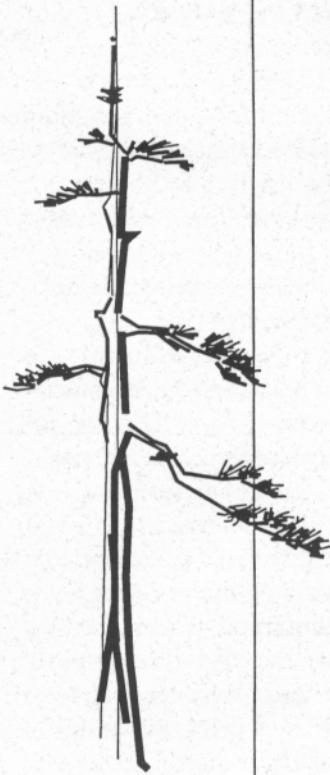


December 2004

# Bonsai News



*Milwaukee  
Bonsai Society*

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

Information Line  
414-299-9229

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Jack Douthitt

Some how it seems to be only yesterday when I agreed to run for the presidency of the Milwaukee Bonsai Society. As many of you already know, I was either on the Board, or an Officer, of BCI for almost 12 years, serving as BCI President from 1994 through 1996. After my term of office was completed I was totally burnt out. Attending meeting after meeting and running an international organization of volunteers had taken its toll. At that time I absolutely refused to consider becoming involved with any volunteer organization. (Especially since I was so far "in the hole" with my vacation time at my regular job.) And I kept that promise to myself, until it was announced that the MBS was going to be hosting the 2002 American Bonsai Society National Convention. That was just too enticing. I had been attending national and international conventions since 1976. As BCI President, I had been involved with organizing conventions from the sponsorship side. Now it was time to put that knowledge to work for a really great organization - The Milwaukee Bonsai Society!

The 2002 ABS convention was a blast. The Convention Committee was enthusiastic and uncompromising about getting everything done in an exceptional manner. I had the "dream job" of being the Convention Chairman. As

we all know the convention was a roaring success. We had a little party for the convention committee several months after the convention and there I heard the ultimate tribute. At the party someone said "Wow! That was fun. When are we going to do it again?" It told me that besides doing an outstanding job, the Convention Committee had fun doing it.

It was at that party that a discussion was held about my becoming MBS President. I accepted with great reservations, based upon my previous experiences. Over the two years that I have been your President, all of my concerns have been erased. In my opinion the Milwaukee Bonsai Society is one of the best bonsai organizations in the country. It is filled with talented people who generously share their time to make the club even better. The Board of Directors has been great!!! They are fully involved and constantly working for the benefit of the entire club. Without all of their efforts, the club would not be what it is.

The club members are in a league of their own!!! If volunteers are needed to "tree-sit" all we have to do is ask and you are there. If we need trees for an exhibit, you bring them. If we need help to put on a workshop, you are there. If we bring in a guest artist to do a workshop, you fill it up! And you come to the meetings. I remember a year or so ago when our meeting fell on a night when a blizzard made travel very

hazardous. There were still 35 people who came to that meeting!!!!!!

Many of our guest artists have commented on the vitality and enthusiasm of our club. And the word has spread. Several other clubs have asked me "How do you keep the interest of your members so high? How do you manage to keep your members?" I can only answer them by saying "We have some of the best members in the world! They are interested and involved and it is all we can do to keep up with them!"

My term of office is quickly drawing to a close. I thank each and every one of you for allowing me to be your President for the last two years.

### Convention Ideas

As you may have heard, the Milwaukee Bonsai Society will be hosting a convention in June of 2006 for the Mid-America Bonsai Alliance (a.k.a. MABA). MABA is a group of bonsai clubs from the following states, Michigan, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Iowa, Missouri, Minnesota, Wisconsin and Toronto Canada. MABA holds conventions on a regular basis to bring artists to the area that individual clubs could not afford to do by themselves. Our club hosted the MABA convention in 1995 and the American Bonsai Society's convention in 2002, both which were very successful.

One of the things we did for the 2002 convention was hold a contest with our membership to come up with a design for the convention logo. This was very popular and not only did we come up with a convention logo, we also adopted one of the designs as our new club logo. So I am asking the membership again to show us your many hidden talents and submit some ideas for our convention in 2006.

Some general guidelines before you start on your submission, of what the design should/could include, again these are guidelines and are not mandatory:

1. Think about how the design will look on a magazine or flyer
2. Think about how the design will look when reduced to the size of a pin (1"x1")

3. Think about how the design will look if expanded to a banner size
4. Try to keep the colors used to a few
5. Try to keep the fine detail to a minimum as it is often lost when reduced to fit on pins, and letterhead
6. Think about how the design will look in black and white
7. If possible include some reference to MABA; 2006; Milwaukee

Just to get your creative juices flowing, one idea for a theme phrase for the convention is, "Bonsai, Brats & Beer" or you could introduce an idea of your own.

