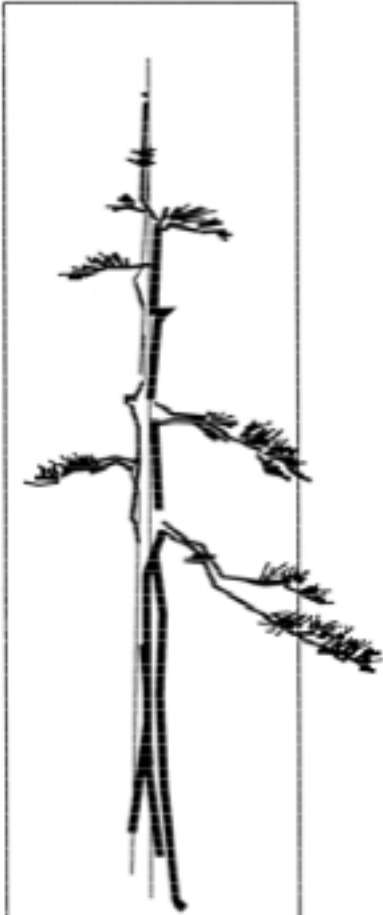


July 2010

Bonsai News



*Milwaukee
Bonsai Society*

P.O. Box 240822
Milwaukee, WI
53224

*Information line
414-299-9229*

JULY CLUB MEETING

Get prepared for the Photo Contest at our September meeting. Enjoy the discussion at our July meeting on how to photograph your trees.

Don't know how to treat the wounds on your tree. This will also be discussed at the July club meeting.

STATE FAIR IS COMING!!

More information will be provided on how to get your trees ready for the show! If you did not receive the booklet that was handed out at the last meeting, you will receive one as well as an additional "Quick Tips" hand-out.

Get ready for the fun.
Join us in July.

JULY

July 6 - CLUB MEETING
Photographing your tree,
treating wounds, getting
ready for a show
July 10 - Wauwatosa Tour
July 24/25 Carini Study Group
July 25 - Intermediate class
July 31 - Suthin workshop

AUGUST

Aug 1 - Suthin workshop
Aug 3 - CLUB MEETING
guest artist Suthin S
Aug 5-15 - State Fair
Aug 8 Carini Study Group
Aug 20-22 - Chicago Show
Aug 29 - Intermediate class

SEPTEMBER

Sept 7 - CLUB MEETING
Photo Contest & Guest
Speaker
Sept 18-19 - Club Show at BBG
Sept 18 - Public Workshop
Sept 25-26 Suthin workshops

NEXT MEETING

July 6 - 7 pm
Grace Lutheran Church

President's Message

“Thinking These Thoughts”

Somehow my bonsai seem most successful when they first come out of winter storage. I'm not so critical because I have not seen them in awhile. My deciduous varieties show off their sculptural effect, ramification and bright green leaves. Soon, munching insects, shoots I should have pinched yesterday, uncertainty of what to do next will invade my thoughts. So this time of year is especially rewarding since I can see what I have worked to do last year.

Our bonsai organization is much the same. Friendship start to bloom again, we have opportunities to meet with other organizations. We grow and respond to circumstance and attention.

Thinking these thoughts, I am aware how important it is to enjoy the bonsai process. Enjoy the opportunities to be involved with cycles of development of trees and the pleasure in association with other people who love bonsai.

This month some of my bonsai friend will be gathering in Michigan, next month we will gather in Chicago. My friends and members are involved in classes and workshops where we share and increase our knowledge. Soon we will have opportunities to show off our work at various club shows and gather once again. See you there!

Pam W

BRING YOUR GINGKO!!

Bring **one** of your ginkgo trees from the 'dig' to the July meeting. We'll have a table for you to display your treasure..

LIBRARY MATERIALS

If you are making use of our wonderful library of books, magazines, DVD's, etc...

PLEASE NOTE:

You may check out any items using your MBS name tag.

