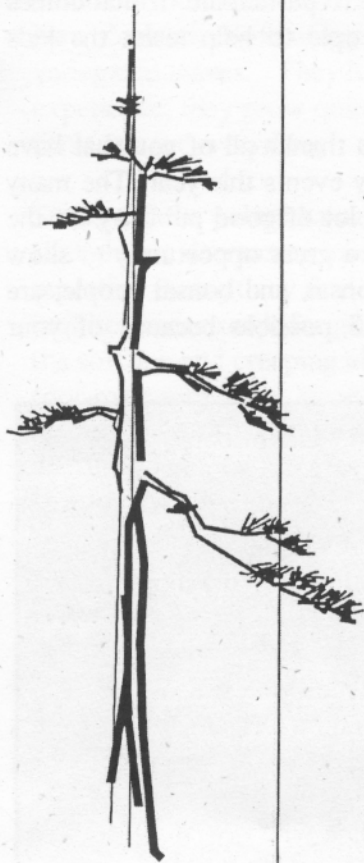


# BONSAI NEWS

September, 2004



*Milwaukee  
Bonsai Society*

P.O. Box 198  
Brookfield, Wisconsin  
53208-0198

Information Line  
414-299-9229

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## September Meeting - Bonsai Critique

Our September meeting might be a bonsai critique. At least that's what the schedule says (your editor's just winging it here - nobody wrote anything up!) Last year's bonsai critique meeting was pretty successful. Everyone brought in trees that they wanted to improve but maybe didn't know where to start. And we all criticized them mercilessly. But we were trying to be helpful, of course. Yikes! If I had taken all of the advice I received last year, my tree would probably be even deader than it is today! Actually, there were many good suggestions. From what I hear, the only new rule this year is ONE TREE to a customer. Last year's meeting went long, and still didn't get through all of the trees.

## October Meeting -Origami/ Dead Tree Contest and White Elephant Sale

Our October meeting will be another wild one!! Bring in your dead trees to be judged by all who attend. It's a great time to see what happens to others' trees!! And it makes us feel better about our own little blunders. Ribbons will be awarded. Also bring in any bonsai or other odds and ends you have for our White Elephant Sale. It's a treat to get bargains! While all this is going on, we will also have a

demonstration on Origami. We're hoping to have everything organized so all will be able to create their own masterpiece in paper. All in all, it should be an exciting meeting

## Public Workshop

The club will hold it's annual fall public workshop on Saturday Sept 11, 9 -12 at Grace Lutheran Church. We have a lot of excited people signed up for the public workshop already.

We will be needing quite a few volunteers to help make this a great experience for our attendees. Please check your calendars and be ready to sign up at our September meeting.

## Pot Auction at the September Meeting

The club has received several donations of pots that will be sold, in a silent auction, at the September meeting. I am told that there are all sizes of pots. They are of various shapes, some are glazed and some unglazed. Bring your checkbook and buy that special pot that strikes your fancy. All proceeds go to the club.

## MBS Meetings and Information Line:

The Milwaukee Bonsai Society meets on the first Tuesday of the month at 7 p.m. at Grace Lutheran Church, 3030 W. Oklahoma Avenue. Call the MBS Voice Mail/Message System at (414) 299-9229 to learn about upcoming events and meeting times. To contact the club via email: [mbs@asapnet.net](mailto:mbs@asapnet.net) Look for us on the web at: <http://www.milwaukeebonsai.org>



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

WOW again this month! The overall quality of the trees that were put on display at the Club Show in June was absolutely outstanding! But somehow, I believe the trees shown at State Fair this year were even better than those in our club show in June.

It makes me very proud of our club and the talent it contains. It should also make all of you that submitted trees proud. Hopefully those of you who did not enter a tree in the State Fair will be inspired to enter next year. One thing that is absolutely marvelous is how some of our younger talent is developing.

