

May 2013



The Bent Twig

Dedicated to the learning, enjoying and promoting of bonsai

President's Message

Dino opened the meeting by thanking all members who participated in our club's annual show. The show was a great success both artistically and financially. Our guest artist, Michael Hagedorn, mentioned that our show was one of the best that he's seen in the United States!

May Demonstration – Doc Ward



Doc is a member of ABAS and is known for his work with maples and rock plantings. He says that he has a passion for this style of bonsai because they are all unique and represent the world and our struggle to survive in the world.

Doc uses mostly trident maples in his rock plantings because they are adaptable to the amount and type of soil used in rock plantings and they are very hardy. Japanese maples need a little more soil to thrive.



Doc started by telling us that there are four main types of rock plantings (slab, bowl, root over rock and clinging). A member asked how he cut the rocks and he said that he uses a diamond tipped die grinder to cut the bottom of the rock.

American Bonsai Association Sacramento

Rock plantings take a little more care because they are in a tough environment. Doc uses Grow Power Plus (humic acid based fertilizer) which he mixes with water and sprays every time he waters. Although no special care is needed in the winter, they need more water in the summer. Doc has created a misting system which mists all his rock plantings three times a day. Rock plantings require a lot of humidity to thrive, so once the weather gets hot, you can place your rock in a tray with water to generate more humidity.

Doc mixes clay, humus and sphagnum moss to make a mixture called muck and he uses this to build a wall around the area that he will place the plant. The wall allows us to put more soil in the area (unless you are doing a bowl planting and have a deep area to plant).

If you are doing a root over rock, there is some preparation required. You have to lengthen the roots to make them long enough to grasp the rock and be planted in the soil. This may take several years. Periodically you take the plants out of the container, clean the roots and then wind the roots around the inside of the pot so that they continue to grow. Other types of rock plantings do not require any preparation other than finding the right rock, slab or bowl.



The first step is to wet the rock so that the muck will cling to the rock. Then Doc molds muck around the outside edge – putting clay into the crevices. Once you get this border, he builds a thin wall and places it around the outside edge of the area where the tree will be planted – slowly tapering the wall to the edge of the rock. Doc likes more soil

to ensure a healthy environment and this wall allows you to use more soil. He uses a chopstick to place a few holes at the bottom of the wall so that water can drain out.



Doc uses organics in the soil for plantings – sort of a super soil (Home Depot brand – fir bark and humus but no chicken manure) with a lot of lava and akadama.



Once the area is prepared, you make a mound with soil and place the tree on top the mound. The tree will be secured to the rock or pot with wire (the wire should be glued to the container with epoxy prior to starting the planting). The final step is to place moss around the tree. Moss helps to stabilize the planting.



After care is important with a rock planting and the tree should be watered and misted and kept in about 40% shade.



Lucky winner is Don Walker

Newsletter Changes

The format of the newsletter will change next month. Unless we have a volunteer to take over the newsletter, it will be much smaller and there will be no description of demonstrations. We will continue to have some pictures of show and tell as well as announcing upcoming club functions.

Repotting Workshop

The club will sponsor a repotting workshop on Saturday, June 1st, at Maruyama Nursery. Please

join us. Experienced club members will be available to help with repotting your trees.

Home Tour – June 15th

If you wish to carpool, please meet at the Garden Center at 8:30 a.m. If you have signed up for the tour, home addresses will be e-mailed to you before the tour. The stops include Renee Seely, Ed Slomovic and Gary and Lucy Judd – and the club will provide refreshments at the end of the tour. Thanks to Gary and Lucy for hosting our after-tour soirée!

SHOW AND TELL





Election of Officers

Kitty will announce next year's slate of officers at our May meeting. Nominations may still be made at the May meeting, and elections will be held at our June Luau meeting. Please contact Kitty if you are interested in running for a club office.

May Meeting – Yuzo Maruyama

Yuzo Maruyama will be our guest artist at the May meeting.

June Meeting - Luau

The June Meeting will be our annual luau, so please join us for an evening of fun, good company and food. Drinks and the main course will be provided by the club, but please bring a side dish or dessert to share if you plan on attending. You should also bring plates and silverware for yourself and your guests. Details will be provided in the June newsletter.

Home Visits

Are you a new member or do you have questions about the set up of bonsai in your yard – for health and display? The ABAS Board is offering to have experienced members visit your home and evaluate the set up of displays to take ensure that you have the right amount of shade and sun and to offer suggestions for improving the health of your trees.

- **May 28th Meeting – Yuzo Maruyama**
- **June 25th Meeting – Luau Dinner**
- **July 23rd Meeting – John Cota – The History of Bonsai**
- **August 27th Meeting – Hideko Metaxas – the Principles of Displaying Bonsai**
- **September 24th Meeting, ABAS Annual Plant Auction**

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