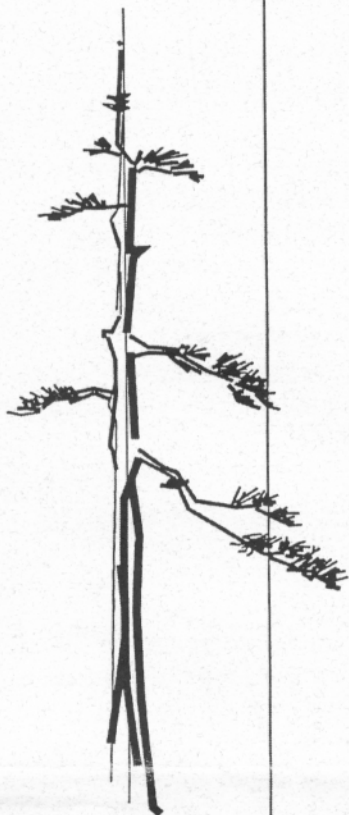


October, 2004

BONSAI NEWS



*Milwaukee
Bonsai Society*

P.O. Box 148
Brookfield, Wisconsin
53208-0148

Information Line
414-299-9229

October Meeting - Origami/Dead Tree Contest/White Elephant Sale

Our October meeting is sure to be interesting, to say the least! Bring in any dead trees that have passed away in the last year. They will be judged by all who attend the "wake". Your former bonsai masterpieces deserve to be in one last show!

Also, bring along any items you want to sell for the White Elephant Sale. Extra pots, plants, or bonsai supplies of any kind are welcome. Also bring along some extra cash! While all this is going on, we will have a demonstration of Origami. Yvonne Szatkowski will be showing us how to do this intriguing art-form. We will have the opportunity to make our own Origami creations with Yvonne's help. Come early to get a good seat. We'll be having a great time!!

Also, please come with ideas of what you would like to see at meetings in 2005. We have already had some excellent suggestions. We want to hear from YOU.

And check your calendars before you come so you can sign up to help at this year's Folk Fair (Nov. 19-21). Buddy Bucks from the Folk Fair will go toward the 2005 Holiday Party.

By Kris Ziemann

November Meeting

Upcoming in November - we'll be having a discussion/question & answer session about annealing copper wire, how to protect your trees in the winter (both tropical and outdoor trees) and the basics of good bonsai soil. A wrap up to a great year at MBS.

Also at our November meeting, you will be able to renew your club membership for 2005 and register for the Holiday Party (December 7 at Meyer's Restaurant 76th and Forest Home

2004 Club Events Calendar

October

Tuesday 5 - Dead Tree Contest & White Elephant Sale / demo on Origami

November

Tuesday 2 - Annealing wire / winter protection / basics of bonsai soil
Friday 19 - Sunday 21 - Folk Fair Exhibit

December

Tuesday 7 - Christmas Party

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

October is the month when we elect new Officers and a Director to the Executive Committee of the Milwaukee Bonsai Society. Although the group is generally called the "Board of Directors, it is in fact, defined in the bylaws of the club as the "Executive Committee"! The new Officers and Director then take office at the December Christmas party.

The Board is made up of five Officers and three Directors. The Officers (President, First & Second Vice Presidents, Treasurer and Secretary) serve a one-year term and are limited to two consecutive terms in any office. This restriction assures the organization that there will be a constant renewal of talent in the officer positions. The Directors are elected to a three-year term on an alternating basis. One Director is elected each year. This way there are always two Directors that have been there at least a year.

The Executive Committee is a group that normally functions outside the public view of the members of the club. The meetings are held once a month and any member of the club is welcome to attend. Although not many regular club members come to the Board meeting, it is a great way to see how your club functions. I invite each of you to attend one of our Board meetings.

Although next years slate of officers has already been selected, and ready to be elected at the October meeting, there is a constant need for volunteers (yes, the Officers and Directors are all volunteers!) to keep our club functioning at a high level. If you have any aspirations to be on the Board, coming to a few meetings is a wonderful way to see how your club functions and to get a feel for what the Officers and Directors do outside of the regular meetings.

Special Book Purchase Offer – Ficus the Exotic Bonsai

All of you who are interested in Ficus. I purchased Jerry Meislik's new book on Ficus - The Exotic Bonsai. I have received a special offer from him. Before November 1 they will be \$35 each (including shipping) or 3 for \$100. After Nov. 1 back to \$42.65 (which is what I paid). I will bring the book to the October meeting so you can look at it. If you want to order a book, please bring a check along to pre-pay.

