

Huntington Botanical Gardens is located at 1151 Oxford Road, San Marino, California 91108

SAN PU KAI

Membership Renewal Form

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Telephone _____

Email _____

Would you like to receive your newsletter by email? Yes No

Individual Membership \$20.00

Family Membership \$25.00

For Family Membership, additional names _____

Please mail to:

Tom Ohgi, Treasurer
4856 Glenhaven Drive
Oceanside, CA 92056



SAN PU KAI

c/o Joanie Berkwitz
5440 El Arbol Drive
Carlsbad, CA 92008

Meetings are always at the Senior Center in Carlsbad, at 799 Pine Avenue, with the exception of the January Holiday Party. The return address, above, allows the Post Office to return newsletters if they cannot be delivered, since the Senior Center does not collect or forward mail for clubs.

Calendar of Events

Tuesday, February 10th, 2009	7 pm to 9 pm	Regular meeting, Carlsbad Senior Center, 799 Pine Ave
Saturday, February 21st, 2009	9 am – 12 pm	Workday, Bonsai Pavilions Wild Animal Park
Tuesday, March 10th, 2009	7 pm to 9 pm	Regular meeting, Carlsbad Senior Center, 799 Pine Ave
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