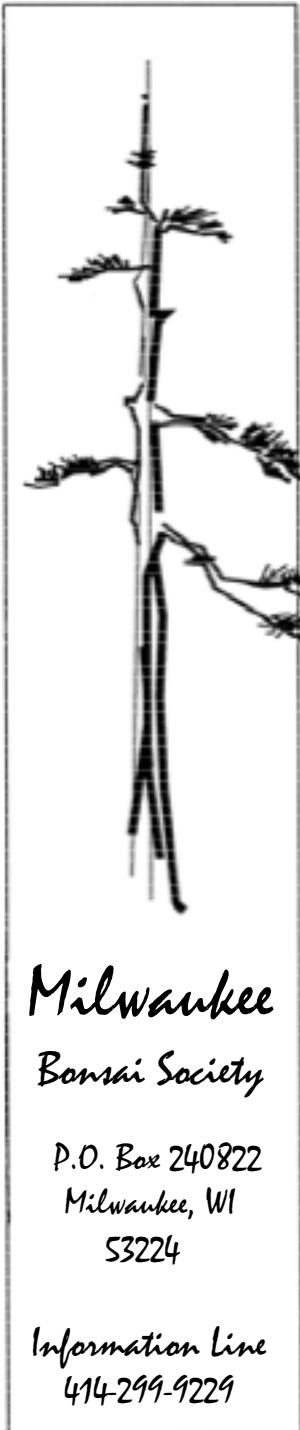


April 2010

Bonsai News



APRIL'S MEETING The Group Slash!

This meeting is always a hit. If you've never been before, you'll see lots of activity. Trees are worked on by enthusiastic groups. You'll have a chance to hear what a number of people "see" in the tree they will be styling. It's amazing how many different "visions" there can be for one tree!

If you have tools, we'd appreciate your bringing them. When our creations are done, we'll have them judged by a non-bonsai person. 'Awards' will also be presented. The trees will then be put into a silent auction and the lucky high bidders will have diamonds in the rough to take home. Join us for the fun!

NEXT MEETING
April 6 - 7 pm
Grace Lutheran Church

APRIL

- Apr 7 - CLUB MEETING
Group slash - trees by group design
- Apr 10 - Novice class #2
- Apr 24 - Novice class #3

MAY

- May 4 - CLUB MEETING
Guest artist Warren Hill
- May 8 - Novice class #4
- May 15-16 - Chicago Show

JUNE

- June 1 - CLUB MEETING
BYOT (tree) Work night
- June 25-27 - MABA convention

JULY

- July 1 - CLUB MEETING
Photographing your tree, treating wounds, getting ready for a show
- July 10 - Wauwatosa Tour
- July ?? - club picnic
- July 31 - Suthin workshop

AUGUST

- Aug 1 - Suthin workshop
- Aug 3 - CLUB MEETING
guest artist Suthin S
- Aug 5-15 - State Fair
- Aug 20-22 - Chicago Show

President's Message

"It's Not Brussels Sprouts It's Dessert"

Have you ever felt uncomfortable when someone lectures you that you should do more volunteer work? It seems that the "eat your Brussels sprouts" approach to encouraging volunteerism is counter-productive. It makes volunteering sound like staying after school, or worse having to go to the principal's office.

It's time for a whole different attitude toward volunteer work. It's not Brussels sprouts.... it's "dessert" and not just fruit or pudding but Death by Chocolate. Our whole club is involved in teaching or supporting new members in some way. And guess what? These members are not only doing good work, they are having a good time!

For example, one of our events is the open workshop where member volunteers get together to help newer members work on trees. Afterwards some convene for lunch and conversations. I hear members are having a rollicking good time at the study groups as well.

We can't sit around eating sprouts, we deserve some fun. So let's take the lead from these fine members and devote a few hours each month to escape and get together with friends and spend some time doing a little volunteer work.

This month we have a novice class followed by the "repotting workshop". See you there!

- Pam W

Transplanting Workshop March 27...

By Pam W

Are you ready to transplant your tree? A repotting workshop is planned that will bring experienced members and new members together to repot trees. There are several important reasons why it is necessary to periodically transplant bonsai. Re-energize your tree, renew the soil, stimulate growth, correct the nebari or simply transplant to a more suitable container.

