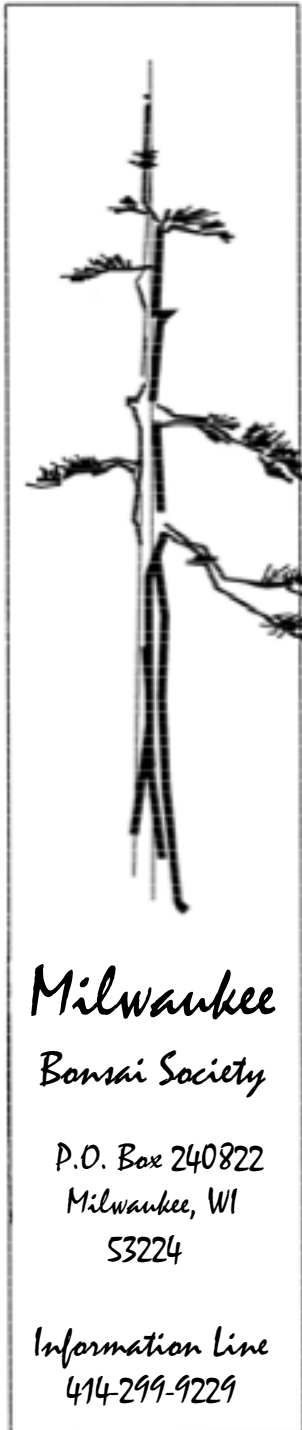


FEBRUARY 2012

# Bonsai News



*Milwaukee  
Bonsai Society*

*P.O. Box 240822  
Milwaukee, WI  
53224*

*Information Line  
414-299-9229*

## Get Ready, Get Set, Go

By Ron F

We all knew that winter would finally arrive, and the past couple of weeks have fulfilled that promise, gone are the fifty degree days. So now is the time to do something other than hibernate, now is the time to get prepared for what is usually the busiest couple months in the bonsai hobby. At the February meeting Allen Koszarek and I will review some of the many tasks that you should be doing now, instead of waiting till nice spring weather breaks out. Don't get caught when spring happens and you are not prepared to do the repotting and other tasks that should happen just as those trees are waking up.

The month of February is a great time to map out your plan for your collection for the next three months which are often pivotal in any bonsai's development. So come to the meeting and be ready to take some notes and start

## 2012 Events

### FEBRUARY

**February 7 - Club Meeting**  
Ready, Set, Go

**February 19 - Open Workshop**  
Wiring and Silhouette  
preparation

### MARCH

**March 4 - Silhouette Show at  
the Domes**

**March 6 - Club Meeting**  
Ted Matson - Hemlock & Pine  
Spring care

**March 9-11 - WORKSHOPS  
WITH TED MATSON - SEE  
DETAILS ON PAGE 2**

**March 24 - Novice Class #1**

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

**IT'S TIME TO RENEW!!**

planning your 2012 Bonsai Journey. It could be off to a great start if you follow our recommendations. See you February 7<sup>th</sup>.

### NEXT MEETING

Tuesday Feb 7 - 6:30 pm  
Boerner Botanical Gardens

## President's Message

*Happy New Year to all of you.*

*My name is Stephen Contney and I begin my term as President of MBS with some anxiety. This presidential stuff is all new for me and to successfully follow Pam will be a difficult task. Let me tell you a little about myself and about some of my visions for our Society.*

*I have recently retired after a 40 plus year career as a researcher and administrator at the Medical College of Wisconsin. Bonsai has been a part of my life for about 23 years and I have been a member of MBS since 2003. Like many of you I started by participating in a public workshop, had my interest piqued and have increased my participation ever since.*

*In the past year or so MBS has moved its home from Grace Lutheran Church to Boerner Botanical Gardens, has made its Annual Show larger and more formal and has a section of the Friends Library at Boerner devoted to the MBS library collection. The move to Boerner has not been without some growing pains but we hope to work these out because I believe we belong at Boerner. We as a Society must put forth an effort to make this move successful.*

*So far the space that has been provided for our workshops, classes, meetings, exhibits and shows has saved us substantial money and kept our event costs lower. Our Executive Committee is working on different ways of saying thank you to the Friends and will bring this up at monthly meetings. Also see Pam Woythals' article regarding FBBG membership in this issue.*