Last year, Scott Hurula and his fourteen-year-old son, Scottie, both won Awards of Merit in the 2003 State Fair. This year, Houston Sanders and his eleven-year-old daughter, Carolyn, both won Awards of Merit in the 2004 State Fair. Congratulations to them and to all those who won ribbons at the 2004 Wisconsin State Fair.

In addition to the State Fair we just completed an exhibit at the 30<sup>th</sup> Annual Bradley Sculpture Garden Party. This is an event sponsored by the Friends of Art of the Milwaukee Art Museum annually when the Bradley Family Foundation makes the Sculpture Garden available for viewing by the public. It reaches an entirely different viewer than does the State Fair or the Folk Fair. We had a nice exhibit and received a very warm welcome.

We will be doing the Folk Fair again this year. It is on November 19, 20 and 21<sup>st</sup>. We will need bonsai to display and tree sitters to watch the trees and answer questions. If you have participated in the Folk Fair previously, you know what a fun time it is talking to the kids! In addition we are looking for a

sponsor so that we can have a workshop for some the kids that would like to participate. If that comes about we will need people to help teach the kids how to do a bonsai!

The Board of Directors thanks all of you that have been active in our many events this year. The many events have provided a lot of good publicity for the club and have given us a great opportunity to show the community what bonsai, and bonsai people, are all about. And it is all possible because of your support.

## 2004 Club Events Calendar

### September

Tuesday 7 - Bonsai Critique  
Saturday 11 - AM Public Workshop

### October

Tuesday 5 - Dead Tree Contest & White Elephant Sale / demo on Origami

### November

Tuesday 2 - Annealing wire / winter protection / basics of bonsai soil  
Friday 19 - Sunday 21 - Folk Fair Exhibit

### December

Tuesday 7 - Christmas Party

## Proposed MBS Officers for 2005

Here is the proposed slate of officers for 2005 who will be elected at the October meeting. The bylaws state that the slate must be published in both the September and the October newsletter prior to the election:

President: Kris Ziemann  
1st Vice-President: Jean Sher  
2nd Vice-President: Darlene Shaginaw  
Secretary: Sharon Schmidt  
Treasurer: Karen Kleineider  
Director-at Large (3 year term): Allen Koszarek

### Current Directors:

Erskine Tucker, retires after 2005  
Joe Herbert retires after 2006



## State Fair Winners

Congratulations to the State Fair Winners!

A = Advanced I = Intermediate N = Novice  
Y = Youth

**Exhibit #1 (Aug 5 - August 7)**

**Sponsored by: Madison / MBS**

### *Best of Show*

Trident Maple (A) - Jack Douthitt (MBS)

(See Picture on page 2)

### *Awards of Merit*

English Boxwood (A) - Jack Douthitt (MBS)

Amur Maple (A) Tim O'Rourke

### *Blue Ribbons*

Trident Maple (A) - Jack Douthitt (MBS)

English Boxwood (A) - Jack Douthitt (MBS)

Amur Maple (A) - Tim O'Rourke (Mad)

Shimpaku juniper (A) - Tim O'Rourke (Mad)

Erodium (I) - Melba Stockhausen (MBS)

Korean Hornbeam grove (I) - Barbara Borders (Mad)

Korean Hornbeam (N) - Kris Ziemann (MBS)

Spirea (I) - Jean Sher (MBS)

Procumbens Juniper (I) - Scott Hurula (MBS)

### *Red Ribbons*

Japanese Maple (I) - Barbara Borders (Mad)

Maple (A) - Tim O'Rourke (Mad)

Narrow Leaf Ficus (A) - Tim O'Rourke (Mad)

White Pine (I) - Karl Bethke (Mad)

Amur Maple (I) Houston Sanders (MBS)

Kingsville Boxwood (I) - Scott Hurula Jr. (MBS)

Moss Sawara Cypress (I) - Melba Stockhausen (MBS)

