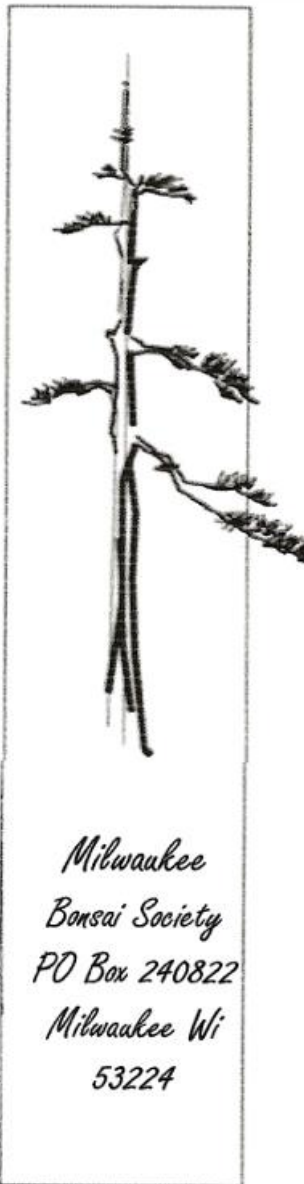


BONSAI NEWS

December 2024



Upcoming Meeting

The December meeting will be our Annual Holiday Social. This year will be a potluck with the club providing beverages (coffee, juices, water and sodas).

Bring your favorite Christmas dish to share with other members and enjoy the company of your fellow bonsai enthusiasts.

The festivities begin at 9am. We look forward to seeing you at the holiday social.



Next Meeting

December 7,
2024
9 am
Boerner
Botanical

December

December 7 – Holiday Social

January

January 4 – General Meeting-Soil Sifting/Bonsai Styles

February

February 1 – General Meeting-Root Work/Explaining Juniper Styles

February 15 – Workshop: How do I Start to Show My Trees?*

February 23 – Silhouette Show
Milw. Domes

March

March 1 – Juniper Work/Guest Artist: Andy Smith-Collecting

March 1 – Workshop: Pondersosa Pine Critique and Discussion*

March 2 – Workshop: Bring your own Tree*

March 22 – Workshop-Root over Rock Follow-up*

*Open to MBS members only

President's Message

I have been thinking lately about the role played by emotion in the pursuit of bonsai.

I love to cook and consider myself pretty good at it. I have one son who is a professional chef, and another who cooked for Sub-Zero in their Fitchburg corporate demo kitchen between college and law school. [In both cases, it was their father who taught them which end of the knife was the pointy end.] For the last thirty-five or so years I've been married to women who delegated that responsibility to me entirely.

I learned an important lesson early on. If I was angry, upset, or worried, my cooking—and my family—would suffer. If I was not in a good head space, it would somehow come through in the food. The seasoning would be off, something would be undercooked or overcooked—it would vary each time, but there would always be something off, something less than my best. I finally figured out that if I came home from work wanting to kick the dog, yell at the wife, and head straight for the liquor cabinet, it was probably best to call out for pizza.

I recently learned a similar lesson about bonsai. As most people know, I have a love affair with azaleas, and part of fall maintenance involves removing the leaves along the stems of the new shoots of the year. It's incredibly tedious work, and I have come to understand that having three large, thriving trees with hundreds of new shoots is a bit of a mixed blessing.

A couple of weeks ago I was working on one of my larger trees, removing the last of the wire and beginning the leaf removal. It happened that I'd had a particularly challenging day, involving a difficult client, a couple of urgent, "fire drill" problems, and a computer failure. To say that I was in a crappy mood would be a masterpiece of understatement.

As I sat down to work on the tree, I cut through a piece of wire, and in the process cut too deep and lost a shoot. No big deal, right? Mistakes happen. In short order, I pulled too hard on an unsupported shoot, and snap! There went another. To cut to the chase, a third, a fourth and a fifth, and a little light came on. It was the same as cooking—I was simply not in the right place to be doing the work. It was time to put things down, walk away, and come back when I'd gotten the stress out of my system.

The next day was an entirely different story. The work went well, I was able to enjoy the work rather than treating it like a chore, and I experienced bonsai the way it's supposed to be.

