
MIDWEST BONSAI CONNECTION

www.midwestbonsai.org

President's Message

It still looks like winter outside—dim, gloomy and snow covering the ground. I just want to sit in front of the fireplace and surf the internet... According to Google, the worlds oldest bonsai is a 1000 year old ficus in Crespi Italy. Let's just say I'm skeptical. A more reliable candidate is the old white pine in the Tokyo Imperial Palace collection. This tree entered bonsai cultivation in 1610, about the same time that Galileo invented the telescope. There are several ancient junipers in Japan, including one at Mansei-en in Omiya, rumored to be well over five centuries old but it's not clear to me if they are talking about actual tree age or the age as a bonsai. My personal favorite old bonsai is the Yamaki Pine donated to the US National Penjing and Bonsai Museum in Washington DC by the Yamaki family in Japan—someone has cared for that tree every single day for over 388 years and I find that utterly amazing. By the way, the Yamaki family home was only two miles from the Hiroshima atomic bomb blast yet this tree is alive and healthy today. The oldest surviving tree under my care is going on eight years as a bonsai. Humbling, to say the least.

More to the present, Accuweather.com and I both agree that the worst of this winter is behind us. Sure, we may have more snow coming, but the really cold single digit weather is in the past. I keep telling myself that until I believe it. One thing that helps is to focus on the upcoming Bonsai season—in May alone we have the ABS Learning Symposium in Grand Rapids, followed by our very own May Bonsai Exhibit and then Brussels Rendezvous a week later. If anyone has the energy

to attend all three I'd really like to hear from you.

For my own trees, I'm getting ready to do some serious branch bending on a Ponerosa Pine, Black Hills Spruce and a small Juniper before the end of February. I may not have the artistic skills of some members or the horticultural skills of others but as an engineer I really, really like bending branches. This is the time of year when I get to do my thing so if you have any big branches that need moved, just give me a call.

Our program for the March club meeting isn't finalized yet, but we have some interesting options so bundle up and come on out. It's a little too early to do our annual repotting meeting so we will save that for April. For later in the year we are lining up some very knowledgeable bonsai professionals such as Jerry Meislik this summer and Mauro Stemberger this fall (as you may recall, Mauro did an excellent demo at our meeting last November)—more details to come later.

—Jay Albright

Random Thoughts on Bonsai

by Larry Stephan

Winter, what winter? With the mild winter some of my Bonsai trees inside are beginning to bud and sprout new leaves. Watching AccuWeather is making me believe that trees could go out from my garage before the end of March or very early April at the latest. My wife saw further proof that Garden this week. She saw flock after flock of Geese flying in from the South. The birds know what it is happening this year.

May Exhibit. Plans for the May Exhibit (May 21st and 22nd) are well underway. Wildwood, Cass and BC Bonsai will all be

back. Karen Shuman and Fred Tarnow will have their pottery on display. Mary Obodzinski will show some of her new Bonsai pots along with her other unique pottery pieces. While the Stands and Stone people from Florida cannot make it this year in May, Kristy, the Scroll lady will be coming. This year she has collected many smaller Scrolls that she believes are suitable for Bonsai. In a rare treat Ivan Watters will be selling some of his collected stands and stones at the Exhibit.

As the May Exhibit nears,

start saving you pennies. Maybe your trees just need a new pot, a better stand, or a scroll to make them stand out in the August Exhibit. Why would you need a scroll anyway? Isn't it all about the tree? Of course it is, but would you display your tree in a flower pot? Or show it without a stand or an accent plant? A scroll can add a lot to the right tree. And what about your next project tree? There will be lots of trees for sale and some interesting workshops. Frank Mihalic is even doing a Bonsai Jewelry-making workshop where you can make your own bronze, silver or gold jewelry. Check them out on the Website.