These items MUST BE RETURNED AT THE NEXT MEETING.

Too many items have been checked out for months and other members are wanting to use them.

THANKS FOR YOUR COOPERATION!

BONSAI BUCKS

Following is an update on the Bonsai Bucks earned so far. If we have omitted your name, please email hagr8d@mac.com, or see Kris Z at the club meeting.

FOLK FAIR 2009

1 Bonsai Buck

Steve Car, Joe H, Tony P, Kris Z, Rocio S, Jorge R

2 Bonsai Bucks

Ken J, Pauline J, Susan L

4 Bonsai Bucks

Jean S

6 Bonsai Bucks

Allen K

NOVICE CLASS #3:

1 Bonsai Buck

Ron F, Jean S, Kris Z, Pam W, Joe N, Jerry N, Steve C, Jorge R, Susan L, Jeff M, Greg P and Tom A

NOVICE CLASS #4:

1 Bonsai Buck

Tony P

2 Bonsai Bucks

Jean S, Kris Z, Greg P, Pam W, Houston S, Barb S and Pat B

Check the May newsletter for the previous list.

SUTHIN WORKSHOPS 2010

*If you have signed up for the Suthin workshops on July 31, Aug 1 & 2. (Aug. 3 is available also), **please note that the remainder of your fee (\$30) is needed now.***

*Please bring a check (payable to MBS) to the July meeting or send it to our MBS treasurer:
Kris Ziemann
10932 N Wauwatosa Rd
Mequon, WI 53097*

Checks for the Sept. 25 & Sept. 26 Workshops will be collected in September.

There are a few openings still available. Contact Judy Hughes, 262/245-6465, jh64boomer@aol.com, or see her at the July meeting.

These workshops are open to ALL members of MBS of ANY skill level.

The locations of each workshop, along with the directions, will be posted at the July MBS meeting.

"Silent observers" are welcomed at these workshops. A charge of \$5.00 per AM or PM sessions (or \$10.00 for a whole day). You will not be able to interact with Suthin, but you will be able to gain insight from a leading bonsai master.



STATE FAIR 2010 - Are you interested in entering a tree at State Fair? If you have never exhibited before, please consider doing so this year. Classes are: Youth, Novice, Intermediate, Advanced and Open. **Please sign up at Club meetings or call 414-774-7714 to participate.**

STATE FAIR EXHIBIT SCHEDULE 2010

Exhibit #1 (August 5 - August 7)
Exhibit #2 (August 8 - August 11)
Exhibit #3 (August 12 - August 15)

Exhibit #1

Deliver trees to **
Wednesday, Aug 4 from 6pm - 7pm

Pick up trees from **
Sunday, Aug 8 from 9am - 10am

Exhibit #2

Deliver trees to **
Saturday, Aug 7 from 6pm - 7pm

Pick up trees from **
Thursday, Aug 12 from 9am - 10am

Exhibit #3

Deliver trees to **
Wednesday, Aug 11 from 6pm - 7pm

Pick up trees from **
Monday Aug, 16 from 9am - 10am

**** Strip mall parking lot approx. 102nd and National, just west of Baker's Square. Turn in by the Sentry/Fashion Bug sign. Meet in the area nearest the street (National)**



When checking in please bring:

+ your list of scientific names and common names,
+ the approximate age of the tree,

+ stand, accent, sketch of display, and the proposed style of tree.

It is also wise to mark all components of your display with your name.

(an address sticker is usually adequate)

Note: If the drop off/pick up schedule is not good for you, please make personal arrangements for your trees with someone who will care for them. YOU must alert the crew about these arrangements so trees will not be misdirected, lost or stolen.

Call or email

Steve at 414-774-7714, scontney@mcw.edu

Good luck and thanks for supporting the MBS 2010 State Fair committee.

