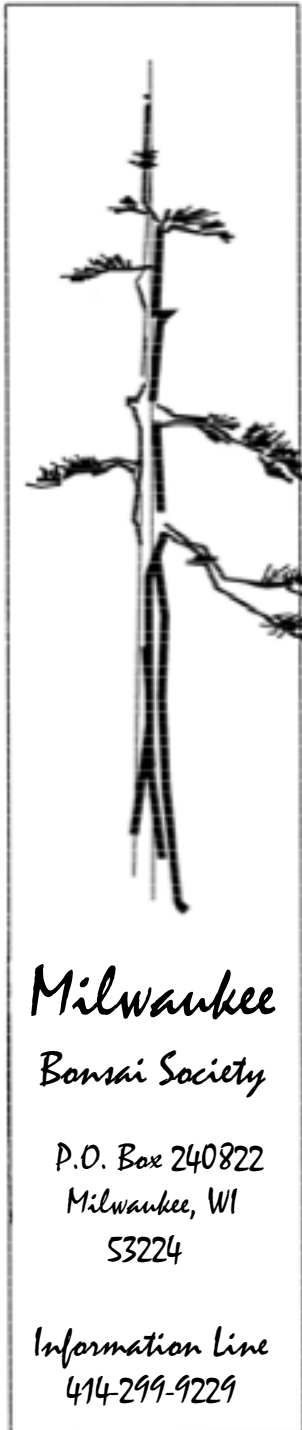


August 2011

# Bonsai News



*Milwaukee  
Bonsai Society*

P.O. Box 240822  
Milwaukee, WI  
53224

*Information line  
414-299-9229*

## **AUGUST CLUB MEETING**

Everything you wanted to know about tropicals, but were afraid to ask...

Tom Ambrose will be our guest speaker at the August club meeting. This is a perfect time to ask questions about your own tropicals.



Also, feel free to bring a tropical from your collection for Tom to look at.

## **2011 Events**

### **JULY**

**July 31** - Intermediate Class

### **AUGUST**

**August 2** - CLUB MEETING  
Tropical trees discussion

**August 4-14** - STATE FAIR

**August 19-22** - Chicago Show

**August 28** - Intermediate Class

### **SEPTEMBER**

**September 2** - CLUB MEETING  
How to exhibit your tree

**September 16-19** - CLUB SHOW

**September 16** - Reception for  
Suthin Sukosolvisit

**Sept 17** - PUBLIC WORKSHOP

**Sept 17-18** - SUTHIN workshops

### **OCTOBER**

**October 1-2** - Matson classes

**October 4** - CLUB MEETING  
Ted Matson - Gingkos revisited

To see the **year's events** go to:

[www.milwaukeebonsai.org](http://www.milwaukeebonsai.org)

click on **What's New**

### **NEXT MEETING**

Tuesday August 2 - 7:00 pm  
Boerner Botanical Gardens

# President's Message

## "Celebrate Success"

One of the Core Focus areas I spoke about a couple months back was Promotion. We want to celebrate our successful move to Boerner. We want the community to know about MBS. We want to promote our annual show and standing in our community. Some of you may have noticed we were on the Morning Blend TMJ4. Check out this link:

<http://www.themorningblend.com/videos/122832429.html>

Now we are poised to follow that up with a marketing campaign for both

*"Creativity is thinking up new things. Innovation is doing new things." – Theodore Levitt*

State Fair and the Annual Club Show. Watch the next TV appearance on August 1 to highlight our State Fair activities and September 15 to announce our annual exhibit.

We need to bring people into the exhibit to celebrate our success. We will measure our success on how many people attend over the two day exhibit and Friday night reception. Here is what you can do to help. First, bring friends to the show in September. Exhibit a tree and tell your neighbors and relative you are exhibiting a tree. Get the word out to the public that we are hosting this event. Put up flyers at your local nursery, work place and places you do business. We will have them available for you at the next meeting or by calling Pat or Jorge. Help us come up with new ideas to raise awareness and help us execute the ideas we have.