With the exception of watering, there is nothing whatsoever in bonsai that must be done on this day. There's always tomorrow. If we push ourselves to work on our trees when our heads and hearts aren't right, we will not only not do our best work, we will cut ourselves off from all of the joy and satisfaction that the trees can give us. If we come back another day, the trees—and we ourselves—will be better for it.

And now for part two: time to talk about tree theft. I offer this as a reminder for our experienced members and a new bit of guidance for the new ones.

There is a reason why on the website, I'm referred to as "Rick W", and why you'll never see anyone's address on a page. Theft of bonsai trees is a terrible problem—not only is it heartbreaking to lose a tree that may have been in training for years, if not decades, there is the virtual certainty that a stolen tree will die.

Within the last month, bonsai legend Peter Chan, owner of Herons Nursery, suffered the loss of five world-class "specimen" trees, plus a dozen others ["lesser trees" that probably were each worth more than my car]. His local police told him that they were not optimistic about recovery, as they had many, more serious crimes requiring attention.

Bonsai tree theft takes place because unscrupulous people have the mistaken idea that all bonsai trees are worth big money, and that they can be easily sold for cash. Obviously, both notions are false. I have some trees that have cost a substantial amount of money, but that is not the basis of their value to me. In addition, anyone in the bonsai community would question the ownership and provenance of a tree offered for quick sale, and probably contact the authorities. Stolen bonsai usually end up on a roadside or in a dumpster when the miscreants realize that they do not, in fact, have the proverbial pot of gold at the end of the rainbow.

We have only two defenses against theft: anonymity as described above, and discretion. If, for example, someone asks at State Fair, "Are bonsai really expensive?", I could respond with a reference to one tree that sold in Japan a few years ago for \$800,000 [which is true, by the way. It also came with a truck full of books and scrolls documenting its 800-year history of training as a bonsai.] A much better answer might be, "It's like any other hobby—you can spend as much or as little as you want. The real value of a tree to its owner can't be measured in dollars." Choosing our words carefully can go a long way toward thwarting the theft problem. It might not be the person we're addressing, but rather the one ten feet away who hears part of what's said, and thinks they're suddenly onto something that can be an easy score.

I wish everyone a happy holiday season and look forward to great things in the new year.

Rick



WISCO BONSAI NOW HAS THE AREA'S LARGEST SELECTION OF ARTISIAN, HANDMADE BONSAI POTTERY, MUCH OF WHICH CONSISTS OF LOCAL AND REGIONAL ARTISTS.

WE ALSO NOW CARRY A LINE OF TOOLS GEARED TOWARD THE BEGINNER AND NOVICE AMONG US, ALONG WITH ALL MANNER OF BONSAI SUNDRIES, SUCH AS, COPPER & ALUMINUM WIRE, JIN SEAL, WOUND PUTTY, ETC.

AND OF COURSE THERES THE SUBSTRATE, WISCO GOLD... THE BEST NON-JAPANESE MIX AROUND WE ALSO OCCASIONALLY HAVE OTHER RAW SUBSTRATE COMPONENTS AVAILABLE (PUMICE, LAVA, ETC).

SEVERAL SIZES OF KANUMA NOW AVAILABLE !!!

GOT ORCHIDS ? WE HAVE A SUBSTRATE FOR THOSE TOO !!!

WiscoBonsai@gmail.com **414-248-3827 www.WiscoBonsai.com**

INSTAGRAM @wisco.bonsai

THE SHOP NOW HAS REGULAR HOURS IN THE SPRING, SUMMER AND FALL. HOURS ARE UPDATED WEEKLY ON MY GOOGLE INFO SITE. OR, TO BE THE AMONG FIRST TO KNOW ABOUT ALL THE WORKSHOPS AND OTHER FUN GOING DOWN AT WISCO BONSAI, JUST SHOOT AN EMAIL AND I WILL ADD YOU TO THE EMAIL LIST.

"BONSAI IS THE ART OF NATURE, GUIDED AND NURTURED BY HUMAN HANDS" - KENS

WISCO BONSAI
www.WiscoBonsai.com

Milwaukee Bonsai Society at the Holiday Folk Fair

By Melissa J.