For specific information as to whether your tree will qualify to be entered at State Fair, please go to:

http://www.wistatefair.com/pdfs/competitions/2010/entry_info/general_info/hort/society_shows.pdf

Go to horticulture info... p14-15

Tips for getting your bonsai ready for Show (State Fair and MBS Club Show):

This is your chance to enter trees for critique by a judge. While the ribbons are nice, the information and perspective gained from comments about our trees from knowledgeable judges is priceless. If you are considering entering a bonsai or two, here are several tips about displaying a tree.

#1 Clean pots are more attractive for display. Wash the pot, dry it with a soft, non-fuzzy cloth. An application of light oil will allow the true color of the pot to shine through. Some people use mineral or baby oil to oil pots. Be sure to wipe off the excess oil with a soft cloth that will not leave fuzzies. This gives a nice sheen to the surface of the pot. Water marks and chemical build up need to be removed from the legs and bottom of the pot.



#2 Dress the soil surface with small particle gravel, grit or soil. The smaller particles in the soil surface make the roots and trunk look larger. Add some small areas of moss to add interest and dimension. Remove all weeds and debris from the moss and soil with tweezers or a small bonsai brush.

#3 Use the stand to "frame" the tree and pot. This means attention to details of the stand. Lower stands are usually used to display taller trees, saikei and forests. Taller stands are used to

display semi-cascades, full cascades and low trees. The color of foliage, pot and stand need to be considered as a unit and add interest, and color balance to the composition.

#4 Accents (plants, figurines or scrolls) need to harmonize with the display of the tree. Accent plants are put on very low stands usually so that they will form a complementary display. Choice of an object as an accent must be very carefully thought through. Accents can be used to depict a season, a geographic location, an elevation and an environment in which the tree might grow.



#5 Possibly the most important step in display preparation is the cleaning of the tree itself. Dead, brown and damaged needles or leaves must be removed. Leaves and needles that extend beyond the desired profile of the tree should be taken off. A last minute check of the surface of the soil and moss, the pot and the profile of the tree will make a good tree look exceptional.

SEPTEMBER CLUB SHOW

Please note that our Club show will be held at the Boerner Botanical Gardens on Saturday and Sunday September 18-19. We will NOT have a show at our September Tuesday night Club meeting.

MBS Heroes

Interview with Houston Sanders

Our current membership has the growth opportunities because of several past efforts by many individuals. This column will offer a look at them with a short interview so we can get to know our heroes.

Can You Tell us a Bit about Who You are

I have been interested in growing plants for most of my life. Long ago, I had quite a few cacti and succulent plants, and I still have a couple. But they grew very slowly and the only artistic value was that of the plant itself. About 15 years ago, I became interested in bonsai. Bonsai has been several steps beyond just growing plants, since bonsai trees require more attention and more creative thought.

My bonsai collection includes at least one hundred bonsai in pots, and many more small trees growing in plastic nursery pots or in the ground. My trees differ from those of almost everyone else because I tend to collect as many rare and unusual species as I can find, and because most of my trees have been grown from small seedlings or cuttings.

Are You Finding That People are willing to Share More Information Now?

In my experience, people have always been willing to share. There really aren't any secret shortcuts in bonsai, so why not share information?

This Leads into the Primary Question: How Would You Define Bonsai?

Bonsai is whatever you want it to be. Look at that...I just saved everyone a ton of time wasted on this silly argument – now spend it growing some trees. To me, bonsai is the process of growing trees (or other plants) in containers to achieve an artistic effect suggestive of a scene from nature.

When it comes to Bonsai, What Do You Think is the Coolest Thing You've Seen Done or That You've Done?

I ate a guava, planted the seeds and grew guava bonsai. In some ways, that is a lot more miraculous than any manipulation of branches and trunks can ever be. As for bonsai demonstrations, the best I can recall was the one in Chicago last fall. A Japanese master split a thick trunked pine into pieces to create a multiple trunk bonsai.

Figure 1: Houston at the Ginkgo Dig



How do you evaluate potential nursery material?

