

Bonsai News

MARCH MEETING:

The MBS March meeting topic is "**Developing Bonsai Spaces**". MBS director and bonsai hobbyist, Allen Koszarek will give us some insight into the elements and organization of bonsai spaces. Come and enjoy his presentation and pick up some pointers for planning your own bonsai space and garden. We all spend enormous amounts of time, effort and emotion on our trees. Now it's time to organize that special place for their display. Spring is just around the corner, begin your planning now!

APRIL MEETING – Group

Slash The MBS April meeting is our most anticipated and most feared (depending on whether you are a person or a tree). Yes, it is the *Group Slash!* We will form teams and each group will attempt to style nursery material into bonsai. At the end of the night, as the world holds its breath, a winner is chosen. And then you get the opportunity to bid in an auction for the newly styled masterpieces. (You know that you all need more trees to replace the ones that died in this month's cold! weather!)

NOVICE CLASS

By Kris Ziemann

Are you ready for the NOVICE CLASS?? If you have been to a public workshop, you're ready. If you've been to an MBS meeting, you're ready. If you have an interest

in learning more about bonsai, you're ready.

The NOVICE CLASS is for beginners. We go through a workbook where you learn the basics of bonsai style, how to wire, prune, pot, etc. The first two classes are classroom style using the workbook as our text. One class is dedicated to working on one variety of tree. The last class will be a daylong event! In the am we will go to Minor's garden center for our nursery 'crawl' - to look for bonsai wannabes. After lunch we will work on the treasures you have picked up at Minor's.

It's an informative, friendly, down to basics class. Try it, you'll like it!!

Classes are March 17, 31 ; April 21 and May 12. The first 3 are at Grace Lutheran Church (30th & Oklahoma). The last is at Minor's Garden Center (76th St north of Good Hope Rd). The cost of ALL the classes (including the workbook, 1 tree and a pot) is \$70 [best deal around!!]

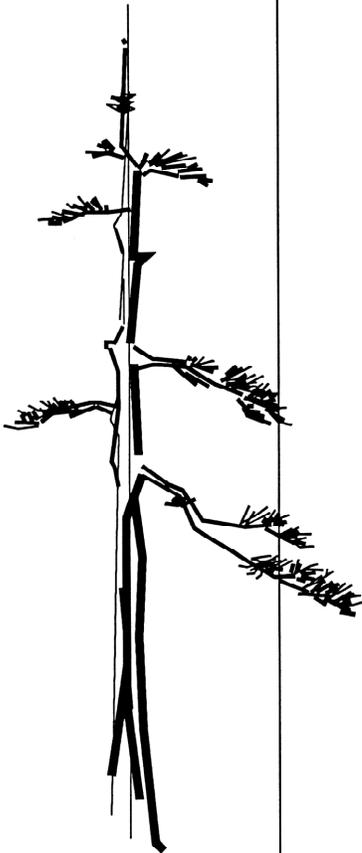
Space is limited, so call or email Greg Wein (262-968-3090)

(runregg@yahoo.com) to reserve your spot. Bring your check to the next meeting (March 6). If you will not be able to make the March meeting, make arrangements with Greg.

NEXT MEETING

March 6 7PM

Grace Lutheran Church



*Milwaukee
Bonsai Society*

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

Information Line
414-299-9229

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Jean Sher

It seems like Spring is really on the way! Today it just smelled like Spring and even though it was still below freezing, I was able to walk through the back yard and start thinking about our bonsai area.

There is still a major amount of snow covering the benches but soon we can clean up and rearrange for this year's display and growing area. I also noticed that the rabbits and deer have been contributing to the bonsai styling on several trees. You might like to check on your outdoor bonsai to see if they have helped you out too. Next year I will be investing in more fencing and deer repellent. In the meanwhile we are looking for a "live trap" to borrow so at least the rabbits can be relocated to the other side of town.

The March meeting topic will be very interesting. Allen Koszarek will make a presentation about developing Bonsai Spaces. We are sure to get some tips that will aid in planning for this year's bonsai season. Also the 2007 Novice Classes will begin on March 17th. Your registration needs to be paid at the March meeting if you want to join the class. The pertinent information is included in another

article in this newsletter. This is great way to expand your knowledge and bonsai expertise.

