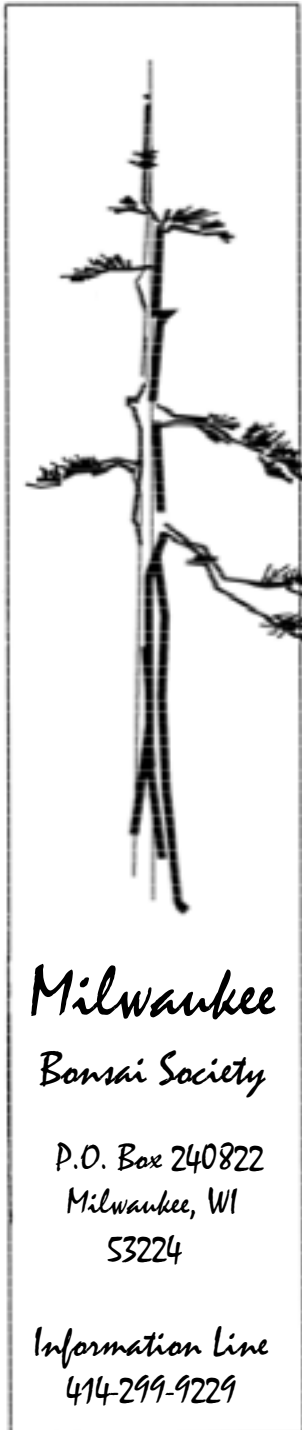


JUNE 2013

Bonsai News



JUNE MEETING

Its that time of year, everything is putting on their spring flush of growth, time to bring out the fertilizer. The June speaker will be our own member, Leo Schordje. Leo comes to the bonsai hobby with a long background in growing orchids. He has been giving half a dozen talks a year on various orchid topics to orchid societies, garden clubs and botanical gardens. He has given talks everywhere from Anchorage, Alaska to the National Arboretum in Washington, D.C. though most of his talks are in the Midwest. He tells me his stand up routine kills in Columbus, Ohio. We'll see if his talk measures up to his build up, or if it is just fresh organic bovine fertilizer. This talk will be his first talk to a bonsai society. The talk will be "Everything You Know about Fertilizer is Wrong", subtitled, "How to simplify your fertilizer program and have healthier trees." He will have the text of the talk and supplemental materials posted on his website before the talk. He will also
(continued on p. 2)

2013 Events

JUNE

June 4 - Society Meeting

New thinking in fertilizers

June 16 (Sun) - Boerner's

Fathers Day in the park

**June 22 (Sat) - Intermediate
Class #1**

JULY

July 2-NO SOCIETY MEETING

**July 13 (Sat) - 1-4 Open
workshop - repotting tropicals**

**July 13 (Sat) - 9-3
Intermediate Class #2**

**July 13 (Sat) - Wauwatosa
Garden Tour**

July 21 (Sun) - MBS Picnic

AUGUST

Aug 1-11 - State Fair

Aug 6 - Society Meeting
Presentation by advanced study
groups

Aug 16-18 - Chicago Show

Aug 25 - Intermediate Class #3

NEXT MEETING

Tuesday June 4 - 6:00 pm
Boerner Botanical Gardens

REMEMBER

**Come to the society
meetings at 6:00 for social
time and to get advice on
trees you bring.**

www.milwaukeebonsai.org

President's Message

Greetings,

MBS has been asked to participate in the Fathers Day celebration at BBG on June 16th. We will do so with a public workshop limited to 6 dads. The material is Golden Gate Ficus, very nice trees for a workshop. There will be a large tent near the Educational Center where the workshop will be. There are still openings, so if you have someone in mind to take this workshop please get them registered.

A new development with the Bartolotta Catering Group will necessitate that access to our library collection be restricted to 1 hour. That hour will be from 6:15 to 7:15 on meeting nights. Please return checked out books at the next meeting.

State Fair is coming up in August so be ready to tree sit if you can. I will have sign up sheets at the June meeting. The Fair runs from Aug 1 to Aug 11.

I had a discussion with the head of the Folk Fair about how much they would like us to increase our participation at the event. We may start with having "demonstrations" this year and maybe actually have public workshop(s) during the Fair next year. To be continued.

The MBS Picnic will be on July 19th and be held at Don G's home again, so save the date. Particulars and an improved map in next month's newsletter.

Thank you to Jean S for a wonderful forest workshop and to Kris Z and Ron F for the blended tree workshop at the last meeting.