This exhibit is our next step to holding an annual fundraiser that will raise funds to house and maintain a permanent collection. We already have some funds and recently MBS has donated \$100 on behalf of Richard Risch (MBS Founder) to the

Permanent Collection Fund to help get us closer to making it a reality. am humbled to pay homage to such an honored member of our bonsai community.

*-Pam*

## Why enter a tree in our State Fair Exhibit?

By entering in State Fair you help our club and yourself. We generate a lot of interest in Bonsai and our club. I found out about Milwaukee Bonsai Society at State Fair and joined MBS soon after.

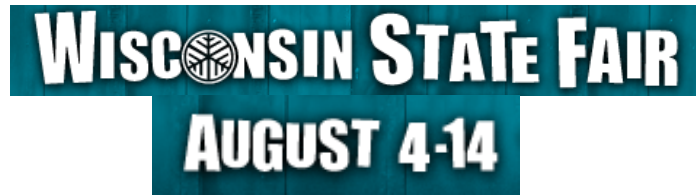
Not only can you win a ribbon, the comments from the judges are invaluable. Even if you don't win, you will gain an understanding of what would make your tree a winner the next time. You understand what is good about your tree and how to improve it. This was my experience was last year, winning First Place in my division at our Club Show after making the adjustments per the judges suggestions at State Fair.

*- Greg P*

**PLEASE CALL OR EMAIL GREG** if you wish to show a tree this year. It's fun, and not as scary as you think.  
414-378-0782, [gpolak@mac.com](mailto:gpolak@mac.com)

**See info on the next page about when to get your trees to Greg...**

**\*\*\*If you will be exhibiting in the first show, bring your tree(s) to the Tuesday Club meeting to save yourself a trip.**



**STATE FAIR 2011** - Are you interested in entering a tree at State Fair? If you have never exhibited before, please consider doing so this year. Classes are: Youth, Novice, Intermediate, Advanced and Open. Please sign up at Club meetings or call 414-378-0782 to participate.

## STATE FAIR EXHIBIT SCHEDULE 2011

Exhibit #1 (August 4 - August 6)  
Exhibit #2 (August 7 - August 10)  
Exhibit #3 (August 11 - August 14)

### Exhibit #1

Deliver trees to \*\*

Wednesday, Aug 3 from 6pm - 7pm  
or bring to the Club meeting at Boerner on Tuesday Aug 2

Pick up trees from \*\*

Sunday, Aug 7 from 9am - 10am

### Exhibit #2

Deliver trees to \*\*

Saturday, Aug 6 from 6pm - 7pm

Pick up trees from \*\*

Thursday, Aug 11 from 9am - 10am

### Exhibit #3

Deliver trees to \*\*

Wednesday, Aug 10 from 6pm - 7pm

Pick up trees from \*\*

Monday Aug, 15 from 9am - 10am

\*\* Strip mall parking lot approx. 102nd and National, just west of Baker's Square. Turn in by the Sentry/Fashion Bug sign. Meet in the area nearest the street (National)

### When checking in please bring:

- + your list of scientific names and common names,
- + the approximate age of the tree,

- + stand, accent, sketch of display, and the proposed style of tree.

It is also wise to mark all components of your display with your name.

(an address sticker is usually adequate)

**Note:** If the drop off/pick up schedule is not good for you, please make personal arrangements for your trees with someone who will care for them. YOU must alert the crew about these arrangements so trees will not be misdirected, lost or stolen.

### Call or email

Greg at 414-378-0782, [gpolak@mac.com](mailto:gpolak@mac.com)

Good luck and thanks for supporting the MBS 2011 State Fair committee.

For specific information as to whether your tree will qualify to be entered at State Fair, please go to:

[http://www.wistatefair.com/pdfs/competitions/entry\\_info/general\\_info/hort/society\\_shows.pdf](http://www.wistatefair.com/pdfs/competitions/entry_info/general_info/hort/society_shows.pdf)

Go to Bonsai info... p14-15

If you wish to help out at State Fair by greeting people who pass by our exhibit, please contact Steve by phone or email: 414-774-7714 or [stephen.contney@att.net](mailto:stephen.contney@att.net)

## SideShow Bonsai

When you are in an obscure section of a relatively obscure hobby there isn't usually a lot of information available. So you use trial and error. I've been growing Caudiciforms and desert plants as bonsai for 8+ years and I've learned some tricks and included some sources for material. I call them the sideshow because they are less commonly used as bonsai and all have at least one feature that is on the extreme side.



