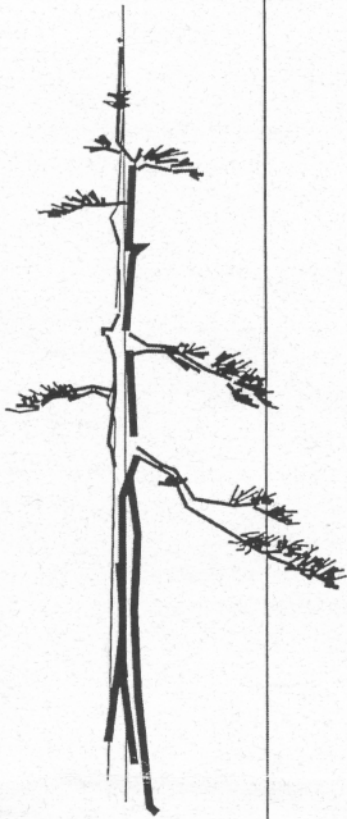


May, 2004

BONSAI NEWS



*Milwaukee
Bonsai Society*

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

*Information Line
414-299-9229*

What's Inside?

President's Message.....	2
Joe Nemeč's Fertilizing Program	2
Sara Raynor Trip	3
Mas Imazumi's Spring Bonsai Tips.....	4
Soil pH	5

May Meeting - Mame

Our May meeting will feature Jack Wikle and "mame" bonsai. We tried to get Jack last year and were not successful, but this year he agreed to come and share his knowledge and experience with us. I guarantee that you will enjoy his presentation and his workshop.

Jack lives in Tecumseh, Michigan with his wife Jeanine. Although he is officially retired, he still works as a consultant to the Hidden Garden Arboretum, which is close by and also has a bonsai collection. Jack also was the Editor of the ABS Bonsai Journal for several years. Jack used to be a regular participant in the Mid-America Bonsai Exhibit in Chicago. He was there for several years as a vendor and as a speaker. Although he has many bonsai of all sizes, he is very well known for his expertise in mame bonsai and growing mame indoors. He used to joke that when he went someplace to put his trees into an exhibit he could bring all of them in a foam plastic cooler. And he could!

He will also be conducting a mame workshop at 1 PM on Saturday, May 1, 2004 at the church. Appropriate material has been especially ordered for the workshop. We have two spots left in the workshop. If you want to enroll in the workshop please call Kris Ziemann at 262/512-1228. Silent observers are welcome. Charge for being a silent observer is \$5 and you can pay at the door.

Announcement:

The Milwaukee Bonsai Society has adopted the Advanced Master Series (AMS) program to give club members the opportunity to raise the level of their individual bonsai skills. Participation in the AMS will require a three-year commitment and the number of participants will be limited. The course will increase bonsai knowledge and skills through structured and repeated course work. An internationally known bonsai teacher will teach the course. There is a cost to participate in the program. If you are interested, plan on attending a short informational session at 6:30 PM prior to the May Meeting.

JUNE MEETING

Join us in June! MBS will be bringing in a local expert on tropical trees. Gerry Knopps, from Appleton, will be bringing some of his award-winning trees and sharing his knowledge of the wonderful world of tropicals. He will also have many helpful tips for those of you who live in apartments. June will also be our annual club show. The club show is a great chance to show off your most precious trees, or just to bring in something and see what everyone thinks. The show will be judged, with ribbons for the top trees in the Expert, Intermediate, and Novice divisions. So, join us at the June 1 meeting.

President's Message

The April Group Slash got spring off to a great start! We had an excellent turnout, and everyone participated in our annual "Bonsai by Committee" program. Not only did everybody have a good time, but also there were some interesting trees designed during the evening. Our Guest Judge, Mr. Al Durtka from the International Institute, had many humorous comments about what he saw, and he gave several prizes and awards.

