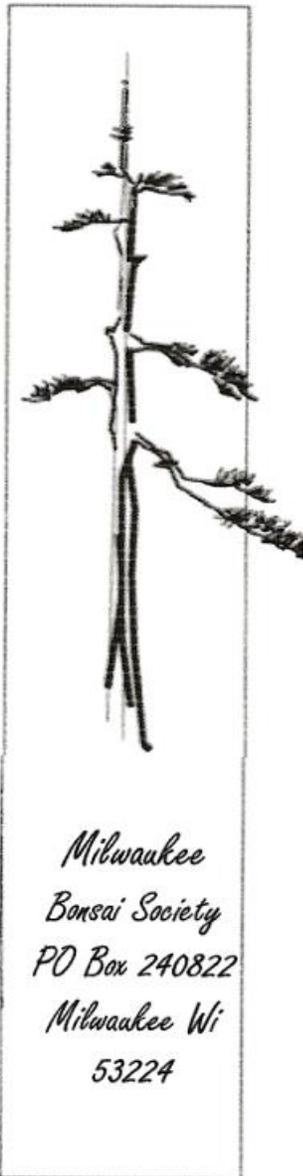


# BONSAI NEWS

May 2024



## Upcoming Meeting

For the next meeting bring your tools if you have them, but most importantly bring your imagination for our group slash,

We will split into a few groups and work in these groups on trees. If you have fun working on a tree, make sure to attend this meeting and work on a tree with others. Everyone has a different idea and it's interesting to hear all the great opinions.

The trees will be raffled off at the end of the meeting with the winners getting trees well on their way to being masterpieces.

Everyone is welcome, no matter your skill level. Join in the fun!

### Next Meeting

May 4, 2024

9 am

Boerner  
Botanical



### May

May 4 – Group Slash

### June

June 1 – Preparing a thread graft/bring a tree for styling advice

June 8-9 – 53<sup>rd</sup> Annual Exhibit  
Boerner Botanical Garden

June 15 – Bonsai Skills 101\*

June 16 – Bonsai Skills 201\*

### July

July 13 – Show and tell-Pines/Hands-off, Puff ball stage, Dealing with Summer heat

### August

August 1-11 – State Fair Shows

August 3 – Guest Artist: David Cutchin/  
Wire

August 4 – Tropical Workshop w/  
David Cutchin\*

August 10 – Bonsai Skills 101\*

August 11 - Bonsai Skills 201\*

### September

September 7 – Ryan's Style  
Descriptions/Common  
Conifers-Deciduous

\*Open to MBS members only

## President's Message

For those who might not know, there is a substance called yamagoke, or mountain moss, which is essential for anyone who raises azaleas, camellias, or other acid-loving trees. The stuff comes in a compressed, dry bale the size of a brick, and it needs to be washed before it can be used. First you soak the brick overnight in a bucket of water, and then you stir it around before taking it, a handful at a time, squeezing the water out, and putting it in another bucket. You fill that bucket with water and do it all again, three times—rinse and repeat. An amazing amount of dirt comes out. It is a mind-numbingly boring task.

The upside to boring tasks, though, is they give us time to reflect and think. I believe that a lot of people in bonsai, especially the newer ones, suffer a great deal of apprehension and anxiety about their trees because they are afraid of making a mistake. Perhaps they fear or believe they will be embarrassed or shamed by doing so—clearly not the case at MBS, but a valid feeling, nonetheless.

My “day job” is in investments. Recently, a gentleman named Charlie Munger passed away. For something like sixty years he was Warren Buffett's business partner and close friend. Together, they are regarded as the most successful investors in the history of modern markets. Before he died, Charlie said something in an interview that really resonated with me. He said, “We learn nothing from success. All that a successful outcome does is confirm that you were correct in something you already knew. We learn by making mistakes, so that we establish what not to do—and if I make a few hundred more, I might start to know what I'm doing.”

Lately I've been reading some of the teachings of His Holiness, the Dalai Lama. Last night I read one of his lessons in which he emphasizes the importance of having realistic expectations if we are to be truly happy. He explains the important distinction between our ‘ideal’—where we want to get to—and the standards by which we measure our own progress on that journey. It may take us years, even decades, if our ideal is to be a bonsai ‘expert’, whatever that is, and it's unrealistic to expect it to happen quickly. We can, however, set our own individual goals and the standards by which we will feel that we have made progress. At the beginning, it may be progress to say I kept the tree alive for a whole year. Much later, it may be that I now feel I really understand ramification and refinement. The point is, each of us can have our own, unique ideal, and we alone choose the standards of our individual progress.

