October Meeting

We all have trees that we really like, but we don’t quite know how to style them. In addition, we sometimes have been looking at a tree in a certain way for so long that we can only see what we have seen before. Our October meeting will use a technique that helps break this ‘brain lock.’ Here’s what we will be doing. Everybody bring at least one tree. (Bring several if you want.) It should be a tree that has had some work done on it. One by one we will ask each person to bring his or her tree forward and we will put it on a turntable in front of everyone else. Then we ask for suggestions as to how the tree could be restyled. In other words, “If this tree were sitting on your workbench at home how would you style it?” You will be amazed at the number of, and the variation, in the suggestions that are offered. Although we will use some pieces of cloth to “cover” branches that someone thinks should be removed, THERE WILL BE NO CUTTING! Those who bring trees will go home with more ideas than they ever imagined. We will all learn from the suggestions offered. It is fun and educational, all at the same time. So come to the meeting and bring those trees!

In addition we will have our election of Officers for 2004. Ron, Mary and Ken have put together a good slate of candidates so come and make your vote count.

We will also have many items that we will be raffling off. There are some items that have been left over from the workshops, there is a turntable kit, and many other items. Bring your money belt and take some of these home for the price of a raffle ticket.

2004 Election News

Don’t forget to come to the October meeting as it is your chance to elect the new board for next year. The slate is as follows:

President                Jack Douthitt
First Vice-President     Kris Ziemann
Second Vice-President    Jean Sher
Treasurer                Karen Kleineider
Secretary               Darlene Shaginaw
Director (3 yr.)         Joe Herbert
Director (1yr)           Sharon Schmidt
Director (2yr)           Erskine Tucker, MD

Carryovers from previous years are:

Please don’t miss your opportunity to cast your vote. Unlike California, we don’t have recall elections. If they get out of control we just prune them back, or wire them in the direction we want them to grow. Unlike our trees this group will not get better with a little Gin!

Finally give any suggestions you may have for programs or artists you would like to see in the coming year, as this group is charged to plan the activities for 2004. If you tell them what you would like they can try to accommodate your wishes, but they need to know what those wishes are because they are bonsai hobbyists not mind readers.

Thank You from the Nominating Committee, Mary Turner, Ken Hahn, and Ron Fortmann.
President's Message

Our September meeting was a lot of fun! Many people brought some of their “white elephants” to sell and some of us that brought material to sell also ending up buying more material to bring home. And many thanks to Mary Turner for the session on haiku. There were many outstanding haiku and they will start showing up in our newsletter. (See the first place winner on the back of this issue).

Years ago, an old friend by the name of Keith Scott told me that he used a particular technique in order to improve his ability as a bonsai artist. His philosophy was that one needed to “stretch” oneself in order to improve. So at least once each year he would select the worst piece of plant material that he could find and see how good a bonsai he could make of it. The point was to improve, by putting himself into a position where he really had to work to make something out of the material at hand.

In my opinion that same technique works for improving organizations. I remember the debate that went on before we hosted the Mid-America Bonsai Alliance (MABA) convention in 1995. There was a big concern about whether or not we had the ability to actually pull it off. We went ahead with the project and made it into a success. I am sure that having that positive experience behind us, gave us the confidence to apply for the 2002 American Bonsai Society (ABS) National Convention. When we were awarded that convention we went to work and made it into a huge success. Now we have successfully produced an eleven-day bonsai exhibit, which was also a roaring success. Each one of these events has stretched us as an organization and through this process we have all grown immensely.

Each of you contribute to the success of the Milwaukee Bonsai Society in your own way. By paying your dues you contribute to the financial health of the organization. By coming to meetings, and taking part in workshops, you show your support for the programs that we present as well as increasing your knowledge of bonsai techniques. By participating as an officer of the club, you help to meet the needs of its members and guide it forward into the future. We are happy to have each and every one of you as a member. We thank all of you for your assistance and your support.

2003 Joshua Roth New Talent Competition

Last year at the Milwaukee – ABS 2003 Symposium we instituted and produced the first North American New Talent Competition. The winner was Rob Kempinski from Florida. Jack Douthitt recently returned from the Pacific Northwest Bonsai Clubs Association/ABS convention in Seattle, where he produced the second annual New Talent Competition. There were eight finalists this year from four US states and Canada, including two women. After the finalists put in their eight hours of work on the collected Mountain Hemlocks, the headliners at the Convention, Chase and Solita Rosade, Colin Lewis and Charlie Anderson judged the results. Just like last year, the registrants at the convention had their opportunity to vote for their favorite. And just like last year, their vote mirrored the vote of the judges. The winners were then announced at the Saturday night Banquet. The Grand Prize winner was Peter Wilson from Port Alice, British Columbia, Canada, and the Runner-Up was Dr. John Quinn from Columbia, SC. The Joshua Roth Company from Albany, Oregon now sponsors the annual competition.

