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# MIDWEST BONSAI CONNECTION

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

## President's Message

Greetings onto the membership! This month there are a lot of announcements to make. To start, I'd like to welcome our new Secretary to the board. Robert Wright has volunteered to take on the task, which will be a great help. The next few announcements are about upcoming meetings.

Next, regarding our March meeting—we had optimistically thought we'd be able to move our annual repotting meeting up to take advantage of sharing some guest speakers. Well, according to the groundhog, it's looking like winter is going to linger on for a while this year. While Puxatony Phil only has an accuracy rating of 39% (yes, someone has done an official study), he seems to be spot-on this year.

So, what does this mean for us? Instead of having our repotting meeting in March, when it will be too cold to give the trees the proper aftercare, we are moving it to June and having a tropical repotting meeting. So, those of you with tropicals—plan ahead to bring them in June to get help with repotting them. In the meantime, we'll have a repotting demonstration in March to get you ready for the repotting season (once it's warm enough), and tell you the things you need to do to prepare and repot a tree.

Now, if changing one meeting wasn't enough—we have a change of date for our April meeting. This has been announced a couple of times, but I want

to make sure that I repeat it one more time. Our April meeting will actually take place on Monday, March 31. This is no April Fools! We have a chance to share Ted Matson with Milwaukee, and the only date we can get him will be on March 31. So, please mark your calendars! The 'April' meeting will be on Monday, March 31 instead and then the next meeting will be on our regularly scheduled Monday, May 5. Ted Matson is a well-known bonsai artist in this country, and I am very much looking forward to hearing him speak to us that night. Well worth moving our meeting date to take advantage of this great opportunity. Thank you to the folks in Milwaukee who are sharing him with us.

Other than that, it's a slow time of year for bonsai. The weather has warmed up for a few days as I write this, but it's forecasted to drop right back down next week. There are near-record levels of snow out there this year, but if you have any trees outside the snow is actually a good thing. It's been acting as an insulator and windbreak for the trees, helping keep them protected from the extremes of temperatures. Not very consoling when shoveling one's driveway, but still a slightly pleasant way to view all the white stuff. On that note, I will see you all at the March 3rd meeting! Thanks as always for your membership.  
—Cat Nelson

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## Community Outreach

Through the years, members of the MBS have heard an increasingly number of foreign languages spoken during the annual Bonsai Show. So, the question is: how do we connect with one another? How do we establish that unique relationship that only Bonsai "comrades" develop?

If you speak another language besides English, let's work together and develop a strong outreach effort, to create new relationships that will nourish our enthusiasm for Bonsai.

Communicating with individuals who come from another country and speak another language opens a

window to another culture with its own traditions, with a flavor and richness and "newness" in our case, bonsai. We go back to our initial question, how do we connect with each other? Let's start with "baby steps." Contact me via email and we can begin to find a way to give form to this effort. We can create a sparkle and eventually a true international flame.

Interested? I know you are. Let's make a New Year resolution, let's find the way to be more inclusive, let's find a common Bonsai ground.

Next time I will narrate for you a story about Bonsai, The Wise Man colored by my Hispanic heritage.

—Eva Hernandez-Thomas  
[epinon12@ameritech.net](mailto:epinon12@ameritech.net)

# Events Calendar

## Monday, March 3, 2014

MIDWEST BONSAI SOCIETY MARCH MEETING, 7:30 pm., at the Chicago Botanic Garden's Fairchild Room, located in the Regenstein Center. Since it will be too cold for general repotting, there will be a repotting demonstration only. There will be a Bonsai 101 talk at 7:00 pm on Bonsai Pests.

## Tuesday, March 4, 2014

MILWAUKEE BONSAI SOCIETY MEETING, 6:30 pm. Watch DVD and discussion regarding collecting materials. For more information go to [www.milwaukeebonsai.org](http://www.milwaukeebonsai.org)

## Wednesday, March 5, 2014

PRAIRIE STATE BONSAI SOCIETY, 7:30 pm, Room TBD. Program: TBD. For more information go to [www.prairiestatebonsai.com](http://www.prairiestatebonsai.com)

## Wednesday, March 19, 2014

Chicago Bonsai Club Meeting, 6 pm at the Garfield Park Conservatory. Contact [suekazoo@hotmail.com](mailto:suekazoo@hotmail.com) for further information.

## Monday, March 31, 2014

**(NOTE\* MBS April meeting moved to March 31)**  
MIDWEST BONSAI SOCIETY APRIL MEETING, 7:00 pm, at the Chicago Botanic Garden's Burnstein Hall, located in the Regenstein Center. Guest Speaker Ted Matson

## Tuesday, April 1, 2014

MILWAUKEE BONSAI SOCIETY, 7:30 pm. "Revisit Ginkos and Repot" Discussion and demonstration. For more information go to [www.milwaukeebonsai.org](http://www.milwaukeebonsai.org).

## May 17 & 18, 2014 (Saturday & Sunday)

10TH ANNUAL MIDWEST BONSAI SOCIETY BONSAI SHOW

For more information go to [www.midwestbonsai.org](http://www.midwestbonsai.org) newsletter.

## March Meeting Focus

The March meeting is scheduled at 7:30 p.m. on Monday, March 3, at the Chicago Botanic Garden's Fairchild Room, located in the Regenstein Center.