*Our Annual Show has grown in size and become our Society's premier show of the year. This is due again to having our home*

*at Boerner and having use of their facilities. It is our plan for the Annual Show to be an even bigger event this year with the goal of it being even bigger the following year.*

*For our Society to continue to grow we need to have participation from long time members, newer members and yet to be members. My vision is that one day soon we will be a regional Society with members from throughout the Southeast Wisconsin area, have a school aged children's education program in addition to our outreach program at Mahone Middle School in Kenosha, that we have a permanent collection and have a planned giving procedure in place.*

*When we are ready to go forward with a permanent collection, Boerner could be the home for the collection. This will not happen overnight but we will continue to move toward this goal. The Executive Committee has already established a fund that can only be used for a permanent collection. The next step in the process will be to set up a committee to work towards a permanent collection. There will be many expenses associated with a collection so we need to have a procedure in place where members and other philanthropists can make donations.*

*I appeal to all members to participate in meetings, workshops either as students or teachers in classes when offered. We should talk up the Society and make an effort to increase our membership with interested people. Let me or any of the other Executive Committee members know if there is a specific topic you would like to have addressed at a monthly meeting or as a workshop.*

**-Steve**

# TED MATSON WORKSHOPS

We will have 3 days of workshops with Ted, Friday March 9, Saturday March 10 and Sunday March 11 at Boerner downstairs. This may be your only chance to work with a guest artist until our Annual Club Show in September.

Ted is a wonderful teacher (talk with members who have taken classes with him), so bring a notebook or tape recorder so you're sure to get down great information about your trees and others.

## The workshops:

**Full day workshops** - 8:30 - 4:30 with a lunch break \$110

**Half day workshops** - 8:30 - 12:00 and 1:00 - 4:30 \$60

Please fill out the following form and bring it to the February meeting with your check or send to our P.O. Box 240822 Milwaukee, WI 53224

**Silent observers:**

**\$5 - 1/2 day, \$10 full day**

**Pay at the door**

**REMEMBER - YOUR MEMBERSHIP MUST BE CURRENT TO PARTICIPATE**

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## Ted Matson Workshops - March 9 - 11, 2012

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Home phone \_\_\_\_\_

Cell \_\_\_\_\_

Choice of workshop day(s) (1st, 2nd, 3rd choice)

Friday \_\_\_\_\_ Saturday \_\_\_\_\_ Sunday \_\_\_\_\_

Full Day \$110 - check # \_\_\_\_\_ or cash \_\_\_\_\_

1/2 day \$60 - check # \_\_\_\_\_ or cash \_\_\_\_\_

**IT'S TIME TO RENEW!!**

**FIRST COME FIRST SERVED**

## **SILHOUETTE SHOW AT THE MITCHELL PARK DOMES**

*In addition to the joys of snow during the winter and early spring months, we in the Midwest have an opportunity to view our landscape in the 'raw', that is, without the dressing of buds, leaves and flowers. Several things happen in this season: the evergreen conifers become more noticeable since they retain their greenery, and the skeletons of the deciduous trees and shrubs are revealed. When viewed at a distance, these skeletons appear as a rather uniform brown-gray cloud of brush and twigs, but when examined closely, each individual tree has its characteristic shape, bark, twigging character and dormant bud detail that allow its identity to be known. It is these leafless features that we will be celebrating in the upcoming "silhouette" bonsai show which MBS will present to the public on Sunday, March 4, 2012 at the Mitchell Park Domes.*



Maple

*Only deciduous trees will be featured in this event. Maples, hornbeams, elms, hawthorns, apples, crabapples, pomegranate, crape myrtle, ginkgos, larches and swamp cypress are some of the species which would be suitable. We anticipate showing 8- 10 specimens, depending on size, and will set a formal display using our club backdrops, tablecovers and skirts. Each tree must have a stand. Accent plants or accessories or scrolls are optional.*



Chinese Quince

*We will need 3 or 4 people to collect, deliver and setup the trees, tree sit from 9:00 to 4:00, then breakdown the exhibit. If you are interested in participating, please call Kris at 262-512-1228, email [hagr8d@mac.com](mailto:hagr8d@mac.com) or talk with Kris at the February meeting.*