It's free for all MBS members. To participate bring your tree (more than one if you have more), pot, soil, wire if needed, scissors, and something to work in to help keep the area clean (a black pan works great). You will also need a pail to take the old soil with you (to use at the upcoming ginkgo collecting dig). If you do not have soil or wire some will be available for sale. If you are not a member, membership will also be available. Meet at the church Saturday, March 27th at 1:00 till 4:00.

PLEASE BRING A TREE FOR OUR SILHOUETTE DISPLAY AT THE APRIL MEETING. WE WILL HAVE A FEW TABLES SET UP TO SHOW OFF THE BEAUTIFUL STRUCTURES OF OUR TREES.

Following is an article by Tom A expanding on information he gave at our last meeting:

A Rainforest in My Basement

Dormancy for Tropical's

I do not fertilize my trees after they are brought inside in the fall till the first of the New Year, and only turn my lights on for 4 hours a day during this time. Tropicals benefit from a rest period just like temperate trees do. In a tropical's native environment the rest periods are

(continued on page 2)

during heat waves (which we don't get a lot of here in Wisconsin) or during the dry season which could be risky to attempt for a bonsai in a pot.

Infestations/Housekeeping

You will get scale, aphids, or whitefly on your bonsai it is almost unavoidable especially if you have a lot of trees.

Do not panic if/when you do get bugs; I've killed more trees by overreacting than by being passive about it. To combat and prevent bugs I spray all my trees every week with a soap/oil solution with a capful of rubbing alcohol added to it. I also hose down my smaller trees with my kitchen sink sprayer when there is bugs present.

I also keep my trees pruned throughout the winter. All tropicals will have some leaf loss and by pruning I can control where that occurs. A pruned tree will have more airflow and then spray can reach the interior easier. For my ficus trees I cut all full sized leaves in half to accomplish this. I run a couple of oscillating fans that are on all the time to discourage bugs since most of them prefer still air.

Lighting

I am using a 1000 watt Metal Halide light in combination with some fluorescents and halogens. The trees love the heat that the MH light and the halogens put out. Light output is more important than spectrum- go for the highest wattage size you can (avoid "plant" bulbs the color coating they put in them just reduces the brightness). Four foot shop lights are great, but the initial cost of the MH setup was about equal to the replacement cost for fluorescent bulbs and ballasts every 2 years. And with the MH light there is more penetration/less distance fall off.

Outside, Outside, Outside!

All my tropicals are outside from June 1st till early to mid September. Being outside is the best thing you can do for the health of your trees. Every 3 years I let all my tropicals grow untrimmed and unwired all summer as a strength gaining year. It really invigorates the trees and insures their health.

Caudiciforms/Fat plants.

These are desert plants that are bonsai'd by their very nature; large trunks and short. They often have

interesting aged bark, and small leaves. They are easy to care for, just put them in full sun and water less often than the tropicals. They require little fertilizer and a soil mix that dries out faster. In the winter they lose all their leaves and sit in my basement with no lights and get watered once a month. The main downside is purchasing them is usually mail order since few places sell them. I've bought from: The Great Petaluma Desert, Guy Wrinkle Rare Exotics, or Bonsai Collectibles. These vendors will sell you the plant you see in the picture.

THE MABA (MID-AMERICA BONSAI ALLIANCE) CONVENTION IS COMING UP SOON!

JUNE 25-27

**PLEASE PUT THIS DATE ON YOUR CALENDAR.
YOU'LL WANT TO HEAD TO GRAND RAPIDS,
MI TO ATTEND THIS CONVENTION.**

**KATHY SHANER WILL BE THE HEADLINER.
OUR OWN JACK D WILL BE A GUEST ARTIST!**

**GO BACK TO THE MBS HOMEPAGE AND CLICK
ON "WHAT'S NEW"
UNDER JUNE YOU WILL SEE A LINK TO THE
MABA REGISTRATION PACKET. ALL YOU
NEED TO KNOW IS IN THIS PACKET. WE ARE
HOPING TO HAVE A CARAVAN OF CARS /
VANS HEADING TO THE OTHER SIDE OF THE
LAKE. WORKSHOPS WILL FILL UP FAST, SO
GET YOUR REGISTRATION IN AS SOON AS YOU
CAN. JOIN US FOR A GREAT WEEKEND!!**

Suthin Workshops for 2010 - April Update

Spaces for the 2010 Suthin workshops are filling up fast. Those who are interested should reserve their slots with a \$50 deposit per workshop. Each workshop will have no more than 8 participants.