Steve

(June meeting - continued)

bring a few printed copies for those without smart phones or home computers, but in an effort to save trees, he will only bring a limited number of printed copies of the supplemental materials. You can find the information on line at: <http://www.iosoc.com/forward-2/bonsai/MBSFertTalk.pdf> Leo will also bring fertilizer for sale and an assortment of bonsai supplies, perhaps a tree or two and maybe some orchids for use as Kusamono.

See www.schordje.com or call (847) 309-3821



BRING YOUR CALENDARS TO THE JUNE MEETING AND BE READY TO SIGN UP TO 'TREE SIT' OR TO BRING TREES TO STATE FAIR.

Expectations

By Pam Woythal

Open Workshops

Open workshops are an opportunity to get together with other enthusiasts to work on your tree. Open workshops are not usually a formal meeting with an agenda. However, there may be a focus area we might cover such as the upcoming repotting workshop. Likewise, there might not be a formal leader, but advanced members may grab a corner and offer a lecture, such as the first one where Allen K. lectured on wiring.

What you can expect at Open Workshops

You can expect friends of all levels, beginner to teachers, and a place to meet. These friends are there same as you, to work on their tree and learn from others. Sometimes we will show up just to help one another, pass the time, make connections, and other times we will have a goal we want to accomplish or a question on something we want to gather information or opinions from each other. You can expect all levels of opinions and sharing of information that may have worked for another member.

What is expected from you at Open Workshops.

You would be responsible for placing plastic on your workspace and ensuring the table, chair, and floor is cleaned in your area when you leave. If you are the last to leave from your table, you will also need to fold and return the plastic to the cabinet. Share what you are learning and ask for other ideas and opinions. If you can help do so, but do not feel like you are required to style or work on someone's tree.

****Repotting Workshop JULY 13... ****

Are you ready to transplant your tree? This Open Workshop is planned that will bring experience 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. July is especially good for re-potting tropicals.



To participate, bring your tree, 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. If you do not have soil or wire, some may be available for sale. Everyone is welcome, and if you want to become a member, membership forms will also be available. **Meet at Boerner Saturday, July 13th at 10:00 till 2:00.**

Classes

Classes are our core competency at MBS. It is what sets our club above all other bonsai clubs and organizations. No other bonsai group offers as much opportunity for education as MBS does. About 8 years ago, MBS started a program to teach 16 members to be able to improve their

bonsai skills. Our leadership promoted and grew these educational programs so that MBS would no longer be known as a beginner club. These original 16 students have led classes, joined the board and given back to our club in experience and commitment.

Today we have Novice classes, Intermediate classes, Advance classes and also hold a Leadership course that is offered when we have members ready to step up and hold another convention. Each of these classes is designed to lead you and offer you opportunities for growth.

Already this year we brought in a world class well respected artist, Colin Lewis, for an advanced intensive weekend class.

What you can expect at classes

Each instructor has a unique approach to teaching. Some excel at lecture such as Warren Hill, some are far more hands on, and others develop a mix of styles. What we try to do with our Novice and Intermediate classes is mix it up. We want you to have the knowledge to build your skill set; giving you tools to develop to your potential. As you work your way through these classes you may find you will be more directed early and less supervised by instructors who then serve as guides and mentor your progress.

You can expect class to start on time at a designated location. Expect to do some reading and studying of your raw material. Your work

between classes should prepare you for what's covered at the class. If you don't understand a

concept expect to be proactive and reach out to the instructor and classmates for help which are the only participants allowed in a class. You make connections and life-long friends, just ask any of

the instructors or other members who have taken these classes.



What is expected from you at class.

Fairness to classmates includes meeting responsibilities. That includes showing up on time, being considerate of classmate's time with instructor, doing your share in preparation and cleanup, bringing suitable material to class, as well as meeting financial obligations.

Bonsai Bucks - what are they and why do I want them?

Whenever you work a 3-4 hour shift as a volunteer, you will receive a bonsai buck. With 6 bonsai bucks, you will receive a complimentary dinner at our Holiday awards banquet. Any bonsai bucks over 6 will be put into a drawing for \$50 certificates towards an MBS workshop or class. There are lots of opportunities coming up at State Fair and the Annual Show to volunteer. Get your calendars out and get ready to have fun!!

