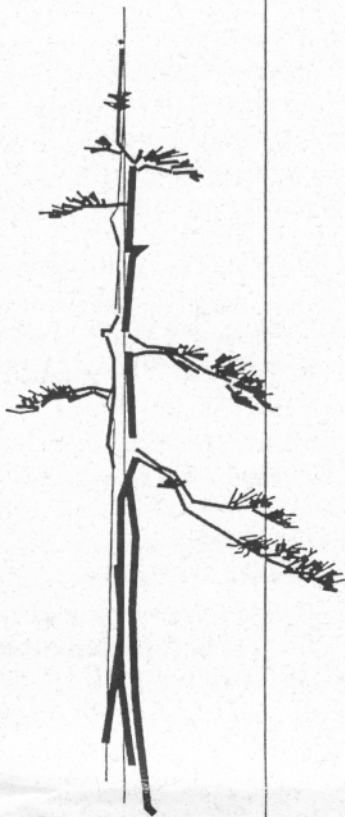


July, 2004

BONSAI NEWS



*Milwaukee
Bonsai Society*

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

*Information Line
414-299-9229*

COLIN LEWIS VISITS MILWAUKEE

How exciting to have a bonsai artist of international fame coming to our July 6 club meeting! For those of you who don't know him, here is a thumbnail sketch of Colin Lewis' foray into bonsai:

1954 - At eight years old he made his first attempt at bonsai, inspired by a chapter in a children's activity book. Failure was inevitable.

1974 - Then working as a book designer, he made his second attempt at bonsai on the window ledge of his London flat. Success!

1979 - Window ledge now too small - moved to a large garden with a small house in Surrey. Joined the Bonsai Kai of the Japan Society of London.

1985 - Exhibited on gold medal winning stand at the Chelsea Flower Show.

1989 - Launched "Bonsai" magazine and traveled to Japan to study bonsai in greater depth. Began teaching in UK.

1991 - Began teaching overseas.

1991-2000 - Consulting Editor for "Bonsai" magazine (UK).

1994-1997 - Board Member of the European Bonsai Association

1996-2001 - Member of the Bonsai Judging Panel at the Chelsea Flower Show, London

2001 - Relocated to the United States to work full-time as a bonsai teacher, artist and consultant

Now residing in Salem, Massachusetts, USA.

Founder and Principal of the Hô Yoku School of Bonsai

Colin will be styling a large juniper at our meeting which will be raffled following the meeting.

**Come as a silent observer for Colin's workshop the following evening, Wednesday July 7, 6:00-10:00 at the church. Just pay \$5 at the door. The workshop participants will be bringing in their own material, so there should be an interesting mix of trees!

(There has been a last minute cancellation, so there is one spot left in the workshop - \$90) Call or email Kris Ziemann if you wish to participate (262-512-1228, kziemann@mtsd.k12.wi.us).

Two MBS members elected officers of Mid-America Bonsai Alliance (MABA)

At the annual meeting of the Mid-America Bonsai Alliance (MABA) at the BCI/ABS convention in St. Louis, Ron Fortmann was elected President of MABA and Sharon Schmidt was elected Treasurer. They have some wonderful ideas about how to keep MABA active and moving forward. I am sure that over the next year or two they will share these ideas with us. Congratulations to both of them.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

WOW! The overall quality of the trees that were put on display at the Club Show in June was absolutely outstanding! There were some excellent trees in every category. I don't envy Len having to decide which tree should be awarded with a ribbon.

Such a phenomenal array of bonsai should make every one of our members proud. It is a symbol of the remarkable talent that is in our Milwaukee Bonsai Society. It is a result of each of you being interested in your bonsai, coming to the meetings and participating in the club workshops. Keep up the good work!

