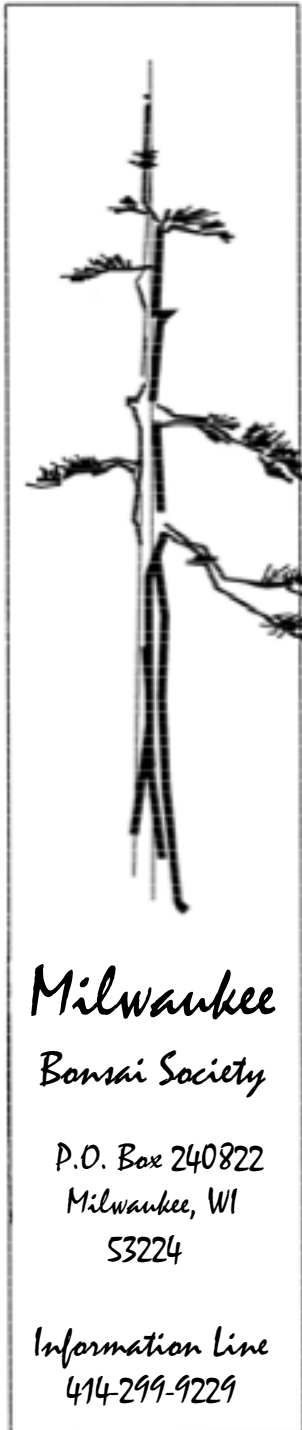


February 2011

# Bonsai News



## MARCH Club Meeting

Join us to welcome guest artist Tom Longfellow. Tom was here last year styling a very large hemlock. It's now time to repot that hemlock. This will be exciting for those who have never seen a repot of a large tree.

Time permitting we will have a tour around the Boerner facility.

Also, a short discussion on preparing for the Silhouette Show in March.

Come and enjoy our new venue at Boerner!

**PLEASE BRING  
HEMLOCKS AND YEW  
FOR DISPLAY! See page 4**

Article on Tom Longfellow  
page 4

## 2011 Events

### March

**Mar 1 - CLUB MEETING**  
Tom Longfellow, guest artist  
hemlock repot

**Mar 19-20** Silhouette Exhibit  
at Boerner Sat 8-1, Sun 8-4

**Mar 19** Novice class #1 9-12

**Mar 20 (12:00-4:00)**

\*\*1) Root over rock workshop  
with Houston S  
2) Repotting workshop

### April

**April 2-3** Ted Matson classes

**April 5 - CLUB MEETING**  
Ted Matson, guest artist  
Ginkgos

### Apr 9

1) Novice Class #2 9-12  
2) Repotting workshop 12-4

**Apr 30 - Novice Class #3 9-12**

To see the year's events go to:  
[www.milwaukeebonsai.org](http://www.milwaukeebonsai.org)

click on **What's New**

\*\* see article p5

**NEXT MEETING**  
March 1 - 7 pm  
Boerner Botanical Gardens

# President's Message

## "Challenge Yourself"

In last month's president's message we talked about where we are going with our organization, our vision and goals. Today is all about you. Now the snow has melted (wrote this part earlier this month) it's time to get going again with your life and your bonsai endeavors. It's a fair bet that you've spent some time over the last few weeks mulling over the things you want to do better. You may have even made some plans and resolutions. Setting yourself goals of any kind can feel scary, with thoughts of both failure and success able to unsettle your mind. But remember, it simply means clearly stating that you are aiming to achieve something you deeply desire. Although goal setting is quite a complex subject, the basic premise is simple. Goal setting is a process that allows you to achieve what you want out of life through planning how you are going to get it.

Let's say I want to be better at getting my trees to thrive (and I do) a good first step would be to attend the upcoming repotting workshop, discover more about fertilizing, join the novice class or find a buddy. Setting goals is just the beginning of the process. Without the planning to achieve the goal and setting of baby steps for each step of the way with a timeframe attached, most goals will hit the skids. Writing down the steps and attaching timeframes is a huge help in achieving goals. Since life has a way of happening despite our best plans, we have to build in some flexibility as well.

So here's the deal.....I'm going to challenge each of you to set at least one bonsai goal for 2011, brainstorm ways to accomplish these goals and then outline a plan. Have that plan include several of the MBS class and workshop offerings. In addition to setting a goal, I encourage you to make it two part goal with the second part being a s-t-r-e-t-c-h goal....perhaps you're going to design a minimum of 3 trees and at least 1 landscape and because you have trouble with landscapes. Challenge yourself to design a landscape to submit to a (gulp!) bonsai show. Challenge yourself to design someone else's tree at a public workshop. And then do it.