Kris Ziemann

Advanced Master Class News

Sixteen of our members signed up for the "Master Class." That will allow us to have two classes of eight persons each. One class will be held on a Saturday and one class will be held on a Sunday. We will be having a meeting of all sixteen master class students in August (after Ted Matson is here) to decide who we want as the teacher. Each person who enrolled will receive a letter containing additional information about the class.

Proposed MBS Officers for 2005

Here is the proposed slate of officers for 2005 who will be elected at the October meeting. The bylaws state that the slate must be published in both the September and the October newsletter prior to the election:

President: Kris Ziemann
1st Vice-President: Jean Sher
2nd Vice-President: Darlene Shaginaw
Secretary: Sharon Schmidt
Treasurer: Karen Kleineider
Director-at Large (3 year term): Allen Koszarek

Current Directors:
Erskine Tucker, retires after 2005
Joe Herbert retires after 2006

BUDDY BUCKS - What are they, anyway??

Buddy Bucks are points that you can accumulate when helping out at a function such as State Fair, Asian Moon, Folk Fair etc. Each 3-4 hour session earns you 1 Buddy Buck. Each Buddy Buck counts for \$3 towards the Holiday party in December. Earn 5 Buddy Bucks and your dinner and delightful evening of entertainment are paid for.

Wauwautosa Garden Tour volunteers were:

2 Buddy Bucks
Ken Hahn and Kris Ziemann

And at our first outing at the **Bradley Garden Party** volunteers were:

2 Buddy Bucks
Camrin LaFond, Darlene Shaginaw, Ken Hahn,
Jack Douthitt and Kris Ziemann

After a short delay due to Hurricane Frances, 16 new members attended the **Public Workshop** (part 1) on September 18. More will be attending September 25. Thanks to all the folks who helped at the September 18 Workshop:

Houston Sanders, Jean Sher, Kris Ziemann, Tony Plicka, Ron Fortmann, Tom Kerner, Erskine Tucker, Joe Herbert, Delores Day, Allen Koszarek, Yvonne Szatkowski and Ken Krueger.



Fall Repotting

by Brent Walston

Fall is a good opportunity for repotting. I have been an advocate for fall repotting in mild areas (zone 8 and warmer) for many years. However, there are some pitfalls. In this article the physiological state of the plant and the environmental factors in autumn are discussed so you can decide if fall repotting is for you.

The Advantages of Fall Repotting

There are some really good reasons for fall planting and repotting. The most important is that transpirational stresses are reduced. Fall is a time of falling air temperatures but residual warm soil (earth) temperatures. Deciduous plants will be pretty much done with their leaves so transpirational losses are minimal. Evergreens will still have active leaves, but the activity is reduced due to cooler temperatures and shorter days (lower light intensity).

This means that you can manipulate and prune roots without much fear of throwing the tree into shock. Additionally, fall is a time of massive root activity. Only the top of the tree is going dormant, the roots have a full complement of stored food from a whole season of activity. They will continue to grow as long as daytime temperatures are above about 50F, independently of the light and other conditions. For roots, soil temperature is everything.

Deciduous plants repotted a few weeks before leaf drop will become partly established in the new pot and soil before winter sets in. You need about six to eight weeks of warm daytime temperatures to achieve this for minor root work and repotting. Contrary to popular belief, you should feed your plants 20-20-20 during this period. The nitrogen will not stimulate bud break once the buds have fully set. The roots will use this feed to speed their activity and build reserves for spring.

The Bad News

Now for the bad news, as I unfortunately discovered the hard way. I have been suspicious for some time that much of my failed fall transplants were due to killer freezes and not fungal activity in our mild very wet winters and springs. Now I can say that I am pretty sure that this is the case.

Undisturbed roots that grow in spring and midsummer will achieve a fair amount of cold hardiness due to lignification by fall and winter *if* they remain undisturbed. This is not the case in fall transplanting. Root pruning and repotting activity will stimulate root growth late in the season as pointed out above. These new white fleshy roots are quite fragile and have very little ability to withstand sub freezing temperatures. The degree of hardiness they obtain prior to winter is dependent on several factors.

Factors Determining Root Cold Hardiness

The biggest factor is the genetic trait of the individual species (sometimes cultivar as well). This is a matter of testing to find out how much cold an individual species can tolerate. There is precious little scientific work on the cold hardiness of roots in this juvenile state. Andy Walsh wrote a post about this a couple of years ago. He also wrote an article on freeze damage.