There are many more exciting things coming to the Milwaukee Bonsai Society this year. We are having several nationally and internationally known guest artists here to teach us more about our favorite art form. Our first guest artist of the season, Mr. Jack Wikle, from Ann Arbor Michigan, will be here to present a workshop and demonstration on mame bonsai in May. (We tried to get Jack last year and were unable to do so.) We know that you will enjoy his program, but also come to his workshop as a "silent observer" to learn more about how to design these bonsai miniatures. Jack will also be providing information about growing bonsai indoors. There is also the field trip to visit with Sarah Rayner at her studio in Red Wing, Minnesota. She is an outstanding potter and makes wonderful bonsai containers. Michelle and I would love the chance to visit with her but unfortunately, we will be out of town and unable to go.

Later in the year we will have Gerry Knops from the Fox Valley, Colin Lewis from Maine (previously from Great Britain), and Ted Matson from California. All of these artists are exciting people who will help us improve our bonsai skills.

In addition, there is an exciting announcement elsewhere in this newsletter about the Advanced Master Series (AMS) program. This is a new program that will benefit the entire club by improving the quality of bonsai being produced by our club members, and by raising the general level of bonsai expertise within the club. Although it is intended for those who already have the basic skills needed to do bonsai, everyone is invited to the informational meeting before the May meeting to learn more about this new program.

In June we will also have a refinement workshop, for those who want to improve their trees and get

them ready for the State Fair exhibit, and we will also be exhibiting our trees at the Asian Moon Festival. Sign up sheets will be available at the May meeting.

Come to the meetings. Come to the workshops. Take an active part in the club and have lots of fun while you are at it!

Suggested Fertilizing Program

(By Joe Nemeč)

Deciduous:

One application on the 1st of May, July and September of Milorganite spread liberally on surface of the soil. Apply no other fertilizer during these months.

April, June and August – Use Peters 20-20-20 or Walmart All Purpose Plant food (15-30-15) at ½ tablespoon per gallon on the 1st, 10th and 20th of these months. Apply no other fertilizer during this time.

Evergreens:

One application on the 1st of May, July and September of a mix of bloodmeal, bonemeal and cottonseed meal. One third of each. Spread liberally on surface of the soil. No other fertilizer during these months.

April, June and August – Same as deciduous.

Suggested Soil Mix for Repotting:

2 parts Turface – available at Reinders in Elm Grove.

1 part Walmart Continuous Feeding Potting Mix (10 lb bag)

1 part vermiculite (available at Stein's)

1 part cocoa bean shells (also available at Stein's)

Repotting:

Most trees need to be repotted every 3 to 4 years. If, however, you find roots growing out of the drain holes, the tree should be repotted that year.

Deciduous trees should be repotted when the first new buds appear in spring.

Evergreen trees should be repotted in May.

Soil Acidity (Internet Discussion sent by Kris Ziemann)

Does anyone know of a site that will tell you what type of fertilizer to use on different trees? Acid etc.? I know junipers and azalias like acid but I have some Elms and Maples, Fukien Teas, olives and ficus that I don't have a clue on. Also I've read pros and cons on organic vs commercial. I would appreciate anyone's input.

Thanks,

Bruce Crawford, Central Texas

From: "Alan Walker" <awbonsai@bellsouth.net> [Save Address]

Bruce: Here's a list of pH preferences for a number of plants which was put together by Marty Klajnowski of San Antonio Bonsai Society.

