

June 2007

# Bonsai News

## JUNE MEETING – Raft Planting and Mahone Raffle

The MBS June meeting will be a Raft Planting Demonstration by Joe Herbert. If you have a Raft style bonsai please bring it along to display.

We will also hold a special benefit raffle for the Mahone Middle School Bonsai Club:

HERE IS YOUR CHANCE TO HELP BUDDING BONSAI STARS!! As you may know, MBS is the sponsor of the Mahone Middle School Bonsai Club. As such, at our June 5 meeting we will be holding a raffle for their benefit. There are two ways you could help...

1) Bring items to put in the raffle. Something bonsai related... or something you know nobody could pass up.

2) Bring money to buy raffle tickets to take advantage of the great deals!

EASY, right? See you at the raffle tables!

## Jim Doyle workshops

Sign up ASAP for a workshop with Visiting Artist Jim Doyle. Most likely, Jim will be our "master" in 2008 so here's a good chance for you to get a sneak peak of what's to come!!

### Jim Doyle Workshop Times:

Saturday AM (June 30)  
Literati Workshop (approx \$85)  
(workshop material will be a Shimpaku Juniper in 3-gal pot)

Saturday PM (July 1)  
Bring Your Own Tree (\$40)

Sun AM and PM (July 1)  
BYO TREE \$40 (per session)

Such an inexpensive chance to work with Jim!! Sign up right away to make sure you get your spot. The literati is almost full (so hurry to sign up). Call or email Scott Hurula (hankengai2@aol.com or 414.759.3274).

## 2007 Display Schedule

**June** - Raft style bonsai

**July** - Bunjin (literati) style bonsai

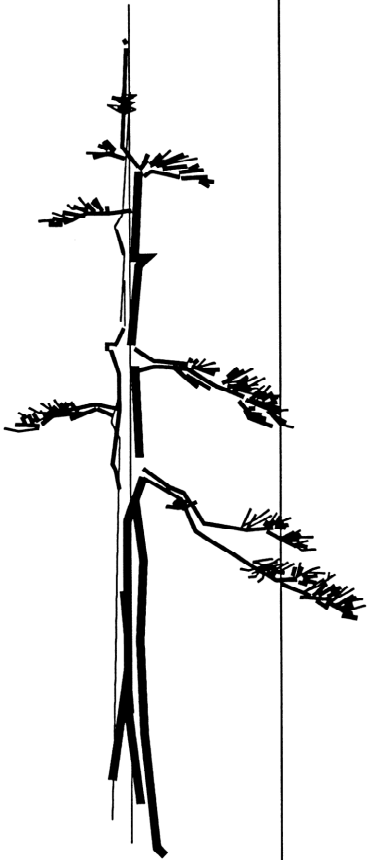
**August** - Ficus bonsai, any species

**September** - no display, club show

**October** - no display- masterclass "finale" display

**November** - Suiseki

**December** - no display, Christmas party



*Milwaukee  
Bonsai Society*

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

*Information Line  
414-299-9229*

## NEXT MEETING

June 5, 7 PM  
Grace Lutheran  
Church

## President's Message

By Jean Sher

The Spring bonsai season is upon us. Leaves are popping and as they appear we watch in awe as our trees begin another journey, another year. This little miracle repeats itself day after day and we tend our trees like cautious parents with one eye on the weather and the other on frost warnings. It is the time to inspect benches and position trees for changing sun, shade and water requirements. As if that isn't enough to keep track of, we need to think of adding wire, removing wire and signing up for summer workshops.

Speaking of summer workshops... Jim Doyle will be with us June 30-July 1 for several workshops and will do a demonstration at the July 3 MBS meeting. Marty Schmalenberg will be joining us in August for workshops (Kingsville Boxwood (variety Sanders) in 2 gallon pot) and will join us for the August 7 MBS meeting.

There is information about all this elsewhere in the news letter, take a moment and check out the opportunities.

The MBS June CLUB SHOW will be held in SEPTEMBER this year for several reasons. September offers us a chance to show our trees in a different stage of splendor.