The Competition is going to be produced next year at the BCI/ABS Convention in St. Louis, Mo. (St. Louis in 2004 would be a good opportunity for some of our members to participate in the Competition!) The 2005 Competition will be produced at the World Bonsai Convention in Washington, DC. Looks like we started something!

Recognition for Members

The garden of Adam and Mia De Lap was featured in the Sunday, September 14, 2003 issue of the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel. It is an oriental style garden and was pronounced a winner in the annual Mayor’s Landscape Award competition. The judges liked the “blends of various species of trees, including tropical plants,” and the “mixture of various Asian cultural plants. They liked the blend of water and stone, and the use of lawn ornaments.” Our congratulations to Adam and Mia.
Michelle Zimmer was one of two people who designed and produced an informational brochure about the trees in the Frederick Law Olmstead designed Lake Park. The brochure has three self-guided loops that wind through the trails of Lake Park, while providing you with a guide for leaf identification and many descriptions of the trees growing there. She also conducts guided tours along the tree walk. The “Walk in the Park” was selected for inclusion in the “2003 Best of Milwaukee” feature in the October 2003 issue of Milwaukee Magazine. Congratulations to Michelle.

Also, there was a nice article about Ambiance Floral and Bonsai in the “Insider Views” section of the October issue of Milwaukee Magazine. Antonio Crossetti of Ambiance is a member of the club and received some nice publicity for his bonsai shop. Ambiance is a new shop in town and also carries bonsai and bonsai supplies. We welcome Antonio and the shop.

Another member, Dr. Tom Roberts and his wife Mary, were featured in a newspaper article about their work as volunteers at the Wildlife in Need Center in Oconomowoc. Their home has become an informal satellite of the center because of their work in rescuing and caring for injured wild animals. At the time of the article they were caring for 1 dog, 4 cats, 4 birds, 7 raccoons, 13 squirrels and one rabbit. Exciting work, Tom and Mary.

Upcoming November Meeting

In November, the season for bonsai activity is beginning to slow down. But it does not stop. One of the chores that we often perform in winter is the sharpening of our tools. Sharp tools make cleaner cuts and help our trees heal faster. So, the first part of our November meeting will be a seminar on the sharpening of bonsai tools. The second part of our meeting will concentrate on “how to use” some of the more common power tools. Although we will not be able to get everyone “hands-on” with the power tools we will give you enough information so that you can start working on your own. Don’t miss it!
Potential Programs for 2003
MBS PROGRAM QUESTIONNAIRE

Please check your answer to each question. The responses that are received will help your Executive Committee decide on the club programs for 2004.

We are investigating the following programs for 2004. Which would be of the most interest to you? Please rate them according to your interest. Number 5 is the highest level of interest while a number 1 would be the lowest level of interest.

Check Your Preference:

Name

(We tried this in 2003 and it did not accomplish what we intended, but are you interested in trying it again with a different artist?)

Indoor material

Slab making

Groves

Design and Composition

Bugs and Pests

Basics of bonsai soil

Winter protection

The following workshops are being considered. Which would be of the most interest to you? Please rate them according to your interest. Number 5 is the highest level of interest while a number 1 would be the lowest level of interest.

Check Your Preference:

A. Wiring Workshop - (Led by Club Members) A session to teach the basics of wiring. Each person would be wiring on one of his or her own trees

D. "What Next?" Workshop - (Led by Club Members) This would be for the benefit of people who have started a bonsai and want to know 'What do I do next?'

E. Collecting Trip - a trip to a selected area for collecting of potential bonsai material.

F. A visit to the studio of Sarah Raynor - Sarah lives in Red Wing Minnesota And has indicated that we would be very welcome to pay her a visit.

G. A Slab Making Workshop - The making of slabs for our bonsai has become very popular. This would give each of us the opportunity to make a slab for one of our trees.

Our program on photographing your trees was stopped by a snow storm last year. Would you like to have it presented this year? Yes No (circle one)

Would you be interested in a "Study Group" that would meet on a Saturday separate from Club meetings? There would be no dues or officers. Just a group that meets to work on bonsai. Yes No

Please list below any other suggestions that you have for a club program.

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________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
Next Meeting of MBS
Tuesday, October 7
7 p.m. at Grace Lutheran Church

MBS Board - 2003
Jack Douthitt, President
Houston Sanders, First Vice President
Jean Sher, Second Vice President
Russell Weiss, Secretary
Kris Ziemann, Treasurer
Sharon Schmidt, Director
Dr. Erskine Tucker, Director
Pam Woychak, Director
Brian Palevac, Past President
Ron Fortmann, MABA Representative
Yvonne Szatkowski, Newsletter Editor

Members with questions or concerns for the Executive Committee should contact Russ Weiss, Club Secretary at cowbell@wi.rr.com

Yellow tulips bloom,
dancing gaily in the sun
rabbits smack their lips!
~ Jerry Niemiec