Two species that do have low thresholds for freeze damage to new roots are the less hardy *Cotoneaster* species and Japanese maple, *Acer palmatum*. Both of these have great economic importance to me, especially *Acer palmatum*. It is *A. palmatum* that I have watched very closely.

It is generally accepted that many woody species will sustain freeze damage to new roots below 20F (soil temperature). Above 28F most species, even a lot of tropicals will suffer little root damage. A number of important species will suffer damage to new roots between 20F and 28F Andy cited studies that showed some *Cotoneaster* species were damaged in the mid 20's.

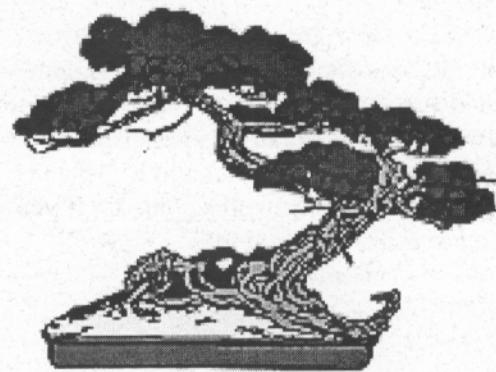
The Evidence

Several years ago, I did a lot of shifting of seedling *A. palmatum* into 2 3/4 inch pots from seedling flats, hoping that we would have a mild winter since I didn't have room to protect them from substantial cold weather. Of course we had the coldest winter in a decade, so I learned some valuable lessons. The newly potted seedlings grew very well in the fall. No top growth (they were fertilized), but substantial root growth nearly filling out the containers before Christmas. The roots were nice white succulent roots as new roots should be. I checked the roots each week during the winter to

see how they were progressing. We had very heavy early winter rains, no root rot, no signs of damage. Then we had an arctic express. Temperatures fell to around 16F for four nights running. About two weeks later the results were in, massive root damage.

Fortunately, I didn't use all the seedlings but left several flats undisturbed. These were from the very same seedling batch. In one case there was half a flat left, the others were potted up. The seedling flats were left out in the open with no protection. Virtually all survived and were potted in early spring with a success rate of about 90%. The roots were all brown and fully lignified at the time of transplant, no root or stem damage from the cold whatsoever.

The potted seedlings suffered both root and stem damage. The stem damage didn't become apparent until later in the spring when the bark became mushy. Some of these seedlings survived, but I lost about 80% of them. There were a few potted seedlings in the shade house which stays about 2 degrees warmer due to the reduced air circulation. These did a little better than the potted seedlings left out in the open.



There were similar losses of other species. I lost the entire new crop of *Corokia cotoneaster*, the old plants were unaffected, only the newly repotted ones froze. Nearly the same for *Sophora tetraptera* 'Nana', 90% loss for newly repotted plants in the open, 50% loss for those under shade cloth, 0% loss for older plants. Apples, *Malus* species were unaffected, and did even better than the previous year, same for *Chaenomeles*. Both Scots and Black

pine (*Pinus sylvestris*, *P. thunbergii*) totally unaffected. In fact they grew better than ever that spring (probably due to improved soil mix), completely filling out their pots by mid spring. There were practically no losses to older plants in the nursery, even in exposed 2 3/4 pots, confirming my general rule of thumb that most temperate climate woody plants can survive temperatures down to 15F in containers without protection. The normal percentages survived except for *Prunus mume*, which suffered heavy losses of even older plants. The losses here appeared to be of fungal origin.

And finally

The conclusion? I still recommend fall planting, transplanting, repotting, and minor root pruning, but with the following cautions. For most woody temperate species:

It should be done in zone 8 and higher or in other areas where the winter storage temperature can be kept above 28F. In zone 8 some species will suffer in an abnormally cold winter and should be protected in the event of sub 20F temperatures. In zone 8 and higher, ground planting should be perfectly safe for recommended species. The difference of only a few degrees marks the difference between survival and death for some species

Brent Walston is the owner of *Evergreen Gardenworks*, a nursery dedicated to growing traditional, rare and unusual species of plants for use as bonsai. They have a great website at www.evergreengardenworks.com. Or if you wish to request a catalog, send to:
 Evergreen Gardenworks
 PO Box 537
 Kelseyville CA 95451



Tony Plicka
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 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>

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October Bonsai Tips

By Houston Sanders

Although our September weather has helped me to remain in denial, the one thing that we can count on here in Wisconsin is the arrival of cold weather. And soon. Eventually, we are going to have to start some fall activities, such as taking in tropical trees and getting the hardy ones ready for winter.