As well the timing for the JUNE MBS meeting is perfect for a Demo on Raft Plantings by our own Joe Herbert. If you have a Raft style bonsai please bring it to display that night.

We will also hold a special benefit raffle for the Mahone Middle School Bonsai Club at the June meeting. These young bonsai artists would like to attend a bonsai conference. They hoped to go to the Gingko Exhibition in Belgium but due to the expense that goal has been exchanged for other dreams...California, Indianapolis are both considerations. This raffle has been proposed to help them extend their horizons and bonsai experience. I want to personally thank everyone who has supported the Mahone Bonsai Club these past two years through volunteer help and donations of trees, tools, books, wire, soil, cash, and

encouragement. I never imagined when this group began what an outpouring of interest and support we would receive from all of you. Often we hear about silent heroes...YOU are the heroes. Thank you Milwaukee Bonsai Society for your support and friendship.

I look forward to seeing everyone in June for an exciting time Rafting and Raffling.

Enjoy your trees,

*Jean*



### **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>

**JIM DOYLE: Guest Artist for MBS**  
Workshops and Meeting June 30- July 3

*By Jean Sher*

Profile: Jim Doyle

In 1973, with a B.S. degree in horticulture from Delaware Valley College of Science and Agriculture, Jim started Nature's Way Nursery and developed an early interest in Asian culture and plants. By 1980, through the influence of Chase Rosade, bonsai passed from being a hobby to a business/life-style. Jim attends many symposia, teaches year round to both adults and children at his studio and travels extensively.

After a brief visit to Japan, Jim started a quest for new information. He was involved in founding the Susquehanna Bonsai Club, boasting membership of over 100, and co-chaired the 1992 ABS Convention in Hershey. He has written articles for national publication and consulted regionally in Japanese garden design.

Today, along with his teaching, Jim continues to import bonsai, pots, tools and related garden items. Other interests include conifers, Japanese maples, writing haiku, volleyball, fishing and spending time with his wife Mary Kay and children Sarah and Max. Jim's favorite tree is, of course, the one he is working on.

As time goes by, Jim continues to enjoy the benefits of knowledge through bonsai. He has discovered a caring and understanding friendship with plants and with people.

Don't miss this chance to work with a nationally known bonsai artist. See the workshop schedule included in this newsletter.

**BUDDY BUCKS - What are they, anyway??**

Buddy Bucks are points that you can accumulate when helping out at a function such as State Fair, Public workshops, 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.

**2007 MBS Schedule**

**JUNE**

June 5 - Club meeting - CREATING A RAFT PLANTING  
June 23-24 Master's classes  
June 30- JIM DOYLE WORKSHOP

**JULY**

July 3 - Club meeting-JIM DOYLE, GUEST BONSAI ARTIST

**AUGUST**

August 2 - 12 - Wisconsin State Fair Bonsai Shows  
August 4- MARTY SCHMALENBERG WORKSHOP  
August 7 - Club meeting-MARTY SCHMALENBERG, GUEST BONSAI ARTIST

**SEPTEMBER**

September 4 - Club meeting- MBS CLUB SHOW  
September 15 - Public workshop 9AM-Noon  
September 29-30 Master's classes

**OCTOBER**

October 2 - Club meeting - Master's CLASS FINALE

**NOVEMBER**

November 6 -Club Meeting- WHITE ELEPHANT AUCTION

**DECEMBER**

December 4 - Holiday Party NO MEETING

Many thanks to all who worked at November's FOLK FAIR 2006.

**1 Buddy Buck:** Elli Wilder, Jerry Niemiec, Gen Molling, Susan Coleman, Pat Basich, Kris Ziemann, Laura Larrabee, Yvonne Szatkowski, Steve Carini, Delores, Day, Marilyn McKnight, Allen Kosarek, Jorge Rossette, Rocio Saybe

**3 Buddy Bucks:** Jack Douthitt, Tony Plicka, John Moore

**5 Buddy Bucks:** Jean Sher

NOVICE CLASSES:

**1 Buddy Buck:** Leo Schordje

**2 Buddy Bucks:** Delores Day, Erskine Tucker, Joe Herbert

**3 Buddy Bucks:** Allen Koszarek

**4 Buddy Bucks:** Jean Sher, Kris Ziemann

## Marty Schmalenberg, August 7 Guest Artist

By Michelle Zimmer

In the throes of the two week long State Fair celebration, we will have the privilege of entertaining Marty Schmalenberg, the director of Asian studies at Blair Academy, New Jersey. Marty has been involved in bonsai and Suiseki for 30 years and has been designing Japanese and Chinese Gardens for the last 20 years.