Along the way, I think it's important to pay attention to the small accomplishments and moments that make this hobby/art form/addiction so enriching. For myself, I think it's nothing short of a minor miracle that sitting in front of me is a white quince in full bloom, and that I get to experience this moment of beauty. I am genuinely grateful for that.

So....spring is well and truly under way, summer is around the corner. This is the time when bonsai is really fun, and the reason why we endure the boredom of dark Wisconsin winters, in order to get to this season. Get busy, risk making some mistakes, and enjoy the time. Most of all, remember that the reason you do this is because it makes you happy.



Nice weather ahead!

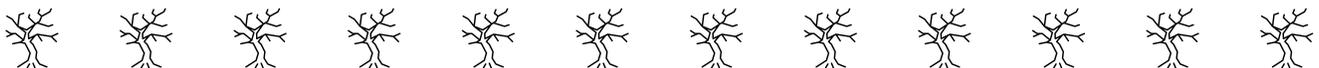
If you are beginning to bring out your trees, here's a recommendation as to where to place them:

- If deciduous trees are still in twig or just greening buds, put them in full sun
- If deciduous trees have foliage already, put them in full shade
- Conifers stored in dark places for the winter should go in full shade.
  - A garage window is still considered a dark place
- Conifers stored where they get direct outdoor light...even if it is in shade, can go in East sun for a week or 2 and then full sun
- Unless you are crazy like me and are bringing tropicals in and out...don't bring them out yet. I will bring some out and into full shade. Not even a bit of East sun.

Steve



Deciduous trees crammed into the sunniest part of the garden (yes, they are on the garage!)



## Raffle Donations Needed

The Annual Exhibit is being held June 8-9, 2024 this year instead of the usual August and is quickly approaching. The raffles are a big fund-raising activity for MBS at the Exhibit. Members enjoy the bonsai items and the public appreciate the non-bonsai items. Without your help the raffles cannot be successful. If you have anything bonsai related you would like to donate, please contact Melissa J ([missyuc2@yahoo.com](mailto:missyuc2@yahoo.com) or 414-350-5924 – call or text). Arrangements can be made to pick up items.

# Annual Exhibit Call for Trees and Education Opportunities

*By Pam W*

The MBS Education Committee has identified three categories of bonsai skills that all bonsai enthusiasts should learn. Becoming proficient in these skills will give you the confidence to grow and maintain your trees.

**Horticulture Skills** - watering, fertilizing, seasonal care, repotting (Keeping my trees alive)

**Styling Skills** - Growing out trunks and branches, cutting back, pruning, building ramification, placing wire on a tree (Making the tree look good)

**Presentation Skills** - Pot selection, stand selection, accent piece selection and overall composition (pulling it all together and creating a great picture).

Each MBS member should reflect on the skill categories and self-determine at which level of proficiency their skills are at. The following describes these levels.

**Open:** You feel confident and reasonable proficient in performing these skills: Horticulture, Styling and Presentation.

**Intermediate:** You are becoming more confident/comfortable in performing these skills but you still are learning and refining these skills.

**Novice:** You are learning these skills and do not feel comfortable or proficient with all of these skills at this point in time.

## CALL FOR TREES

We have had over a year of general meeting presentations to help level up our skills and enjoy doing it! We have had more than one meeting on the display aspect of presentation and preparation of your tree for show. We had a day long workshop last year to help set up your tree and selection process for exhibiting your tree. NOW is the time to up our presentation skills! This year's judge is Rick Garcia. Have him help you reach a new level. Exhibit participation includes:

- An assessment of your presentation so you can improve it for a future exhibit.
- An assessment of your tree that shows horticulture needs that you can address.
- An assessment of specific styling areas you can concentrate on improving over this next year.

By listening and taking the evaluation from our judge Rick Garcia you can build on next year's goal for the tree. Additionally, MBS Executive Committee with the Education Committee will use the evaluation to help you reach that next level. We will be planning great quality general meetings around areas that are identified as needing improvement. Your exhibit participation is critical to setting the tone for 2025 education.

Sign up to exhibit your tree at

[53rd Annual Exhibit-Displays Tickets, Fri, Jun 7, 2024 at 10:00 AM | Eventbrite](#)

**Workshops** are Sunday June 9 Sign up online at:

[Sunday workshops with Rick Garcia Tickets, Sun, Jun 9, 2024 at 9:00 AM | Eventbrite](#)

Volunteer at:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/53rd-annual-exhibit-volunteers-tickets-771842761477>

The **demonstration Saturday afternoon is free** and starts at 1:00. MBS has a very nice azalea bonsai picked out by Rick Garcia and has been acclimated to our climate for this event. Everyone is welcome to watch this amazing refinement and transformation.