We have two more visiting artists this year. Colin Lewis will be here in July and Ted Matson will be here in August. Both of these artists are very talented and have a lot to offer us. They, along with Warren Hill, are being considered as the teacher for the Master Class. So, if you signed up for the Master Class, don't miss seeing these two. Even if you are not in their workshop, at least come to the meeting and maybe even come to the workshop as a silent observer. Because later in the summer you will be asked to choose which of these three artists you want to teach the Master Class.

We have already contracted for the State Fair this year. Since last year's exhibit was such a huge success, we will be appearing at the Fair for the full eleven days again this year. The Appleton and Madison clubs have expressed their interest in being a part of the exhibit again this year so we will probably follow the same format as last year. It gives the club some wonderful exposure and lets us show our trees to a very wide audience. And with the trees that we have in the club, we can stage a bonsai exhibit that is second to none. So start getting those trees ready for the big show at the State Fair.

We also appreciate those of you who are willing to come early to help set-up the meeting space and those who are willing to stay afterwards and help clean up. The more we have to share in this "chore" the easier it is for everyone.

John Naka

John Naka passed away on May 22nd of 2004. Those of you that have been in bonsai for a few years may have had the chance to be in a workshop with John. Those of you that are newer to the art have undoubtedly been exposed to one of his books.

Although John was very well known, and revered, around the world he was long considered to be the "Father of American Bonsai." He was born in Colorado in 1914 to Japanese immigrants. When John was eight, he went with his Father to Japan and lived there for thirteen years. It was during this time in Japan that his Grandfather introduced him to bonsai. He eventually returned to Colorado and spent 10 plus years there living and working on a farm. Eventually, he moved to California and there he again discovered bonsai. This time it became a passion. He and four bonsai friends were the original founders of the California Bonsai Society.

His wife, Alice, who survives him, says that she became a "bonsai widow." They had an understanding that if she called John for supper and he did not come, it meant that he was busy and could not stop what he was doing. She says, that she and her children ate many a meal without him. She also recites a story about the time when they went to an exhibit to pick up his trees and she started visiting with some friends. John loaded up all his trees and left without her. He said that he realized that he had forgotten her about halfway home, but she thinks he did not remember about her until he started to unload his trees!

John was a friend to many bonsai people around the world and will be missed by all of us.

"What I like about bonsai is that it has a beginning but no end. A bud today becomes a branch tomorrow. It is like searching for the rainbow's end; the farther it is pursued, the farther away it is. There are no borders in bonsai. The dove of peace flies to palace as to humble house, to young as to old, to rich and poor. So does the spirit of bonsai."

John Naka

(Quote From National Bonsai Foundation)

ONE ON ONE

How would you like to have one of our visiting bonsai artists work with you "one on one" for a morning? an afternoon? or even all day?

Often when we bring a visiting artist into town to give a demonstration and a workshop for us, s/he has some free time between club events. The artist would be very happy to come to your house and spend time working with you on your personal collection. The cost is not as unreasonable as you might think. Obviously it will vary with the fee charged by each artist.

Colin Lewis, who is the visiting artist for our July 6 meeting has free time:

Tuesday, July 6 (afternoon)
Wednesday, July 7 (morning and afternoon).

He is available for a half day for \$270 or for a full day for \$450. If that is a little out of your price range then get two or three of your bonsai buddies to share him for a "private workshop."

Ted Mattson is our guest artist at the August 3 meeting. His free time is:

Sunday, August 1 (morning and afternoon)
Tuesday, August 3 (morning and afternoon)

He is available for a half day for \$250. You may get two or three of your bonsai buddies to share him for a "private workshop."

If you are interested in working with Colin or Ted on a "one on one" basis give Kris Ziemann a call at 262-512-1228 or email: kziemann@mtsd.k12.wi.us

It will make a huge difference in the quality of your collection.