Growing conditions are similar to tropicals, just more towards feast & famine. Place in full sun, I have mine next to my house on the north side. So they not only get full sun but the reflected light and heat off the house. Thoroughly water once a week during the summer (by the

end of the week the soil should be bone dry), and once a month in winter. Fertilize ¼ strength twice a month, although it's not really necessary, & most of the time I use water from my koi pond in substitute of fertilizer. Soil medium is mostly surface with some fine & medium chicken grit mixed in, no organic matter. No water for 2 weeks after repotting and the soil used should be completely dry to start with. I bring them inside by mid September when temperatures fall below 55 degrees at night. In winter many will lose most or all of their leaves and don't require light.

I use an open bottom wooden grow box (5' Long x 1'H x 14"W) to bulk up small trees as well as reinvigorate specimens every couple of years. Dig them up in September and no water for a month after digging them back up. Even with our short growing season I can get twice the bulk compared to keeping them potted.

Generally some concessions or creativity is required when creating a caudiciform bonsai. The species with big fat trunks will often have inverse

taper and poor roots or you'll have great roots with a thin trunk. Their uniqueness and drama can easily overcome these defects, or a well placed rock or accent plant can complete the story/environment.



I've used the following websites with good results: [bonsai-collectibles.com](http://bonsai-collectibles.com) (they are great for both caudiciforms and tropicals, and will email pictures for you to request specific plants if you specify a species and size/price.), [gpdesert.com](http://gpdesert.com) (updated often and good prices for larger sized trees), [rareexotics.com](http://rareexotics.com) (has rare species no one else has, though often when it's gone they won't get more).

- Tom Ambrose

## Caravan to Chicago Show

*By Pam Woythal*

Our neighbor to the South has been promoting bonsai and cultivating public awareness at its Mid-America Bonsai Exhibit for 34 years. Each year several of us car pool and caravan to participate and this year will be no different. Guest Master Ryan Neil will be doing a demonstration at 2:00 on Saturday, after his morning workshop. There are many of our club members already planning to take his workshop. At the August meeting let's sign-up to car pool and caravan to see this young artist and purchase good material for our artist coming in September.

<http://www.midwestbonsai.org/guest.html>

## Wauwatosa Garden Tour 2011

## 41st ANNUAL CLUB EXHIBIT

September 16th-18th, 2011

by Steve Carini

July 9<sup>th</sup> was a scorching hot day for the Wauwatosa Garden Tour but Kris Z, Jean S and Steve Co spent the day talking bonsai with many visitors to the MBS tent. As in other years there was a lot of interest in our society, many handouts were taken and some promising contacts were made. It was a



time to work on our trees and explain to the public what



we were doing. Like State Fair and Folk Fair International the Wauwatosa

Garden Tour is a wonderful opportunity for MBS members to talk with the public. I can't wait to do it again next year!

-Steve Co



Melinda Myers & Steve

It was October 6th, 2009... the night of our 39th Annual Club Show. I was just leaving the office at 6PM in the evening. How would I ever make this all work out? I had to drive home and pick up my trees and somehow get them to the church before the meeting began. I was feeling stressed. I made it there by 7:05 and I could barely find a space for one, much less two trees. Jean and Jeff helped me move a couple of the already placed trees together so I could fit mine into the cramped exhibit. At this point, I could hardly tell who's tree went with what companion plant. I stood back to look at all the trees on display and couldn't help but feel that this was not how I had imagined our club members best trees to be on exhibit.

Fast forward to August 20th, 2011. I'm still stressed... but this time it is because today is the deadline for me to get this article to our editor, Kris Z, so that she can place it in the August club newsletter. My purpose here is to tell you all that this year, our 41st Annual Club Show, will be very different.