November 22-24, 2024 brought the 81st Annual Holiday Folk Fair International to the State Fair grounds of Milwaukee, WI and a chance for the Milwaukee Bonsai Society (MBS) to shine once again. The Folk Fair is considered Milwaukee's premier Multicultural Festival and MBS was proud to be able to participate with 20 trees on display.



This year's Folk Fair theme was "Celebrate the Culture of Traditional Art". What is more traditional than the art of bonsai? MBS was mentioned in a press release featuring special exhibits and displays, ensuring there would be plenty of traffic to the booth.



Bonsai term handouts

The weekend always starts Friday morning with a special "school children" only program where children from Southeastern WI arrive by the bus load to the Expo Hall eager to learn more about other cultures. The bonsai booth had the children try to identify different styles of trees in order to engage each child and make the learning experience fun. There was a forest, a literati style and a formal upright to name a few of the styles on display this year. The public is welcome at the Fair starting Friday afternoon, once the children return to school.

The learning about bonsai doesn't stop when the school children leave though. MBS had handouts available listing bonsai terms for everyone to take, along with a demonstration area where members worked on trees and gave the public a chance to see a tree transform into a thing of beauty. There was also a contest for the public to vote for their favorite tree. Each booth visitor was given a ballot and asked to vote after viewing the trees. The winning tree was a beauty this year. It was #6, a 35 year old Shimpaku Juniper owned by Judy S. Congratulations Judy!



People's Choice Winner



Holiday Folk Fair Cont.





Wintering Notes

By Pam W



Cool looking Grow lights



Inkbird Digital Temperature Controller



Milkhouse Heater.

At our last meeting several items were mentioned that can help us manage our wintering bonsai activities. Some were as simple as Fans but others were kind of unique for our needs

Rechargeable Watering Wand

This item mentioned by Rob S caught my attention as I do my watering from a pail and use a smaller watering can to dunk and water. This would speed up the watering as well as make it easier to reach my higher shelf trees. In looking for it some has a 10-foot hose for around \$20 and 16 feet for \$25. [Amazon.com : rechargeable watering wand](https://www.amazon.com/rechargeable-watering-wand)

Digital Temperature Controller Outlet Thermostat

I have written about this device in the past and have been using it for almost a decade. The idea is to plant the temperature probe in the soil of one of your trees and once you have set the controller the outlets will turn on the power when the temperature reaches the low setting and turn off the outlets when the probe detects the soil temperature at the peak. Mine is set for 35 degrees and 38 degrees and works without fail. This item has 9552 reviews. I found it a bit hard to set the controller but you only need to that once. [Amazon.com: Inkbird ITC-308 Digital Temperature Controller 2-Stage Outlet Thermostat Heating and Cooling Mode Carboy Homebrew Fermenter Greenhouse Terrarium 110V 10A : Home & Kitchen](https://www.amazon.com/Inkbird-ITC-308-Digital-Temperature-Controller-2-Stage-Outlet-Thermostat-Heating-and-Cooling-Mode-Carboy-Homebrew-Fermenter-Greenhouse-Terrarium-110V-10A-Home-Kitchen)

LED Lights

For lighting there are several options. But Irene H turned me on to some cool looking height adjustable grow lights with a timer. I checked and they are currently unavailable but I found a newer similar cool looking ones that also allow you to add an hour a month as Kris suggested. . [Amazon.com: LED Grow Lights for Indoor Plants 2 Pack, Smart Full Spectrum USB Small Plant Lights with Remote, Height Adjustable, Auto On/Off Timer, Ideal for Home Decoration : Patio, Lawn & Garden](https://www.amazon.com/LED-Grow-Lights-for-Indoor-Plants-2-Pack-Smart-Full-Spectrum-USB-Small-Plant-Lights-with-Remote-Height-Adjustable-Auto-On-Off-Timer-Ideal-for-Home-Decoration-Patio-Lawn-Garden)

If you need it for taller trees in a then pot you might need a light that has a base. These just stick right into the pot

Milkhouse Heater

I actually have no experience with these heaters. Judy S and several other club members do so reach out to them for features to look out for when you purchase one. [Amazon.com : milk house heater](https://www.amazon.com/milk-house-heater)

2025 Schedule

by PAM W

The 2025 MBS schedule provides an overview of the upcoming year. It allows you to plan and view meetings, workshops, classes and events. Before we get to the schedule let's look at what each type of event it includes.