The MBS board has been working to organize the 2007 guest artists, workshops and events and the final arrangements are almost finished. You can access the club calendar on line and also find it in the newsletter. Notice that some exciting events have been planned. As you do your Spring cleaning remember to save those unused and unwanted Bonsai items for the White Elephant sale in November. Your "trash" just might be someone's treasure! It's also time to begin planning to join us in July and August for our Guest Artist series. Jim Doyle and Marty Schmalenberg will be presenting meeting demonstrations and workshops. Watch for announcements as we get closer to the summer. Workshops will be limited to eight participants, so mark your calendars and get ready to go.

I look forward to seeing everyone at the March 6th MBS meeting.

Enjoy your bonsai,

Jean



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 Look for us on the web at: <http://www.milwaukeebonsai.org>

TREESTUMP's BONSAI ADVICE

By Joe Herbert

Do you need some advice on Bonsai?

Please be as specific as possible with your questions to increase the chances of getting a correct answer. All answers are researched either in text, from experienced artists and masters, or just plain guessed at. Names won't be printed unless asked to protect your privacy. Send your question to Tree.Stump@yahoo.com.

M. Asks,

Q: When is the best time to repot tropicals?

A: Usually mid summer during active growth is the best time to repot tropicals. Repotting during other times is possible if the tree is healthy and actively growing even during mid winter.

J. Writes in,

Q: Why are most bonsai pots reddish?

A: Your bonsai image as a whole should invoke a feeling or emotion. The colors you use in your composition help cause this to happen. The most tranquil or relaxing feeling, the color to use is brown. If you stir the primary colors together, red, blue, and yellow you end up with brown. A usually unknown skill your brain has is the ability to see a image, take that image and blend all the colors together and gain a feeling from it. The conifer tree has a brown trunk so nothing has to be done there, but to counteract the green foliage, (blue and yellow) a red pot is used to create brown. If there is some white deadwood a dark red or something with black added to it to absorb the white...etc. This is only one theory as there are many others that are also fun to investigate.

MBS Gallery

Call for submissions...

Webmaster for the MBS, Pam Woythal, has been hard at work updating our website (mbsweb@hotmail.com) to give it a sleek, new 2007 look. Among the features is an actively scrolling photo montage of various events sponsored by the club and member trees. If you haven't looked at the website in a while, please check this out. It's a wonderful addition and adds loads of interest to the updated website.

Pam wants to keep the picture gallery new and fresh and always changing. So, as the seasons unfold, or as you review your personal photo gallery, please consider sending any photo by e-mail to the above address to be included in the gallery. Personal identification, if any, will include first name only to protect privacy. Please include an interesting sentence or two about your tree, (history, age, particular challenges, etc.) and the common and scientific name.

Help us make this new feature a success!

Here is our schedule for 2007. More activities may be added during the course of the year.

MBS 2007 Schedule

March 6 - Club meeting-'BONSAI AREAS AND GARDENS'

March 17-Novice Class #1 9AM-Noon

March 31- Novice Class #2 9AM-Noon

April 3 - Club meeting - Group SLASH

April 7, 9 Master's classes

April 21 Novice Class #3 9AM-Noon

May 1 - Club meeting-'BRING YOUR OWN TREE'

May 5-6 Master's classes

May 12 - Novice Class nursery crawl AM/Class #4 PM

May 19 - Bonsai Workshop at Boerner 9-12

June 5 - Club meeting - CREATING A RAFT PLANTING

June 23-24 Master's classes

June 30- JIM DOYLE WORKSHOP

July 3 - Club meeting-JIM DOYLE, GUEST BONSAI ARTIST

August 2 - 12 - Wisconsin State Fair Bonsai Shows

August 4- MARTY SCHMALENBERG WORKSHOP

August 7 - Club meeting-MARTY SCHMALENBERG, GUEST BONSAI ARTIST

September 4 - Club meeting- MBS CLUB SHOW

September 15 - Public workshop 9AM-Noon

September 29-30 Master's classes

October 2 - Club meeting - Master's CLASS FINALE

November 6 -Club Meeting- WHITE ELEPHANT AUCTION

December 4 - Holiday Party NO MEETING



Dana Quattlebaum critiques bonsai with the Mahone Bonsai Club.



Ted Matson performs his famous tree imitation

LATE WINTER PRUNING

by Houston Sanders

Often, the first bonsai activity of the new year for our deciduous trees is winter pruning. OK, maybe the FIRST activity is to dig the tree that you are going to prune out from wherever it was safely hibernating for the coldest part of the winter. But the next activity should be winter pruning. So when can you start winter pruning? The easiest answer, for our area, is early March. But in practice, it is anytime after January when the weather makes it possible to drag out some trees for an hour or two.