FOREST WORKSHOP

"With a little help from my friends" is what you needed during Jean Sher's Forest Workshop that was held on Saturday, May 11th. Each of the participants received seven Chinese Elm trees of various sizes. The challenge was to arrange them to look like an attractive, naturally occurring grouping. We first went outside to study the placement of trees relative to one another as well as perspective. After which, we took a large sheet of paper, traced the oval shape of the pot onto it and looked at our trees to decide what a natural arrangement should look like. We wanted to achieve an asymmetrical look to our forest with the medium and small sized trees working in harmony with the largest tree. A preliminary plan was drawn. A plastic mesh grid was cut to fit the oval pot. Wires were placed to anchor the trees and the trees were removed from their pots. This is the point at which the buddy system was imperative. As the trees were placed they had to be held as they were wired in. Sometimes even four hands didn't seem like enough since trying to place seven trees in an attractive arrangement was sometimes an exercise in frustration. Eventually, everyone successfully got their trees in their pot and Jean did a wonderful job making suggestions about how to tweak the arrangement to make it look even better.

Stones and moss were added to complete the project along with some preliminary styling of the trees. The trees were no longer individuals, but a part of a unit that will need attention as a unit. In the end, the participants seemed happy with the results and Jean was thanked for a wonderful and informative workshop. Great job, Jean!

- Judy S

So you always wanted to make your own cut paste??

Here are a couple of recipes for cut paste:

Take a small bottle of Elmer's glue and add brown food coloring.

Go to a hobby shop and get modeling clay, brown or grey. Mix in a little olive oil to keep it pliable.

What does water do for our trees other than providing moisture?



Water is good and bad with Bonsai. Of course, our trees need water to survive but water can also be a detriment.

To begin, hopefully you are utilizing a coarse grade of soil in your pots. Again, this is partially for the tree and its growth. A large reason for using this soil is to create and maintain the air spaces because they are also like air conditioning systems for the root system. Stop and think, what does water do, it also holds heat. As our soil becomes clogged, or the wrong mixture is used, it will hold more moisture and thus create an area that will hold heat during the warmer months. As much as our trees need moisture in the summer to live, moisture can also be to their detriment and cause heat buildup. Remember, roots do not like to grow in wet conditions. Add to this a heat buildup in summer and we have the perfect conditions to help kill our trees. In the summer, make sure you water properly, wet the soil but don't keep it wet. Any tree that has a clogged or dense soil system should be watched very closely.

When you're repotting, always use a scythe-type tool to free the tree from the pot. These are the long, narrow slightly curved bladed tools. Most think these are used to cut the roots along and next to the edge of the pot. This is totally wrong. They are made to work out a thin section of soil around the pot. You should stand your pot at a slight angle and slowly scratch the soil and work it loose creating a gap between the root system and the pot. This will allow you to remove the tree easily and not put undue pressure on the root ball which can cause irreversible damage. Again, these tools are not made to be yanked along the edge cutting roots. Typically you can loosen and remove soil from two sides and then can easily be removed without causing damage.

Most know that when a bonsai sets out in the hot sun, the pot and root system of course will heat up. The issue here is just how hot they get. Any pot whose temperatures exceeds 100 degrees will progressively harm the roots. To guard against this, we can of course move the trees but that's not easy if you have a lot of trees, large trees or no where to move them. So, we need to guard against heat buildup some other way. Moisture in a root system will actually increase heat. If you have the proper soil mixture which has open air spaces, your

tree will have an advantage but it is still susceptible to over heating. Remember, an open soil mix containing air spaces creates a type of air-conditioning for your tree.

If your soil has organic matter clogging the air spaces, you could be in for dire problems. Either way, you probably need to guard against the heat especially on very hot days. There are a number of ways to reduce the temperature in the pots. One simple yet effective method was to use white bath towels to cover pots and surface soil. Several factors make this work. First, the white color will help deflect heat. If the towel is wet, it of course helps reduce heat but, having the towel wet constantly is not necessary. The real key here is dead air space. By simply draping the towel over the pot, it will leave a space which will become a buffer between the sun and the pot. This buffer area, due to air circulation, remains slightly cooler. For those in doubt, use a meat thermometer to check the soil temperature in several trees.

The soil temperature at a point 2 - 3 inches in from the pot's edge consistently read at or above 100 degrees without the towels. The next day, with temperatures again in the high nineties, the towels were draped over the pot and soil surface. Now during mid day when the temperatures were at their peak, the soil temperatures in the same areas as before were checked. The soil was consistently at ninety to ninety three. Still hot but now in a range that would not harm the root system.