Tony Plicka
(414) 761-9298
Fax (414) 327-4882

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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>

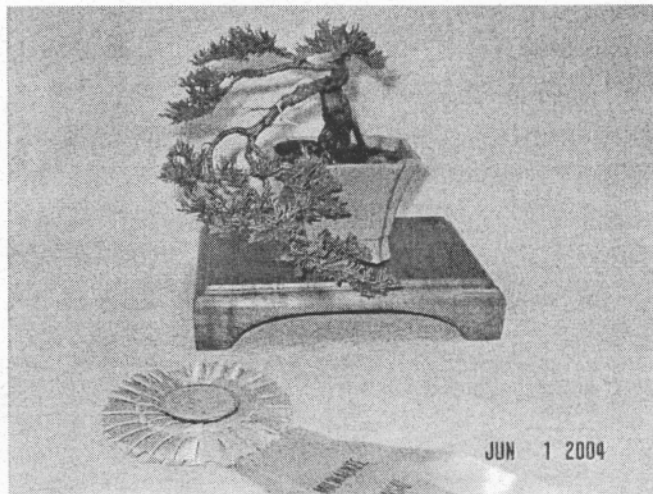
CLUB SHOW RESULTS:



1st Place (Advanced) - Chinese Elm
Jack Douthitt



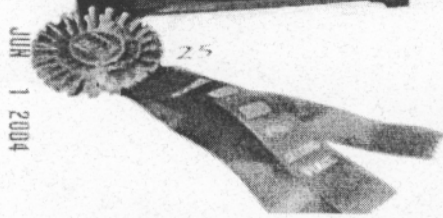
2nd Place (Advanced) - Kingsville Boxwood
Jack Douthitt



3rd Place (Advanced) - Juniper
Yvonne Szatkowski



1st Place (Intermediate) - Japanese Maple
Houston Sanders

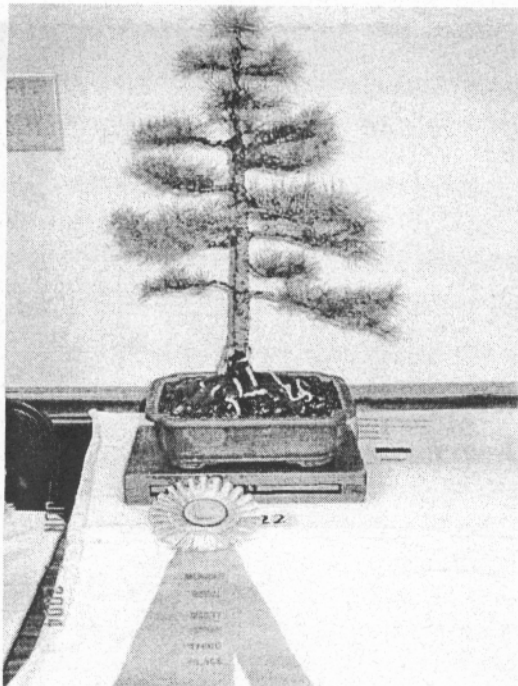


2nd Place (Intermediate) - Korean Hornbeam
Ken Hahn

2nd Place (Novice) - Fukien Tea
(Joe Herbert)