## New Talent Contest

Our MBS Executive Committee wants to discover and encourage our MBS new talent by holding the first annual New Talent Contest at the Annual Exhibit on Saturday, June 8<sup>th</sup>.

The requirements for entering the contest are:

1. Be an active MBS member.
2. Have less than 5 years' experience in the art of Bonsai.
3. Have attended at least one MBS class.
4. Not won a previous New Talent Competition
5. Not participated in a previous New Talent Competition.

The cost to enter the competition is \$30.

At the competition each contestant shall:

1. Be provided with similar raw material selected by the AE Committee
2. Furnish their own personal tools, wire and supplies at the competition.
3. Be given a 3-hour time period on Saturday afternoon starting at 1:00 PM on June 8<sup>th</sup> in which to style the randomly provided raw material into a bonsai.

The current three MBS teachers (Ron, Brian and Steve) will judge the completed bonsai and declare the winner. The winning new talent will be awarded the prize of a \$100 voucher to be used for a future MBS Class.

Click [here](#) to register for the New Talent Contest on Eventbrite.



## LSG Volunteers Needed

**MBS members** wishing to volunteer at the bonsai exhibit at Lynden Sculpture Garden (LSG) for the 2024 season are asked to meet for lunch/ orientation/ cleanup at **noon, Saturday, May 4**, or at **noon, Sunday, May 5** on the bonsai patio at the exhibit @ LSG.

No experience is necessary.

Please bring your calendars and be prepared to sign up for May and June dates. The exhibit is open on Wednesdays, Saturdays and Sundays from 10a.m.-4p.m.

Wear old cloths and bring your finishing tools and maybe a tabletop turntable.

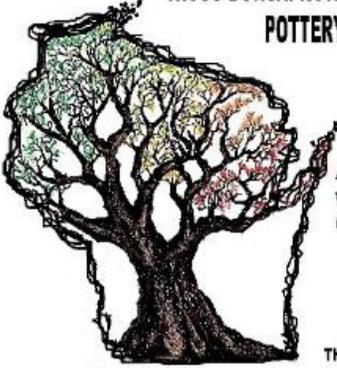
We will be refreshing the exhibit area, patio, gates and changing house, cleaning, weeding, raking gravel and sanding display benches.

We will prepare the bonsai for exhibit. We can work until the garden closes at 4 p.m.

We plan to open the exhibit to the public on **World Bonsai Day, Saturday, May 11, 2024** with a demonstration open to the public led by volunteer, Erich B.

Anyone interested, please contact Michelle Z. ([mgaz.md@gmail.com](mailto:mgaz.md@gmail.com)) so I'll know how many to plan for. Can't wait to get started!

<https://www.milwaukeebonsaifoundation.org/>



**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](mailto:WiscoBonsai@gmail.com) 414-248-3827 [www.WiscoBonsai.com](http://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" - KMIS**

**WISCO BONSAI**  
[www.WiscoBonsai.com](http://www.WiscoBonsai.com)

The South Milwaukee Historical Society and The Friends of Grant Park are hosting a City Garden Tour on Saturday, **June 22, 2024**, from 9am – 4pm and MBS is featured as a stop in Grant Park on this tour.

Look for more information in the June newsletter.



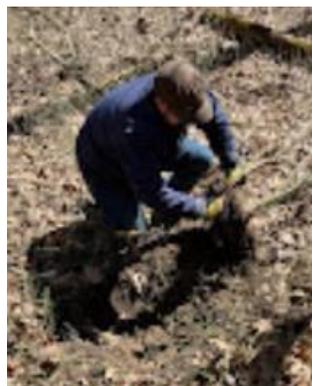
*Burning Bush Dig - April 6, 2024*



Additional Pictures from the Dig and examples of trees from the dig:

<https://photos.app.goo.gl/mY2DG2xEjuxBBsfU7>

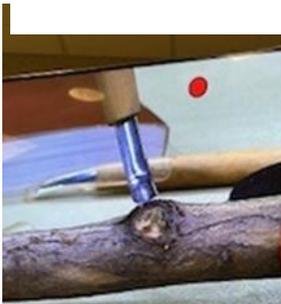
Learn how to further care for and design your Burning Bush by clicking [here](#).



## April Meeting



The April meeting started with Steve explaining to everyone when and how to use a curved chisel, without cutting yourself. The next part of the meeting had Steve explaining about and showing everyone about forest plantings. John N brought in a group of trees he has been growing for the past few years in his yard and are now going to be planted in a box as a forest. We all had fun giving our opinion as to where the last tree should be placed in the box.