TREE	pH range	TREE	pH range	TREE	pH range
Acacia	6.5-7.5	Ficus	5.0-6.0	Orange	5.0-7.0
Apple	5.0-6.5	Fir	5.0-6.0	Oxalis	6.0-8.0
Arborvitae	6.0-8.0	Firethorn	6.0-8.0	Pine (Pinus)	5.0-6.0
Ash	6.0-8.0	Forsythia	6.0-8.0	Podocarpus	5.0-6.5
Azalea	5.0-6.0	Fuschia	6.0-8.0	Pomegranate	5.5-6.5
Barberry	6.0-8.0	Gardenia	5.5-6.5	Poplar	6.0-8.0
Beech	6.0-7.0	Geranium	7.0-8.0	Privet (Ligustrum)	6.0-8.0
Birch	5.0-6.0	Ginkgo	6.0-8.0	Prunus	6.0-8.0
Bougainvillea	4.5-5.5	Grape (Vitas)	6.0-8.0	Quince	6.0-7.5
Boxwood	6.5-7.5	Hawthorn	6.0-7.5	Redbud	6.0-8.0
Camellia	4.0-5.5	Hazelnut	6.0-7.0	Rhododendron	5.0-6.0
Cedar	6.0-7.0	Hickory	6.5-7.5	Rose	6.0-8.0
Cherry	6.0-8.0	Holly (Ilex)	5.0-6.0	Rosemary	5.0-6.0
Cotoneaster	6.0-8.0	Ivy	7.0-8.0	Sage	6.0-8.0
Crabapple	6.0-7.5	Juniper	5.5-7.5	Spirea	6.0-8.0
Cypress, bald	5.0-6.0	Lantana	5.5-7.0	Spruce (Picea)	5.0-6.0
Deutzia	6.0-7.5	Larch	5.5-6.5	Sumac	6.0-8.0
Dogwood	6.0-7.0	Lemon	5.5-7.0	Sweet Gum	6.0-7.0
Douglas Fir	6.0-7.0	Lilac	6.0-8.0	Tamarix	6.0-8.0
Eleagnus	6.0-8.0	Mimosa	5.0-7.0	Tuliptree	6.0-7.0
Elder	6.0-8.0	Magnolia	5.0-6.0	Viburnum	6.0-8.0
Elm (Ulmus)	6.0-8.0	Maple (Acer)	6.0-8.0	Willow (Salix)	6.0-8.0
Eucalyptus	6.0-8.0	Mountain Laurel (Kalmia)	5.0-8.0	Wisteria	6.0-8.0
Euonymus	6.0-8.0	Myrtle	6.5-7.5	Witch Hazel	6.0-7.0
Euphorbia	5.5-6.5	Oak (Quercus)	5.0-7.0	Yew (Taxus)	5.5-7.0
		Oleander	6.0-7.5		

Note: For plant health, always consider checking the pH of your soil first, before adding things. The plant cannot absorb nutrients unless the pH is within its tolerable range. A pH of 6.5 is the mid-range and supports most plant growth.

Alan Walker

<http://bonsai-bci.com> <http://LCBSBonsai.org>



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

NINO'S
Landscape Company


P.O. Box 510108
New Berlin WI 53151 Bonsai Supplier

❖ Specimen trees ❖ Stock material ❖ Seedlings
❖ Tools ❖ Pots ❖ Books ❖ Videos ❖ Mail Order

Now accepting VISA and MasterCard

Your #1 Milwaukee Bonsai Source!

THE CITY GARDENER



Featuring
Bonsai and bonsai accessories

◆ Indoor and outdoor bonsai ◆ Pre-bonsai
◆ Pots ◆ Bonsai soil ◆ Wire ◆ Tools ◆ Books
◆ Clay miniatures and more

Plus We offer practical, easy-to-understand help in choosing and caring for your bonsai

1814 North Farwell Avenue
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53202
(414) 224-8224

1 Block
North of Brady Street

Pots – Should They be Legalized? The Sara Rayner Road Trip

(anonymous)

On a recent pleasant spring weekend, a group of fearless bonsai-adventurers embarked upon a long and perilous journey – the MBS spring trip. Brazenly crossing enemy lines into the heart of Vi-Queen country, we reached the studio of Sara Rayner in scenic Redwing, Minnesota.

Now if you haven't heard of Sara Rayner, you are probably new to bonsai. Or else you're dumb as dirt. (Or both...) Anyway, Ms Rayner is one of the pre-eminent American bonsai potters; many would rate her as the finest. Some of her unique and beautiful textured stoneware pots house many of the finest bonsai in our club and in the USA. She also grows her own bonsai (I bet her trees have REALLY nice pots!)

In addition to perusing her full inventory of bonsai pots, the MBS group had the chance to take a tour of Sara's studio. The studio is actually the carriage house of a beautiful old home. It is interesting that the place does not have a conventional heating system. Not that it is unheated! Ms. Rayner told us that she works hard throughout the winter months and keeps the large kiln going to heat the place. She starts about 30 pots per week all winter long. The pot-making process takes longer than a week, but she starts more pots each week while continuing production and firing of the previous weeks' work. Because she works most in winter, her inventory was highest at the time we visited.