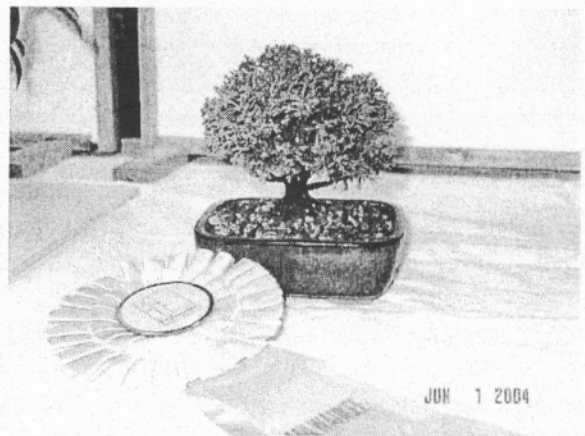


1st Place (Novice) - Korean Hornbeam
Kris Ziemann



3rd Place (Intermediate) - American Larch
Tom Kerner

3rd Place (Novice) - Dwarf Cypress
Darlene Shaginaw



Sudden Oak Death Syndrome

Sudden Oak Death Syndrome is a recently discovered fungal-type disease affecting oaks and many other plant species. Currently, restrictions on shipment of plants from California are in effect and may cause some disruption in the bonsai business (or at least additional costs for inspections). The disease was first noticed in California live oak and tanoak species in the late '90's, and was associated with the fungus-like pathogen *Phytophthora ramorum* in 2000. The disease has been spreading quickly in California and Oregon, and a similar outbreak has occurred in Europe. The disease pathogen has been found on many species including redwood, Douglas fir, rhododendron, firethorn, beech and camellia. While the disease is fatal in some of the affected species (mostly oaks), other plants get less severe foliar and twig infections. These other species, however, allow the growth and proliferation of the disease spores, which spread aerially via wind blown rain. Human movement of infested host materials is considered the most likely means of long distance spread.

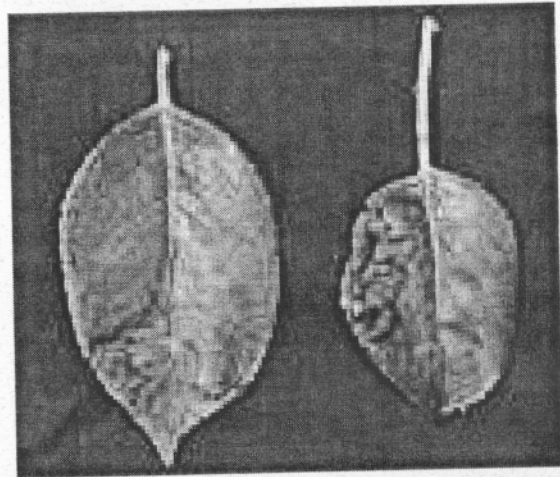
Phytophthora ramorum appears to thrive in cooler, wetter climates.

At present, there are 60 species known to be **susceptible** to the *Phytophthora ramorum*, and an additional 30 plant species are listed as **associated** with *Phytophthora ramorum*. Associated plants are suspected, not proven, to harbor the disease. A current list of affected species can be found at: <http://www.oda.state.or.us/plant/ppd/path/SOD>

Symptoms

Depending on the plant species, infection may occur on the trunk, branches, and/or leaves. Infections on woody portions of the tree are referred to as cankers. Cankers on the trunk of oak trees are the most damaging. Tree death appears to occur when cankers expand in the trunk (girdling) and disrupt physiological function. Diseased oaks are often attacked by other pest organisms -- fungi that decay sapwood and bark beetles. In the shrub species the symptoms can range from leaf spot to twig girdling, and do not necessarily result in death of the plant.

For bonsai, the main impact of this disease would be some dried-out or burnt- looking leaf spots. The infection could be treated by the use of systemic fungicides. BUT, like the Asian longhorned beetles a few years ago, the presence of the disease in our area would be a huge problem! Remember: *human movement of infested host materials is considered the most likely means of long distance spread.*



Infected camellia leaves.
Credit: Courtesy C. Blomquist, California Department of Food and Agriculture

July Bonsai Tips

Late June and early July is supposed to be the time that it finally warms up and dries out a little bit around here. I'm still waiting...

Assuming that it does indeed warm up, this would be a great time to put your tropical bonsai outside. It's amazing how fast the feeble ficus trees go from scraggly to full, if you just give them some sun, wind, and rain! In putting out tropicals, remember to increase the sunlight *gradually*, or your poor tree's leaves will burn (much like your poor editor's skin). Even in the brightest window, there is less than 1/3 of the sunlight of an outdoor location. So move trees from indoors to a well-shaded outdoor location for the first few days, before moving them to a sunnier area.