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Events Calendar

Tuesday, March 1, 2016

MILWAUKEE BONSAI SOCIETY MEETING,
6:30 pm, Taking bonsai out of storage/framing
your bonsai. For further information go to www.milwaukeebonsai.org

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

PRAIRIE STATE BONSAI SOCIETY,
7:00pm, Bonsai 101, TBD, General Meeting 7:30pm,
Room TEC1038b Program TBD. For further information
go to www.prairiestatebonsai.com

Monday, March 7, 2016

MIDWEST BONSAI SOCIETY MEETING
at the Chicago Botanic Garden's Burnstein Hall, located
in the Regenstein Center. Program: 7:00 pm: Bonsai
101, topic: General Approach to Bonsai. 7:30 pm:
General Meeting, Linda Camp will do a presentation on
Deciduous Trees, Bring your trees for a quick critique.
For further information, go to www.midwestbonsai.org

Saturday, March 12, 2016

MILWAUKEE BONSAI SOCIETY
Two different Sean Smith workshops. For further
information or to register, go to www.milwaukeebonsai.org

Sunday, March 13, 2016

BONSAI WORKSHOP – IVAN WATTERS,
9am – 1pm. See blurb in this newsletter for further info
or to Sign up go to yasukunai@hotmail.com

Sunday, March 13, 2016

MILWAUKEE BONSAI SOCIETY
Sean Smith presentation 10:00 am – 1:00 pm at
Boerner, on his experience with suiseki and diaza
around the world. Free and open to all. For further
information go to www.milwaukeebonsai.org

Monday, April 4, 2016

MIDWEST BONSAI SOCIETY MEETING
at the Chicago Botanic Garden's Burnstein Hall, located
in the Regenstein Center. Program: 7:00 pm: Bonsai
101, topic TBA. 7:30 pm: Repotting, Air layering &
Propagation, Spring work, Evergreen trees, Bring
your trees, Raffle. For further information, go to www.midwestbonsai.org

Wednesday, April 6, 2016

PRAIRIE STATE BONSAI SOCIETY
General Meeting 7:30pm, Room TEC1038b Program:
For further information go to www.prairiestatebonsai.com

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

WALTER PALL continues his Bonsai Academy
at Hidden Gardens in Willowbrook. Program: 6pm to
10pm. Sign up: Call Hidden Gardens at (630) 655-8283
or email JSchulz@comcast.com

Friday, April 15 – Sunday, April 17, 2016

MID-ATLANTIC SOCIETIES SPRING FESTIVAL,
Cromwell, CT. For further info go to www.midatlanticbonsai.org

Thursday, May 12 – Sunday, May 15, 2016

AMERICAN BONSAI SOCIETY (ABS) CONFERENCE
Grand Rapids, MI. Early registration ends in March
and the workshops are filling up. Four workshops and
meals are included with the price of the registration. Go
to: <http://www.absbonsai.org/2016-abs-bonsai-in-the-garden-learning-seminars> for more information.

Saturday, May 21 – Sunday, May 22, 2016

**MIDWEST BONSAI SOCIETY 12th ANNUAL MAY
BONSAI EXHIBIT, Show theme: education**
Members invited to bring trees in various stages
of training, accompanied by explanations of what
processes are being used. Held in the Burnstein Hall of
the Regenstein Center at the Chicago Botanic Garden.
Vendors, workshops, demonstrations. For further
information, go to www.midwestbonsai.org

Saturday, September 10 – Sunday, September 11, 2016

5TH US NATIONAL BONSAI EXHIBITION,
Rochester, NY. Details to follow.

Learn bonsai at the Hidden Gardens

- Six week beginners program starting in Spring, 2016
- Six week intermediate program starting in Spring, 2016
(Six 1-1/2 hour sessions over six weeks) Call the
Hidden Gardens in Willowbrook at (630) 655-8283 to
sign-up. There is also a bonsai program every Saturday
Morning with Mark Karczewski. For more information go
to hiddengarden.net

Register for May Exhibit Workshops

The May Bonsai Exhibit Workshops schedule is now
available online for registration. You should sign up ASAP
because these workshops can fill up fast. The 2016
Exhibit is scheduled May 21 & 22 at the Chicago Botanic
Garden. To register go to www.midwestbonsai.org

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Society membership or
the Board of Directors.

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 presenta-
tions 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, end of March and into April. Look for signs that they are waking, for swelling buds and white growing tips at the end of roots. Deciduous trees can probably be pruned, but protect them from heavy frost. Avoid repotting any larch that are showing green.

Generally, no need to begin fertilizing 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, 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.