Our Annual repotting meeting, which we usually have in March, has been cancelled—it's going

to be too cold. Instead, there will be a Bonsai 101 talk on Bonsai Pests at 7:00 pm. The regular meeting will begin at 7:30 pm and will feature a repotting demonstration. The member's repotting event has been moved to June, and we will focus on tropics.

Midwest Bonsai Connection

# Chicago Bonsai Club

The Chicago Bonsai Club, a chapter of the Midwest Bonsai Society, will hold its first 2014 meeting on Wednesday, March 19, beginning at 6 p.m. We will be repotting trees, so bring a tree and a pot. There will be senior members present to assist beginners.

Chicago Bonsai Club meets at Garfield Park Conservatory, 300 N. Central Park Ave. (at Lake Street) in Chicago. Contact: [suekazoo@hotmail.com](mailto:suekazoo@hotmail.com) or call 773-235-9479.

## Haiku

by Susan Babyk

### March

Winter lingers  
on.

Don't the  
bonsai look  
forlorn

Buried in the  
snow.



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## General Meetings

Meetings of the Midwest Bonsai Society are held at the Chicago Botanic Garden's Burnstein Hall, located in the Regenstein Center.

All meetings begin at 7:30 PM. Bonsai 101 presentations commence at 7:00 PM.

## Library Resources

MBS has a fine collection of Bonsai books and journals which are available for loan. Please contact the Librarian for information.

# Monthly Care Report: What to Do in March

If any of your deciduous trees need to be repotted this year, you will be able to do the repotting as soon as the winter breaks and the ground thaws, which will be soon, end of March and into April. Look to your trees for signs that they are waking up. Look for swelling buds and white growing tips at the end of your roots. Deciduous trees can probably be pruned, but protect them from heavy frost. Avoid repotting any larch that are showing green. If they are showing green, it is best to wait until next year.

Generally there is no need to begin fertilizing your trees yet. Let them leaf out, and for your repotted trees, begin your feeding regime at least one month after repotting. You may want to keep them sheltered under the eaves of the house and out of cold winds.

Watch for insects, especially aphids on crabapples, maples, etc. As the weather warms you will need to step up your watering routine. Trees less than 5 years old should be repotted annually, trees between 5 and 20 years old may be repotted every other year, and trees over 20 should be repotted every 3 years. By the end of March, depending on weather conditions, trees can be gradually brought out of winter shelter. Evergreens can be lifted until the end of April. March and April are also good months to dig trees from the wild, keeping as much fibrous root attached as possible.

Keep your trees cool. Don't be in a hurry to encourage early growth, as it can still get cold

Transplanting from one pot to another is generally done for aesthetic reasons, but soil changing is necessary for the health of the tree. Some rapidly growing trees should have their soil changed annually. Some trees can go two, maybe up to three years. Slower growing conifers and some evergreens may not need their soil changed more than every three to five years. A younger tree, still in development, will need it sooner, where an older tree less often. You also must consider the size of the pot. However, the best indicator of a need for soil change is not time, but the condition of the tree. A vigorous, healthy tree does not need its soil changed and should not be disturbed.

FERTILIZING... Do not feed your deciduous trees until the leaves have hardened off, that means not until all of the leaves are out and branch tips are starting to grow. If you feed them too early you will get a big flush of growth, which translates to long internodes and larger leaves. You could literally waste a season getting them back.

You can start feeding your tropicals once every two weeks at 1/2 strength if leaves are growing, but it is too early to move outside. You fertilize bonsai for optimum health,

## April Meeting Moved to March 31!

**\*\*Note Change in Date\*\***

We've moved our April meeting to March 31, 2014 to take advantage of the opportunity to share a guest speaker: Ted Matson. Please make a note on your calendar.

not for growth per say like other plants.

PRUNING... You should have already taken a good look at your trees over the winter, now knowing where you want to go with them. If you have a branch or apex you want to thicken, try to divert more energy to it by keeping your other branches trimmed back and letting that one grow. If all your main branches are good, then work on your ramification by pruning your secondary and tertiary branches back. Always prune in front of the bud that is growing in the direction you want the branch to grow. If any of the internodes towards the tip of any branch are spaced farther apart, then

towards the beginning of the branch (closest to the trunk) prune back to where that elongation begins. A branch should be styled just like a tree, the secondary branches on a main branch should get smaller and closer together as you go towards the tip. The tertiary branches on your secondary branches should do the same. Doing this will help create proper ramification and taper. Proper directional pruning of your bonsai is a must, to increase ramification and for good taper.

—Ed Hake. Fort Wayne Bonsai Club. Reprinted by Permission. Compiled from several web articles and adapted to our area.

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Midwest Bonsai Society  
P.O. Box 1373  
Highland Park, Illinois 60035-7373  
www.midwestbonsai.org

# Membership Renewal Reminder

July was the time to renew your Midwest Bonsai Society membership, so if you haven't already, please fill out the "Membership Request" form provided on the last page of this newsletter. If you do not renew your membership by the end of the year you will no longer receive newsletters via email or snail mail. Your renewal is important in order for us to keep our mailing lists up-to-date. Thank you for your ongoing support. Membership dues keep the Society running and cover costs such as producing our 2 annual shows, inviting guest lecturers to various meetings, and newsletter printing and postage.

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## Membership Request

Name

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Address

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City, State, Zip Code

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Date

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Please Check If Renewal

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