



BADGER BONSAI NEWS

May 2023

President's Message

- RON FORTMANN

If you did not make the April meeting, you missed out on watching a flurry of repotting activity by a number of our members. We saw good examples of repotting for trees that were going into their first bonsai pot to trees that were moving into new containers for the next stage of their development. All in all, it was a fun and educational night for everyone.

April brought a mix of weather that probably had some of you doing the bonsai shuffle, bringing your trees out on the warm days and back in when the cold returned. Hopefully, May will bring us less temperature swings so our trees can begin this year's development.

May 20th and 21st we host the Badger Bonsai Society Annual Show at Olbrich Botanical Gardens. We need volunteers to help set up and/or take down the display tables and answer questions from the general public. We'll have sign-up sheets for all opportunities to help at our May 11 meeting.

We also need to know if you plan to show a tree or trees and a general size of the display needed to help us plan for enough space to accommodate. We will also have an area to display trees that are still in "training." This will be an interesting and informative display, as those not familiar with bonsai likely don't realize how much time and effort goes into making a tree show worthy.

At the May meeting I will discuss some show preparation tips to ensure that those trees on

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It was a packed house for the April meeting

UPCOMING EVENTS

Bonsai Fundamentals Course, Session 5

(BBS Registrants Only) Saturday, May 13, 2023,
- 9:00 am

<https://aabonsai.com/>

[Ancient Arts Bonsai](#) (see website for address and directions)

BBS May Meeting

Thursday, May 11 from 6:30–8:00 pm
Olbrich Botanical Gardens, 3330 Atwood Ave.,
Madison

Agenda: Prepping our trees for show, BBS Annual Show volunteer sign up, Bonsai fertilization

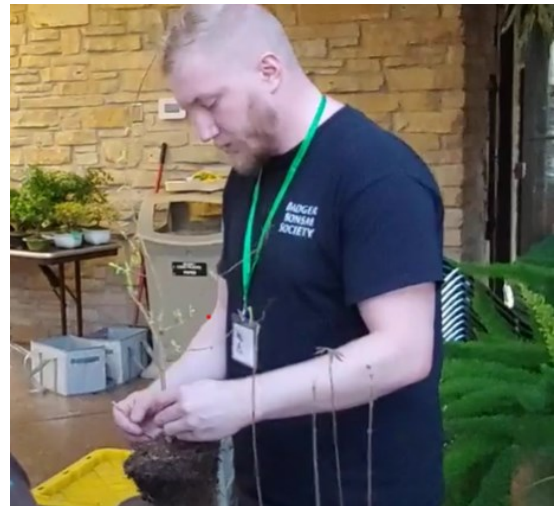
Badger Bonsai Society Annual Show

Saturday, and Sunday, May 20 & 21
- 10:00 am - 4:00 pm

Olbrich Botanical Gardens,
3330 Atwood Ave. Madison

display are looking their best. I will also show my technique for “show mossing” a tree for display. We will begin talking about fertilization. There’s a lot to cover on this topic, including why we fertilize, when we fertilize, what types of fertilizer is best, and how often do we need to apply it.

Look forward to seeing you all at the May meeting!



Alex upgrades his tree from a nursery pot



Ben repots his root-over-rock grown elm.



Tyler and Phillip exchange notes



Colin works on his repot while Skyler, Zach, and Dean collaborate on the repotting of Skyler's larch

Appreciating Elaine

Sweet Elaine (left) has been providing refreshments for BBS meetings for 30 years! We honored her generosity at last month's meeting by gifting her with an orchid and some chocolates. Thank you, Elaine! We appreciate YOU!

Elaine is pictured here with Mary, another long-time member and bonsai artist. One of her favorite BBS activities is the annual show coming up this month.



Welcome New Members

Welcome to the BBS Michael and Jake!
We're glad to have you!

Bonsai Fundamentals

Our final class on Saturday, May 13, will meet at Ron's house in Oconomowoc at 9:00 am. Visit aabonsai.com for address and directions.

Participants should bring their trees from our last session for a review of how they are doing. We will look at Ron's collection and see how he manages, displays, and maintains it.

We will also visit a local garden center to look at what is available to become bonsai and what to avoid.



Mary shared a picture of her beautiful *Forsythia*, which is perfect for this shell pot. This very early spring bloomer finished its presentation in April and wasn't interested in hanging on for the BBS show in May. Its windswept style, and with very little wiring needed, is in great form nonetheless.

Bonsai Dream School

Jonathan completed year two of an intensive program taught by world-renowned bonsai artist Mauro Stemberger from April 28 through 30.