### *White Ribbons*

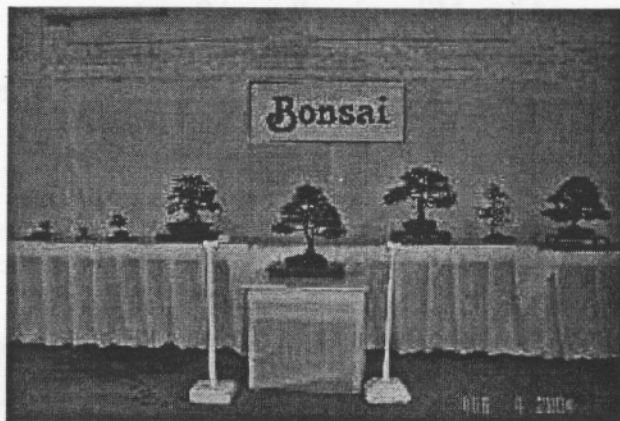
Korean Boxwood (I) - Karl Bethke (Mad)

Korean Hornbeam (I) - Karl Bethke (Mad)

Moss Sawara Cypress (I) - Melba Stockhausen (MBS)

American Elm (I) - Jean Sher (MBS)

Compacta juniper (I) - Jean Sher (MBS)



Top - Show 1 display  
Middle - Boxwood  
Bottom L- Korean Hornbeam  
Bottom R - Amur Maple

**Exhibit #2 (August 8 - 11)**

**Sponsored by: Milwaukee Bonsai Society**

*Best of Show*

False Cypress (A) - Yvonne Szatkowski (MBS)

*Awards of Merit*

Blue Rug Juniper (A) - Yvonne Szatkowski (MBS)

Pohutukawa (I) - Houston Sanders (MBS)

Pohutukawa (Y) - Carolyn Sanders (MBS)

*Blue Ribbons*

False Cypress (A) - Yvonne Szatkowski (MBS)

Blue Rug Juniper (A) - Yvonne Szatkowski (MBS)

Pohutukawa (I) - Houston Sanders (MBS)

Pohutukawa (Y) - Carolyn Sanders (MBS)

American Larch (I) - Tom Kerner (MBS)

Bald Cypress (A) - Pam Woythal (MBS)

Korean Hornbeam (A) - Yvonne Szatkowski (MBS)

*Red Ribbons*

Ponderosa Pine (I) - Tom Kerner (MBS)

Needles Juniper (I) - Tom Kerner (MBS)

Bougainvillea (I) - Jim Toepfer (MBS)

Shimpaku Juniper (A) - Joe Nemecek (MBS)

Pfitzer Juniper (A) - Joe Nemecek (MBS)

Fukien Tea (A) - Joe Nemecek (MBS)

*White Ribbons*

Pacific Juniper (I) - Jim Toepfer (MBS)

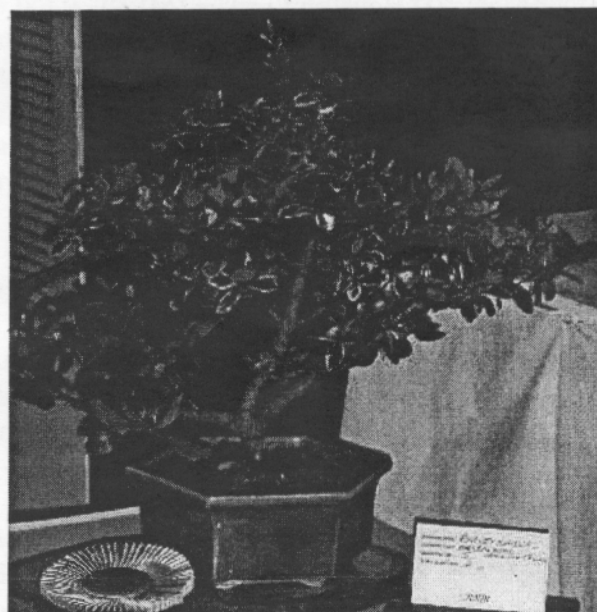
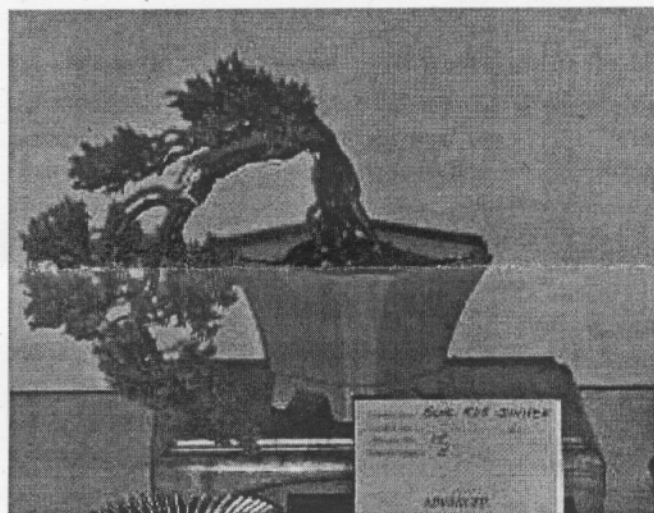
Japanese Larch (I) - Tom Kerner (MBS)