With a nine member committee, and myself as the chairperson, we envision presenting the very best Annual Club Exhibit that MBS has ever seen. Our mission is to stimulate excitement in and participation from all our club members to get out and show their VERY BEST trees. It will be a "Knock-your-sox-off" event for the Milwaukee Bonsai Society, to be held in the Educational and Visitor Center, at Boerner Botanical Garden. It will be sweet!

The exhibit will be set up on Thursday and Friday, September 15th and 16th, with the help of many members. We will accept exhibit trees from the membership, on Thursday, the 15th, from 5-8PM at the Educational and Visitor Center at Boerner, which is at 9400 Boerner Drive, in Hales Corners. The show will be judged on Friday afternoon, September 16th by Suthin Sukosolvisit, and will open to the membership, public and the press on Friday evening at 6PM. (continued on next page)

This year we will be offering a VERY SPECIAL social and educational RECEPTION to celebrate this awesome exhibit. Suthin will be present and will guide us through the Exhibit, and critique and elaborate on each individual composition. He may even do a demo on the Shimpaku trees that he has been working on with the club. For those of you who have attended a bonsai convention, this is ALWAYS a sold out event! PLAN TO ATTEND THIS FREE RECEPTION, a first time ever part of our Annual Exhibit.

Now here is your part... YOU BRING THE TREES!

Remember, this is YOUR club and we want to see YOUR trees. There will be room for ONE tree from each of our members in the main exhibit.

You may choose one of four classes to exhibit in; Novice, Intermediate, Advanced or Open/Professional. Each member is encouraged to also bring a second tree, but this one is to be a tree that is NOT yet ready to exhibit. It should be a tree that you have been working on, but still needs more development. Knowing that this exhibit will be open to the public, the board and I felt it would be a great opportunity to educate the public, by showing them just how we start out with our trees. This tree does not need to be in a bonsai pot and it will not be judged. They will be displayed in a separate area... a part of the main exhibit, but in an area of their own. So look out on your benches and pick the two trees that you will include in this 41st Annual Club Exhibit at Boerner Botanical Garden.

Recap of important information:

Now... Pick your best tree to include in the Exhibit

Second... Pick out one more tree that shows real promise for the future

September 15th, from 5-8PM... Drop off your trees at Boerner Botanical Garden  
Education and Visitor Center  
9400 Boerner Drive  
Hales Corners, WI  
Lower level, Multimedia Room

September 16th, 6-8PM... Come and attend the RECEPTION WITH SUTHIN  
(more on this reception in next month's newsletter)

September 17th and 18th, 10AM-5PM... Come see the trees again

September 18th, 4PM-5PM... Come and pick up your trees, RIBBONS, and critique sheets

THANKS for your participation and have fun picking out your best to show!

## Photographing Your Trees

*By Pam Woythal*

### Why

There are three typical reasons for photographing your trees, Record, Design, and Create. You can record progress, document for insurance purposes, and journaling for future articles. You can capture design element by taking a picture of a tree in the landscape or bonsai to emulate that particular design. You can also study a picture of your tree for design elements that come to light in two dimensions. The most common is enjoyment, and beyond enjoyment is the artistic medium of photography.

### Details Matter

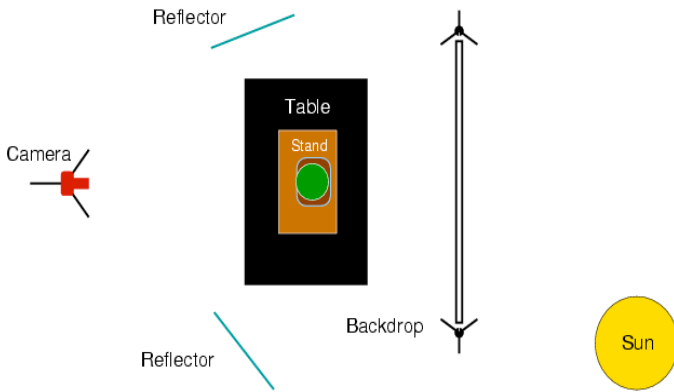
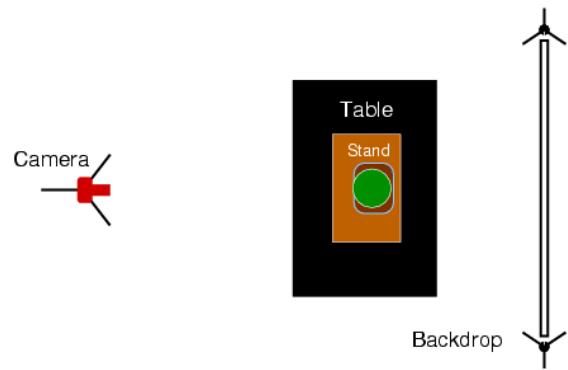
Let's look at the following in detail because it's these details that matter.