Stretch goals are meant to take us out of our comfort zones. Their job is to push us beyond what we normally do so that we find out what we're capable of rather than what we "think" we can do. I believe you'll be pleasantly

surprised. I know I often am when I reach for a stretch goal. Even if I don't succeed at the specified task, I've succeeded just because I gave it a shot and I got out of my comfort zone!  
*-Pam*



## March Silhouette Show

The Milwaukee Bonsai Society will exhibit deciduous trees in their dormant or winter phase in the Atrium of at Boerner Botanical Gardens:

Saturday March 19 from 8am to 1pm  
and Sunday March 20 from 8am to 4pm

An exhibition of this type is known in bonsai as a "silhouette show". At this time of the year deciduous trees are leafless and reveal their skeleton and highlight the branch structure. The exhibition will be a formal display of MBS members trees using backdrops, tablecovers and skirts. Tree stands are required while accessories such as accent plants or scrolls are optional.

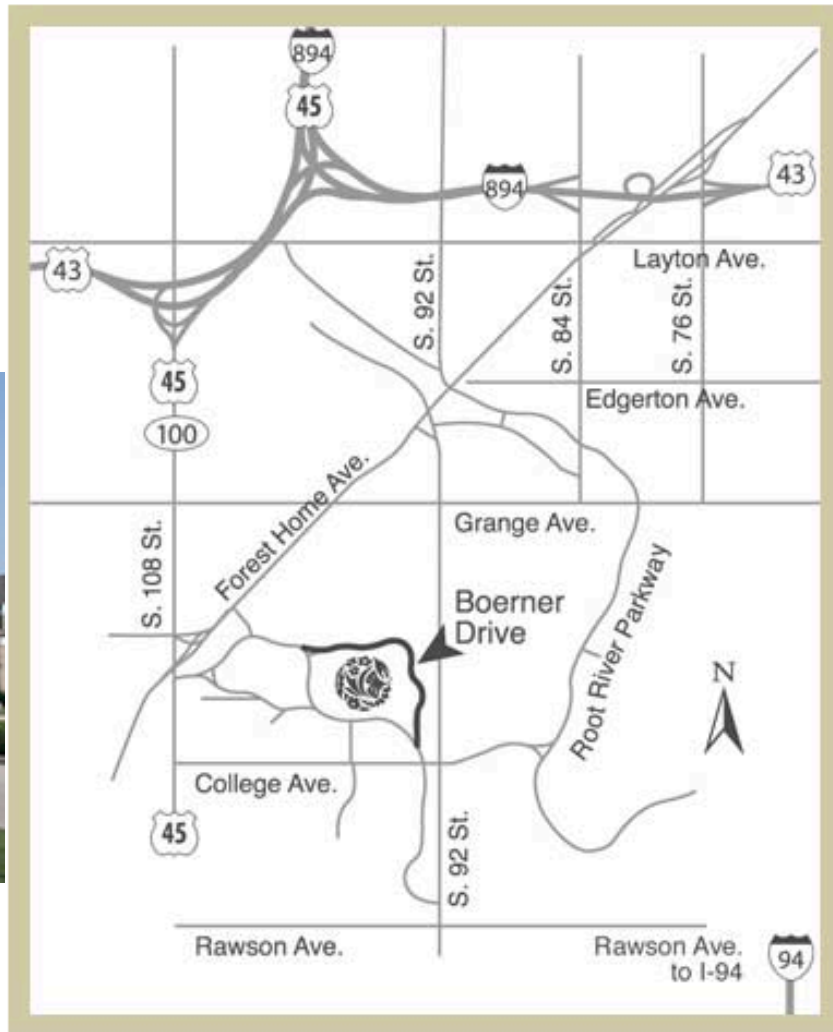
A short discussion of how to prepare your tree for a silhouette display will take place at the March club meeting.