You may notice that the soil of your trees stays damp longer, even during the hot days. Since growth has slowed and days are shorter, your trees will need less water during the fall, even while their leaves are still green. But it is still important to walk thru your growing area and check everything each day – because every tree is unique and they don't all cut down their water use at the same rate. I have seen it suggested that better fall color results from giving a tree good sunlight with less water during the fall. The color occurs when chlorophyll breaks down in the leaves, removing the green color and making the secondary colors visible. Seems like a nice theory, but my experience doesn't support it much. For me, some trees have good color while some don't, and the species of tree is the main factor determining this. But I keep experimenting! Anyone who has found the secret of good fall color is very welcome to write an article to tell the rest of us!

For well-developed hardy bonsai, it will probably be necessary to perform some fall maintenance after the leaves fall. My maples need to have their fine branches wired and slightly trimmed. This keeps the small branches looking interesting, with short curving shapes. If you leave this task until spring, I have found that it is too late to do any wiring. I break off many, many of the new buds when wiring in spring, and the wire cuts into the branches within a few days of putting it on. So do it in FALL! This also applies to many other species.

Pines need to have yellow needles removed, and it is also appropriate to remove all needles pointing down from the bottom of the branches on developing trees (as long as you are sure which side is going to be the bottom!). For ponderosa pines, there was a recommendation in the ABS Journal a few years back for inducing budding. In fall,

remove the bud at the tip of the branch and all needles more than one year old. This can only be done on well established trees, and only once every few years. It seemed to work well on my ponderosa pine last year.

There are a few trees that respond well to fall repotting, but unless you are pretty sure about what you are doing, wait until spring. (See the article on fall repotting).

After the leaves fall, it is helpful to use a dormant oil spray. Dormant oil is a very inexpensive and non-toxic weapon against insects that lay eggs in the bark of trees. The oil covers the insect larvae or eggs, doesn't let in air, and the evil insects are defeated. I spray it on everything in the fall.

So when do you bring the indoor trees inside? The easy answer is "Now". My tropicals are usually protected in a greenhouse by mid-September, but this year's warmth allowed me to delay. Tropicals do not like temperatures below 50°F, so when the nighttime low starts getting below that temperature regularly they need protection. At first, all the tropicals and sub-tropicals go inside the greenhouse, while the hardy trees stay out. A small electric heater is available for emergency duty in the greenhouse in case of unseasonable cold. This allows the trees a transition period in which the sunlight *gradually* decreases before the sunlight is reduced even further as the trees go into the house. Even in the brightest window, there is less than 1/3 of the sunlight of an outdoor location. The tropicals go inside the house after 2-3 weeks in the greenhouse, while the subtropicals stay out until November to get their "winter". It is good to spray the trees with insecticide in the greenhouse a day or two before bringing them in.

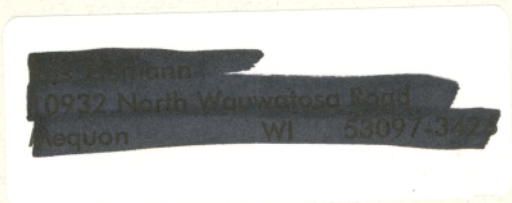
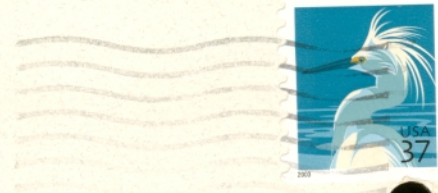
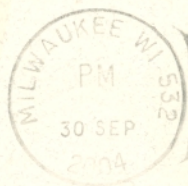


The following form is provided for listing your ideas for club presentations and activities in 2005. Please think about what you would like to see or do and submit your ideas to Kris Ziemann or a board member at the October meeting.

Ideas for 2004 presentations

Meeting Presentation Topics or Speakers

Workshop Ideas



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

RETURN SERVICE
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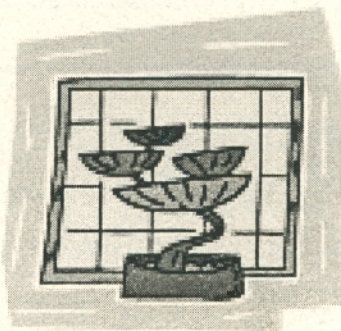
Next Meeting of MBS
7PM, Tuesday, October 5
Grace Lutheran Church
27th and Oklahoma

53097+3426



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



Bonsai on display
Admiring crowds passing by
Beauty shared with all
- Joe Nemeč