Here are availabilities:

Sat. July 31, 0 openings.....wait list only
Sun. August 1, 2 openings
Monday, August 2, 2 openings
Tues. August 3, Available all day for private, semi-private, workshops, etc.

Sat. Sept. 25 0 openings, ,,,,,wait list only
Sun. Sept. 26, 4 openings

You can forward your non-refundable deposit of \$50 per workshop, payable to MBS, to
Judy Hughes
414 Maple Lane
Williams Bay, Wi. 53191

These workshops are open to ALL members of MBS of any skill level and will cost \$75-115 per workshop, depending on the number of participants and the location.

This is a great opportunity to improve our Bonsai knowledge and skills. Learning from one of the best.

DON'T MISS OUT !!!!!

Any questions, please call,
Judy Hughes 262-245-6465.

Ginkgo biloba
MAIDENHAIR TREE
Steve Ca.



At the time of this reading, we all are either dreaming of the upcoming Ginkgo DIG in Bayview, or enjoying the trees that we have collected. So why not talk about these historic trees.

The ginkgo is believed to be the oldest living species on earth. It was thought to be extinct in the wild until it was rediscovered in Chekiang province, eastern China, in the seventeenth century. It is one of the few deciduous conifers. The foliage is alternate, simple, in clusters of 3 to 5 on spurs, or single on long shoots, fan shaped, 2 to 3" long and wide, bright green in summer changing to an excellent yellow in fall, and oftentimes dropping all its leaves in the matter of one or two days. The young tree has an open branch structure that with age

gives way to a dense columnar shape. Ginkgo bonsai are produced in Japan to the unique style which imitates this old, mature columnar shape.

Having had a ginkgo, I suspect that this style is not entirely by design. Ginkgo is not very happy with pruning and pruned shoots are inclined to die back further, either shortly after pruning or during the upcoming winter. So it is quite difficult to develop a fine branch structure with ramification. That certainly has not prevented me from trying. Remember also that because wounds do not typically heal and callous over very well as other deciduous species, avoid large cuts visible from the front.

Harry Tomlinson, in his book, *The Complete Book of Bonsai*, suggests that repotting is best in early spring, annually until the tree is ten years old or well established in the pot. Thereafter, repot every second year and every third year for aged specimens. Colin Lewis, notes in his book *Bonsai Survival Manual*, that "ginkgo's have thick, fleshy roots which hold a lot of moisture. When they become frozen, the water expands and the roots can literally explode with the pressure, particularly when there is an imbalance in the water content of the roots and the soil." He also indicates that they do well in full sun or partial shade, and I know that they have thrived on this site in full shade.

The location in Bayview where the dig will take place, was purchased in 1941 by Joseph and Dorothea Halser . A 1970 story in The Milwaukee Journal quotes Dorothy Halser as saying that the first trees on this property were a gift to the previous owner around 1900 from a U.S. ambassador to China. Since my neighbors Bill and Janice took over the house in 2009, investigators representing the University of Wisconsin Extension and the state Department of Natural Resources have stopped by and established that the two biggest trees on the property are the 13th and 14th largest in the state of Wisconsin. This investigator referred to the property as a "mini forest".

It will be most enjoyable to watch us all learn from the many trees we have or are about to collect. I can envision a club show in about 2015 of all our developed Ginkgo bonsai. For more info or if you missed the March meeting, write Steve C at stefanoo@att.net. Have fun!

POTS, POTS, POTS

excerpted from <http://www.bonsai4me.com/erinbonsai/choosingtherightpot.htm>

The literal meaning of bonsai is 'plant in a tray'. While the tree itself contributes to one half of the composition, the pot completes the overall image. The 'bonsai' in its literal sense is judged by the visual impact of both the tree and the pot. Unfortunately, choosing and locating the correct, or the best, pot to plant your tree into is not easy. While a well-chosen pot will enhance a bonsai and strengthen a design, a poorly chosen or unsuitable design will actually lessen the impact of the tree. Ultimately, until the 'right' pot is found the tree will never reach its full potential as a bonsai. A pot can be expensive investment for your tree; buying an unsuitable pot for your tree can mean having to find a more suitable pot in the future. Finding the right pot, first time, is not only satisfying but saves money and helps avoid ending up with a pile of pots that don't quite seem to suit any of your trees! This article is written to help the enthusiast understand how to go about choosing the correct pot for their tree. My express thanks go to Vic Harris of Erin Pottery for his help in writing this guide and for providing images of some of his pots to illustrate this article.