Just as we finish our spring work of potting, wiring and shaping our trees, we must continue. Now, as the new spring foliage lengthens, we must keep it under control. Those that fertilized early are probably experiencing fast growth and wishing they had held off. Remember, fast growth causes larger foliage and also long internodes. Both of which we don't want. Now begins the battle for allowing light and air into our tree's canopy, trimming leaves for increased ramification and maintaining our tree's shape. All of which will continue for several weeks during the spring growth spurt. In many cases, a lot of people are so impatient, they allow their trees to rapidly fill in until they have a full canopy and then they have a real battle. As the new growth emerges, keep it under control by continually pinch and pruning. As a branch elongates, cut or pinch it back to the first set of leaves, keeping in mind this cut spot needs to be back inside the canopy area and not simply at the edge of the canopy. By continually doing this, you will slowly build ramification and generally the leaves will be slightly smaller. Always practice good light and air management.

Automated Watering System

By Jorge H. Rossette

Every time we go on a trip I am faced with the same challenge: who is going to water my bonsai trees? You can always ask a friend or a neighbor for help, but this can become a time consuming chore.

In previous years I wanted to setup a watering system only to find that local stores don't have all the components, is not clear what parts are required, or didn't know if they will properly water my bonsai trees.

After searching the Internet for different options: sprinkler, dripping, misting and spray systems; found that other bonsai enthusiasts are using what is called a spray system.

Please note that my soil drains and dries very fast.

Components

All the components were found at <http://www.dripworks.com>

1. The first component is called **Heart of the Garden Drip Irrigation Kit (KHEART)**. It includes a filter, pressure regulator, fitting, main line tubing (100 ft), pocket punch tool, stakes and three Easy Loc Couplers.



2. The main line tubing is not flexible. Additional **Easy Loc Couplers (ELL, ELT, ELC1)** are required. They come in different shapes to close the line, accommodate 90 degree turns, split or extend the main line.



3. The **Mini-Jet, Black (MSBL180, MSBL300)** are the sprayers. At pressures above 30 PSI the spray turns into more of a mist. You can buy different spray patterns to cover 90, 180 or 300 degrees. With 4 sprayers, one bench (4 x 8 feet long) is getting watered using two sprayers on each side,



4. To attach the sprayer to the main line and the bench the **Stake w/Tubing & Barb (SEZ13)** was used.



5. Extra **Figure 8 End (CF8)** to close the end of the lines and some **1/4" Goof Plugs (14GP2)** to repair the line were required
6. The last component is a water timer, the **Orbit Detachable LCD Timer (TORLCD)** is battery operated and programmable up to four different start times with variable durations.



Installation

Based on the instructions that came with the kit, all the components were connected in the following order: first connect the timer to the faucet, then filter, pressure regulator and fitting to the main line.



A trench is not required; the mainline lies down in the bonsai area. A cutter or sharp knife can be used to cut the line in the sizes required. Stakes to hold the mainline to the ground were used, and the Easy couplers help make turns, split a line or go up.

Winterize

To winterize the system, remove and store the timer, filter, and pressure reducer. The timer is turned off and the batteries were removed. Using an air compressor the water gets flushed from the mainline tubing. An adapter to connect the compressor to the main line is required.

Freezing temperatures can damage the pipe lines and break some of the components. The system was reconnected and tested to verify that everything is working properly in Spring.

After the mainline is installed the stakes were attached to the bench using tubing clamps. The sprayer is inserted on the top of the stake tubing and the line connected to the main line. With the stakes the sprayer can be moved up or down based on the size (pot) of the trees.