Bonsai Dream School Chicago meets over three days twice a year (spring and fall) for three years at The Hidden Gardens in Willowbrook, IL. Jonathan is one of only ten students accepted into the program at a time, which allows each student to gain a deep understanding of Mauro's knowledge of bonsai and bonsai artistry. At the end of the program Jonathan will have earned Mauro's Certified Bonsai Artist designation.

Jonathan said Mauro began the class discussing how in his travels across the United States, and particularly in northern climates, he continually sees issues with trees that are overwintered. In his garden in the mountains of Italy he leaves his conifers out year-round; only his deciduous trees need protection. He doesn't say this option is what will work for us in the Midwest, but encourages students to explore and figure out what works best.

In the most recent class, Jonathan and the other students learned about the care and management of pines (single and double flush) as well as different grafting techniques.

Over the course of the three days, Jonathan worked on four trees. He styled a Colorado spruce, a Scotts pine and an eastern white cedar, and repotted a ponderosa pine.



Other trees from the class, including Jonathan's Scots pine and a rocky mountain juniper styled by another student

Colorado spruce: before, during and after

2023 BBS Calendar

Meetings are on the second Thursday of the month unless noted.

May 11—Monthly Meeting. Show prep. Watering & Fertilization Basics—What, when, how much, why

May 13 —Bonsai Fundamentals Course, Session 5

May 20 & 21—BBS 2023 Annual Show

June 8—Monthly Meeting. Pruning and partial defoliation tips

July 13—Monthly Meeting. Wound work and wiring

August 10—Monthly Meeting. Late summer work

September 14—Monthly Meeting. Wiring and styling

October 12—Monthly Meeting. Fall preparation

November 9—Monthly Meeting. Winter preparation

December 14—Monthly Meeting. Holiday get-together, Suiseki viewing stones

Potential Workshops in 2023

July—Pruning, wiring, partial defoliation

September—Wiring, styling



Of Interest on the Web

[Jason's Bonsai Channel](#)
—YouTube (Video)

[Badger Bonsai Society Member Group](#)

BBS members only platform for sharing tips, advice, and inspiration between monthly meetings

A few of our suggestions for further study on what's happening this month in the world of bonsai.

[Don't Pinch Your Juniper Bonsai](#)
—Stone Lantern (Article)

[Is Bonsai Getting Harder?](#)
—Bonsai Tonight (Blog Post)

[The Function of Water in Bonsai](#)
—Bonsai Mirai (Blog Post)



BBS Member Artistry

It's not at all surprising that our fellow bonsai artists have artistic abilities that go beyond styling trees. These bonsai-related items made by Sharon and Ken are truly works of art by themselves.



After acquiring a bunch of bonsai tools from Ron and others, Sharon finally found a use for the leather-working tools she had bought years ago but hadn't touched until now. This hand-sewn tool wrap is gorgeous and it will only get better with age. She also repurposed one of her kitchen forks into a root rake just in time for repotting season and the April meeting.



This wonderful Black Hills spruce forest looks amazing planted in this beautiful planter box crafted by Ken.

Bonsai Events in the Area

2023 Guest Artist Workshops

All workshops from 9-4 pm, Cost \$140 per day

June 10-11—[Owen Reich](#)

June 22-23—[David Cutchin](#)

October 14-15—[Todd Schlafer](#)

Call The Hidden Gardens at 630.655.8283 or email Jeff Schulz at JSchulz@comcast.net to register

The Hidden Gardens

16W658 S Frontage Road

Willowbrook, IL 60527

<https://thehiddengardens.net>



Wisco Bonsai Spring Workshops

WISCO BONSAI
www.WiscoBonsai.com

Saturday, May 27 (date change) – DECIDUOUS STRATEGIES

This will be an actionable class on taking your elms, maples, hornbeams, etc., to the next level, or even the first level of development. Note: we will concentrate on development, and not refinement. This will be a BYO material class, or material may be available for purchase. Appropriate for beginner/ intermediate. \$30/participant—class size limited to 6.

Saturday, June 10—OPEN HOUSE

Trees, pots, food, trees, music, trees, beverages, pots, workshops, trees, and casual fun. Appropriate for all ages and all bonsai levels.

More details coming soon, but let Kevin know now if you want to attend any of the events.

To register for a workshop and/or get on Kevin's mailing list, contact him at wiscobonsai@gmail.com.

Wisco Bonsai

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www.wiscobonsai.com



Promoting and enjoying the
ancient art of bonsai since 1972.

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<https://badgerbonsai.net>

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