Choosing the right pot for your tree

Choosing the best pot for a particular tree is not easy. As well as the more mundane factory-made Chinese and Korean pots there are a number of bonsai potters and potteries throughout the world that are able to offer individual and diverse pot designs and glazes to the enthusiast. There are so many available colors, sizes and designs that it can become very difficult to identify exactly which one(s) are best for your tree.

Pot choice is also subjective, ultimately some of the final decision will be made according to your own personal tastes. Some enthusiasts prefer more conservative pot shapes, textures and glazes, other enthusiasts prefer to make more unusual 'individual' choices.

In an effort to help choose the correct 'type' of pot for your tree I have asked Vic Harris to help me draw up some basic guidelines when choosing a new pot for your tree.

To arrive at a good decision, it is useful to break down the choices into 4 parts. Pot dimension, pot shape, pot color and Texture

Choice 1: Pot Dimensions

The first thing to consider is the size of the pot that you will need. The correct pot dimensions can be

achieved using some basic rules according to the dimensions of the tree itself.

The *general* rule of thumb is that the pots depth should be equal to the diameter of the trunk just above soil level.

For oval or rectangular pots, the length of the pot should be 2/3 the height of the tree.

For round pots, the diameter of the pot should be 1/3 the height of the tree.

For trees with especially wide canopies a wider pot can be necessary and this can be compensated by using a slightly shallower pot.

As equally, a tree with a very thick trunk (in comparison with the height of the tree) may suit a slightly deeper but narrower pot.

It should be remembered that these guidelines are based on aesthetics only. For horticultural reasons, some tree species require larger or smaller pots. Species with very fast growing roots such as Trident Maples often require deeper pots whilst flowering and fruiting species such as Crab Apples require more root run and therefore deeper pots.

Choice 2: Pot Shape

The style of pot that you choose will need to harmonize with the tree.

You need to take a look at your tree and evaluate its characteristics. Try to decide whether your tree is masculine or feminine. Many trees are a combination of both although usually one is dominant than the other. This is very subjective; for some people a tree may be masculine, for others, it might be feminine. Ultimately as the owner of the tree it is for you to decide. It should be noted though that a firmly masculine tree will never look right in a very feminine oval pot; in turn a feminine tree will always look awkward in a masculine pot.

What makes a tree feminine or masculine?

A masculine tree gives an impression of strength, it might have a heavily tapered trunk, have craggy, mature bark, strong angular branching, it may have deadwood. It may have a straight, powerful trunk or a dense canopy.

A feminine tree will have a more delicate appearance, a smooth trunkline, smooth bark, sinuous movement in its trunk and branches. A light canopy and slow taper.

Some tree species are predisposed to being considered feminine or masculine; Pines or angular Hawthorns are often considered masculine whereas delicate Japanese Maples will be considered as naturally feminine.

However, a strong, heavily tapered Japanese Maple with delicate leaves and branching could be

considered to be a feminine species with masculine features, whilst a tall Hawthorn with craggy, rough bark, gentle curves and very gradual taper could be considered a masculine species with a feminine characteristics. With trees such as these it is necessary to identify which is the strongest feature and reflect it. Is it the craggy, fissured bark of the hawthorn or the gentle curves of the trunk that have the strongest visual impact? Is it the delicate branching of the Maple or the powerful tapered trunk that attracts your eye most? Fortunately, it is possible to find pot designs that can reflect both femininity and masculinity.

Pots are considered feminine or masculine. Deep pots with strong angular features are considered masculine whilst more feminine pots are shallower with softer lines.

For instance, strong chunky, deep rectangles with sharp corners are very masculine pots, as are square pots. These are suited to thick heavy trunked masculine trees, especially conifers.