Chinese Elm (I) - Tony Plicka (MBS)

Natal Plum (I) - Houston Sanders (MBS)

Wianda Ficus (A) - Joe Nemecek (MBS)

Japanese Hornbeam (A) - Pam Woythal (MBS)



Above - Show 2 Display

Top Right - Best of Show Cypress

Middle Right - Blue Rug Juniper

Bottom Right - Pohutukawa



**Exhibit #3 (August 12, 15)**

**Sponsored by: Fox Valley Bonsai Society/ MBS**

(Sorry, no pictures available)

*Best of Show*

Willow Leaf Ficus (A) - Gerry Knops (FV)

*Award of Merit*

Narrow Leaf Ficus (A) - Dennis Chuchel (FV)

Korean Hornbeam (I) - Scott Hurula (MBS)

Korean Hornbeam (I) - Steve Carini (MBS)

*Blue Ribbons*

Willow Leaf Ficus (A) - Gerry Knops (FV)

Narrow Leaf Ficus (A) - Dennis Chuchel (FV)

Korean Hornbeam (I) - Scott Hurula (MBS)

Korean Hornbeam (I) - Steve Carini (MBS)

Ivy (A) - Dennis Chuchel (FV)

Juniper (A) - Dennis Chuchel (FV)

Larch (N) - Dennis Dahlstrom (FV)

Willow Leaf Ficus (Y) - Martin Hubmanna (MBS)

Fukien Tea (N) - Joe Herbert (MBS)

Shimpaku Juniper (I) - Scott Hurula Jr (MBS)

*Red Ribbons*

Golden Gate Ficus (Y) - Amber Stone (MBS)

Golden Gate Ficus (Y) - Ashley Stone (MBS)

Shimpaku Juniper (N) - Joe Herbert (MBS)

Procumbens Juniper (I) - Scott Hurula (MBS)

Larch grove (N) - Dennis Dahlstrom (FV)

Korean Hornbeam (A) - Dennis Chuchel (FV)

Blue Rug Juniper (A) - Dennis Chuchel (FV)

Virginia Creeper (A) - Ralph Mahn (FV)

Korean Hornbeam (A) - Ralph Mahn (FV)

Korean Hornbeam (I) - Ken Hahn (MBS)

Amur Maple (I) - Ken Hahn (MBS)

Willow Leaf Ficus (I) - Ken Hahn (MBS)

*White Ribbons*

San Jose Juniper (Y) - Martin Hubmanna (MBS)

Dwarf Hawaiian Umbrella Tree (I) - Jerry Niemiec (MBS)

Juniper (A) - Ralph Mahn (FV)

American Hornbeam (A) - Ralph Mahn (FV)

Clove Currant (A) - Ralph Mahn (FV)

Larch (A) - Dennis Chuchel (FV)