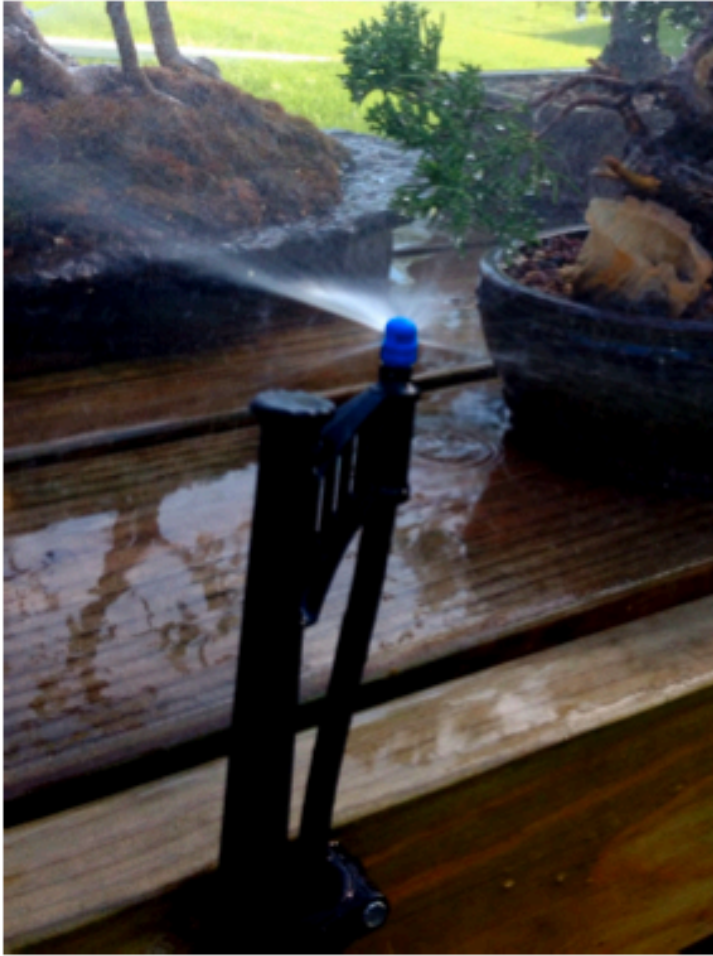


Figure 8 End were used to close the mainline after everything is connected; the system was ready for testing.



Results

The system works very well and is fun to watch.

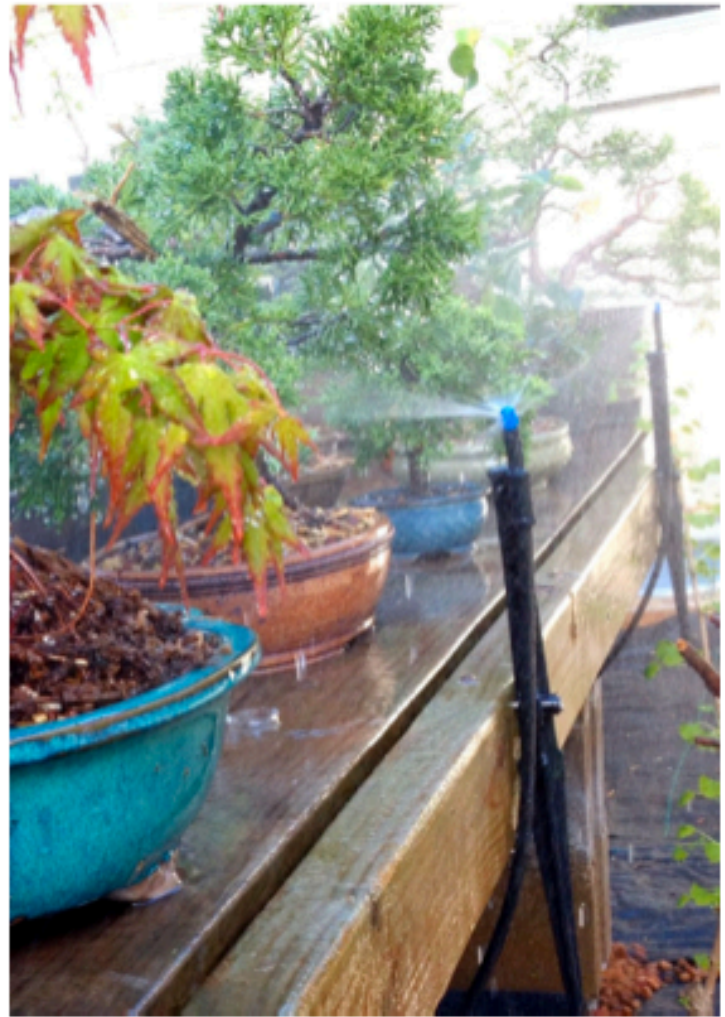


All the trees get enough water; my first concern was under watering, and then was over watering. Some pots are tilted to one side to help drain the water. During hot summer days the system was running four times a day; it helped to cool the trees.

Fertilization is being accomplished by using tea bags filled with organic fertilizer. All the trees get checked every day for pests, weeds, tight wire and drainage.