**IT'S TIME TO RENEW!!**

## Call for Raffle Items

*By Pam W*

One of my new "lean" activities for MBS has expanded to include "Ways & Means", which means "creative ways to raise money". One of our good, consistent fund raisers has been the raffles that take place at meetings. We have sometimes sold close to 100 raffle tickets, when there was a selection of trees, pots and tools, some very nice ones, donated for the raffle. In recent meetings, however, the raffle seems to have fallen on hard times. Item donations have been sparse, and trees have been even scarcer. As a consequence, ticket sales have been down, and many of those who bought tickets have done so simply to help out the club, rather than any real interest in winning an item. At recent board meetings we have tossed around some suggestions. For now, we will just try putting out a CALL FOR RAFFLE ITEMS.

Donations to the raffle may be tax-deductible. If you want a receipt, turn in a note with your name, donated items, and the estimated value (be reasonable!), to the Raffle Manager (me) or the Treasurer.

We are working to collect items to use in our next Ted Matson event and we need your help! Do you or someone you know have items of value that could be donated? Bring them to the meeting! "Big hits" in the past have included:

- Artwork such as scrolls or jewelry
- Tool roll with tools
- Sara Raynor or large pots
- Bonsai themed Baskets or Wine
- Memorabilia or Collectibles like autographed books or aprons
- Gift Certificates
- And of course Bonsai

Finally, I'll need help on the RAFFLE COMMITTEE. This committee will help the board by taking responsibility to collect donated items and cull out diseased or undesirable items, see that raffle tickets get sold, and run the actual drawing. This could be a job for more than one person, rotating the meetings among two or three people would ease the work load. Any volunteers? Please call me at 352-7799,

or see me at the meeting. And remember, support the club raffle - donate plants, and buy raffle tickets.

Thank you for your support!

## Become a Friend of Boerner Botanical Garden

*By Pam W*

As a member of the Friends of Boerner Botanical Gardens (FBBG), you help support one of Wisconsin's most unique and beautiful natural spaces. You'll also receive a full package of convenient benefits, advance notice of special events and more. Your membership makes a difference, and not just for FBBG. Milwaukee Bonsai Society has formed a partnership with the FBBG where we are able to take advantage of their awesome gardens and facilities.

FBBG is making available to MBS members a discount on their FBBG membership of \$10, for an individual it will be a real bargain at \$25 and family is available for \$55. If you are a student it is already a bargain at \$15. Please show your appreciation of FBBG for making their facility available to us by joining in January. And take advantage of the discount! Let them know you are an MBS member by writing MBS on the form to get the discount. For a printable form go to <http://www.boernerbotanicalgardens.org/support/j1-1.html>.

## A Year in the Life of a Bonsai

*By Ron F*

A new monthly feature that I will be bringing the club during 2012 will be the ongoing care and maintenance of a tree throughout the year. At the February meeting I will introduce the tree that we will be following. Each month we will discuss what actions should be done at that time of year and what the tree has done over the past month and what to watch and look forward to in the coming month.

## SPRING DIG!

Hello MBS. This is an introduction to BC Bonsai. Located in Wheaton, IL BC Bonsai is owned and operated by Jim B and Linda C. They have a rustic old farm with 7000-8000 trees with 200 varieties growing in the ground. These are pre-bonsai materials and get trimmed back yearly.

I talked with them in December and they told me they have a collecting / digging opportunity on the last 2 weekends of March and the first 2 weekends in April. They will supply bonsai soil and you can buy pots or bring your own. These are bonsai people and want you to have a quality bonsai experience.

Here's the scoop. They have blue scotch pine with 3" trunks, shimpaku junipers, Japanese larch, Korean white pine, Limbar pine, black pine, red pine, young stewardia, ungrafted Japanese maples and crabapples, Chinese Hazelnut, tree lilacs, a Manchurian pear, and single trunk Japanese quince with white and pink flowers. All pre-bonsai and in the ground, dormant.

Maybe you would want to trim and pot a tree, then put it back in the ground and have Jim and Linda bring it up to Milwaukee in September as they will be vending at our Annual Club Show.

I'm going to go on one Saturday and if anyone is interested please email Allen ([jsher46@wi.rr.com](mailto:jsher46@wi.rr.com)) or talk to me at the Feb or March MBS club meetings.

Sounds like a great early Spring bonsai adventure.