**More Buddy Bucks**

Thanks to the volunteers for STATE FAIR. It was a huge success... If we have overlooked your name, please call Kris at 262-512-1228 or

email [kziemann@mtsd.k12.wi.us](mailto:kziemann@mtsd.k12.wi.us)

*1 Buddy Buck:* Allen Koszarek, Dorothy Schenzel, Erv Schenzel, Scott Hurula, Joe Nemecek, Houston Sanders, Delores Day, Dick Butula, Carol Butula, Jerry Niemiec, Gen Molling, Karen Kleineider, Milt Baas, Audrey Baas, Joe Herbert, Mary Turner, Don Gumieny, Karen Gumieny, Ken Krueger, Mary Ann Barrager and Yvonne Szatkowski

*2 Buddy Bucks:* Melba Stockhausen, Jack Douthitt, Sharon Schmidt, Tom Kerner, Kate Kerner, Ken Hahn and Greg Wein.

*3 Buddy Bucks:* John Moore, Darlene Shaginaw, Camrin LaFond and Jim Toepfer.

*4 Buddy Bucks:* Kris Ziemann  
*5 Buddy Bucks:* Jean Sher and Tony Plicka

And at our first outing at the Bradley Garden Party volunteers were:

*2 Buddy Bucks:* Camrin LaFond, Darlene Shaginaw, Ken Hahn, Jack Douthitt and Kris Ziemann



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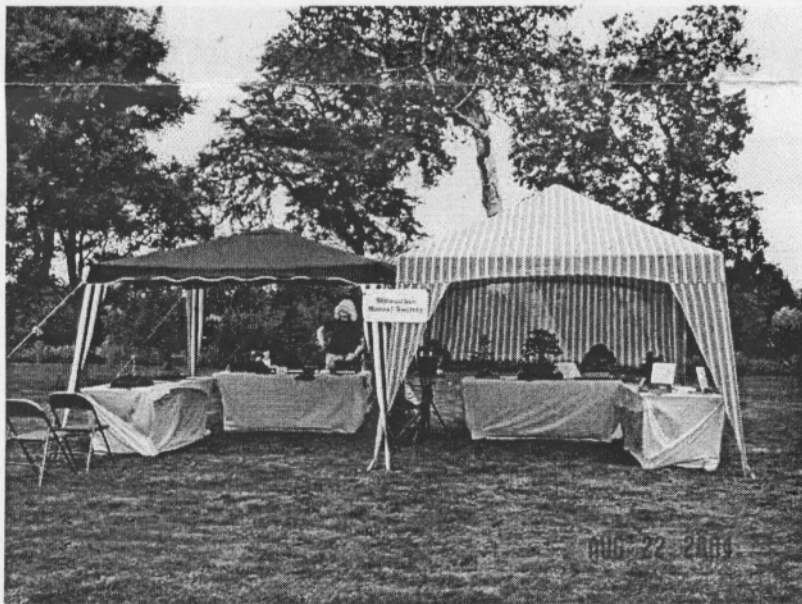
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## Bradley Sculpture Garden Exhibit

Milwaukee Bonsai Society members recently displayed an exhibit at the Bradley Sculpture Garden. Although wind was a problem, the exhibit of "living sculpture" harmonized well with the art display.



↑  
And one more photo from the Ted Matson Workshop



## Pohutukawa: Bonsai Inspiration from Nature's Wonders

By Houston Sanders

What's a pohutukawa? It is the national tree of New Zealand, and one of the most interesting and beautiful tree species in the world. Imagine an old gnarled oak tree spreading its wide canopy from the steep bank of a rocky seaside cliff. Then imagine it completely covered in bright crimson red flowers, and you start to get the image.