There is a lot more work, thought, and creativity that goes into making bonsai pots than I had ever realized. Sara explained that her beautiful textures are unique because she fires her pots at higher temperature than other potters: Cone 10, 2400°F. The stoneware becomes harder at that temperature, and this makes the textures possible. The process of firing pots is hard to control, and she can't always predict the results. One of the problems with firing pots is the shrinkage. Clay can shrink up to 25% during the process. Ever wonder why those large pots cost so much? For some designs, Sara told us that 3 out of 7 large pots will crack during firing. The price of the masterpieces reflects those pots that were lost along the way.

Along with the large selection of regular pots, we had the special chance to purchase a few of the "second quality" pots in which the color didn't come out quite perfectly, or the glaze dripped or the design just didn't sell well. They were better than "first quality" pots anywhere else! Our budgets were overwhelmed, but how could we say no?

I arrived with a list of all the pot dimensions for my few trees worthy of Sara's pots. Within a few minutes, I discarded the list and just started buying the pots I liked. There was only one tree that really HAD to have a Sara Rayner pot. To pick a pot for a specific tree is so much harder and less pleasant than simply picking out nice pots! It's much harder to satisfy a customer who comes seeking a very specific pot. Sara agreed with that assessment, and explained that it was even worse for her when someone asked for a special-order pot. She has to make 3 or 4 pots in the special design, and hope that one comes out right!

Thank God for credit cards! The MBS group would never have been able to afford dinner, and would have slept in the cars and hitchhiked back home. Fortunately, the power of plastic prevailed, and we all enjoyed a great meal and spent the night in a local hotel. Then it was up early in the morning to collect trees growing in the hotel landscape! And back to the car for the long drive home. Cramped into tight quarters amongst the pots, rocks and trees we had collected, the group hobbled home, where we gleefully attempted to match our trees with our beautiful pots.



Mas Imazumi's Timely Tips for Spring

(From Minnesota Bonsai Newsletter)

I found the following "tips" in my copy of the Redwood Empire Bonsai Society's March 1999 newsletter from Sebastopol, CA. And what is "timely" in **March** in California is pretty doggone timely for **May** in Minnesota! (or WI, ed.) I've added just a few slight variations to translate the information to Minnesota time.

You can't go wrong following this set of rules because it's
By Mas Imazumi

(This) is a good time to pot or repot your evergreen bonsai. When you have your tree in its new home, please be sure to place it in **FULL** sun, out of the wind. The reason for this is the warmth of the spring sun hits the pot and promotes faster root growth.

Pinching: On maples, when the first set of new leaves appears, pinch back the new growth in the center of the set. Of course, if you wish to develop longer branches, pinch the second or third set of leaves. On trees with alternate sets of leaves, such as elm or zelkova, leave two leaves and then pinch back. Doing this faithfully will shorten internodes and develop smaller foliage as well as a fine branching pattern. On evergreens, pinch as needed. Especially watch your junipers - new foliage has a habit of appearing overnight. On black pines, when candles on strong growth have grown to 3-4", break back the top 2/3. On five-needle pines, leave 3-4 needles on strong new growth and break off the candle. In all cases, pinching will promote denser, more attractive trees.