A question many bonsai growers ask is “Why the #@&#\$ do we need to prune our trees again before spring? We just pruned them last fall and they haven’t been growing!” (Bonsai growers are often rather profane - it comes from our deep sense of inner peace). While the trees haven’t grown bigger, they actually have grown in a very important way – they have grown buds, and the buds have swollen to make it obvious where new season’s growth will be. So the focus for late winter pruning is to PLAN AHEAD.

Winter is the time for the heavier pruning. The tree will recover well from removing large branches at this time, because the tree has concentrated its energy in the roots. As the buds open, the tree’s energy investment in the branch greatly increases, and its removal becomes a greater shock to the tree. So the major styling decisions are best considered in fall, contemplated during mid-winter, and carried out in the late winter pruning.

Or you may even notice branches that have died over the winter. This is the most painless time to remove them, both for the tree and the artist, if you are sure that they (the branches) are dead.

In fall you may have pruned to shorten the past year’s new shoots, and perhaps wired the new shoots to adjust their location. Now, in late winter, you can just picture each bud as the new branch that it will soon become. And you will easily see specific areas of your tree that are in

danger of becoming too congested. Sometimes this can be resolved by just rubbing off some of the new buds, but often it is better to shorten the branches and improve their taper by cutting back long branches to a well-positioned bud. I tried to include some photos with this article, and I hope that you can observe some of the details of pruning from the photos. But many better ones are available. Bonsai Today has many good pruning articles with highly detailed photos - taken by REAL photographers. Check the club library!

Another activity that should be carried out is to examine the new adventitious buds and decide which ones are “keepers” and which are not needed. Maples get a veritable plethora¹ of adventitious buds at the bases of each branch. Leaving more than two shoots from any point on a branch confuses our eyes, and also causes the branch to thicken at the junction. So remove all but two and don’t agonize over the deciding which ones to leave – it’s unimportant. Try to remove any branches, twigs or buds that are directed back toward the trunk. Concentrate on trying to achieve a smooth visual flow to the branch.

Pictures (next page) show a small pomegranate tree before and after pruning. *Yes, you’re right. The tree doesn’t look as nice after pruning!* I have removed a lot of the fine branches that add character and charm to the winter silhouette. That is why doing proper winter pruning is HARD. It takes a lot of faith and confidence to make your tree look worse so that it can improve later. It’s so...un-American!

But the winter is over. Once growth starts, the fine branches grow back very, very quickly. Remember the bonsai paradox – making your tree smaller makes it look *bigger*. If I had left all the fine twigs, the outline of the tree would extend wider with all the new growth, making

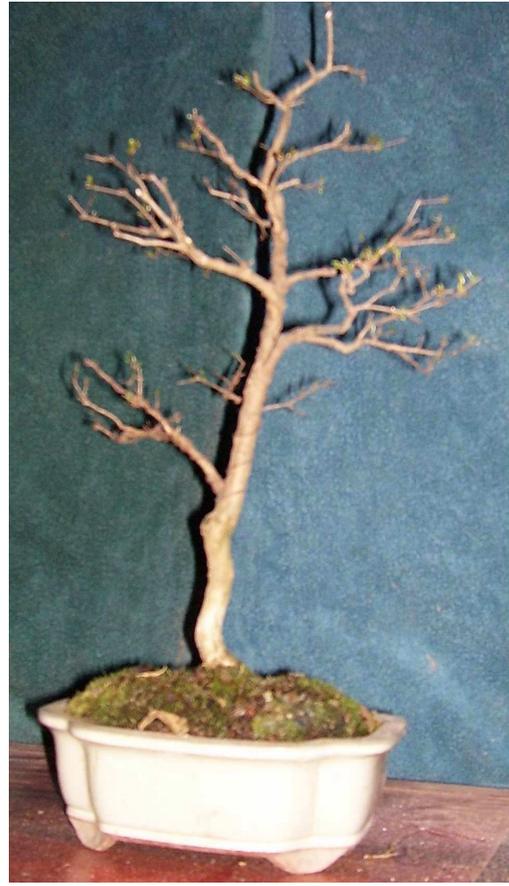
¹ This means “a lot”: In college, we had to use the phrase “veritable plethora” in every paper or else buy beer for everyone living on our floor of the dorm. NO, they didn’t literally live *on the floor* but many of them did spend a lot of time there.

the trunk appear smaller. Winter pruning creates a closer-to-the-trunk framework to build on by adding new fine twigs.