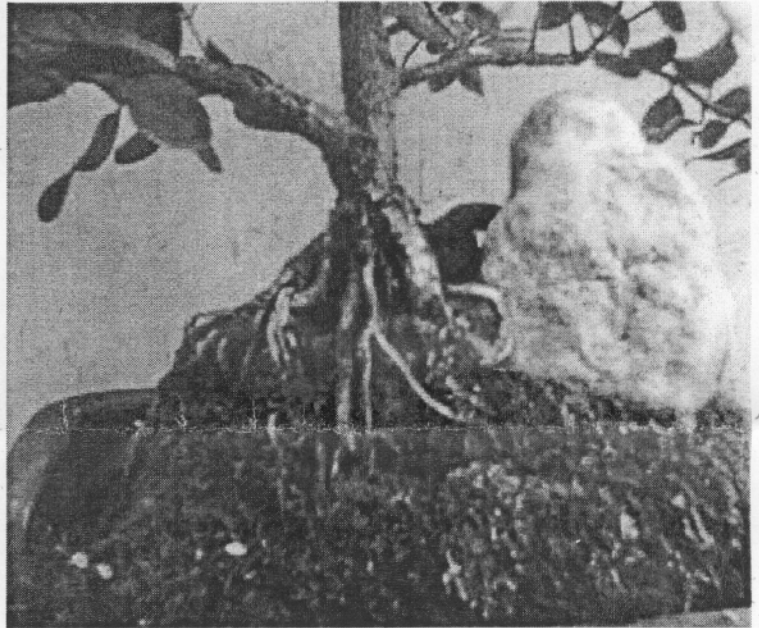


**A majestic old multi-trunked pohutukawa (*Metrosideros excelsa*)**

Photo by Toni Kling. Used with permission from his art photography website, Blende81 ([www.Blende81.de](http://www.Blende81.de))

Let's start with the name: Pohutukawa. Pó-Who-Too-Cow-A (Easy if you try, and like many Polynesian words, kinda fun to say). In the poetic Maori language, it means "sprinkled by spray", in reference to the trees' preference for oceanside locations. This name refers mainly to a particular species (*Metrosideros excelsa*) but there are many other species in the genus *Metrosideros* in New Zealand and the surrounding islands, and the name Pohutukawa is used as a general term for many of them.

The *Metrosideros* are fascinating members of the myrtle family, and like the more familiar myrtles, they share the characteristic of small glossy leaves, powderpuff flowers, and a very well-developed ability to produce buds on old branches. In addition, the *Metrosideros* family specializes in rooting. Species include the pohutukawa, the rata (*Metrosideros robusta*), and several smaller trees. To colonize rocky shorelines, the pohutukawa sends its roots along the ground surface, creeping over the bare rocks in search of pockets of soil. The rata often germinates high in the branches of other trees then sends aerial roots down to the ground, eventually surrounding and "strangling" the host tree. Unlike the popular *Ficus* species, pohutukawas usually do not send out aerial roots from the branches to produce banyan style trees; they send out aerial roots from the base of the trunk. And also unlike the *Ficus*, pohutukawa aerial roots do not require high heat and humidity to form. In fact, they form very well in our Wisconsin summer climate! And these roots rapidly grow and thicken when they find a bit of soil to grow in. One can easily imagine how to take advantage of these rooting properties for bonsai! Root-over-rock style bonsai are not commonly seen, perhaps because they are hard to grow from normal trees, and require many years of work to achieve effective results. With pohutukawas, the root-over-rock style grows by itself!



**Pohutukawa bonsai roots grow easily and naturally over rocks**

But the *Metrosideros* have been woefully underutilized and are not widely available. Perhaps this is because of their climate requirements. Most *Metrosideros* species grow in the cool, humid climate of northern New Zealand. This is an environment somewhere between temperate and subtropical, where sub-freezing temperatures are as rare as 90° warmth. There are few, if any, places in the United States where these lovely species can thrive. So they are not available for landscape planting. But, in cool, humid Wisconsin, these climatic needs can easily be provided for bonsai - outdoors for summer and fall, and indoors or protected for the winter and early spring. Just watch out for early frosts.