The deadline for submissions for this contest will be March 11, 2005, after that time the planning committee for the convention will review the submissions and select a winner, or we may bring that decision back to the club for a vote at the April 2005 meeting. There will be a prize, but at this time I cannot reveal what until I have committee approval.

Please submit your entries to me at either the February or March meeting next year or submissions can be sent to me at:

Ron Fortmann  
933 Duchess Drive  
Oconomowoc, WI 53066

Make sure you protect them well, (cardboard and heavy duty envelope) if you are mailing, as the postal service can be quite rough at times, looking at some of the mail I have received over the years.

If you have any other thoughts or ideas about or for the convention, please let me know. We are always looking for that next new idea.

Respectfully,  
Ron Fortmann

#### 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>



## December Bonsai Tips

By Alan Walker

(Reprinted from Lake Charles Bonsai Society Newsletter)

Although your bonsai require very little attention this time of year, don't neglect them in the rush of December. Root rot can become a big problem, if you haven't modified your watering schedule. Make sure you water only when your bonsai's soil has gotten on the dry side. Your deciduous trees are not transpiring when their leaves have fallen, and the cool temperatures do not promote much evaporation, so your trees are not using much water. If you've been collecting and had to prune your newly collected material, be sure to seal all cuts. They really won't start to heal until dormancy ends, and the exposure to winter winds will draw moisture from the wounds faster than the traumatized root system can replenish it. Coat all the cut areas with Calsmate or some other sealant to give that new addition a chance to survive.

December is a good time to rewire, since the branches won't begin to swell with growth again until dormancy ends. Be careful with your deciduous material though. Even though they are denuded and easier to wire, there is less sap in the branches now, making them more brittle. Your pines, junipers and most other evergreens are still fairly pliable. As always, remember to use wire that is harder to bend than the branch is to train. That way you won't need to put your branches at risk from overbending in order to get the correct angle to stay. Also, the heavier wire will be less likely to scar the branch if you don't remove it in time.

Prepare soil now for the potting season. There are so many things to be done in the early spring that any early preparation now will be appreciated then. Tag any trees that will need repotting. Now is the time to order pots, so they'll be there when you need them.

The slow winter season is a good time to photograph your bonsai. Look up the article by Dan Barton (reprinted here). For digital photography most of the considerations are the same. Your deciduous material is fully exposed, and there's nothing like a black and white photograph of a tree to reveal flaws in the branch arrangement. This can be your blueprint for pruning in spring. Your photographs may also reveal a better front or

potting angle. Keep these photographs in a record book. It can be quite rewarding to look over your bonsai records and see how your trees have developed over the years. Bring your records to a club meeting to get suggestions from other members for shaping and design. If you're afraid of being pressured into cutting more than you want, just having photos or sketches can save you from regrets and still allow you to get input from others.

*Have a happy and safe holiday season.*



**Tony Plicka**  
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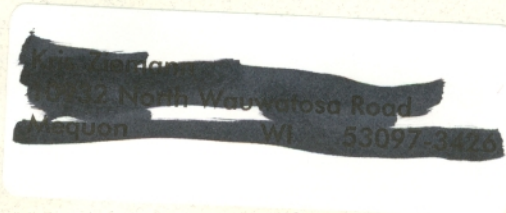
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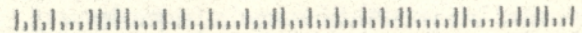
Next Meeting of MBS  
7PM, Tuesday, Nov. 2  
Grace Lutheran Church  
27<sup>th</sup> and Oklahoma



GREETING  
FROM  
Far Far Away

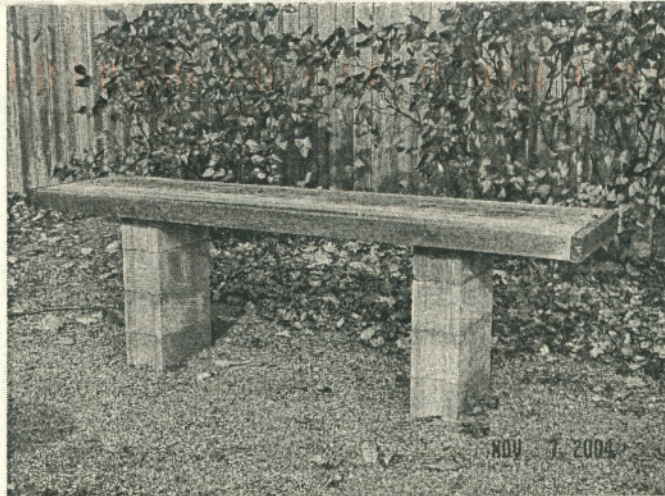


53097+3426



**MBS Board, 2005**

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



Empty, lonely bench  
Foretells winter soon to come  
Spring brings life again

- Kris Ziemann