He has been the featured artist at conventions and has received many awards for bonsai design. In addition, he is a world traveler and a musical playwright.

Marty will offer a Saturday morning workshop which includes material on August 4th and is available for individual private or group classes on the 5th, 6th, and 7th prior to his club presentation on the 7th. If you would like more information, or KNOW that you want to reserve some time, please contact Scott Hurula, phone 414.759.3274 or e-mail at [hankengai2@aol.com](mailto:hankengai2@aol.com) to reserve your time. Sign us soon, this is a first come, first serve opportunity!

### MBS Classy-fied Ads

#### WANTED

Talented volunteer paid-up member to photograph (digital or otherwise) significant events and ordinary monthly meetings for Milwaukee Bonsai Society. Results will be stored in archives and included on website and in newsletters. Pay is non-existent and rewards are plentiful: the gratitude of each club member for a job well done. Contact President Jean Sher or any Board member.

#### FOR SALE

Sharp, handy, easy-to-use, comfortable snips. Not the bonsai tool you'll cherish for years to come and pass on to your children, but helpful nonetheless. Bring \$8 (cash or check - no credit cards) to the next meetings while the snips are still available.

#### MISSING

Books and magazines from our MBS library. Check your coffee table, kitchen table, nightstand, tool box, glove compartment, backpack and desk for these publications and return at the very next meeting so another member can also benefit. See Laura or Josh, or just slip it past either of them unnoticed if you've borrowed that book for a couple of years or so.

#### WANTED

Bonsai-related items for the very special Mahone Bonsai Club benefit raffle: a tree with potential but no longer of interest to you, a book you purchased but already have, a pot with no tree to grow into it. Well, you get the idea. Bring that treasure to the June meeting and see Michelle Z or anyone on the Board.

## TREESTUMP's BONSAI ADVICE

By Joe Herbert

Do you need some advice on Bonsai?

Please be as specific as possible with your questions to increase the chances of getting a correct answer. All answers are researched either in text, from experienced artists and masters, or just plain guessed at. Names won't be printed unless asked to protect your privacy. Send your question to [Tree.Stump@yahoo.com](mailto:Tree.Stump@yahoo.com).

Q. Why are some stones called suiseki, some called scholar rocks and others called viewing stones? G.

A. Suiseki are uncut on the bottom and are totally untouched by man except for rubbing. These are the most valuable and treasured. A nomad prince once loved his small mountain stone so much that he hired five men to transport and protect the stone as they followed him on his travels. A viewing stone is cut, and sometimes sliced thinly. Although viewing stones can look very nice they don't have as much value because almost any rock has something interesting on it, or in it that can be cut off and used. Scholar rocks are usually very lacy rocks with many holes in them formed by river currents. These can be either suiseki or viewing stones. The most cherished stones of all have wonderful patinas that are caused by natural elements and by daily rubbing with a cotton cloth and forehead oil.

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# Fertilization for Bonsai

By Houston Sanders

Fertilization ranks right up there with soil mixes as one of the magical mysteries of bonsai. Many people want you to believe that if you use the right fertilizer (the one they are selling!), your trees will suddenly rival those of the Japanese masters. Unfortunately, that is a crock of fertilizer. In this, just like everything else related to bonsai, there is no magic and no shortcuts. Fertilizing is one more thing you need to do to keep your tree healthy - that's about it. And fertilization can't make your tree healthy if it is not getting proper sunlight, water, and drainage. On the bright side, when you do get all these things right, your trees may indeed grow like magic.