# BOERNER BOTANICAL GARDENS

9400 Boerner Drive  
Hales Corners, WI 53130

**REMEMBER:**

**OUR MEETINGS ARE NOW AT  
BOERNER BOTANICAL GARDENS**



## **Hear ye, hear ye! The 2011 Novice class is now forming.**

This is a wonderful follow-up to the public workshop. And, if you have never participated in a novice class, it offers wonderful instruction, information and hands-on experiences. This year's Novice classes will be held:

**PLEASE NOTE ERROR IN PREVIOUS NEWSLETTER\*\*** (~~Saturday March 27~~)

**Saturday March 19 (CORRECTED)** at Boerner Botanical Gardens 9:00-12:00

Saturday April 9 at Boerner Botanical Gardens 9:00-12:00

Saturday April 30 at Boerner Botanical Gardens 9:00-12:00

Saturday May 14 at Minor's Garden Center

The first two classes are classroom style. You will be working out of a workbook - extensive information about styles of trees, pots, tools, pruning, soils, fertilizing and much, much more to continue your bonsai training! Trees will be brought in for Session 3 for you to style. Session 4 finds us at a local nursery searching for potential bonsai in the morning. After lunch, we get together to work on the "treasures" we found during our "nursery crawl". It's an exciting way to continue your bonsai experience, and all for \$80. Please contact Kris Z (262-512-1228) or [hagr8d@mac.com](mailto:hagr8d@mac.com)



TOM LONGFELLOW

Tom has been working with bonsai for over fifteen years. While enjoying all manner of potential material, Tom really enjoys working with conifers and collected trees. With a career as a technical project manager for many years, Tom is currently completing his horticulture degree in landscape design to further his knowledge and work full time with plants instead of computers.

Tom got his start in bonsai studying with Ivan Watters at Yasakunai Bonsai Nursery. He eventually became an instructor and started teaching at the nursery. Tom is a member of Sosunu Nakamura's Chicago-based study group and has studied with Walter Pall. He continues to work with Ivan Watters at the Chicago Botanic Garden when his schedule permits.

Currently Tom provides one-on-one instruction and winter care services for clients. He has served as a judge for bonsai shows in the Illinois/Wisconsin area and has enjoyed being a long time contributor at the Wisconsin State Fair for the Milwaukee Bonsai Society.

Tom's spouse Cheryl started his interest in gardening and horticulture. The couple insist on an organic approach to gardening and Tom applies this approach to his bonsai as well. They maintain a variety of native and perennial gardens and seem to be winning their struggle with garlic mustard and buckthorn.

When not working with plants, Tom plays guitar for the band Against the Grain, works on ad-hoc design and layout projects and helps people with computer issues.

## Call for Display of Your Hemlocks, Yews and Spruces

By Pam Woythal

The MBS Program committee has put together quite a plan for us this year. When we have an artist working on a specific tree we are going to ask members to bring in their examples. So for our first guest artist let's bring in some *Tsuga* species commonly known as Hemlocks which feature flattened, usually linear leaves similar to the leaves of the more common Yews. And since they are like Yews let's bring in some Yews or *Taxus* family, that consists of evergreen plants with small needles, colorful bark, excellent survivability under pot culture, good response to wiring, and a durable wood suitable for jin and shari. Closely related would be spruces, *Picea* species which have a challenging reputation as bonsai (my own experience included).

So let's see your trees!

### WHAT ARE BONSAI BUCKS?

Bonsai 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 Bonsai Buck. Each BB counts for \$3 towards the **Awards Banquet** in December. Earn 6 Bonsai Bucks and your dinner and delightful evening of entertainment are paid for. Anyone earning more than 6 BB will receive 1 ticket for each BB to be used is a special drawing the evening of the Awards Banquet.

Earn ONE BONSAI BUCK for each original article you submit to be published in the newsletter. Please email your article to: [hagr8d@mac.com](mailto:hagr8d@mac.com)

Bonsai Buck recipients thus far:

Open Workshop 11/9

1 BB

Joe N, Pam W and Kris Z

Folk Fair 2010

1BB

Pat B, Steve Ca, Tom F, Gen M, Jerry N, Rob P, Jorge R, Rocío S, Rebecca S, Pam W and Kris Z

2BB

Steve Co, Susan L, John M, Tony P, Greg P and Anna S

## Root-Over-Rock Workshop

On Sunday, March 20, the club will be sponsoring a root-over-rock workshop. The workshop will be held at Boerner, starting at 1PM and lasting until everyone is done. This is a different kind of workshop than we usually hold - it is not about the great raw material that you will get, but instead will be about learning the root-over-rock technique. As such, the workshop is free, but there will be a small materials fee (up to \$10 per tree, depending on what you materials you need).

If you were fortunate enough to see my spectacular demonstration last year, you may already be familiar with the fabulous, world-famous, patented, Houston root-over-rock pantyhose technique. If you have not seen it, you are in for a special treat...