For anyone with a few years of experience, there is little nursery material that is really worth growing as bonsai. To make better bonsai, start from small cuttings or material grown specifically for bonsai.

Of All the Things You Mentioned, is Any More Important than the others?

Please note the use of the term “process”. The tree itself is just a physical object – the value of bonsai comes with your connection to that tree. You can purchase a “bonsai” but not the experience of bonsai.

Wisconsin Bonsai Enthusiast Daytrips at the
Bonsai Garden at Lake Merritt
Oakland, California
By Steve Carini

I am a very lucky man.

My son Andy and his wife Shawnee, along with their three children, live in a very beautiful and natural setting in the Shasta-Trinity National Forest, in northern California. Because I have a severe case of "grandpa-itis," I've made a commitment to visit them as often as I can afford to. It is a long trip, both in the air and the car. And sometimes I only get a few days with them... and it is worth every minute.



I have been known to wander a tad, so on my visit to see the kids in the fall of 2008, I spent a day attending the Golden State Bonsai Federation's Annual Convention in Modesto, California. There, I took a critique with Kathy Shaner. I had met Kathy before at a workshop in Washington, DC and in this second meeting, I realized how much I enjoyed her style of discussing the trees in the show and her special way of finding the beauty in each composition and, of course, what has to change.

After the critique, I introduced myself to her. I told her that I was from Wisconsin and was able to get out to California from time to time, and wondered if there might be a possibility that I could work with her on one of those visits. "Of course," she said, "let me introduce you to Andrea. She will help you arrange a time to visit us at the Bonsai Garden at Lake Merritt. You could come out to Oakland, and donate a day or two in service to the Collection." What follows is a journaling of my experience, on my first of nine days in service:

It is a rainy morning. Usually, the garden is closed in the rain... not today I hope.

The alarm rang at six thirty. I am already awake. Kind of tossing for an hour or so. I am anticipating what the day might be like. I had never been to the collection before but imagine tree after beautiful tree. I was right.

I arrive just after nine. I walk in and say hello to Kathy Shaner. I, of course, know who she is. She, I'm sure, does not remember me. I introduce myself as the volunteer from



Wisconsin. She lights up with a welcoming smile and seems very grateful that I am willing to help the Collection. She suggests that I check in with Andrea and that she would show me around. Andrea, happy that I had followed through with my commitment, walks me down the crushed granite pathway that winds through the bonsai garden. It is still raining, but I don't care. As she tells me about the trees, she keeps apologizing (as I so often do when I show my trees to someone), about just how much work each tree needs. At that moment in time, I only saw a wonderfully natural exhibit. Each tree is displayed on a stand with a single post, set in a bed of mulch with repeating plantings of varying ground cover species. It is all green, wet, lush and alive with beauty.

Others were beginning to arrive. Seiji from Carnares, Bill from Hayward, and Donna from Redwood City. Donna was about to begin working on a three foot tall redwood that had been damaged by either heat, cold, or fungus, in the fall of '08, on it's way home from the National Exhibit in Rochester, New York. Kathy had been treating it with a copper spray and a mix of water and peroxide, both intended to kill fungus. Donna was to remove all the brown foliage to make it more presentable for the exhibit as it recovered. It looked a lot like mine do as I take them out of winter storage back home in Wisconsin. I had never thought of the browning as a possible fungus. I just assumed it was because I was trying to grow coastal redwoods on the western shore of Lake Michigan.

Just off a multi purpose room was a large area with trees packed closely together. I suspected I might be assigned to work on one of those, possibly to prepare one for exhibit or for Kathy to see just what I could be trusted with. Kathy calls me, hands me an umbrella and explains that she will take me through the exhibit. We pass a Mendocino cypress and she tells me to break off a piece of foliage and roll it between my fingers. "Now smell it... you'll never forget this smell." She's right - a very pleasant but strong citrusy aroma, like orange, lemon and grapefruit rind all together. Now we pass a Monterey cypress and she explains how this fragrance is much more subdued. I took

a wiff and felt it had a slight soapy smell. I ask her if this is the species of tree that I see lining the coast, with long arms stretching up at 45 degree angles. "Yes," she said, "I'm working on recreating that very look on this one. I think it is appropriate that we style our trees to look like they do out in nature."