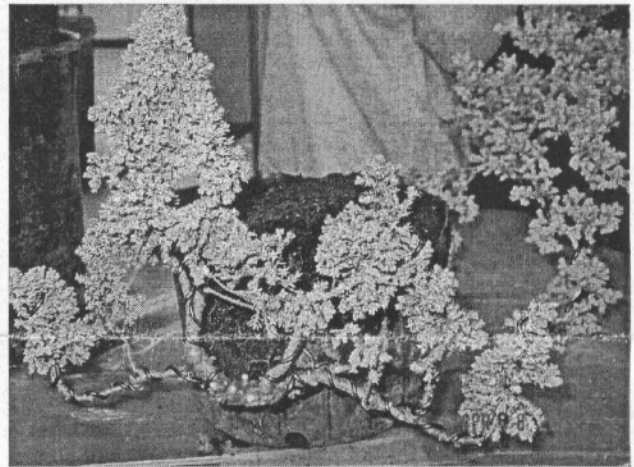
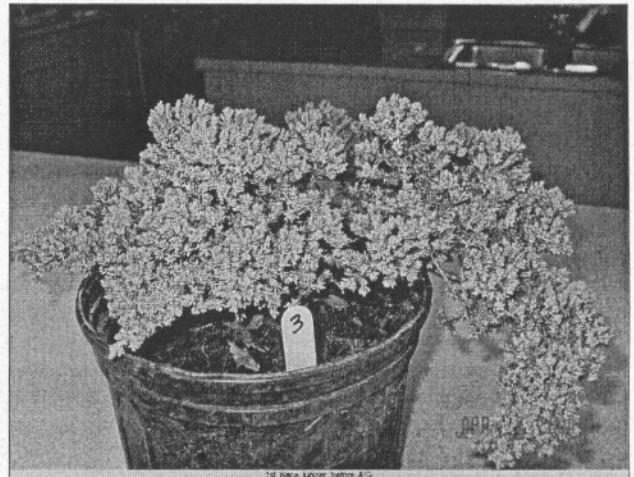
Fertilizing: Don't get anxious and fertilize deciduous trees at this time. Wait until the (June). Otherwise you will have a tree in a pot instead of a developing bonsai. The foliage will grow large internodes long and - well, just don't.

Evergreen trees don't react the same way, and fertilizing them from (April or May) on will keep them happy and flourishing. Of course, newly potted trees should have a waiting period of several weeks before fertilizing. The black pine likes food in frequent amounts to develop strength for future candle removal. Don't be afraid to foliar feed evergreens - they like it! Rape seed cake or a mix of 70% cottonseed meal and 30% bonemeal are excellent fertilizers for all bonsai.

A further word on foliar feeding. On the lower branches of cascades, foliar feeding regularly is a good idea. The strongest growth naturally is at the top, and the lower branches need special encouragement to maintain a good growth pattern.

Spraying and Watering: These are two important chores that are always with you. Don't neglect them if you wish top quality bonsai. Evergreen trees especially like overhead misting or spraying. It helps prevent spider mites and green worm, as well as refreshing the foliage. One caution - if your water is heavily mineralized, consistent overhead mist/spray can leave a residue on the foliage. Doing this procedure only occasionally will probably be OK.

Does your tree have a lopsided look? You didn't **ROTATE** often enough. **Rotate** regularly, and your bonsai will respond to your care with that well-balanced look.



Above: 1st Place Tree from Group Slash - Before and After
Below: 2nd Place Tree



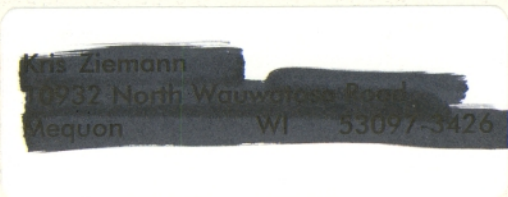
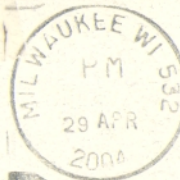
MBS Meetings and Information Line:

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>



Novice Class 2004





P.O. Box 198
Brookfield, WI 53008-0198

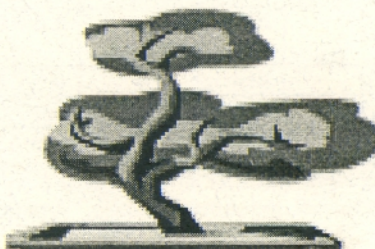
RETURN SERVICE
REQUESTED

Next Meeting of MBS
7PM, Tuesday, May 3
Grace Lutheran Church
27th and Oklahoma

53097+3426 [Barcode]

MBS Board, 2004

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



Toasty Cinnabuns
Dripping warm frosting warms me
Oh crap, stupid floor.

- Dax Schaefer