General Meetings

Starting with General Meetings, our meetings are split into 3 sections. First, we have a Focus Topic which last about 30 minutes. These focus topics are usually techniques such as watering or soil sifting. Or it may be a quick revisit of a previous workshop like Root Over Rock or Thread grafting. The next section would be Business. Typically, we try to keep this to 30 minutes to discuss upcoming club events and other business. The third section is the Main Topic where we take a deep dive into a variety of topics. It could be a small discussion on Pines, a presentation on Viewing Stones, or a demonstration of a technique such as Shoot Selection/ Reduction Pruning. Many meetings we have guest artist from around the country and that meeting may be a demonstration on a tree like when David Cutchin styled a Rain Tree or a particular subject like Viewing Stones. This year we have 2 guest artist, Andy Smith in March and David will return in August.

Workshops

A traditional bonsai workshop is one in which the artist and participant work together to design a bonsai. Sometimes material is provided while at other workshops you bring your own material for styling. The basic advantage of the workshops is in a single event of few hours, we get to complete a single 'cycle' of design or refinement of a bonsai. MBS sponsored workshops are learning experiences for your benefit.

Artist Workshops

In order to expose its members to a variety of styling approaches and perspectives, MBS strives to bring in established bonsai talent from around and outside of the Milwaukee area to conduct workshops and demonstrations. Artist workshops are among the highlights of the Society's calendar. Enrollment is limited and will be filled on a first come first served basis. These may be subject deep dives into subjects like "How to Show a Tree" or workshop to style a tree. Workshops will vary in subject, level of skill, and cost which is set by the Executive Committee. Time with the artist is at the artist discretion which is typically divided equally among participants.

Open Workshops

MBS sponsored open workshops are a collaborative learning experience. Sometimes these workshops have a designated theme such as transplanting or wiring. In all cases novice and experienced members work and share ideas on trees.

Open workshop enrollment is limited and typically there is a very small cost to members who participate. Each participant provides his/her own tools, wire, potting materials and tree to work on.

2025 Schedule

Classes

A bonsai class is a series of educational and work sessions. Small groups of people meet together with an instructor over a short period of time to concentrate on a defined area of study. Classes typically use interactive and immersive technique to take the student through a developmental progression of study from initial styling through refinement work and technical progression of techniques from wiring through ramification work. Attendance at all class sessions should be considered as mandatory. A fee is charged for any class to cover cost of instructor and supplies. Students must pay for the entire year in advance with no refunds.

Fundamentals

Fundamentals classes are held on an as-needed basis to introduce members with little or no previous experience to the basics of bonsai. This is a wonderful follow-up to the public workshop. If you have never participated in a Fundamentals class, it offers wonderful instruction, information and hands-on experiences. Classes are taught by experienced volunteers and are open to any MBS member.

Skills

MBS offers continuing educational opportunities in Skills Classes (101 and 201). Building upon what is learned in Fundamentals Classes. Again, these classes are taught by experienced MBS instructors and are open to all MBS members who have taken the Fundamentals Class or have some Bonsai experience. The classes foster each student's advancement and contributes to her/his future work as a bonsai leader in MBS. In this course, class discussions, bonsai activities and hands on assignments will challenge students to think critically about their bonsai. All sessions will be directed toward the development of better bonsai.

Events (Exhibits, Demonstrations)

MBS promotes its activities locally at several exhibits and shows each year. MBS has a 2-day Annual Exhibition of members' trees at Lynden Sculpture Garden or Boerner Botanical Gardens each year. It also sponsors booths during the Domes in February, Wisconsin State Fair in August and Folk Fair International in November.

Schedule for 2025

The schedule can always be found on the website [Schedule Page](#). It is the one place one place to find all our area events. You will also find the PDF there so you can download it. Additionally on the MBS [Home Page](#) we keep you up to date on all things MBS such as the next meeting. Volunteer Opportunities, the Newsletter, and the latest pictures.