To summarize: You simply get yourself a young 2-3 year old starter bonsai tree, a nice interesting-textured rock, and some old pantyhose. Position the tree on the rock, spread out the roots over the rock, and tie everything in place with strips of pantyhose. Then you cover the roots with a layer of soil held in place by pantyhose, and place your new rock planting in a generously proportioned growing container. You let it all grow for at least a few months, then begin wiring. After a year or two, the roots thicken and the pantyhose rot away or can be cut off. And you have yourself a root-over-rock bonsai! This technique works best with small to medium sized rocks, but I have done a monster or two.

Some of the best species are: Ficus, Maple (Japanese, trident, field or amur), pyracantha, zelkova, and elm. But almost anything can work. A 2-3 year tree is ideal, but I will be happy to help you place a larger one on a rock if you want. Larger trees are much harder due to stiff roots at the base of the trunk that won't conform to the shape of the rock.

For the workshop, participants need to have trees, rocks, containers, bonsai soil and pantyhose. All of these things, you are welcome to provide your own, or choose from what we have on hand to purchase from the club. Here are some suggestions:

**ROCK:** I will have a supply of appropriate rocks (about 4-10 inch size. These will be available for the same price I paid... (free!). But you are welcome to bring your own rock. An appropriate rock can be of any size or shape, but rough texture is recommended - not smooth round river rocks.

**TREE:** Here's where we need your input! Bonsai starter trees will be ordered for the workshop (or you can bring your own). But we will need to get a good idea of the number of participants and the number and type of trees desired. Sign up at the March meeting PLEASE!!! You need to tell us 1) if you are attending 2) how many R-O-R trees you would like to make (up to 3) 3) Number and type of trees you would be interested in ordering. The cost of materials will be \$10 for tree, container and soil. If you will provide your own tree, there will be a small (and I mean small!) charge for the container and/or soil.

**CONTAINER:** I will bring some wonderful 10-inch plastic sieves from the Dollar Tree store. Ideal for fast growth and great drainage. If you want to use something else, you will have to bring it.

**PANTYHOSE:** I could use some help here! Even at my size, I can't provide used pantyhose for everyone... So anyone who can provide some, please please please bring them to the March club meeting or to the workshop.

Doesn't all that sound like a lot of fun? That is the point of bonsai! So join us on March 20 for a great workshop!