- **Use a backdrop** to isolate your image
- **Plan the lighting** to bring out depth and detail
- **Plan the shoot** to for the best image
- **Prepare your tree**
- **Don't blame the camera**

(continued on next page)

## Use a Backdrop

Show off the bonsai, remove distracting elements from the background. Watch the background color. I use black plush as makes the tree pop. Kokufu albums normally use off-white as the background. Position the background 5 feet behind the tree, it helps keep the background out of focus when tree is in focus and the distance allows back lighting.x



## Plan the Lighting

Good lighting makes the difference between a mediocre photograph and a good one. For Natural Light, position the tree in the shade on a sunny day or a bright overcast day, bounce light back onto the tree with a set of reflectors to create depth.

Some shoot at night by flash, with nothing in the background. While this works in a pinch, I find that the flash-by-night approach creates an image that is too flat and too high in contrast

## Plan the Shoot

Get a sharp image, minimize movement and thus **Maximize Image Sharpness**. Shoot from a tripod using a shutter release or find something to steady your camera - i.e. lean against a tree, put the camera on top of a trashcan. Shoot a wider angle shot, the wider the focal length, the steadier the shot. Shoot several frames and pick the sharp one later.

Get the entire tree to be in focus the leaves or needles on the front branches, the bark at the base of the trunk, the back branches, the pot, even the stand to **Maximize the Depth of Field**. Shoot with as small of an aperture (as large of an f-stop) as possible. As you go to smaller and smaller apertures, you get a broader zone of focus - but this comes at the expense of letting less light into the camera and thus requiring longer exposure times. Shoot from relatively far away with a relatively long lens (zoom) you get a better (less distorted) perspective.

Set your camera height and frame your image to **Control the Camera/Lens Position**. Set up your display so that you are photographing the tree head-on, directly from the front. The camera should be level with the lower trunk, so that the soil surface is just barely visible.

It's natural to want to avoid critiquing negatively because you are worried about hurting the bonsai artist's feeling. Keep in mind that it is not the negative or positive aspect of the critique that causes pain; it's the level of condensation, antagonism, sarcasm, or nastiness that is implied by what you write or say. Remember critiquing is not a game, you are not scoring against the artist; you are trying to help. Don't just tell the artist what's wrong; make a suggestion about how the artist can fix the problems you see.

## Prepare the Tree

When you photograph your tree, you are exhibiting it

- Wipe down the pot with a damp cloth to remove splashes of mud and other debris.
- Put on a clean layer of top-dressing or add moss to the soil surface.
- Remove any weeds that have sprouted.
- Trim stray and out-of-place shoots.
- Make sure your wiring is as tidy as possible.
- Place the tree on a display stand if possible.

Respect yourself, your tree, and your audience enough to take a few minutes to present your bonsai properly

## Don't blame the camera

You don't need high-end equipment to get very nice photographs that will be entirely adequate for sharing on the web.

*In the next issue we will show some examples.*



P.O. Box 240822  
Milwaukee, WI 53224  
[www.milwaukeebonsai.org](http://www.milwaukeebonsai.org)  
RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Next Meeting of MBS  
7PM, Tuesday, August 2  
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



*Bonsai on display  
Admiring crowds passing by  
Beauty shared with all*

*- Joe Nemeec*