MBS 2025 Meeting Schedule

Date	Time	Focus Topic	Main Topic
1/4/2025	9:00 AM	1-Soil Sifting	2-Bonsai Styles - Common Conifers/Deciduous
2/1/2025	9:00 AM	1-Root Work	2-Explaing Juniper types (Running, Clumping, Needle)
3/1/2025	9:00 AM	1- Guest Artist Andy Smith Collecting	2-Juniper Work
4/5/2025	9:00 AM	1-Pinching in General	2- Mugo Pine Work
5/3/2025	9:00 AM	1-Accent Plant Placement	2-Multi Flush Deep Dive
6/7/2025	9:00 AM	1-Post flush cut back deciduous	2- Boxwood Work
7/12/2025	9:00 AM	1-Rooting/Cuttings	2-Tropical Work
8/2/2025	9:00 AM	Guest Artist David Cutchin Tropical Deep Dive	
9/6/2025	9:00 AM	1-Late Summer/Early Fall Work and Wire, wire, wire	2-Pondarosa Deep Dive
10/4/2025	9:00 AM	1-Deadwood Preservation	2- Revisit Work Trees
11/1/2025	9:00 AM	1-Overwintering Discussion	2-Shoot Selection/Reduction Pruning
12/6/2025	9:00 AM	Holiday Social	

MBS 2025 Workshop & Exhibits

Date	Time	Details
2/15/2025	9:00- 2:00 PM	Workshop -How Do I Start to Show My Trees with Kris Z. Kris Z and others discuss containers, stands, accents needed to display trees.
2/23/2025	1 day at the Domes	Exhibit - Domes Winter Silhouette
3/1/2025	11:00 -3:00 PM	Workshop - Material Provided with Andy Smith
3/2/2025	9:00 -3:00 PM	Workshop - Bring your own tree with Andy Smith
3/22/2025	9:00- 2:00 PM	Workshop -Root Over Rock Follow-up with Houston S. Houston will review next steps for those who took his previous workshop and introduce others to create their own.
4/5/2025	1:00 - 4:00 PM	Workshop-Urbandori Dig with Bryan L. Join Bryan to dig up burning bushes to fill your forest and for other styles. After the meeting, meet in the parking lot of Boerner
4/26/2025	10:00 AM - 2:00 PM	Open Workshop -Spring Clean-up with MBS members. Members will be cleaning up trees for Spring.
5/10/2025	10:00 AM - 2:00 PM LSG	Spring Public Workshop at Lynden Sculpture Garden World Bonsai Day Wrkshp aranged by LSG
5/24/2025	10:00 AM - 2:00 PM	Open Workshop -Ficus Review from Previous Public Workshops. Members will be helping and reviewing Ficus trees.
6/13/2025	2 Days of demo, critique and workshop opportunities	MBS 53rd Annual Exhibit Celebration This year were are have a special selection of learning opportunities with artist Jennifer Price. See the Annual Exhibit Page
7/31/2025	10 days at State Fair	Exhibit - Wisconsin State Fair
8/2/2025	12:00 -4:00 PM	Workshop - Critique and Discussion with David Cutchin
8/3/2025	9:00 -4:00 PM	Workshop - Bring your own tree with David Cutchin
9/20/2025	9:00 AM -12:00 PM	Fall Public Workshop at Boerner Get your feet wet (and hands dirty) by attending our Next Beginner Workshop. Members of the Milwaukee Bonsai Society will be on hand to help with the creation of your first Bonsai 'masterpiece'!
10/11/2025	10:00 AM - 2:00 PM	Open Workshop -Fall Clean-up with MBS members. Members will be cleaning up trees for Fall.
11/14/2025	3 days at State Fair	Exhibit - Holiday Folk Fair

November Meeting

Over Wintering – Judy S



Wiring – Steve C & Ron F



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Next MBS meeting will be
December 7, 2024 @ 9am

2024 MBS OFFICERS

President [Rick W](#)
1st VP [Pam W](#)
2nd VP [Rob S](#)
Secretary [Greg R](#)
Treasurer [John N](#)
Director [Joe T](#)
Director [Irene H](#)
Director [Mike B](#)
Past President [Erich B](#)

Other Club Functions

Newsletter [Melissa J](#)
Webmaster [Pam W](#)
Librarian [Greg R](#)
Social media [Jenna W](#)

PAB Board-Ron F, Houston S & Judy S



*Weeping willow's tears
Blown away on autumn leaves
Days before the snow*

*~Reflections of Life
Modern Haiku of
Vaugh Banting*