Like the soil mix, there is a pretty wide range of acceptable conditions for fertilization, and you don't have to get it perfect to keep your tree alive and well. For most of us, fertilizing isn't going to make or break our trees. There are a lot of details that are important to master bonsai growers to keep leaves small and optimize flowering, etc. My intent in this article is to provide a few basic facts. For those interested in learning about the subject in more detail, I suggest reading Brent Walston's article at his website, [www.Evergreengardenworks.com](http://www.Evergreengardenworks.com).

## What are those numbers on the box?

The main components of any good fertilizer are nitrogen (N), phosphorus (P) and potassium (K). The fertilizer will have a three number description (called the NPK) that lists the relative amounts of each of these components - for example, 20-20-20. These numbers are the percent of each component in the dry fertilizer. It is important to know that the actual numbers are not as significant as the ratio between the three components. When diluted with water to apply to your bonsai, 20-20-20 is pretty much the same as 10-10-10 (it just takes twice as much water to dilute it). Nitrogen is a key ingredient in leaves and green stems. So most books recommend that you use higher Nitrogen fertilizers in the spring, when new growth is fastest, while switching to lower nitrogen formulas in the fall when growth is slower.

## Trace Elements

There are other components in fertilizer that plants need in small amounts, such as iron and magnesium. Usually these are referred to as Trace Elements. For the most part, *don't worry* about these. One fertilizer may have different trace elements than the next, so I try to use different brands to make sure everything is provided. But it isn't too critical.

## Why Fertilization is Needed for Bonsai

For a full-sized tree, there is usually plenty of root space and plenty of soil in which the tree can find all the nutrients it needs. But a bonsai needs a bit of help. Besides the limited root space of a small pot, a bonsai usually grows in a soil mix that is formulated for extra drainage, and tends to have a lower level of nutrients than your average dirt. So we fertilize.

## Types of Fertilizer

The typical fertilizers sold at garden centers are chemical fertilizers. These contain nutrients in the form that trees can immediately absorb. So you apply them once, and the tree gets a single dose at a single time. Other fertilizers are slow-release. They contain little balls of plastic that slowly release chemical fertilizers. This provides feeding at a lower dose over an increased time. Another way to accomplish the same extended feeding is to use organic fertilizer. The term "organic" means that the fertilizers are in a more complex chemical form that is not immediately soluble in water and available to the tree. Organic fertilizers break down slowly to release nutrients over an extended time. The key difference from slow-release chemicals is that organics are broken down by microorganisms, and these are usually good for your tree.

## So what do you use?

Based on my own experience, limited as it may be, I recommend:

1. Use both organic \* and inorganic fertilizers. I use a few chunks of organic fertilizer in the soil of each tree, along with a feeding of chemical fertilizer every 2 to 3 weeks.



Just use the right fertilizer and your tree will look like this...  
(in a hundred years)

- I have always used the chemical fertilizer at about half the recommended strength. Since we have already discussed how fertilizer isn't that big a deal, it is never worthwhile to risk killing your tree with too high a concentration of fertilizer. Especially if combined with an organic fertilizer, chemical fertilizer is needed only in moderate amounts.
- Throughout the growing season, May-October, alternate between the higher nitrogen fertilizer (such as 20-20-20) and a low nitrogen fertilizer (for example I use a "flowering" plant fertilizer with 10-52-10). I have always switched to the low nitrogen formula as fall approaches, discontinuing the high nitrogen after August.

Mr. Walston in the article referenced above, reports that you can use higher nitrogen fertilizers all year and use chemical fertilizers at full strength. While his word carries a lot more weight than mine, I am not anxious to experiment with any major changes, and I can only recommend what works for me. The key point is to find something that works for you.