### **Ancient Arts Bonsai**

Bonsai Supplier Established  
in 2005

Bonsai a Growing Hobby  
Wisconsin's Leading Full Line Bonsai Supplier

Tools, Wire – Aluminum & Copper, Pots, Fertilizers  
Soils – Akadama, Lava, Pumice, Kanuma, Blends  
Trees – Tropical, Deciduous, Conifers, Evergreens  
Services – Lessons, Consults, Repotting, Wiring, Boarding

See our updated Website: [aabonsai.com](http://aabonsai.com)

Email – [aabonsai@charter.net](mailto:aabonsai@charter.net)

Phone – 262-490-8733

The Daylily Society of Southeast WI is holding its Annual Daylily Sale on the 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday in June 7:30 AM – Noon at The Brookfield Farmers Market, 16900 W Gebhardt Rd, Brookfield in Front of Brookfield Central High School. Over 200 Cultivars for Sale. Pictures and descriptions are available at the sale and online: [www.dssew.org](http://www.dssew.org).



## Get carried away in May!

by PAM W

The number Bonsai Events within our driving range is staggering this year. Not sure how to list them – by proximity? By date? By organization? Let me get started without trying to organize them:

May 3-5: Bonsai Society of Greater St. Louis [Bonsai Central](#)

May 5: National Public Gardens Day at [Boerner Botanical Gardens](#)

May 9-12: American Bonsai Society [Learning Seminars 2024](#) in Grand Rapids MI

May 11: Worlds Bonsai Day at [Lynden Sculpture Garden](#)

May 11-12: Midwest Bonsai Society [May Bonsai Event](#)

And right after all of these events we have our [53rd Annual Bonsai Exhibit](#) June 7-9

# Outstanding Volunteers and Our Appreciation.

by Pam W

Our inspiration comes from you and to show our appreciation for volunteer efforts above and beyond MBS offers a view events. Some MBS members volunteer over 20 hours every month as editor, webmaster, and videographer. Some serve on the Executive Committee, while some ensure our exhibit come off without a hitch or offer workshops. Even volunteering to clean-up after meetings and tree-sit at events makes a difference.

We never know if an event comes our way but when they do we get out our list of volunteer efforts and suggest they take part in these events.

Recently Isaiah G. had Ryan Neil and Todd Schlafer (well-known internet artists) over to help him repot his monster trees. He offered a few spots to our MBS volunteers to be silent observers. This exciting educational opportunity was exceptional!

For the last few years, LSG Curator, Michelle Z has rewarded volunteers with the most hours with a 3-hour workshop with Suthin Sukosolvisit during his annual visit to help with the LSG collection. Suthin is the artistic director of the bonsai exhibit. Along with that she offered a few spots to high hour volunteers (such as the volunteer of the year Teri W with over 60 hours) to work with the artist on a tree they brought along.

## Thank-you Isaiah and Michelle!

While these events are outstanding, we cannot count on these events being offered. MBS has in the past dedicated resources to reward our volunteers. Last year we had a dinner hosted at Ann's Pizza or the Bavarian Brew House for the AE volunteers. In prior years we offered raffle tickets to be used for annual exhibit raffles

Please reach out to our MBS leadership to let them know you appreciate these opportunities, dinners and raffle tickets or if you have an opportunity.

And more importantly **CONTINUE to VOLUNTEER!**



Dinner at Ann's Pizza



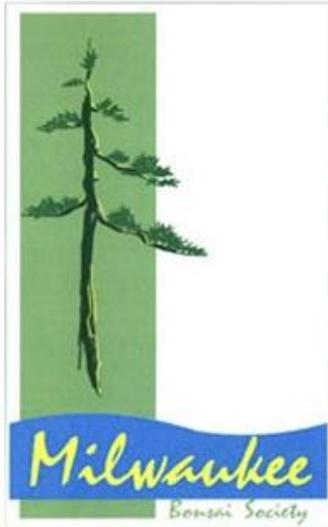
Ryan Todd and Ron



Suthin and Jorge



Dinner at Bavarian Brew House



PO Box 240822  
Milwaukee, WI 53224  
[www.milwaukeebonsai.org](http://www.milwaukeebonsai.org)

Next MBS meeting will be  
May 4, 2024 @ 9am

#### 2023 MBS OFFICERS

President [Rick W](#)  
1<sup>st</sup> VP [Pam W](#)  
2<sup>nd</sup> 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](#)

PAB Board-Ron F, Houston S & Judy S



*Snow receding, birds  
Migrating, Flowers growing;  
Spring is returning.*

*~ Devon Strang*