This year I am adding an Easy coupler with a shut off valve to not water my pines. I will do those by hand.

Now that the winter is over, the system is setup and tested to verify that is working. New batteries were installed in the timer.



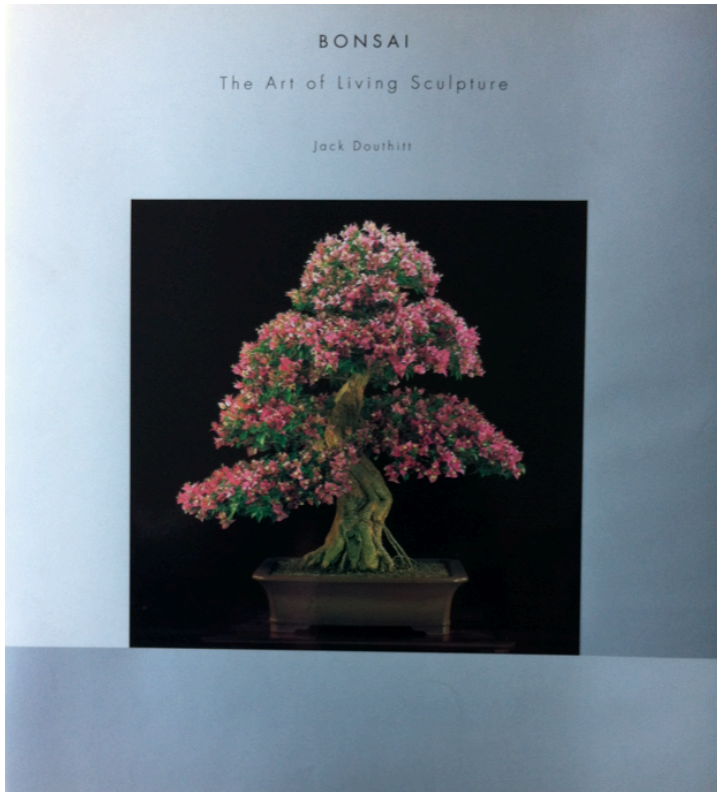
When I am on vacation I ask my neighbor to check that the system is running.

If you have any questions please contact me at al345900@hotmail.com

Good Luck!!!

BONSAI - THE ART OF LIVING SCULPTURE

by Jack Douthitt



Bonsai pays tribute to the artistry and design behind these fascinating miniature trees. The text compares the ancient art of bonsai to the traditional arts and focuses on the specific design elements of the bonsai--the roots, trunk, branches, foliage, and container--and discusses how bonsai artists manipulate these elements for a specific effect. Unlike the traditional arts, bonsai requires working with material that is alive and ever-changing, presenting unique challenges and rewards.

Featured are photographs from the most highly-regarded bonsai artists throughout the world. The bonsai photographed are not only the most popular pine, juniper, elm, and boxwood, but also the more exotic or colorful rhododendron, crabapple, wisteria, and bougainvillea. A useful reference section provides a list of public bonsai collections.

BOOK REVIEWS:

***First of all, this book is beautiful: from the trees in it (a truly amazing array, photographed simply to highlight the beauty of the bonsai) right down to the paper it's printed on, the book itself is a work of art. Wonderful design, good captions, and good color, too. An homage to the art of bonsai, and indeed a bonsai-lover's must-have for its beauty alone.

Second of all, I actually liked the text. It's not a basic how-to or a boring dense history- it focuses instead on the philosophy and, again, the art of bonsai. Just reading the book is calming.

***The title is perfect. I just wanted a book with great photos of beautiful trees and this book is it. Plus quotes and simple captions that compliment the photos. Then in the back of the book, so it would not distract from the art, the author was thoughtful enough to give detailed information about each tree. I will hold on to this one.



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

Next Meeting of MBS
Tuesday June 4, 2013
Boerner Botanical Gardens
9400 Boerner Dr
Hales Corners, WI 53130

2013 MBS OFFICERS

President	Steve Con.
First VP	Judy S
Second VP	Kris Z
Secretary	Ron F
Treasurer	Susan L
Director	John M
Director	Barbara S
Director	Allen K
Past Pres.	Pam W

Other Club Functions:

Newsletter - Kris Z
Webmaster - Pam W
PAB Board - Rob P, Anna S & Houston S



Radiant rainbow
The promise of potted gold
A search - but in vain
- Joe Nemec