For thick-trunked deciduous trees, the corners of the rectangle can be rounded thus reducing the masculinity of the pot a little.

Working down through the scale of masculinity, deep chunky ovals come next and then we have drums/round pots that are androgynous i.e are suitable for a masculine or feminine tree.

After this we move into the feminine pots which are shallow delicate ovals and very shallow round literati pots.

Choice 3: Pot Color

Once you have decided on the shape of the pot, next you need to think of the color and texture. Every tree is unique, although it is possible to generalize about a particular species, each individual tree will have something to pick up on as no two trees are exactly the same and there are always small variations that can be brought out in the pot color and texture.

The color of the pot can be used to pick up on a feature of the tree and therefore helps the tree and pot color 'work' well together. The color in the tree that is complimented can be that of the bark, for instance an unglazed red/brown pot picking up the bark of a Juniper. It can compliment the color of the leaves through the summer or the autumn color. On fruiting or flowering trees, the color of the pot can be used to compliment the color of the flowers or the berries. Although you generally want the color and texture of a pot to match some characteristic of the tree, sometimes contrasts can work very well, for example, the red leaves of a red-leaved trees work well with a blue pot.

The color can also be used to accentuate the energy of the tree. Warm colors such as browns, reds, oranges and yellows provide a feeling of warmth and stability to the tree whereas cold colors such as blues and greens can balance and refresh the overall composition.

Warm and cold colors can be used to contrast with a bonsai. Warm colors can be used for tiny (mame-sized) bonsai to exaggerate their color whereas cool colors can be used to tone down bright-leaved species.

Choice 4: Pot Texture

Textures in a pot are again used to compliment a tree. Smooth clay finishes are suitable for more feminine trees whereas heavily textured pots bring out the masculinity and wildness in a tree.

As can be seen in this article, choosing the correct pot is not simple but it can be learnt. Ultimately, a combination of personal tastes, knowledge and experience makes the process much easier.

When buying pots for your bonsai try to make sure you know the pot measurements needed for a tree. It is no good buying a suitable pot only to find it is too big or small for your tree.

Have a good idea of the shape that will suit the masculinity or femininity of your tree.

Have a good idea of the colors and textures that will suit your tree.

Don't be embarrassed to ask the advice of the bonsai nursery or the potter you are buying from, an experienced potter or bonsai nursery will always be able to give you a choice of suitable pots to choose from. However, always try to have a picture of your tree to hand as this makes the nursery or potter's job much, much easier!

To see pictures of the pots described and for more information, please go to:

<http://www.bonsai4me.com/erinbonsai/choosingtherightpot.htm>



Bonsai on a budget tip: To add less expensive trees to your collection, visit our silent auction at the April meeting. Also search out treasures at garden centers at the end of the season. At a convention you might also wait until the last day to talk with vendors about a lower price. Sometimes they are willing to give a discount so as not to have to take the trees home again.

SELLERS TABLES: At each meeting there is one table available for club members to bring in items for sale. The cost is \$5. You may do this 2 times per year. Openings are available for July, August, September, October and November. Please contact Kris at hagr8d@mac.com to reserve a spot.

Milwaukee Bonsai Society Membership Form 2010

Name _____



Check here if your information below HAS NOT CHANGED.

Address _____

Phone # (home) _____ (work) _____

Email _____

(This e-mail address will not be shared with other parties and is for MBS Board use only.)

for (circle) **Single** 1 year \$25 2 years \$48 3 years \$70

Family 1 year \$35 2 years \$68 3 years \$100

Do you have any hidden talents / interests that you would be willing to share with our members?
If so, please describe:

Please send to: Milwaukee Bonsai Society, P.O. Box 240822, Milwaukee, WI 53224



P.O. Box 240822
Milwaukee, WI 53224
RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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

Please note our new P.O. Box #

2010 MBS OFFICERS

President	Pam W
First VP	John M
Second VP	Greg P
Secretary	Jorge R
Treasurer	Kris Z
Director	Jerry N
Director	Steve Car.
Director	Steve Con.
Past Pres.	Joe H

Other Club Functions:

Newsletter - Kris Z
Webmaster - Pam W
Librarian - Tom A
Telephone response - John M
PAB Board - Don G, Leo S, & Houston S



*Ideas bare as
empty branches viewed above.
New haikus needed!*