Recently, a very short paragraph about *Metrosideros excelsa* was included in Werner Busch's book, *Indoor Bonsai*. This is the only reference that I have been able to find showing the use of this species for bonsai. On a recent trip to New Zealand, I observed a lot of good bonsai, but found that few New Zealanders were making extensive use of their native species in bonsai. Most New Zealand species just grow too slowly, and larger specimens do not survive well if collected from the wild. So pohutukawa bonsai specimens are rarely seen, even in their homeland.

There are two *Metrosideros* species that I have managed to acquire. One species is a garden/houseplant cultivar with beautiful glossy yellow-edged variegated leaves. It is sold infrequently by Meehan's nursery in Maryland under the name *Metrosideros* "Red and Gold". The other is sold by Trans-Pacific Nursery, located in



Washington, under the name *Metrosideros villosus*. A literature search showed that this tree was more commonly known as *Metrosideros kermadecensis*, and is native to the island of Kermadec, to the northeast of New Zealand. Both of my pohutukawas have identical appearance and growth characteristics, except for the variegated leaves. They have quarter-sized, glossy leaves and grow rapidly with a spreading habit. And, in my experience, they grow quite easily from cuttings. Unfortunately, I am still waiting for flowers. I guess you can't ask for *everything*!

Strangely, the pohutukawa's season for fastest growth is in the fall, even as the temperatures and levels of sunlight are decreasing most rapidly. This is also the best time to repot, but there seems to be no difficulty in repotting them at any time of year. I have found that they like to be kept moist, with no special soil requirements except for good drainage. The aerial roots form in mid to late summer, starting from just above the soil line and creeping along the surface in search of fresh soil. As I have already mentioned, this is great for root-over-rock style, since the roots form themselves to the shape of the rock. I have had success by just planting year-old cuttings on top of rocks with a light covering of "muck" (peat and soil mix) held on by strips of panty hose (an old army trick...). The roots quickly grow into the ground, but it is best to leave the muck on for a year so that the roots will thicken faster. The branches extend rapidly, and it is necessary to ruthlessly cut back the new branches each fall to avoid losing the shape of the tree.

I have attached pictures of each of the two species described. Each of these trees is about 6 years old. The "red and gold" cultivar has been trained over a rock and cut back regularly as described above. The unvariegated species has been allowed to grow unrestrained in hopes of thickening the trunk and building the nebari. The trunk is now about 1 1/2 in. thick, with a beautiful set of roots radiating out strongly on all sides. Oh yes, one more thing... if you choose a *Metrosideros*, you had better like the curves of the trunk. I am told that the name *Metrosideros* means "Ironwood" in Greek. If you don't shape it when it is very young, forget about it!



Large Pohutukawa – any guesses at the inspiration for this design?



Root-Over-Rock Pohutukawa



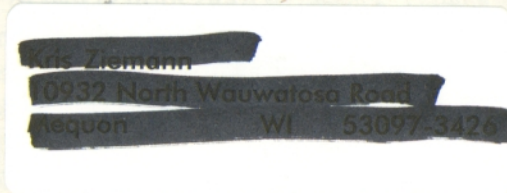
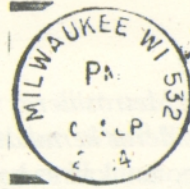


P.O. Box 198  
Brookfield, WI 53008-0198

RETURN SERVICE  
REQUESTED

Next Meeting of MBS  
7PM, Tuesday, Sept. 7  
Grace Lutheran Church  
27<sup>th</sup> and Oklahoma

53097+3426 30



**MBS Board, 2004**

- Jack Douthitt – President
- Kris Ziemann – 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President
- Jean Sher – 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President
- Karen Kleineider – Treasurer
- Darlene Shaginaw – Secretary
- Sharon Schmidt – Board Member
- Dr. Erskine Tucker – Board Member
- Joe Herbert – Board Member
- Ron Fortmann – MABA Representative
- Houston Sanders – Newsletter Editor
- Yvonne Szatkowski - Distribution
- Pam Woythal - Webmaster



Autumn twilight, and  
earth is quiet with color:  
mist-folded silence.

- Mary Turner