Your director, Allen K

## Milwaukee Bonsai Society

### 2012 Membership Application

#### Contact Information

Please Print:

Name(s)	
Street Address	
City ST ZIP Code	
Home Phone	
Cell/Work Phone	
E-Mail Address	

#### Membership Type

New or Renewal:

- Individual 1 year \$25       Individual 2 years \$48       Individual 3 years \$70  
 Family 1 year \$35       Family 2 years \$68       Family 3 years \$100

#### Interests

Tell us in which areas you are interested in volunteering

- Events       Administration       Other (let us know your interest)  
 Fundraising       Newsletter production  
 Tree Exhibiting/Sitting       Volunteer coordination

#### Payment

Please make your check or money order payable to: **Milwaukee Bonsai Society**

Mail to:

Milwaukee Bonsai Society  
P.O. Box 240822  
Milwaukee, WI 53224

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## The Chopstick as a Bonsai Tool

Bonsai hobbyists tease one another that it may rot away before cutting in. Speaking of at the Holiday dinner with guy wires, a piece of chopstick can also be used as reminders, —Don't forget to take a turnbuckle to tighten the guy wire and gradually your chopsticks. While fun, I lower a branch. If you accidentally crack a branch thought, it is a frequently used bonsai tool.

Truly, when wiring a piece of chopstick can become a it is the only bonsai tool that you can pick up for free with a carry out meal. The chopstick has been in use in most of Asia since 500 AD. So it seems natural to me that the chopstick's ubiquitous use in bonsai arose from its use to pick up pieces of food. Both uses keep your fingers clean.

Use 1. – Repotting: Over 20 years ago I was instructed that the chopstick is the ideal tool for settling soil in around the roots of a newly repotted tree. Soil is encouraged to drop into the root ball by making swirling movements with the chopstick, not poking. The chopstick can also be used to remove old soil from the root ball. Many of the books I've read say not to use metal tools when removing old soil as they may cause too much damage to the roots. Pointed tips are best for mame' and shohin, blunt for larger trees. The chopstick can be used to spread the roots out into a more radial arrangement as recommended for symmetry. Pieces of chopstick can be used as spacers to position roots. And if you are using a pot with only one hole or eye, a piece of chopstick can also serve to wrap you anchor wire around to hold the tree in the pot.

Use 2 – As a wedge or spacer: As noted above, pieces of chopstick can be used to space roots and branches. Sometimes to achieve the correct arrangement of trunks or branches you want to move them away from one another, a piece of chopstick can become a simple wedge. A piece of chopstick can also pad a branch or root when being anchored by a guy wire to prevent the wire from cutting in if you don't have any aquarium air tubing. The beauty of using a piece of chopstick is splint as long as the area of branch is relatively straight, otherwise a heavy gage piece of wire will

serve you better. In either case you should wrap the broken area with raffia to reduce evaporation first. Use 3 – As a Moisture Meter: Mike Thornhill reminded me of this use. He said that he uses a chopstick rather than a moisture meter to tell him when a tree in a larger pot needs to be watered. Because most chopsticks are natural wood, moisture is attracted to their surface and you can see the dampness. Some chopstick moisture meter users leave chopsticks in the soil and pull them up to check. I'm guessing this reduces root damage caused by daily poking. The chopstick can be cut to a length so that it doesn't stick up to far above the soil. Besides low or no cost, if your chopstick breaks you can easily replace it and it usually doesn't need to be protected from rust. Sharpening can be done with a knife, sandpaper or a pencil sharpener. In some restaurants I've found round chopsticks and on occasion I've purchased a package after Chinese New Year. They tend to be more decorative and harder to break.

Ken Schultz

Columbus Bonsai Society



## Vendor News

Ancient Arts Bonsai will be able to accept major credit cards for your purchases in 2012, see Ron F for exact details.

Novice Class will be forming soon. Details at the February Meeting and in the next Newsletter.



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

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

**IT'S TIME TO RENEW!!**

## 2012 MBS OFFICERS

President	Steve Con.
First VP	Tony P
Second VP	Kris Z
Secretary	Ron F
Treasurer	Susan L
Director	John M
Director	Greg P
Director	Allen K
Past Pres.	Pam W

### Other Club Functions:

Newsletter - Kris Z  
Webmaster - Pam W  
PAB Board - Ron F, Don G & Houston S