Soil changing is necessary when repotting. Some rapidly growing trees should have their soil changed annually. Others can go two to three years. Slower growing conifers and some evergreens may not need their soil changed more than every three to five years. The best indicator of a need for soil change is 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 too early you will get a big flush of growth, which may

mean 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. Fertilize bonsai for optimum health.

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 all your main branches are good, then work on your ramification by pruning your secondary and tertiary branches back. 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.

Random Thoughts

(continued from page 1)

A Little Free Publicity

The recent issue of Bonsai magazine published an article with photos about last August's Exhibit. See pages 38 and 39 for the article. The plans for August are well underway. Colin Lewis is locked in as our Guest Judge. Vendors are signing up now for spots to display. More than half the available space has been reserved.

Exciting Time of Year

In many ways this can be one of the most exciting times of the year. Are your flowering bulbs already poking their little heads up in your garden? Are you going to grow some vegetables this summer? What changes do you plan to make with your Bonsai trees? Whatever stirs your thoughts of Spring, now is time to make those plans...

Chicago Bonsai Club

The first meeting of the Chicago Bonsai Club, a chapter of the Midwest Bonsai Society, will be held on Wednesday, March 16, beginning at 6 p.m. There will be senior members available to answer your questions

and provide assistance, so bring a plant to work on. Chicago Bonsai Club meets at Garfield Park Conservatory, 300 N. Central Park Ave. (at Lake Street) in Chicago. Contact: suekazoo@hotmail.com or call 773-235-9479.

Midwest Bonsai Society Officers + Chairpersons

President	Jay Albright
Executive Vice President	Kurt Nykaza
Vice President Programs	Victor Zurczak
Vice President Special Events	Larry Stephan
Treasurer	Phil Troy
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Membership	Lorraine May
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Webmaster	Matthew Corpolongo
Past Presidents	Jim Fairchild
	Ivan Watters
Members at Large	Eva Hernandez-Thomas
	Tony Welninski
Prairie State Representative	Dan Turner

March Meeting Focus

The March meeting is scheduled at 7:00 p.m. on Monday, March 7, at the Chicago Botanic Garden's Burnstein Hall, located in the Regenstein Center.

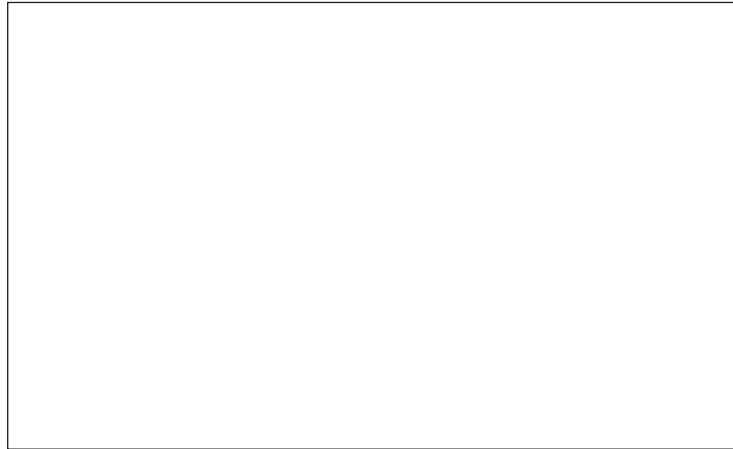
Bonsai 101 begins at 7 pm, topic: General Approaches to Bonsai. At 7:30 pm, Linda Camp will do a presentation on deciduous trees. Also, bring a tree for a quick critique.

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

Membership Renewal Reminder

August begins the new membership year. We appreciate the renewals already received in July, and encourage everyone else to send yours in August. Renewing is easier than ever—simply go to the club website at www.midwestbonsai.org, click on Membership and enter your payment information. Of course, we still accept checks at club meetings or by mail, and you can 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

Address

City, State, Zip Code

Telephone

Date

Email

Please Check If Renewal

Please make check payable to: **Midwest Bonsai Society**

Send to: Midwest Bonsai Society

P.O. Box 1373

Highland Park, Illinois

60035-7373

Annual Membership • July 1st thru June 30

\$35 Electronic Newsletter **OR \$40** Newsletter by Mail