She asks me what kind of trees I have and feel comfortable working with. I share that I like deciduous trees best; maples being my favorite. "So," she said, "what kind of tree do you feel you need the most help with?" I immediately respond, "junipers. I have four of them. I struggle most with species identification and feel least confident pruning them." I'm sure now that she will pick out a less than ideal maple for me to work on while she observes my skills. Kathy thinks for a moment and says, "Then, a juniper it will be." She takes me to the far end of the Collection Exhibit. "This is a California juniper. It was a John Naka tree. It needs a lot of work and you will be here for two days. It will teach you well."

Tripping on my lower jaw, which was now dragging on the crushed granite of the garden pathway, I headed back to get a cart and three people to help me lift the tree and one to steady the cart. We moved tree number 226 to the work area and set it on a stand that was creatively made from a piece of plywood attached to the base of an old hair salon chair. Just pump it up or down to set the perfect height and you can reach any branch you'll need to. "To begin with" Kathy says, "don't touch the top few branches. We'll do these together. Spend the morning taking down all the extended new growth areas. Then call me." And it did take me all morning.

I pinched foliage for two and one half hours while Seiji worked on a Japanese white pine behind me. Kathy explains how most all white pine are grafted onto black pine root stock to increase the speed of growth. Most grafts are very knobby and most have reverse taper. She uncovers the soil around the nebari to expose the graft, in the shape of a perfect mushroom. "We'll work on that later." Kathy gets up and walks away. Bill, next to me, is

defoliating a variegated ivy, preparing to repot it. When I look surprised that he is defoliating and repotting in the same day, he said, "Wait until you see her root prune this baby. You can't kill these."

Well, it's twelve fifteen now, and I call Kathy to come check as I think I'm ready to use a shears to trim the under foliage. She leads me to a large, bright red, multi drawer Sears Roebuck tool chest. She pulls out one of at least 15 bags of tools. "Do you know how to sharpen tools?" she asked. Fearful of acknowledging that I can or cannot, I tell her I can always use a lesson on sharpening. Kathy finds the bucket full of sharpening stones submerged in water. She picks up a large soft grey stone and sets it down on the bench. Next, she picks up a hard red stone and begins to rub one stone onto the other. She tells me this will assure that the harder red stone develops a perfectly flat surface. "You can tell it is flat when the two stone surfaces stick together" she said. Kathy turns the hard red stone over, sets it on the bench, picks up the shears and shows me where the bevel is. She demonstrates how to position it and strokes the blade over the stone. And, when finished, she turns the shears over and removes the burrs which form on the opposite side of the blade. If not removed, each cut will mar the opposing blade and ruin all your effort. At home, I so rarely sharpen my tools. It seems to be that one step I never get to. She must have heard me "think" that thought because she excuses herself and, in a moment, walks back with a handful of shears. I thought for sure that this was about to become the "wax on-wax off" part of my apprentice sharpening lesson. There goes the afternoon, I thought. Lucky for me, she must have detected the panic in my eyes as she said, "...don't worry Steve, I'm not going to make you sharpen all these. I just wanted to point out how the tips of the shears should just slightly pass each other when closed. I relax a little."

I spend the next two hours working on a few branches; I remove downward growing foliage, and again, trim the top of the pads. Kathy stops over and suggests rather than doing one area to perfect completion, as is my tendency, it would be better to do all areas of the tree, little by little. This way I will not over prune one area and later find that the balance is off. I agree and tell her that I just wanted to be sure I was doing what she wanted. She tells me to relax.