So this year, don't neglect your winter pruning. It gives you something to do for the couple of weeks before it is safe to repot!



Dwarf Pomegranate
(before pruning)



Now it's ready for a new
season's growth

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED PLEASE HELP WITH A MBS EVENT!

NOVICE CLASS

April 21, 9AM -Noon
May 12, 12:30- 4:00 PM

MAHONE CLUB WORKSHOP

May 7, 8:30 AM- 3:30 PM

BOERNER WORKSHOP

May 19, 9:00 AM -Noon

MBS PUBLIC WORKSHOP

September 19, 9AM-NOON

CONTACT Jean Sher (414-979-0281)
jsheer@wi.rr.com or SIGN UP at the next MBS meeting

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Getting Started on a New Season

By Kris Ziemann

You've got bonsai fever and it's 20° outside. What do you do? Well, you can start a fire in the fireplace and cozy up with a good bonsai book. Or...

Make a list of all the trees you need to pot or re-pot. Do you know when the best time is to do your potting? Check in your books or online. There is so much info out there!!

Next decide which tree goes into which pot (if it's a re-pot in the same container, that's easy). I have about 12-13 to re-pot and maybe 7-8 to pot for the first time. Do some need to be put in smaller pots? Do you have the best shaped pot for your tree? If you have some questions, bring a picture of your tree and its size to the next meeting and you'll be able to get help from our members and/or vendors.

OK. You have the correct pot and you need to wait until the buds begin to swell. So you need to wait a bit. Is your pot prepared? i.e. if you have used the pot before, is there any white residue on it? Make sure all your pots are spiffy clean before you re-pot. Some use vinegar to get rid of the residue, some use a sanding block (see the vendors). When the pots are clean, maybe you'd like to get the screens wired in so there's one less thing to think about during the re-potting process (many's the time I have forgotten to wire my screens in... whatta mess!).

Great. Now you're waiting on the tree, your pot is ready. What about the soil? Does your tree have special requirements? Do you have a pre-made mix that you use? Do you mix your own concoction? Either way, have you sifted it yet? Winter is a great time to get this done. I have my own mix of dry stall, rotten granite, chicken grit and a bit of organic material. I get buckets of rotten granite from a garden center and sift away in front of the TV. It's a boring thing to do, so the TV helps. What's too small or too large is put outside in my bonsai area. What's just right goes in a bin in my re-potting area in the basement.

You have your list -

All your pots are ready -

The soil is sifted and ready to go -

Whew, I'm all done! Maybe, maybe not.

If you are re-potting into another pot, will you be altering the design of the tree? Will the front be changing any? If you're going from asquare pot to an oval pot, have you thought about where you want the tree positioned in the pot? Maybe you'd like to draw a sketch or go online to the many sites that have pictures of the tree you're working with. My favorite site to look at pictures is:

<http://www.bonsaiweb.com/show/byname.php> Trees are listed by botanical name, but you can go to the top and click on search and type in the common name. Get an idea of where you're going before those dangling little roots get too dried out during the potting process. Remember the old adage.. P P P P P (prior planning prevents poor performance) :o)

Well, I think that's about it. Except... do come to the meetings and ask questions. We have so many talented bonsaists who are so willing to share their experiences. Or send an email to: treestump@yahoo.com. Selected questions will be answered in the newsletter.



P.O. Box 198
Brookfield, WI 53008-0198
RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Next Meeting of MBS
7PM, Tuesday, March 6
Grace Lutheran Church
3030 W. Oklahoma

MEET THE 2007 OFFICERS

The new Officers for 2007 are:

President	Jean Sher
First VP	Scott Hurula
Second VP	Gregg Wein
Secretary	Susan Coleman
Treasurer	Mary Turner
Director	Allen Koszarek
Director	John Moore
Director	Michelle Zimmer
Past Pres.	Kris Ziemann

Other Club Functions:

Houston Sanders – Newsletter Editor
Pam Woythal – Webmaster
Josh Rabeth – Librarian
Jean Sher - Distribution / Telephone
response
Mary Turner - Membership Chairperson



*That great blue oak
Indifferent to all blossoms
Appears more noble*

- Basho

Thanks once again to the Potomoc Bonsai Association for
this month's poem