\*Organic fertilizers are sold for bonsai use in little cylindrical chunks. If you have only a few trees, you can buy these from a vendor and save yourself a lot of trouble. But those of us with too many trees may be interested in making organic fertilizer. A decent formula is:

**DRY INGREDIENTS:**

- 3 parts cottonseed meal
- 2 parts agricultural lime
- 1 part bloodmeal,
- 1 part bonemeal

**LIQUID INGREDIENTS:**

Peter's 20-20-20 mixed with water according to directions

**OPTIONAL INGREDIENTS:**

- Superthrive
- Sevin Insecticide
- Fish emulsion

Mix dry ingredients thoroughly, then add in the liquid fertilizers to bring the mix to a paste-like consistency. Add in some Sevin insecticide and Superthrive if desired.

Spoon onto waxpaper to dry in the sun, and cut into squares when nearly dry, or use a scoop to form into balls.



Nursery Crawl

Bring your own tree meeting with Ted Matson







The Four Seasons Bonsai Club Of Michigan's

# Annual Bonsai Show

July 27th, 28th, and 29th

At Telly's Greenhouse

On John R Road, just north of 16 Mile Road in Troy, MI

Show is open to the public 9am to 8pm each day

Some of the many activities scheduled for the show this year include:

July 27th	6 pm	Bonsai Demonstration Admission is Free
July 28th	11 am	Introduction to Bonsai Workshop*
July 28th	2 pm	Bonsai Demonstration Admission is Free
July 28th	5 pm	William Valavanis Work- shop*
July 29th	10 am	William Valavanis Slide- show and Lecture*
July 29th	12 pm	William Valavanis "Bring Your Own Bonsai" Work- shop.*
July 29th	3 pm	Introduction to Bonsai Workshop*

\*Admissions to Workshops are limited to a small number of participants to assure quality instruction. Reserve your spot by pre-registering at [www.fourseasonsbonsai.org](http://www.fourseasonsbonsai.org)



This years annual club show promises to be one of our best, with more workshops, educational programs, and vendors than we have had in quite awhile.

This year we have also decided to invite a world renowned bonsai artist to judge our show and to personally lead two workshops as well as a Lecture and Slideshow on traditional bonsai. William N. Valavanis is the proprietor of the International Bonsai Arboretum in Rochester, New York and the publisher of the International Bonsai magazine. He will also be giving advice and critiques of bonsai at the show this year. His presence will certainly make this years show an exciting and educational one!

We have also included in this years agenda two "Introduction to Bonsai Workshops" which were especially designed with the beginner in mind. Those who are interested in the art of bonsai are invited to participate in these workshops where they will receive a tree, a pot, the soil, and the wire necessary to create their very own bonsai right there under the expert instruction of some of our club members. All ages are welcome.

Two of our club masters will also be giving bonsai demonstrations that are free and open to the public during the show. These demonstrations are entertaining and educational for enthusiasts of all levels.

Add raffles, vendors from around the country selling bonsai related goods, stock, and pots, the exhibition of our club member's bonsai, and a gathering of bonsai lovers all in the wonderful setting of Telly's greenhouse and we are sure you will agree that this is one show you won't want to miss!

See you there!

For more information on our annual club show, directions, maps, and pre-registration information please visit our website at [www.fourseasonsbonsai.org](http://www.fourseasonsbonsai.org) or email our Show Chairperson, Will Heath at [will@artofbonsai.org](mailto:will@artofbonsai.org)



P.O. Box 198  
Brookfield, WI 53008-0198  
RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Next Meeting of MBS  
7PM, Tuesday, June 5  
Grace Lutheran Church  
3030 W. Oklahoma

## MEET THE 2007 OFFICERS

The MBS Officers for 2007 are:

President	Jean Sher
First VP	Scott Hurula
Second VP	Gregg Wein
Secretary	Susan Coleman
Treasurer	Mary Turner
Director	Allen Koszarek
Director	John Moore
Director	Michelle Zimmer
Past Pres.	Kris Ziemann

### Other Club Functions:

Houston Sanders – Newsletter Editor  
Pam Woythal – Webmaster  
Josh Rabeth – Librarian  
Jean Sher - Distribution / Telephone  
response  
Mary Turner - Membership Chairperson

*Dew evaporates  
And all our world  
Is dew...  
So dear,  
So fresh,  
So fleeting*

- Issa

(Stolen from  
Clippings – newsletter of the  
Potomac Bonsai Association)