2 year old root over rock



7 year old root over rock

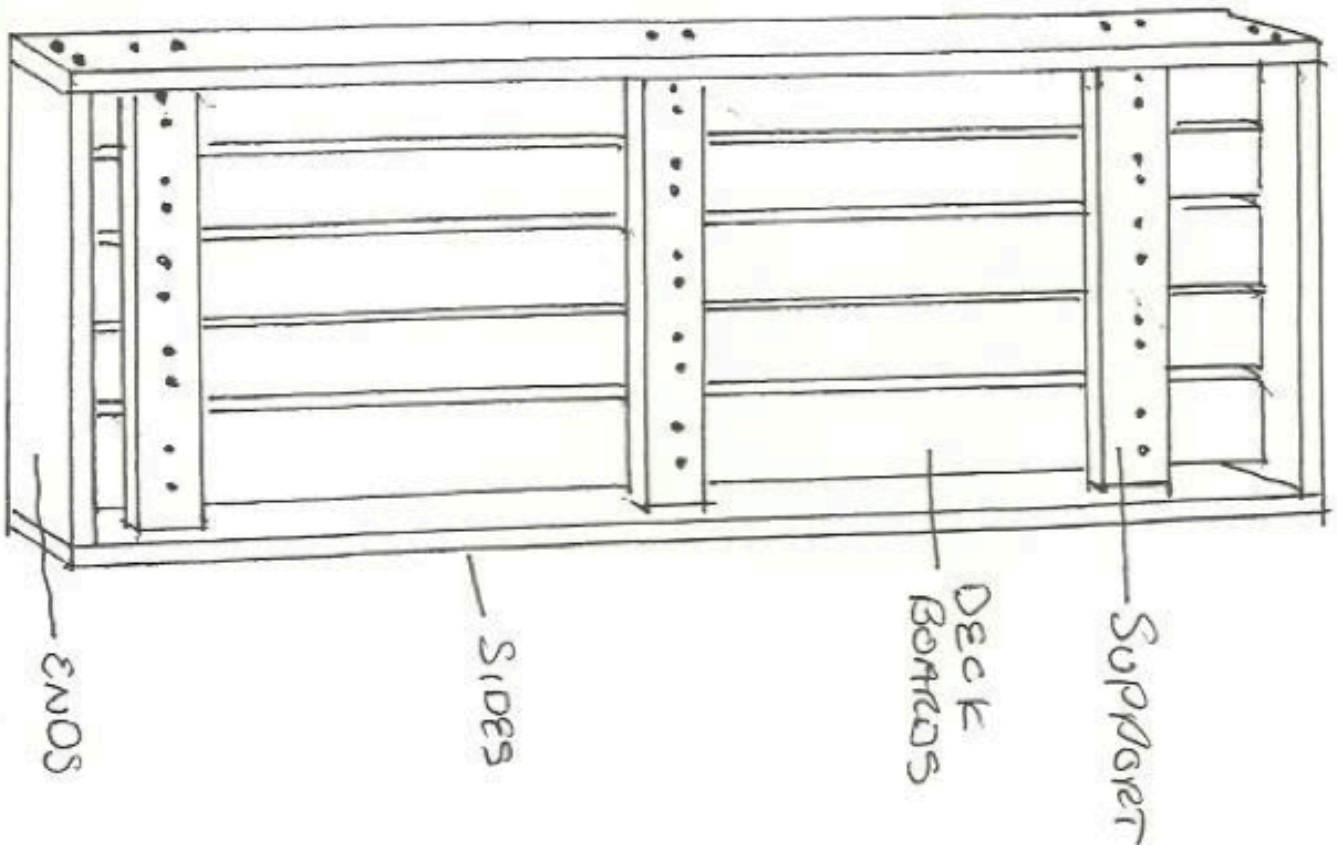
## DISPLAY BENCHES 101

This type of bench is fairly easy to build and can be made using basic tools.

Following these simple instructions you will produce a very attractive bench with a flat top. This bench will be sitting on top of concrete blocks so there are no legs but some could be added if needed.

Use a type of wood like cedar or redwood. Pine could be used but it will have to be replaced every two or three years. The boards shown in the diagram except for the deck boards are 2x4s, (using 2x6s will create a stronger bench). The deck boards are the same boards used on deck floors although any size board could be used that is thicker than 1/2 inch.

The diagram shows the display bench upside down to make it easier to see the way it's constructed, upside down is also the way we will build this. First let's place the deck boards on a flat hard surface like a garage floor with the top side down. Carefully space them about 1/4 inch apart with the ends of the boards lined up with each other. Measure across the deck boards and add 1/2 inch for the gap between the deck boards and the sides. In the case of the diagram there are three support boards shown, (you may need more depending on the length of your bench) and two end boards, cut them to this length. Place the support boards on the deck boards and screw in using brass or deck screws short enough not to go through the top, allow the support boards to hang over the deck boards by 1/4 inch on both sides. Place the end boards 1/4 inch away from the ends of the deck boards on each side, then measure the length for the side boards by measuring the space from the outside edge of the one end board to the outside edge of the other end board. Cut two side boards this length then butt them up to the end boards and screw them together as shown. Kneeling on the support boards screw the support boards to the side boards. Next flip over, then enjoy.





MBS now has aprons for sale with the Milwaukee Bonsai Society logo embroidered in living color. These are great for working on your trees, especially repotting.

It has a unique adjustable fitting system that allows for a tailored look throughout with the pull of a single strap, and features 2 pouch pockets. All for only \$20!

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## Milwaukee Bonsai Society Membership Form 2011

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone # (home) \_\_\_\_\_ (work) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Check # \_\_\_\_\_

(This e-mail address will not be shared with other parties and is for MBS Board use only.)

for (circle)      **Single** 1 year \$25   2 years \$48   3 years \$70

**Family** 1 year \$35   2 years \$68   3 years \$100

Do you have any hidden talents / interests that you would be willing to share with our members?  
If so, please describe:

Please send to: Milwaukee Bonsai Society, P.O. Box 240822, Milwaukee, WI 53224



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

Next Meeting of MBS  
7PM, Tuesday, March 1  
Boerner Botanical Gardens  
9400 Boerner Dr  
Hales Corners, WI 53130

## 2011 MBS OFFICERS

President	Pam W
First VP	John M
Second VP	Greg P
Secretary	Jorge R
Treasurer	Kris Z
Director	Steve Car.
Director	Steve Con.
Director	Pat B
Past Pres.	Joe H

### Other Club Functions:

Newsletter - Kris Z  
Webmaster - Pam W  
Librarian - Tom A  
Telephone response - Jorge R  
PAB Board - Ron F, Don G & Houston S



Well, spring's almost here...