July is also a great time to repot tropicals. Unlike the cold-hardy trees, tropicals should be repotted when they are actively growing. I have never had problems in removing up to half the root mass from a tropical in July. After repotting, place the tree in semi-shade for a week or two, and do not fertilize. To be safest in repotting, I recommend use of an anti-transpirant spray. This coats the leaves temporarily and prevents the loss of moisture, giving the roots some time to recover. Anti-transpirants such as Wilt-Prufe and CloudCover are available at many garden centers. These products also work very well to prevent cuttings from drying out.

For your cold-hardy trees, this is the time for maintenance. Watering has been difficult lately, with all of the rain. Since it can be hard to tell how much water your trees received from a light rain shower, make a point to check every tree, every day. When you have the time, examine each individual tree and evaluate its condition. Does it need pinching or pruning? How is the foliage color? Are there any unusual spots on the leaves? Any wire that is in danger of cutting into the branches? For me, these questions are best addressed by picking up the tree and moving it from its growing area to the workbench for examination. Sometimes it's amazing how much I can miss when I am focused on watering and fail to take the time to *look* at my trees.

One of the problems to look for in summer is root rot. This can be caused by overwatering or poor drainage. For me, this is often due to breakdown of soil on trees that hadn't been recently repotted. Root rot can be evident from a black sticky appearance of the soil surface. Sometimes, the only sign is when the foliage of a tree will go from healthy to yellow or dried-up. To treat a tree for root rot, I recommend Maneb®, a sulfur-based fungicide. To apply Maneb®, just prepare a solution in a pail or bin, and soak the roots of your tree for 15 minutes. Then repeat the treatment a week later. CAUTION – do not do this to pines or other conifers! These trees depend on microorganisms in the soil, which may be killed by the fungicide. In my own experience, Maneb® works especially well for ficus, olive, maple and natal plum trees.

It's hard to judge how much fertilization is needed. Most bonsai will appreciate a dose of fertilizer at least once every two weeks in summer. I like to alternate between several different brands, including the "balanced" or "20/20/20", a low-nitrogen "blooming plant" formula, and various rose fertilizer formulas. Alternating these products helps ensure that the trees get trace elements that may not be present in all of the products.

One of the really difficult things for me to do is to rotate my trees. By all accounts, this should be done weekly. Due to overcrowded spaces, however, rotating one of my trees usually requires repositioning every other tree in the area. And there are always those trees with one protruding branch that only fits on the bench when it's facing outward. Is this what Mr. Naka meant when he said that if your tree has a problem, just cut it off?

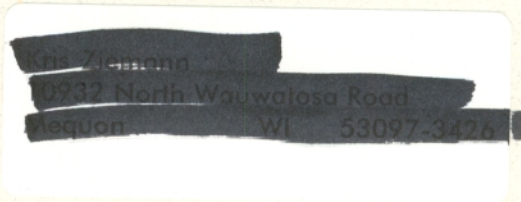
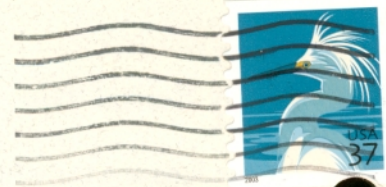
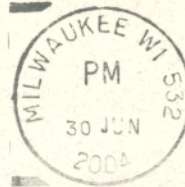
And don't forget to prepare your trees for the State Fair!



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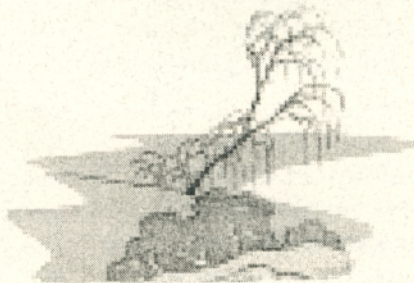
RETURN SERVICE
REQUESTED

Next Meeting of MBS
7PM, Tuesday, July 6
Grace Lutheran Church
27th and Oklahoma



MBS Board, 2004

Jack Douthitt – President
Kris Ziemann – 1st Vice President
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Though the colors be fragrant
The flower will fall
Who in this world of ours
will last forever?

- Traditional Japanese poem