Kathy turns around and stops Bill from repotting and says she has a few adjustments to make on the roots. "A few adjustments," I've found, means she'll reduce the roots by



around eighty percent, and will most likely employ the use of a Craftsman hammer and chisel. Seiji, after removing the top 1/3 of soil which was hiding the Japanese white pine's mushroom nebari that I mentioned earlier, calls Kathy over. She arrives and shows us how she will fix the mushroom bulges on the nebari. She studies the life

lines and chisels out an area of bark and wood to give the convincing illusion of proper taper to the right side of the mushroom. The left side is remedied by removing layers of bark and with a smaller chisel, re-creating the flaking pattern of bark present on all other areas. She tells us tomorrow we will paint on lime sulphur which will accentuate the edges of each flake. The area is reddish brown right now, but she assures that it will age to match within one year. She spots the Naka juniper I've been working on and suggests three wiring changes for tomorrow.

Speaking of wiring, the tree had been wired three years ago by Janice Dilbeck, a volunteer who loves to wire trees. Much of the perfectly placed wire has dug into the branches to varying degrees, some, in my humble opinion, to a destructive degree. I found some twist-ties in the utility drawer and marked the areas I was most concerned about. Bill, behind me, shared that Kathy feels sometimes on a Juniper, the dug in wire adds to the character and appearance of age. I'll see what she says tomorrow. Kathy, overhearing our comments, shared that she never allows wire to be cut off. She prefers that it always be unwound, so as never to inadvertently leave one loop in place.

Kathy's attention is diverted to Bill who has prepared the pot for the Ivy. She helps pick the front of the pot by pointing to the darker area of glaze in one area that she feels gives the illusion of a shadow from the lower branch. Bill has prepared the wire through the drain holes to secure the tree in the pot, and Kathy describes her technique of a four-way tie in, using two pairs of tie wires plus one extra half wire. (Next year, I'd be happy to demonstrate this technique at our club repotting

workshop.) Before she does this tie in, she shows us how she gently forces bonsai soil into EVERY possible air space around the roots and how she loosely holds the chopstick as not to damage the fine roots we try so hard to create. She discourages high pressure water rinsing of the roots, as she feels it can de-bark the roots. She suggests swishing up and down in large vat of water instead.

The meeting of the Bonsai Collection board of directors that has been going on in the background all afternoon, is now breaking up. Listening in while I worked affirms that all non-profit/club board meetings function quite similarly; some members are natural leaders, others ask questions and others are quiet participants.

It's hard to believe the day is coming to an end and people are beginning to pack up. I uncork the bottle of my son Andy's 2002 Kenific Ranch Merlot I brought to share. Many stick around to sample a taste. Cherries, chocolate, oak, and tannins, are all noted. Jerry, the newsletter editor, immediately wanted a steak. Another said it was such a distinctive merlot, he'd have guessed it to be a cab. I made sure Andrea took the rest home. I feel so proud of my son each and every time I open and share a bottle of his wine with new friends. And I end my day humbled to have been able to help out at this fine collection of trees. I am not only excited to have worked with a group of such committed volunteers, I am thankful to have had the opportunity to work with such a knowledgeable, kind, and sharing teacher, Kathy Shaner.

I am indeed a very lucky man.

The grafting workshop with Mike Yanny will be on August 7. We will have a 3 hour morning session and a 3 hour afternoon session. Each session will be limited to 8 people. Each participant will be given a choice of understock and scions to choose from to graft. Each person will be able to do a minimum of 5 one gallon container plants to take with them (retail value of over \$65). In addition, each person will receive a professional grafting knife valued at about \$35. The cost of the workshop is \$250 per person for a session. (For more detailed information, see last month's newsletter.) Please contact Mike Yanny at... mike@johnsonsnursery.com



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

Next Meeting of MBS
7PM, Tuesday, July 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



*Japanese maples
five finger leaves, red or green
delicate beauty*

- Dave Burke